



# 2025 Toolkit Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Month

**#HealthyLove**

By respecting ourselves and each other, we can create #HealthyLove in our community.

**Respect Is Change**

# Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Month Toolkit

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Month. This toolkit is designed to help you learn to promote #HealthyLove for yourself and community through respect because respect is change. Included in this toolkit are resources to help you learn about Teen Dating Violence, guides to get involved in your communities, and how to talk to your parents.

This years #HealthyLove campaign focuses on generational cycles of violence and how change starts with respect. By respecting yourself and others it is possible to end the cycle of generational violence and prevent teen dating violence in your relationships.

If you have any questions or would like more information on how you can partner with us please email us at [preventioneducation@humanoptions.org](mailto:preventioneducation@humanoptions.org).

 **HUMAN OPTIONS**

If you or someone you know is in an abusive relationship call our 24/7 Hotline: 887.854.3594

**#RespectIsChange**

Visit our website @ [Humanoptions.org](http://Humanoptions.org)

# Take Action NOW

Here are some ways you can get involved and take action against Teen Dating Violence:

- Attend the 10th Annual Love Shouldn't Hurt Conference on February 8th .
- Request a presentation from Human Options on teen dating violence, healthy relationships, boundaries & consent.
- Participate in Wear Orange Day on February 11th to show your solidarity with those who've experienced teen dating violence.
- Write an article about Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month in your school newsletter.
- Include statistics or facts about teen dating violence in your daily announcements.
- Get your school involved. Have a space for you and other students to take our pledge and post them on a door or wall.
- Create posters highlighting Teen Dating Violence facts and statistics and hang them throughout your school.
- Share our social media posts to help raise awareness (@humanoptions).
- **Win a free ice cream social for you and your class by taking action and sharing with us the impact you're making by emailing us or sending to our IG.**

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# What is Teen Dating Violence?

## Teen Dating Violence (TDV) is:

A pattern of behaviors used to establish power and exert control by one intimate partner over the other. It is also known as abuse, domestic violence or relationship violence.

## Abuse is:

### Learned

From seeing it in our family members, media and communities.

### Pattern

It is never a one time event.

### Everywhere

Found in every age, gender, race, religion, class, status, & sexuality.

#### Physical:

Hitting, slapping, scratching, kicking, cutting, beating, battering, destruction of property.

#### Emotional:

Gaslighting, ghosting, threats, manipulation, name calling, insults, accusations & jealousy.

#### Financial:

Giving an "allowance," keeping all access to money & cards, and constantly asking for money.

#### Digital:

Cyberstalking on social accounts, checking messages, keeping passwords, tracking, stalking, and posting revenge porn.

#### Sexual:

Sexual assault, forced pregnancy, revenge porn, and any nonconsensual sexual act.

#### Verbal:

Threats, insults, accusations, ridicule, humiliation, excessive yelling, and "the silent treatment"

#### Mental Psychological:

Isolation from friends, family & hobbies, restricting access to the public and internet.

#### Spiritual:

Using religion to justify or keep abusing, inability to split, and criticizing their beliefs.



# Teen Dating Violence

## The Facts

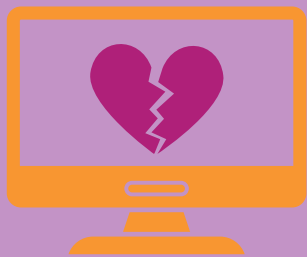
Up to **19%** of teens experience dating violence.

**1.5 Million** teenagers in the U.S. say they have experienced abusive behavior in a relationship.

About half of all teens reporting they've been stalked or harassed.



Approximately **26 Million** teenagers experience some form of dating violence before graduating from high school.



Roughly 1 in 3 teens experiences cyber dating abuse while nearly 1 in 4 perpetrates it.

**32%** & **24%** of highschool boys of highschool girls report having experienced cyber dating abuse.

According to Wisniewska, M. J. (2024, September 14) "Teen Dating Violence Statistics 2024". Break The Cycle. <https://www.breakthecycle.org/teen-dating-violence-statistics/>

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# Teen Dating Violence

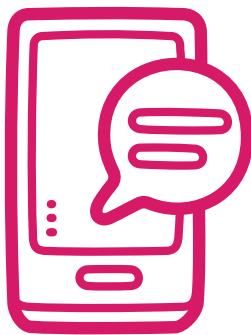
## The Facts



Kids who witness abuse between their parents are 15x more likely to enter an abusive relationship themselves.



One in four female and one in five male victims report that their first victimization occurred before 18.



Only 9% of teens in abusive relationships report the abuse.

If you or someone you know is in an abusive relationship  
Remember you are not alone,  
We are here to help.

**24-Hour Hotline**  
**(877) 854-3594**

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<https://www.breakthecycle.org/teen-dating-violence-statistics/>

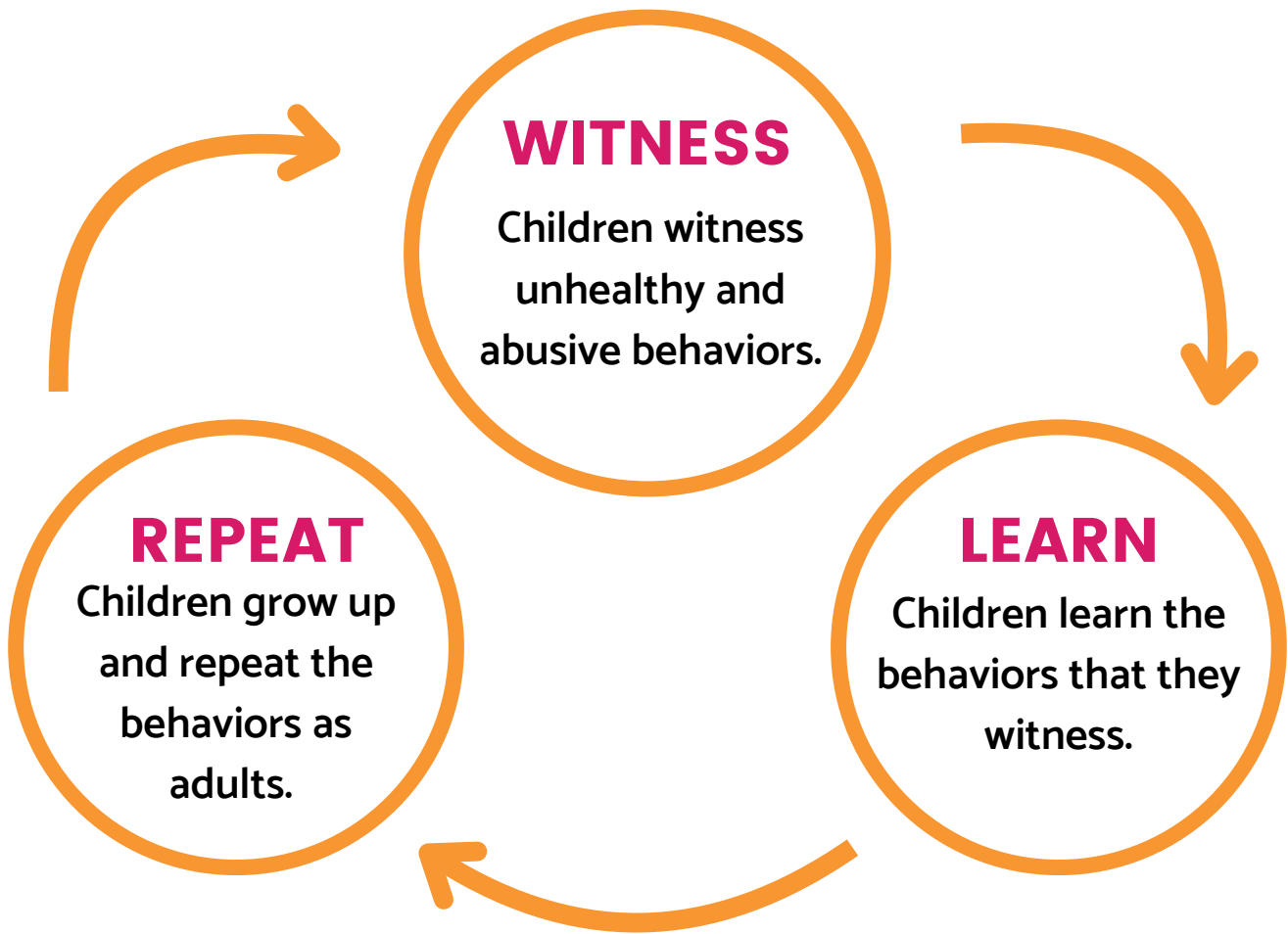
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# The Generational Cycle of Abuse



The cycle of abuse can often start and be passed from one generation to the next. If as children we **witness** unhealthy and abusive behaviors, we can unknowingly make those behaviors our own. Abuse is a learned behavior. As we grow & develop, we **learn** the behaviors of parents & caregivers in our lives, our environment and, the media. Eventually we can take those behaviors into adulthood with us and **repeat** the cycle within our own relationships and children.

# 4 R's of Breaking the Cycle of Generational Abuse

## Recognize

the signs of generational abuse in your family members by educating yourself.

## Respect

yourself and your family. Allow yourself the time to process the trauma from abuse. Understand that these behaviors were likely learned but can also be unlearned.

## Reflect

on how seeing unhealthy or abusive behaviors has impacted you & your family. Consider what behaviors you want to embody and ones you don't want to be repeating in your life.

## Replace

the unhealthy behaviors you dont want to repeat with #HealthyLove. Learn to set, reset and maintain boundaries.

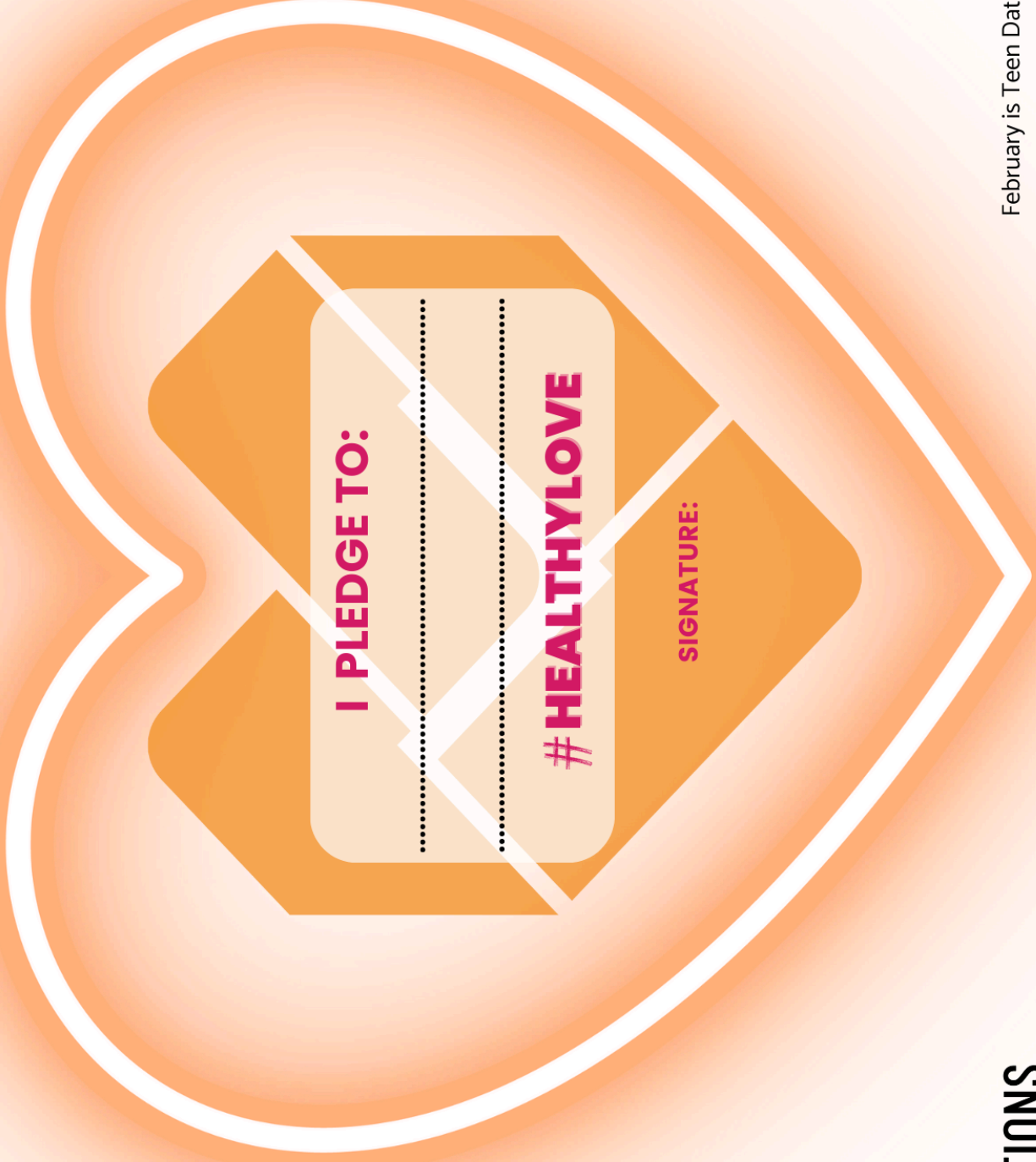


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**I PLEDGE TO:**

.....  
.....

**#HEALTHYLOVE**

**SIGNATURE:**

**HUMAN**  **OPTIONS**

[humanoptions.org](http://humanoptions.org)

24/7 Hotline: 877.854.3594

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. Use this pledging template to self-reflect on what you plan on doing to support victims and survivors of teen dating violence.

**I WILL HELP A TEEN BREAK  
THE CYCLE OF ABUSE BY:**

**# HEALTHYLOVE**

**SIGNATURE:**

**HUMAN**  **OPTIONS**

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February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness  
and Prevention Month. Join our #HEALTHYLOVE  
campaign by pledging with us.

# Turning Red flags into Green Flags in Relationships!

Source: <https://www.thehotline.org/resources/know-the-red-flags-of-abuse/>

Grade: 8-12

Time Needed: 40-60 minutes

Supplies Needed: Large construction poster paper, green and red-letter construction paper that can be cut into small flags, scissors, markers, paper slicer (optional), an open bulletin, wall, or door space

Objective: For students to learn and begin to identify what behaviors and actions are considered as red or green flags in relationships.

## Activity:

1. Discuss that February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month and share the importance for students to learn about what makes relationships healthy, unhealthy and abusive relationships.
2. Open a discussion about what red and green flags are in relationships.
3. Pass out the red and green letter construction paper for students to begin cutting in the shape of a small flag. Each student should have at least two flags to write on, a red and green flag.
4. Have students write an example of a red and green flag in relationships on each individual flag.
5. Identify a wall, door, or open space where students can decorate the space with the large poster construction paper as the background and display their red and green and flags.

## Reflection Questions:

1. Why is it important to recognize red flags in a dating relationship?
2. Did you notice yourself engaging in red flag behaviors? If so, what can you do to begin changing these behaviors and start promoting green flags in your relationship(s)?
3. What is a green flag that you aspire to have in a relationship?
4. What can you do if you realize that a dating partner is showing more red flags than green flags in a relationship?
5. Who is worthy of being in a healthy relationship that shows and promotes green flag behaviors?



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# Spotting the Signs, Setting the lines, and Respecting the Boundaries!

Source:

1. <https://www.loveisrespect.org/everyone-deserves-a-healthy-relationship/how-to-set-boundaries/>
2. <https://www.loveisrespect.org/resources/what-consent-does-and-doesnt-look-like/>
3. <https://www.loveisrespect.org/resources/what-are-my-boundaries/>

## Scenarios:

1. On Wednesday during lunch, Alicia and her friends plan to ask their parents if they can go to the mall together on Friday after school. Later that day, after school, Alicia texts and tells her boyfriend Jose their upcoming plans about asking their parents to go to the mall on Friday. Jose simply replies, "Alright." The next day in the morning, Alicia tells Jose that all their parents are okay with them going to the mall and she tells him she is excited to be out again after some time at home the past few weekends. Jose replies to Alicia's text, "Okay. Well just send me your location when you leave and send me a picture when you get there." Alicia is caught off guard because Jose has never asked her for her location.
  - o In this scenario should Alicia:
    - Ignore Jose's message and not reply.
    - Respond and say, "Why do you need my location? Do you not trust me or something?"
    - Start sharing her location and tell her friends she needs to take a picture with them on Friday at the mall
    - Respond and say, "Can I ask why? I'm not trying to argue or anything but, I just want to know what you think and why you are asking for a picture and my location?"
2. After school, Ryan likes to walk home with his friends and strategize what game they want to play together when they get home and go live on their PS5's. Usually it's Call of Duty, Fortnite, or 2K NBA. Today, they decide to hop on live and play Fortnite. Recently though, Ryan's girlfriend gets mad if he doesn't text her right away. He can be on Fortnite for hours at a time. So, when Ryan's girlfriend texts him, "Wyd? (What are you doing)," he replies, "Going to hop on Fortnite real quick." Ryan's girlfriend replies instantly saying, "Why are you always playing stupid games with your friends, don't you want to FaceTime me and talk?" Ryan finds himself getting mad because he has already told his girlfriend in previous arguments that he likes to play with his friends after school to relax and chill after a long and busy day at school.
  - o In this scenario should Ryan:
    - Respond to his girlfriend and say, "I already told you why I play games after school with them. Is this something you can respect as I have asked you to?"
    - Block his girlfriend and continue with his plan to play.
    - Respond to his girlfriend and say, "Why do you always make this a bigger deal than it is?"

# Spotting the Signs, Setting the lines, and Respecting the Boundaries

## Scenarios (Continued):

1. Omar and Rosy have been together for a year already as juniors. After their one-year anniversary passes, Omar starts bringing up sex and ask Rosy if she is ready to take that next step with him. Rosy tells Omar that she still needs time because she is scared to have sex and is not ready. Omar replies, "Okay. Well if you aren't ready which I respect that. Can we start sharing photos of each other then?" Rosy doesn't know what to say because she is afraid that Omar might leave her if she does not send photos of herself soon but, she is already that during an argument or if they break up, that he might share it to others.
  - o In this scenario should Alicia:
    - Ask Omar why he thinks that she would be okay sending him photos if she is not ready to have sex with him.
    - Yell at Omar for asking such a question.
    - Tell Omar she is not comfortable with doing that and she does not feel respected as his girlfriend if she has already made it clear that she is not ready for anything in regard to sex with him.
2. Jordan and Natalie have been together for 6 months. They have recently been arguing because of things like jealousy, trust issues, and stress from classes. Natalie tells Jordan that she needs space when they argue because she notices that when they argue in the moment, she is so mad that she will say things that she does not mean, and it makes her feel ashamed and guilty. But Jordan says that they do not like the space away from each other because they like to solve their issues in the moment because the longer the issue stays, the angrier they become, and it makes the argument worst for them. Natalie responds each time saying, "But I am asking for space. I need it. Can you respect and understand that?"

What should Jordan say in response?

  - Tell Natalie that she should also respect the needs that Jordan have about fixing issues quickly.
  - Respond saying, "You always throw that in my face and act like I don't respect you when I do."
  - Let Natalie cool down and just find another way to make time pass quicker.
  - Ask Natalie if they can find a way to meet both their needs. So that neither of them feels that their needs are not being respected or met.

## Reflection Questions:

1. Did these scenarios feel familiar to what you may have experienced in your relationships?
2. What does consent look like and what does it not look like?
3. What is a boundary? Why is it important?
4. Can you identify one or multiple boundaries that you want to set in your relationship(s)?
5. What do you do if a partner or person does not respect a boundary that you set?

# Relationship Quiz: Am I being Abused?

Do you find yourself questioning your relationship and ask yourself if your partner is healthy, unhealthy, or abusive?  
Take this reflection quiz to determine if you are in an unhealthy or abusive relationship.

## DOES YOUR PARTNER...

- Wants to spend every minute together?
- Questions you about everything you do when you are apart?
- Go through your phone or demand your social media passwords?
- Get upset if you don't call/text them back right away?
- Keeps you from seeing your friends or family? Do they make you feel guilty for not being with them?
- Makes fun of you or puts you down?
- Breaks things when they get mad?
- Threatens to harm you, loved ones, pets, or themselves if you do not do something they want?
- Accuses you of wanting to be with someone else?
- Call you names when they're angry?
- Use stress, drugs or alcohol as an excuse for being abusive?
- Does not apologize to you when they harm or upset you?
- Force you to do things that you don't feel comfortable doing?
- Criticize or give you "advice" on your choice of friends, clothing, etc.?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions or are questioning your answers, please consider talking to a trusted adult or CALL AN ADVOCATE AT 877-854-3594 for help because you may be in an abusive relationship.

You are not alone.

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# HOW TO TALK TO YOUR PARENTS

## **Abuse is never your fault.**

It can be the scariest time when you are getting ready to tell your parents or a caring adult about the violence you are facing. Always remember that abuse is not your fault and if you need help call our 24/7 Hotline at 877.854-3594.

## **Talk when you are ready.**

Choose a time and place that is most safe and comfortable for you to have this conversation. What is most comfortable to you? Being in your room, at the table, in the car? Who is around? Your mom, dad, caregiver, siblings or friends?

## **Ask for support.**

Make it clear that what you are asking for in this moment is for your parents or caring adult to listen and offer you emotional support, not judgement.

## **Be honest.**

Do not be afraid to tell your parents or caring adults the abuse you are facing no matter how scared you might feel. Being 100% honest allows your parents and caring adults to help you the best they can and to keep you safe.

## **Understand your parents or caring adult.**

Understand that this will be very hard for your parents or caring adult to hear, they may feel many emotions including shock, sadness, frustration & confusion. Give them time to understand what is happening.

## **Make a plan.**

Work with your family to create a plan to keep you safe. Consider working with a DV advocate to create a safety plan with you, you can call our 24/7 hotline or call any of hotline numbers on the resource page.

# HOW TO TALK TO YOUR TEENS

## **Recognize the signs**

Preventing teen dating violence starts with you recognizing changes in your teens behaviors and relationships. Notice how they act around their partner, are they excessively worrying or messaging their partner?

## **Abuse is never their fault**

It can be the scariest time when a teen tells you about the violence they are facing in their relationship. Feelings of shame and guilt often come up and it's important to create a space where your teen can feel safe, heard and supported. If you need help call our 24/7 Hotline.

## **Validate them.**

Understand that this was a very brave decision to make to tell you what they are facing. In this moment they are just looking for your emotional support as a trusted adult and need someone to listen and help them. Validate their feelings and experiences and offer them the support they need.

## **Make a safety plan.**

Work with your teen to create a plan that keeps them safe. How can they stay safe once they want to leave their relationship? What does safety look like online and at school? You can call our 24/7 hotline to have a trained domestic violence advocate help you create this plan with your teen.

# Safety Planning for Teens



A safety plan is a practical guide that helps lower your risk of being hurt by your abusive partner. Each plan is specific to the person being abused and their life. When considering a breakup, a safety plan can help make sure you are doing what's best for you.

## • **Recruit Allies.**

Allies are individuals who will help you feel safe. They will be there to support and talk to you when you need them. Ask yourself, who can you call or talk to anytime you need them?

**Consider the following:**

- *Parent or adult you trust*
- *Teacher, coach, counselor, or campus PD*
- *Sibling or family member*
- *Friend or mentor*



## My allies are?

1)	2)	3)

**Make up a code word to share with your allies**

This code word is used when you feel unsafe, need a ride home or want to leave the situation.

## Keep a log of alarming or abusive behavior

Save all threatening voice mails, e-mails, screenshots or text messages. Send them to your ally or you can also create a safe e-mail address to save these documents. You may need it later as evidence, if the violence escalates.



## • **Staying SAFE.**

Begin limiting the amount of alone time you spend with your abusive partner, until it is safe to leave the relationship. Hang out in public spaces that are not familiar to your partner and surround yourself with a group of friends.

# Staying Safe



**If I live with my abuser, I will have a bag ready with these important items in case I need to leave quickly**

**(check off what you have):**

- Cell phone & charger
- Laptops/Tech & charger
- Extra cash
- Keys
- Driver's license or other form of ID
- Copy of Restraining Order
- Birth certificate, social security card, immigration papers and other important documents
- Change of clothes
- Medications
- Special photos or other valuable items
- Water and snacks
- If I have children - anything they may need (important papers, formula, diapers)

The safest way for me to get to and from school is:

I can make sure that a friend can walk with me between classes. I will ask these three people:

There may be times when no one else is home. During those times, I can have these people stay with me:

I will eat lunch and spend free periods in an area where there are school staff or faculty nearby. These are some areas on campus where I feel safe:

If I have to leave in an emergency, I should try to go to a place that is public, safe and unknown to my abuser. I can go to these places:

## • *Things to consider* •

- Changing your school schedule by switching classes
  - Prepare for a breakup
    - If you do not feel safe, do not breakup in person
    - When breaking up in person, do it in a public place
    - Avoid being alone with your abusive partner after the breakup
- ➔ Because, statistically, 72 hours after the breakup is the most dangerous time.

Have questions?  
Here are resources:

Human Options 24/7 Hotline |  
877-854-3594

loveisrespect.org |  
(Text/Chatting available)

Crisis Text Line |  
Text connect to 741741

adapted from [loveisrespect.org](http://loveisrespect.org)



# Are you Practicing Good Self-Care?

A big part of handling conflict in relationships or continuing with disregarding potential red flags and warning signs of abuse comes from our self-worth. Our self-worth can be high or low depending on how much time we invest in ourselves and practice self-care.

**Directions:** Answer the following statements as honest as you can. Please reflect when answering these questions on how frequent or infrequently you do this things. Check the boxes to record your answers.

## I Do This:

	Frequently	Often	Rarely	Never
1. I exercise or do a fun physical activity if I am stressed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I eat regularly and do not skip meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner, or after fasting.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I get at least 8 hours of sleep like recommended.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I make time for myself to be with my thoughts and self-reflect.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I spend time with people who make me happy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I say no to extra responsibilities or say no to things that make me uncomfortable or stressed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I allow myself to show emotions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I ask for help if I need it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I take time to express my emotions or thoughts in healthy ways (journaling, creating art, meditating/praying, communicating after self-reflecting, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. I set boundaries in my relationships with my partner, family, and friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. I take time to slow down and take care of myself when I am sick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. I take time to talk and get to know others around me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. I practice muscle relaxation if I notice my body becomes tense when stressed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. I can recognize what is reality and what is false ideas from media outlets like television shows, social media, books, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. I give myself positive affirmations and recognize my strengths.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. I am confident in handling and resolving conflict.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. I want to save and rescue others often.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. I take things other people say about me personally.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: <https://www.loveisrespect.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Self-Care-Quiz.pdf>

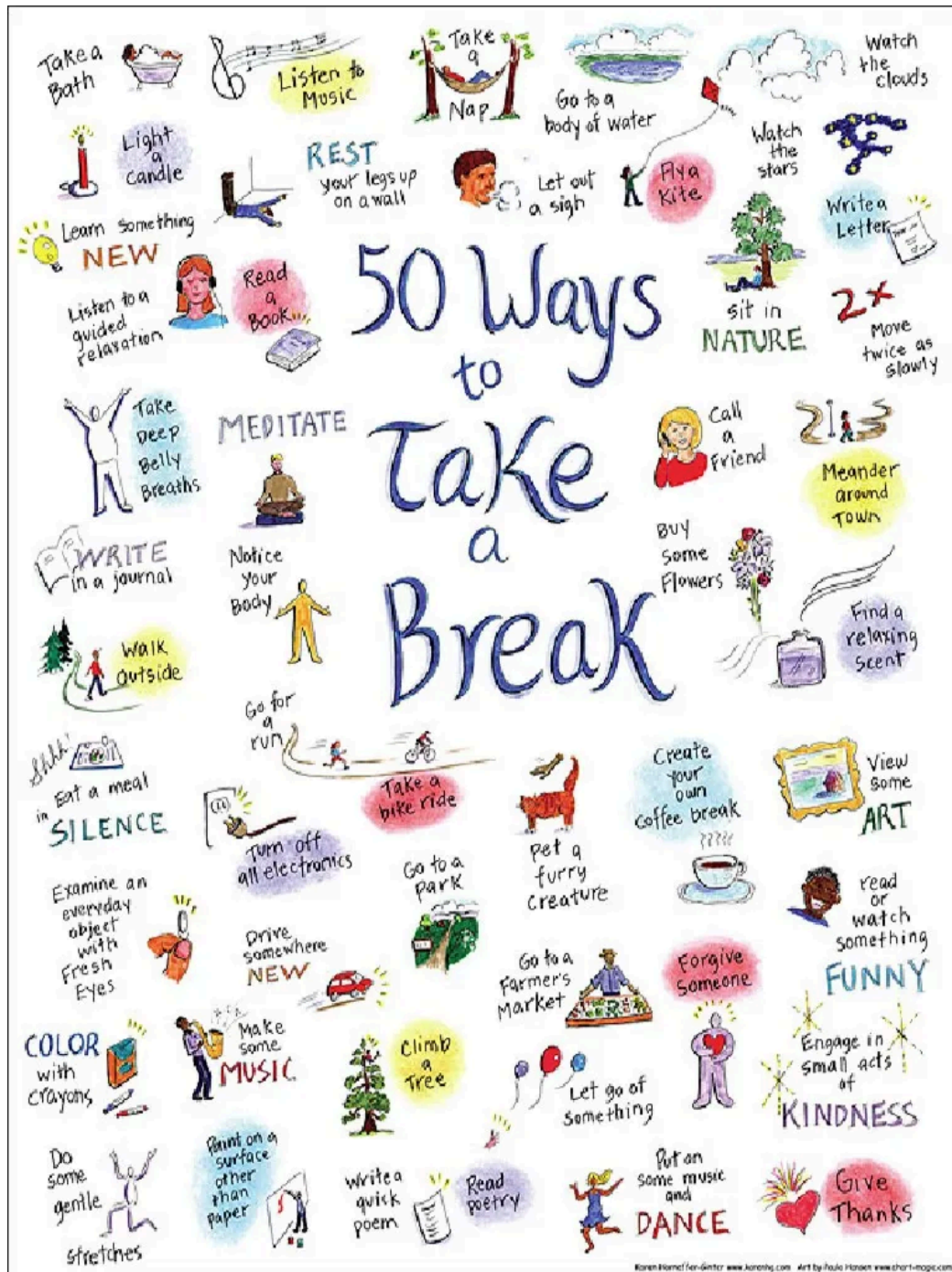
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# Self-Care Activities



# Resources

## **Break the Cycle:**

<https://www.breakthecycle.org/>

## **Love Is Respect:**

<https://www.loveisrespect.org/>

## **National LGBTQ Institute on Intimate Partner Violence:**

<https://lgbtqipvinstitute.org/>

## **One Love Foundation:**

<https://www.joinonelove.org/>

<https://www.joinonelove.org/lms/lms-courses/>

## **RESPOND: A Parent's Guide to Teen Dating Violence**

<https://www.respondinc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/TDV-Parent-Packet-1.pdf>

## **U.S. Department of Education: Educators Supporting Students**

<https://www.ed.gov/teaching-and-administration/supporting-students/human-trafficking-gender-based-violence-prevention>



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