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RELATIONSHIPS

Don't put up with abuse

Teens that are in abusive relationships tend to have depression, low self-esteem, use illegal drugs, have STD's, mental illness, and suicide risk.

PHYSICAL	SEXUAL	VERBAL OR EMOTIONAL	ECONOMICS
Coercion, intimidation and threats	Unwanted sexual touching	Put downs, name calling and insults	Preventing partner from attending school or work
Hitting shoving slapping hair pulling	Getting partner drugged or drunk to force sex	shifting responsibility for abuse onto victim: "you made me do it"	Giving an allowance or gifts as a way of controlling partner
Restriction of clothing or activities	Birth control sabotage or refusing to use protection	Isolating partner from family friends and community	Destroying partner's property
stalking	Demanding a "right" to and forcing sex	surveillance using cell phones, online networking, or through friends	stealing or demanding money from partner

1 in 3

girls are in an abusive relationship

One in 10

teens have been hit by their boyfriend / girlfriend.

“They should be fun and exciting!”

Relationships are great!

“Especially if it's your first”

However, for some young people relationships can be abusive. Those aged 16–25 are more vulnerable when it comes to abusive relationships, so we have listed the five most common types of abuse so that **you** don't find yourself in an unsafe relationship:

VERBAL

- Using words, insults, or threats to make you feel bad about yourself. It can be shouting and swearing, but it can also be simple things like tone of voice – do you ever feel uncomfortable about how your partner speaks to you?

FINANCIAL

- This means money, so it might be taking something of yours, or constantly asking and taking money without returning it, or destroying your property.

EMOTIONAL (sometimes known as psychological)

- Things that make you feel bad or question yourself. Can include verbal insults or put downs, threats to make you do what they want these might be towards you or someone you love. Saying things about friends to isolate you and leave you lonely. This can even include constant texting and checking your whereabouts.

PHYSICAL

- Physical harm to you or someone you love, it includes hitting, grabbing, or even using a weapon. A person being physically abusive can cause minor to severe injuries.

SEXUAL

- Rape is sexual abuse, or forcing you to do something sexual that you don't want to do; either by force or persuasion – “you would if you loved me!” Sexual abuse can also be verbal, insults about how you are in bed or put downs because you won't have sex.

Abuse can be experienced in many ways, you could experience all types at different points in your relationship. Generally there is an increase of abuse in a relationship so it may start with insults and then become physical. There is also usually a cycle in these relationships where after an incident there will be a period where things calm down, maybe apologies or gifts, but eventually something else will happen. This cycle is what keeps people in the relationship as they may think it's “a one off” or won't happen again. If you are worried about your relationship, act on your concerns and speak to someone you can trust.

If you think you or a friend is unsafe you can get help; from your parent, a carer, teacher, youth worker, police officer, doctor or social worker.

There are also organisations:

Like CEOP Click this button when you see it online
Or ChildLine phone free on 0800 1111 anytime



HELP A FRIEND

Are you concerned about a friend's relationship?

If you are worried about and want to help a friend, write down what your concerns are. Is it a behaviour you've noticed? Are you seeing them less than before now they are in a relationship? Or was there an incident you saw? It can be quite daunting to discuss this with your friend, so you could speak to someone you trust about it first, an adult would be best. If you feel comfortable speaking to your friend then here are some tips:

SET UP TIME TO TALK

Take your friend aside so you can talk without distraction, they may feel uncomfortable so try not to push them and reassure them that you're their friend and want to help them.

LET YOUR FRIEND KNOW YOU'RE CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR SAFETY

It's helpful to have your concerns written down so you don't go off track and can be clear. Again reassure them that you're worried about them and here to help.

BE SUPPORTIVE

Your friend's partner may have said things about you as the perpetrator wants your friend to be isolated. Try to avoid the talk becoming an argument, tell them you want to help, if they're not ready to talk, don't push them, reassure them you're there if they need you.

OFFER HELP

Remain clear, you're there to help, make sure the help is something you can do. For example; don't offer to be an emergency contact to your friend as you can't take on this responsibility. It is better to sit with them while they read a leaflet or call a helpline

AVOID GIVING ORDERS

Saying "You need to dump them", isn't helpful and might make your friend go silent and not come to you in future. Instead, say something like, "I'm scared by what might happen to you. Stay positive and offer support but allow your friend to make their own decisions.

MAKE A SAFETY PLAN

Make a simple plan with things like; always keep their phone with them, fully charged and with credit. Memorise a number they can ring if they lose their phone and need help. Tell someone where they're going. Call a helpline to ask about safety planning.

ENCOURAGE YOUR FRIEND TO TALK TO OTHERS

It's great you're friend has you, but they will need as much support as possible, go with them to get help from local domestic abuse agencies, a doctor, or the police.

IF THEY DECIDE TO NOT TO ACT

Remember it's your friend's decision if they don't get help, tell them you're concerned and reinforce you're there to help. They may come to you later when they're ready to end the relationship. **IF YOU ARE SERIOUSLY WORRIED ABOUT THEIR SAFETY SPEAK TO SOMEONE.**

ENCOURAGE YOUR FRIEND TO DO OTHER THINGS

This might be difficult as the perpetrator wants to isolate them, help your friend find as much support as possible, including social groups, clubs, or activities. Don't be disappointed if they refuse, continue to be supportive.

ENDING THE RELATIONSHIP

Don't push them into ending the relationship as this can increase the chance of harm as it's not what the perpetrator wants. Your friend may feel lonely or upset because of things the perpetrator has said. Introduce them to other support groups as it will help them recover and learn to avoid harmful relationships in future.

YOU CAN'T "RESCUE" YOUR FRIEND

Remember this is your friend's decision and they need to feel in control. Be there to offer support and listen to them.

Teen Equality



Healthy Relationships	Unhealthy Relationships
Equality You make decisions together.	Control One of you makes all the decisions and is demanding.
Honesty You can share your feelings and thoughts with each other.	Dishonesty One of you lies or hides things from the other.
Physical Safety You feel safe with each other. You're not scared of getting hurt.	Physical Abuse One of you hits, slaps, grabs, or shoves the other person.
Respect You listen and accept each other's opinions, friends, and interests.	Disrespect One of you makes fun of each other's feelings, thoughts, and opinions.
Comfort You feel great being yourself and you are comfortable saying "sorry."	Discomfort One of you might make threats like, "I'll break up with you if..."
Sexual Respectfulness You never force each other to do things you aren't comfortable with.	Sexual Abuse One of you pressures or forces sexual activities the other does not want to do.
Independence You have friends and hobbies outside of your relationship.	Dependence One of you makes threats to do something drastic if relationship ends.
Humor You have fun in the relationship.	Hostility One of you is mean to the other.

"A healthy relationship will never require you to sacrifice your friends, your dreams, or your dignity."

"A healthy relationship is one in which love enriches you; not imprisons you."

Contact:

- **Support email:** pcoghlan@nmea.net
- **Support line:** 07955580542 Mon-Fri 3-5pm
- **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/work4Uplus
- **Web:** www.work4uplus.com
- **Online support groups via Zoom**
- Email pcoghlan@nmea.net to register

