

DATINGMATTERS[®]

STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE HEALTHY TEEN RELATIONSHIPS



DATING MATTERS[®]

*Handbook for
6th Graders*

Write your name here:



**Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention**
National Center for Injury
Prevention and Control



About the Program

Welcome to Dating Matters® (6th Grade)!

Dating Matters is a program that teaches skills to help you have healthy, safe relationships both now and in the future. Although it is called Dating Matters, this program will talk about all kinds of relationships, including those with family members and friends.

This handbook will be a very important tool as you go through the program—it is full of activities and information about healthy, safe relationships. When you have completed Dating Matters, be sure to take this handbook home with you and keep it in a safe place. It will remind you how to keep relationships healthy and fun. It will also be a helpful guide if you or a friend have questions or are wondering what to do about an unhealthy or unsafe relationship.



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Session 1: Group Agreements

Instructions: Group Agreements help everyone feel respected so each group member can get the most out of participating. List the Group Agreements below so that you can remember them. They will also be posted in the front of the class.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

Go-To Trusted Adults

These are people that I can talk to about relationships—the parts of relationships that make me feel good and the parts of relationships that do not make me feel as good. These are people who I could go to if I was having trouble with a friend, a dating partner... anyone.

Instructions: Think of three trusted adults you can talk to about relationships. This can include parents, neighbors, teachers, adults in your school, adults in your community, and even older siblings/cousins who are at least 18 years old. Put #1 by your go-to person—the first person that you would call or talk to. Put #2 by your back-up (if the first person is not around when you have a question).

Name:

How to Find This Person:

(e.g., phone number, room at school, address)

Name:

How to Find This Person:

Name:

How to Find This Person:

Healthy Dating Recipe

Instructions: Create your own recipe for a healthy dating relationship—the best relationship for you. You can use the ingredients we have listed out during the session, or any other ingredients you want to add. List the ingredients (qualities) for a healthy relationship that are important to YOU in the measuring cup below.



How Would You Feel?

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4	Scenario 5
Worried					
Angry					
Jealous					
Happy					
Confused					
Excited					
Embarrassed					

Brandon's Story

Brandon told his good friend Troy that he likes Gabi. The next day, Brandon saw Troy talking to Gabi at her locker.

Brandon's heart started beating faster, his face got red... his hands clenched into fists, and it felt like his blood was going to start boiling!

Before he knew it, he was punching Troy.



Staying in Control of Your Feelings: 4 Steps

1. Notice what your body is telling you. Then, **PAUSE!**

When you experience a strong feeling, your body sends you clues—you start to feel different inside. You might feel your muscles tense up, your heart beat faster, or your hands shake. You might feel other changes, too.

When you start to feel physical clues, say to yourself: **PAUSE!** Just like when you pause a movie, you need to pause the action and words in your own life.

2. Name Your Feeling

Use the clues to name your feeling. Are you feeling sad, frustrated, disappointed, nervous, jealous, or something else?

3. Pick the Best Way to Calm Down (and do it!)

- Take deep breaths
- Use positive self-talk
- Do something physically active or relaxing
- Talk to someone you trust

4. Check-In

Do you feel calmer and are you thinking more clearly? If not, you may need to try something else to calm down. It may be time to talk to someone you trust.

Notes:

Negative Self-Talk, Positive Self-Talk

Instructions: Read the scenario and write down one or two examples of how you could change the negative self-talk into positive self-talk.

Scenario	Negative Self-Talk	Positive Self-Talk
José got an F on his math test.	<i>I am stupid. I am horrible at everything.</i>	
Malia got a text from her boyfriend. It said, "I am going to hang out with my friends tonight."	<i>He doesn't like being around me.</i>	
Darius saw Jess walk into science class with her friend. He said "hi" and she did not say anything back.	<i>Jess must hate me.</i>	
In gym class, Isaiah hit Selena on the head with a soccer ball.	<i>He did that on purpose. I am going to get him back.</i>	

We Enjoy...

Instructions: In the blank spaces below, write down the activities that fall into the Physically Active and/or Relaxing categories.

Physically Active	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

Relaxing	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

Thumbs Up or Thumbs Down?

Thumbs Up for Healthy Communication | Thumbs Down for Poor Communication

Optional: As you observe the role-plays, you can use the space below to take notes of things that the instructor does or says that are examples of either healthy communication or poor communication.



The instructor **seemed** like he or she was really listening and caring. These are the things that he or she did:



The instructor **did not seem** like he or she was really listening or caring. These are the things that he or she did:



Skills for Healthy Communication

These nonverbal and verbal skills for healthy communication can help you have more positive conversations with others and prevent and handle conflicts.

Nonverbal Skills	
Stay in control of your feelings	If you need to, use the 4 Steps for Staying in Control of Your Feelings (page 6).
Make eye contact	The right amount shows that you are listening and shows the other person that what they say is important.
Watch your facial expressions and body	Your body and face are sending a message too! What is happening with your body and your face says as much about what you are saying as what comes out of your mouth.
Verbal Skills	
Watch your tone of voice	If you raise your voice or use a sarcastic tone, others may be less likely to listen to you.
Listen actively	Make sure you understand what is being said. Try rephrasing what has been said: "It sounds like you are saying..." Take turns talking. Ask questions about what is being said and how the other person feels. Do not jump to conclusions: After listening to the other person's answers, you may realize that the disagreement (if there is one) was all a misunderstanding.
Express your feelings	Use "I" statements when expressing your feelings. Be specific. "I feel _____ when you _____ because _____."

Your nonverbal and verbal communication should match! For example, it would be confusing if someone said "yes" while shaking their head no, or said, "great idea" while rolling their eyes.

"I" Am Important

"I" statements...

- Are a way to clearly express how you feel
- Make it easier to express how you feel because you are just talking about yourself

Let's practice. Turn these "You" statements into "I" statements.

1

Your sister has been in your shared bathroom for a long time and you still need to get ready for school.

You say, *Jenny, you always take forever. Don't you ever think of anyone besides yourself?*

I statement: I feel frustrated when you take a long time in the bathroom in the mornings because I need to get ready for school too.

2

Your friend Blake told your crush that you like her.

You say, *Blake, you and your big mouth! You never keep a secret!*

I statement:

I feel _____ when you _____

because _____

3

Your friend Andy showed up to your house without asking and you have to study for a test tomorrow.

You say, *Andy, you never think of anyone else. You always just do what you want.*

I statement:

I feel _____ when you _____

because _____

Communication Situation Observer Checklist

Instructions: Use this checklist to record the actor's or actresses' use of the healthy nonverbal and verbal communication skills reviewed in this session. Circle Yes or No for each scenario.

Skills for Healthy Communication	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4
Rephrased what was said	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Asked questions	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Took turns talking	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Used "I" statements	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Stayed calm	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Body and facial expressions matched their words	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Tone of voice matched their words	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No

What Is Teen Dating Violence?

A few things to know about Teen Dating Violence...

- Dating violence is the use of physical, sexual, or emotional violence within a dating relationship, including stalking.
 - » It can result in injury, death, or psychological harm.
- Dating violence can happen in person or electronically (such as through text message, e-mail, and social media).
- It happens in both casual and serious relationships and may take place between a current or past dating partner.
- It often starts with hurtful teasing and name calling. If it is part of an abusive pattern, these things can lead to physical and sexual violence.

Notes:

You may have heard some of the words below used to describe teen dating violence.



Using violence against a dating partner (no matter how casual or serious) *is not okay*. If you or someone you know is using dating violence or is the victim of dating violence

STOP AND GET HELP!

Understanding Teen Dating Violence

Behavior and Definition	Example Behaviors	
Physical violence is any physical act intended to scare, hurt, or injure someone.	• scratching • hitting • pushing • kicking • pinching • choking • spitting	• shaking • biting • grabbing • pulling hair • throwing things • bending fingers backwards
Sexual violence involves forcing someone to do something sexual, including any unwanted sexual contact or acts done to someone without their consent or when they are unable to consent.	• forcing someone into sexual contact (e.g., kissing, touching, sex) by holding them down, hurting them, or threatening to hurt them • having sexual contact with someone who is passed out or too intoxicated to consent • using pressure or alcohol or drugs to get someone to do something sexual • showing your private parts to someone without permission • touching someone in a sexual way without permission • showing someone sexual pictures or images that they do not want to see • taking pictures, videotaping, or recording a sexual act or nude image of someone without their permission	
Sexual harassment is a form of sexual violence. It includes sexual comments or acts intended to hurt, offend, or intimidate someone else.	• making comments about someone's appearance, body, or sexual orientation • calling someone sexist or homophobic names to hurt them • spreading gossip or rumors of a sexual nature	

Understanding Teen Dating Violence

Behavior and Definition	Example Behaviors
Verbal or emotional abuse involves using threats, insults, humiliation, or other behaviors to control or isolate someone, or to harm their self-esteem.	• calling someone names • criticizing someone's beliefs or opinions • ignoring someone's feelings • refusing to let someone see or talk to other people • spreading rumors • threatening to hurt oneself • not letting someone make their own decisions or trying to "control" them • intentionally humiliating someone in public or private • threatening someone or someone's family member or friend • making someone feel like everything is his or her fault • posting fake or altered images of someone • creating an abusive group or profile about someone online
Stalking behaviors are threatening acts used by someone that is both unwanted and causes fear in the other person.	• following a person when they do not want you to • calling or texting over and over • sending unwanted emails, instant messages, or messages through social media



Teen Dating Violence: True or False?

Instructions: Read each statement below and write whether or not you think the statement is True or False in the box on the right. Don't peek at the answers on the next page!

1.	Dating violence does not happen to teenagers very often. It is more of an adult problem.	
2.	Teenage boys are rarely the victims of dating violence.	
3.	Dating violence can happen in all kinds of relationships, not just long-term or serious ones.	
4.	Being insulted over and over by someone you are dating is not that big of a deal, as long as there is no physical violence.	
5.	Most victims of sexual violence do not know their abuser(s).	
6.	Physical violence happens in same-sex relationships as often as it happens in opposite sex dating relationships.	
7.	Teens who see violence in their home, such as between their parents, are more likely to be involved in dating violence, either as a victim or as the abuser.	

Teen Dating Violence: True or False Answers

- 1. Dating violence does not happen to teenagers very often. It is more of an adult problem.**

False

One out of every 4 teenagers says that they have been physically, sexually, or emotionally abused by a dating partner each year. Approximately one out of every 10 teenagers says they have been physically abused by a dating partner each year.

- 2. Teenage boys are rarely the victims of dating violence.**

False

About equal numbers of high school boys and girls are victims of physical violence. But, girls are more likely to experience any form of dating violence including physical and sexual and to be injured from dating violence.

- 3. Dating violence can happen in all kinds of relationships, not just long-term or serious ones.**

True

Even if your relationship is casual or you have only gone out once or twice, you can still experience dating violence.

- 4. Being insulted over and over by someone you are dating is not that big of a deal, as long as there is no physical violence.**

False

Insulting someone is a type of emotional violence. Many victims of physical violence say that the person they were with used emotional violence before they used physical violence. Often dating violence reoccurs and does not just go away.

- 5. Most victims of sexual violence do not know their abuser(s).**

False

About three out of every four women who are raped or physically assaulted know the person who assaulted them.

- 6. Physical violence happens in same-sex relationships as often as it happens in opposite sex dating relationships.**

True

Teens involved in same-sex relationships are as likely to experience dating violence as those involved in opposite-sex relationships

- 7. Teens who see violence in their home, such as between their parents, are more likely to be involved in dating violence, either as a victim or as the abuser.**

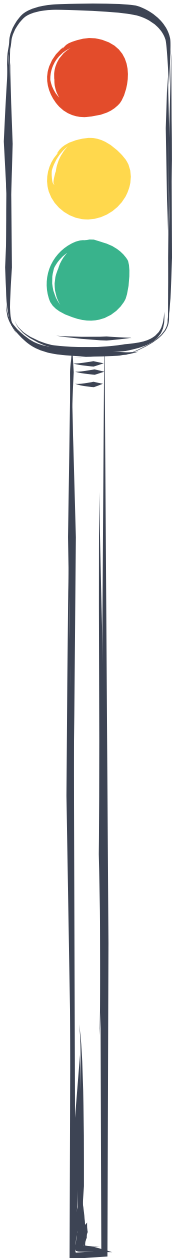
True

When we are young, we learn a lot about how to communicate with others by watching our parents/guardians. Still, many teens who are involved in dating violence have never witnessed any violence between their parents. And, it is never an excuse. Everyone has the power to decide how to treat others.

If you have seen violence between people in your home, talking to someone about it can help keep you safe. Try your trusted adult, or someone else you trust. Although you may not have control over what has happened to you or what you have seen, talking to someone can help keep you safe and help you make healthy decisions about how to treat others.

www.loveisrespect.org | Help Hotline: 1-866-331-9474 | Text LOVEIS to 22522

Red-Yellow-Green Light



STOP! – GET HELP! This behavior has crossed the line and is unsafe.

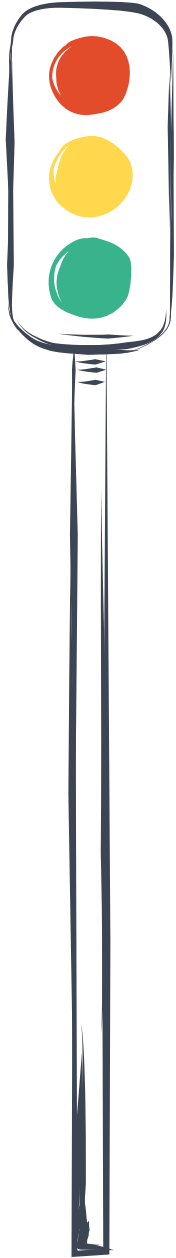
Yellow light – CAUTION. This behavior is unhealthy and worrisome. You could try using healthy communication skills or talking to a trusted adult.

Green light – GO ahead and keep up with these healthy behaviors.

Instructions: Read each behavior below and imagine that your friend or a sibling is saying this to you. In your groups, decide if you should give red, yellow or green light advice. It is okay if everyone in your group does not agree on the same color.

Behaviors	
1. The girl I sit next to on the bus keeps saying she wants to touch my private parts. I told her to stop, but she keeps saying it.	☐
2. I walk to lunch with a friend from my class every day. We are always cracking each other up. She is hilarious.	☐
3. The guy I am dating looks through my text messages sometimes. I think he gets jealous of my guy friends.	☐
4. I broke up with an old girlfriend 3 months ago, but she keeps calling my phone. I told her to stop calling and I haven't answered her calls since. One day, she called my phone 25 times and even called my mom's phone. She is really making me scared.	☐
5. My girlfriend and I love hanging out together, but we do not like the same kind of music.	☐
6. My boyfriend said he'd break up with me if I didn't send him a "sexy" picture.	☐

Red-Yellow-Green Light



Behaviors	
7. A classmate who I do not know very well keeps giving me mean looks. She looks like she wants to fight me. It is probably because I told her to shut up on the bus the other day—her voice is so annoying!	☐
8. My boyfriend threatened to kill himself if we ever broke up.	☐
9. Yesterday, my friend made fun of one of my pictures on social media. I know he/she was joking, but it still made me mad. I really like that picture.	☐
10. Whenever I am upset about something, I like to talk to one of my friends. She is such a good listener.	☐
11. My girlfriend and I got into a big argument yesterday. She was so mad that she forwarded a “sexy” picture of me to all my friends. That picture was supposed to be private.	☐



8 Text Messaging Tips

1. Never assume that a text from someone (even your best friend) is coming directly from the source.

- Phones can be lost or stolen so if someone texts you asking for personal or valuable information, call them back to confirm that the source is really who you think it is.

2. Do not send texts about private or very important things.

- Texts can be forwarded to other people—you might not want them to see what you have to say.
- If you have something private or important to say to someone, give them a call or meet them in person.

3. Ask questions if you do not understand a text.

- Sometimes it is hard to understand how someone is feeling when you are “talking” through text message.
- If you feel like someone is mad or upset after reading their text, ask questions before jumping to conclusions.

4. Do not send texts or pictures through text that hurt other people or are against the law.

- “Sexting” is sending or forwarding nude or sexually suggestive pictures on your cell phone or online (e.g., email). Taking, sending, and possessing naked images of someone under 18 is a federal crime, even if you are under 18 (and even if it is your boyfriend or girlfriend)! You could get arrested. To protect yourself, never send someone an inappropriate picture of yourself or give permission for someone to take sexual pictures of you. Once you send it, you can no longer control where it goes.
- You may feel like sending mean or hurtful things when you are very upset, but keep in mind that you might regret this later and cannot un-send a text.

5. Do not respond to texts that are mean or make you feel uncomfortable.

- If you get a text that is mean or makes you feel uncomfortable, tell your parent(s) and or one of your go-to trusted adults.
- If someone sends you an inappropriate picture, delete it immediately and ask them to stop. If they continue, let a trusted adult know.

6. Call back to confirm a meet-up.

- If someone texts you to meet-up, call that person back directly to confirm the meet-up to make sure the person you are meeting is really who you think it is.

7. Do not use text messaging for everything.

- If you are having a fight with a friend, it is probably best to talk it out in person—things will get solved twice as fast and nothing will come out the wrong way!
- If you want to break up with someone, it is usually best to do it in person. However, it is best not to end unhealthy and unsafe relationships in person—see Page 22 in this handbook for more information on ending an unsafe relationship.

8. Do not text when you should be focusing on something else.

- If you should be focusing on something else, like spending time with a friend or family, studying, or walking, do not try to text at the same time.

RESPECT ME Rights

R	I have the right to REFUSE to do anything I believe is wrong or makes me uncomfortable.
E	I have the right to have and EXPRESS my own thoughts and feelings in a healthy, safe way.
S	I have the right to feel SAFE and free from physical, sexual, or emotional harm.
P	I have the right to say “no” to any kind of PHYSICAL contact, including sex. It does not matter if I have done anything sexual in the past.
E	I have the right to my own personal or EXTRA space.
C	I have the right to CHOOSE my own friends.
T	I have the right to TALK to a trusted adult about my relationships.
M	I have the right to make MISTAKES , as everyone makes mistakes from time to time.
E	I have the right to END a relationship.

Leaving an Unsafe Relationship

Ending an unhealthy relationship—especially an unsafe one—is not like ending a healthy one. Your partner may not accept the break-up or may continue or start to use emotional violence and try to control you through using guilt, lies, or threats. This can make it very difficult to end the relationship, and you may be worried about your safety. If this is the case, consider the tips below in addition to talking to a trusted adult.

TRUST YOURSELF

- If you feel scared or worried, there is probably a good reason for those feelings.

ASK FOR HELP

- Let your trusted adults and friends know that you plan to break-up. A local resource or the National Dating Abuse Helpline (1-800-331-9474) can help you make a plan.

DO NOT BE ALONE WHEN YOU BREAK UP

- Let your trusted adults and friends know that you plan to break-up. A local resource or the National Dating Abuse Helpline (1-800-331-9474) can help you make a plan.

IT IS HARD TO END A RELATIONSHIP

- Expect it to be hard. Remember, it is okay to feel many different ways at once.
- Say why you are breaking up once. There may be nothing you can say that will make your partner OK with the break-up.

**JUST BECAUSE AN UNSAFE RELATIONSHIP IS OVER,
THAT DOES NOT MEAN THE RISK OF VIOLENCE IS OVER.**

- If your ex comes to your house, a friend's house, or school and you are alone, do not open the door or talk to him/her alone.



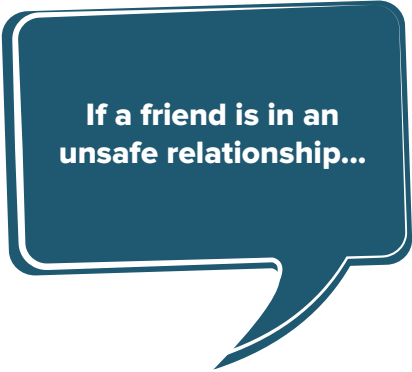
Helping Friends

REACH OUT

- Tell them you are concerned for their safety.

LISTEN

- Use your healthy communication skills to listen—listen patiently, take turns talking, and acknowledge their feelings.



If a friend is in an unsafe relationship...

BELIEVE

- Believe what he or she tells you. It takes courage for him or her to tell you.

DO NOT JUDGE

- Be careful not to make judgments about the situation he or she is in or decisions that he or she has made or appears to have made.

REPEAT THAT VIOLENCE OR ABUSE IS NOT HIS OR HER FAULT

- It is common for victims of teen dating violence (or any violence) to feel they have done something wrong.
- Continue to remind him or her that the violence was the other person's choice and that is where the blame belongs. Everyone deserves to be in a healthy, safe relationship.

CONNECT HIM OR HER TO A RESOURCE THAT CAN HELP

- Do not ignore dating violence you see or hear about. It is everyone's responsibility to stop dating violence.
- If someone you know is in immediate danger, dial 9-1-1.

Where Can I or My Friends Get Help

National Organizations & Websites

Love is Respect

www.loveisrespect.org/

1-866-331-9474

This website has lots of information to help prevent unhealthy and unsafe relationships and resources to help if you or someone you know is in an unhealthy or unsafe dating relationship. It includes a 24/7 anonymous online chat with a peer advocate and a text chat—text “LOVEIS” to 22522.

Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

24/7 support and help if you are feeling depressed and/or thinking about suicide.

Stop Bullying

www.stopbullying.gov

This website has tips for dealing with all kinds of bullying, including how to get help.

Ask your Dating Matters program facilitator, or a trusted adult, for more local resources that can help!

If you are in immediate danger, call 911!

Parking Lot

Parking Lot





Get more tips
for staying safe at
www.loveisrespect.org

DATINGMATTERS®

STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE HEALTHY TEEN RELATIONSHIPS