

SEEKING HELP TO END UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Many teenagers involved in unhealthy or abusive relationships do not know what to do or whom to turn to. Others may feel too embarrassed to talk about it.

If you have been hurt or threatened by your boy/girlfriend and want to end the relationship, it is really important that you talk to someone and get some help immediately.



The longer you stay in an abusive relationship, the more abuse you will face. You will also find that it gets harder to leave the relationship.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **T**ell your friends, family or a trusted teacher about the abusive situation and ask for help. The more isolated you are, the more the abuser has control over you.
- **T**ry not to be alone with an abusive partner. If you have to, plan what you will do if s/he becomes abusive. Trust your own feelings – if something doesn't feel right or if you feel scared, leave, or get out of the situation immediately.
- **I**f you have to go out with your abusive partner, tell someone where you are going and when you plan to be back. Bring your mobile phone and transportation money.
- **C**ontact a school counselor or a NGO like the WCC, Befrienders, or Mitraline (Mandarin) for help to make a safety plan.
- **C**all the police if you feel that you are in danger.



HELPFUL NUMBERS

Women's Centre for Change (WCC): 04-228 0342
Pusat Perkhidmatan Wanita Seberang Prai (PPW): 04-398 8340
Befrienders: 04-281 5161
Mitraline: 04-645 1141
Talian Nur: 15999
Rakan Cop: 04-269 1999

In collaboration with



Department of Women's Development,
Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development
www.jpw.gov.my

Teenage Relationships



Being a teenager is an exciting time of exploration and making friends. You will experience different types of friendships including close or casual friendships. Sometimes, a particular friendship with a person might develop into a boyfriend-girlfriend relationship.

This pamphlet will help you explore whether the relationship you are in is healthy and what to do if it is not.



Women's Centre for Change (WCC)

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WHAT IS A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP?

A healthy relationship between two persons is when they:

- Feel good about themselves and each other.
- Enjoy their time together.
- Respect each other and their opinions.
- Trust and are honest with each other.
- Support each other.
- Accept each other as they are.
- Do not insult each other.
- Never try to control the other.
- Sort out their arguments through talking.



RECOGNISING UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

While having friends can be fun, some teenagers experience violence in their relationships. This is when one person uses emotional, physical and/or sexual violence to control the other.

Some may think that controlling or jealous behaviours are signs of love but they are not. Others excuse abusive behaviour because they think that it is normal behaviour in a relationship.

It is important for you to recognise abusive behaviour and unhealthy relationships.



STATEMENT 1: My boyfriend is always jealous and possessive over me. S/he says it's because s/he loves me.

If your boy/girlfriend always wants to know where you are, what you're doing, and who you are with or gets angry if you spend time with other people, s/he may tell you that it's only because s/he cares about you or loves you.

Jealousy is one of the most common signs of an unhealthy relationship. Jealousy is not about love, it's about control.



STATEMENT 2: My boyfriend gets really angry and violent if I don't agree with him/her. S/he says that's what's best for me.

In any relationship, it is common to have disagreements. However, using violence or abusive language to get you to agree with him/her is wrong.

If your boy/girlfriend gets physically violent or emotionally abusive every time you disagree with him/her, you should reassess the relationship. It is a crime to assault someone.

STATEMENT 3: I have already been physically intimate with my boy/girlfriend. S/he insists that that I should have sex with him/her.

If you have kissed, touched, or been intimate with your boy/girlfriend, you still have the right to say "no" to sex. Even if you've had sex with your boy/girlfriend before, you can change your mind and say "no" in the future.

If s/he threatens to blackmail you with your past intimacies, tell a trusted adult and lodge a police report immediately.

No one should force you to do anything you do not want to do.

STATEMENT 4: My boyfriend forces himself on me. He says he can't control himself.

Your boyfriend is fully capable of controlling his sexual urges. Not being able to control himself is an unacceptable excuse for forcing you to have sex.

If your boyfriend forces you to have sex after you have said "no", then it is rape. You should seek help and lodge a police report.

STATEMENT 5: My boy/girlfriend always humiliates me in front of friends and family. Did I do something wrong?

What your boy/girlfriend does is called emotional abuse. No one should humiliate you in public or in private.

You deserve to be treated with respect and not be insulted and hurt emotionally.

