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41 Kensico Drive Mount Kisco NY 10549 1-800-431-2050

THE TEN SIGNS OF RELATIONSHIP ABUSE

DVD Version



HUMAN RELATIONS MEDIA

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THE TEN SIGNS OF RELATIONSHIP ABUSE

CREDITS

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Anson W. Schloat

PRODUCER

John G. Young

CONSULTANT

Dr. Jill Murray, Psy.D.
Licensed psychotherapist and
author of *But He Never Hit Me:
The Devastating Cost of Non-Physical Abuse to Girls and Women*

TEACHER'S RESOURCE BOOK

Bonnie Denmark

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THE TEN SIGNS OF RELATIONSHIP ABUSE

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THE TEN SIGNS OF RELATIONSHIP ABUSE

DVD MENU

MAIN MENU

➤ **PLAY**

➤ **CHAPTER SELECTION**

From here you can access many different paths of the DVD, beginning with the introduction and ending with the credits.

1. Introduction
2. Isolation
3. Jealousy
4. Possessiveness
5. Double Standards
6. Name-calling
7. Controlling Behavior
8. Marc's Story
9. Threats of Self-harm
10. Playing Rough
11. Nonconsensual Sex
12. Violence
13. Jennifer's Story
14. Getting Help

➤ **TEACHER'S RESOURCE GUIDE**

A file of the accompanying Teacher's Resource Guide is available on the DVD. To open the file you need to load the DVD onto a computer that has a DVD-ROM and Adobe Acrobat Reader. Right click on the DVD icon and then double click on the file titled "Teacher's Resource Book."

The teen and young adult years are a time of forming special friendships and dating relationships. But while dating is one of the most exhilarating new experiences in a young person's life, it can introduce problems that may be difficult for that person to negotiate or even to recognize. Unfortunately, many people suffer abuse within the context of their intimate relationships. Relationship abuse is any type of controlling, abusive or aggressive behavior that takes place in a romantic relationship. It may take many forms—verbal, emotional, psychological, physical and/or sexual—and often has serious long-term consequences for the people involved, as well as their families and society as a whole.

Even though youthful dating relationships may be different from adult relationships in many ways, young people do experience the same types of partner abuse that adults do. One out of every five teens in a serious relationship reports having been hit, slapped or pushed by a partner, while 40 percent of teenage girls between the ages 14 to 17 report knowing someone their age who has been physically hurt by a partner. Relationship abuse can be directed at males as well as females, but young women between the ages 16 to 24 experience the highest rates of relationship violence. In addition, gay, lesbian and bisexual youth are equally likely to experience violence in their dating relationships as heterosexual youth.

Abusers do not suddenly become physically violent as adults. It begins in their early dating relationships, generally after a history of verbal and emotional abuse, such as ongoing belittling and humiliating that chips away at the dating partner's sense of self-worth. By the time physical violence begins, his or her self-esteem is damaged, making him or her more likely to put up with other, even more dangerous types of abuse. When individuals seriously doubt their self-worth, it is especially difficult for them to leave abusive relationships.

Recognizing abuse in a relationship is difficult, especially for young people. There are many types of abuse that young people often assume are normal in a dating relationship. Abuse in a dating relationship may be unreported because young people are inexperienced with dating and dealing with conflicts, they seek independence from their parents, and they often have unrealistic views of love and romance based upon what they have seen in films and on television.

Young people need to learn to distinguish between healthy versus unhealthy relationships. In addition, they need to develop their self-esteem and be able to articulate their core values so that they are better prepared to identify and put an end to abusive behavior and accept that they have the right to a safe and healthy relationship. *The Ten Signs of Relationship Abuse* helps students identify the warning signs of relationship abuse and instructs young viewers on how to extricate themselves from unhealthy, potentially dangerous dating relationships.

As the program begins, young women share their stories: "Calling me stupid was only the beginning of an abusive relationship." "I cried for hours on end because of the things he said." "Since I had never been in a relationship before, I didn't know what to expect." "I rationalized in my mind that things would get better." "It was supposed to be love." "I trusted him with my safety. I never thought anyone would do that to me."

After the program's title appears, viewers meet Dr. Jill Murray, licensed psychotherapist and author of *But He Never Hit Me: The Devastating Cost of Non-Physical Abuse to Girls and Women*. She explains that an abusive relationship usually starts off by making you feel good emotions—"warm, fuzzy, loving, connected and special" feelings—so you never expect that something bad will be coming. "These things start very slowly and very insidiously."

At this point, the video begins identifying the ten signs of relationship abuse.

Sign 1: Isolation

The young women describe how they were progressively cut off from their friends and family: "I wasn't allowed to spend time with one of my closest friends." "He just wants to spend all his time with me because he loves me so much. I shouldn't talk to other guys because I'm the love of his life and he doesn't want to lose me." "He got to the point of saying, *I just want you to always stay home.*" "I took on the role of him trying to isolate me. I just brought it into my own personality." "It was like I turned into someone else."

Again we hear from Dr. Murray. She calls jealousy, possessiveness and controlling behaviors "The Big Three," and explains that young women often confuse jealousy and love. "So if a guy says, *I'll kill any guy who looks at you*, we think, *Wow, he's great. He really, really loves me.* But that's not the case," Dr. Murray reminds viewers. "Jealousy isn't the same thing as love. Jealousy means *I'm afraid and I'm not worthy of you.*"

Sign 2: Jealousy

The young women next discuss the extreme jealousy they've had to endure from their boyfriends. They were not allowed to talk to, look at or spend time with any other males—even if they were just platonic friends. "I had a [male] friend since ninth grade... It was like, *You can't talk to him, he's a guy.* He was threatened by anyone and everyone."

Sign 3: Possessiveness

Now the young women address the topic of possessiveness: "Any time I went out with other people and didn't bring him along, when I'd get home he'd scream at me or give me the silent treatment." "I chose not to associate with other guys because I knew it would upset him." "He'd say, *I saw you looking at that guy. What, you want to have sex with him? Do you think he's better than me?*" "I couldn't have friends or hang out with other people because other people might put ideas into my head and tell me what he was doing was wrong."

Marc's Story

At this point in the program, a young man named Marc talks about his dating relationship. His girlfriend got upset when he went out with his friends. "She started calling or text-messaging me over and over and over again. She'd call 30 times in a row. It got to the point where she'd be yelling into the phone at me, calling me all sorts of terrible things." He says, "It's a bad relationship when you spend most of your time being told you're not good enough."

Dr. Murray tells male viewers that if their girlfriends show the same type of behaviors—being jealous, not wanting you to have female pals, calling all the time, crying a lot, threatening suicide and isolating you from your friends, then that is an abusive relationship. "Just as abusive relationships start off [as] very, very small [incidents] and are hard to see for a girl, it's the same thing with a guy. Don't be afraid to speak up and talk to someone that you trust about it."

Sign 7: Threats of Self-Harm

The young women featured in the program recall times that their boyfriends threatened to hurt or kill themselves when they tried to break up. "One time, he actually did cut himself." "He stood in the middle of the street in two-way traffic and cried and said he was going to wait for a car to hit him if I left him." "I would stay because I didn't want to be responsible for that." "I didn't care if I had to suffer, because I didn't want him to hurt himself."

Dr. Murray stresses, "Nobody should be killing themselves over you." This kind of behavior could be a manipulation tactic, but viewers are warned to always take threats of suicide or self-harm seriously. "You're not an authority figure or somebody who can truly help him. You should tell his parents, a teacher, the police, the principal or your parents and let them deal with it. If you really love your boyfriend and are concerned for his safety, you need to put it in the hands of somebody who can really help."

Sign 8: Playing Rough

Several of the young women relate incidents where physical play turned violent: "We were playing around, kind of rough-housing, and all of a sudden he had his hands around my neck." "He did hold me down a couple times." "He said to me, *When I did that it made me have this great feeling inside like I had all this power and all this control.*" "He would make sure he had a tight grip around my waist or a tight grip on my hand." "I knew at that point [that] it could escalate."

Sign 9: Non-Consensual Sex

On the topic of forced sexual acts, the young women say: "If I wouldn't, he'd get very upset." "He would say, *If you really cared about me, you'd do this with me.*" "It was like, *You're gonna have sex with me, and you're gonna have sex with me now.*" "He would

One day Jennifer came home with a deep bite mark. She said laughingly that her boyfriend did it because he didn't want her to leave. Her mother told her that this kind of behavior was abuse, but Jennifer insisted they were just kidding around. The relationship between Jennifer and her mother became strained. She didn't want to hear that things between her and her boyfriend weren't normal.

One night Jennifer didn't come home. Panicked, her mother started calling hospitals. "I had this gut feeling, a horrible gut feeling." The television was on as background noise. She heard that a body had been found and knew it was her daughter. "I'll never get to see her married, or go to college or graduate high school. But what is most painful is that I won't see her smile. I won't get to tell her I love her twice a day and hear it back."

Dr. Murray says that before a relationship becomes physically abusive, there usually is a lot of testing by the abuser to see how far he can go. "You've told him that you don't like it when he does those things, and he hasn't listened to you yet. And so by keeping this a secret, understand that it's not going to get any better." Dr. Murray firmly tells viewers a fact that could one day save their lives: "Physical abuse only keeps getting worse. It never gets better until that person is stopped. Now is the time to talk to somebody else about it."

Getting Help

The young women who have appeared throughout the program now return onscreen to tell viewers that there are many people who can help an abused teen. They suggest hotlines, counselors, a parent, a friend, a teacher or relatives. "As hard or as embarrassing as it is, turn to anyone you can." "I never wanted my parents to have to come and get me out of a relationship because I wanted to be independent, but sometimes you need that." "Don't be afraid to go talk to somebody. It could possibly save your life."

Dr. Murray concludes, "You have the opportunity to have your life back and make decisions for yourself again and decide what you want your future to look like, and it's going to be great!" As the credits roll, the girls speak of their new perspective since being free of their abusers. "It has been 100 percent better." "I started having friends and being social again." "I do feel like I have to start over again." "It is your right to be in a healthy relationship."

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Name: _____

Pre/Post Test

Decide whether the following statements are true or false.

1. **TRUE or FALSE:** An abusive relationship starts off as abusive from the very beginning. _____
2. **TRUE or FALSE:** Abusers try to isolate their partner from her/his friends and family. _____
3. **TRUE or FALSE:** If a guy says, "I'll kill any guy who looks at you," he must really love you. _____
4. **TRUE or FALSE:** It is normal for your dating partner to have different rules for you than he/she does for him/herself. _____
5. **TRUE or FALSE:** Physical abuse often starts with rough-housing or extreme tickling. _____
6. **TRUE or FALSE:** The more times per day your boyfriend or girlfriend calls you, the healthier your relationship is. _____
7. **TRUE or FALSE:** Girls cannot be the abusers in dating relationships. _____
8. **TRUE or FALSE:** If your dating partner threatens to harm him/herself, you don't have to take it seriously because he/she is just trying to manipulate you. _____
9. **TRUE or FALSE:** The goal of an abuser is to have power and control over you. _____
10. **TRUE or FALSE:** If you want to be viewed as a young adult, you should not rely on your parents to help you get out of an abusive relationship. _____

The Answer Key appears on the next page.

Name: _____

Answer Key

1. **TRUE or FALSE:** An abusive relationship starts off as abusive from the very beginning. **FALSE**

2. **TRUE or FALSE:** Abusers try to isolate their partner from her/his friends and family. **TRUE**

3. **TRUE or FALSE:** If a guy says, "I'll kill any guy who looks at you," he must really love you. **FALSE**

4. **TRUE or FALSE:** It is normal for your dating partner to have different rules for you than he/she does for him/herself. **FALSE**

5. **TRUE or FALSE:** Physical abuse often starts with rough-housing or extreme tickling. **TRUE**

6. **TRUE or FALSE:** The more times per day your boyfriend or girlfriend calls you, the healthier your relationship is. **FALSE**

7. **TRUE or FALSE:** Girls cannot be the abusers in dating relationships. **FALSE**

8. **TRUE or FALSE:** If your dating partner threatens to harm him/herself, you don't have to take it seriously because he/she is just trying to manipulate you. **FALSE**

9. **TRUE or FALSE:** The goal of an abuser is to have power and control over you. **TRUE**

10. **TRUE or FALSE:** If you want to be viewed as a young adult, you should not rely on your parents to help you get out of an abusive relationship. **FALSE**

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 2A

JENNA'S STORY

Read the story below and then answer the discussion questions that follow on the next page.

Jenna was sure that Jared was the man of her dreams. He was handsome and attentive. He was totally into Jenna. He cared so much about her that he called her several times a day. When he told her he loved her on their second date, Jenna knew this was the real thing. Pretty soon they were seeing each other every day. On weekends, they were practically inseparable.

Because she spent so much time with Jared, Jenna was seeing less and less of her other friends. He got annoyed when she talked to her friends on the phone. Plus he wanted to know what she talked about with her friends, and Jenna didn't like having to report all the details of her conversations to Jared.

Sunday was Jenna's best friend's birthday. She promised Audrey that they would hang out at the mall. When she told Jared her plans to spend the day with Audrey, he frowned. She didn't like his tone of voice when he said, "Are you sure you're just going to hang out with Audrey? You better not wear that purple shirt. It's too low-cut for the mall. I don't want my girl looking like a tramp."

While she was at the mall, Jared called or text-messaged her every hour to say hi. The girls decided to go to a movie, so Jenna turned off her phone. When she got out of the theater, there were six messages from Jared. They started off sweet but progressively got angrier and angrier. The last message said, "I don't know why you won't talk to me. Are you trying to hook up with someone else? You might as well know: you're not all that great."

Jenna had just finished listening to her messages when the phone rang again. It was Jared. When Jenna explained that she didn't answer her phone because they were at the movie, he apologized: "I guess I just lost my temper. I didn't mean it. It's just that I miss you when you're not around."

Just then, a group of friends from school walked up to say hello, so Jenna said goodbye to Jared. But two seconds later, Jared called back. "Did I hear a guy talking to you? All right, tell me the truth! Who are you hooking up with?"

Jenna was annoyed because she and Audrey were just innocently talking with a group of both guys and girls. She turned off her phone. She and Audrey started walking to the bus stop. After about ten minutes, Audrey said, "Isn't that Jared?" It was. Jared was waiting in his car near the bus stop. He got out when he saw the girls. He looked angry. "What were you doing with those guys? I knew I couldn't trust you! You're nothing but a sleaze!"

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

Jenna couldn't believe her ears. She was about to tell him to leave her alone, but he grabbed her arm and said, "I'll give you a ride home. Let's go." Jenna started to protest, but Jared was holding her arm so tightly that it hurt when she tried to step away. She knew he would make a scene if she didn't go with him. She said an awkward goodbye to Audrey and saw the worried look in her eyes as she got into Jared's car.

The next day at school, Jenna had a bruise on her cheek. When Audrey asked what happened, Jenna said she fell. Audrey didn't believe her. Finally, Jenna admitted that Jared had hit her. "He's an emotional guy. He gets upset sometimes. I'm sure he didn't mean to hurt me. He said he was sorry."

Discussion Questions:

Discuss the following questions in small groups. Summarize your answers on the back of this page and then share your thoughts with the class.

1. Read the *Ten Signs of Relationship Abuse* fact sheet. How many of these signs can you identify in Jenna's story?
2. At what point should Jenna have known that her relationship with Jared was not healthy?
3. How do you think Jared justified his behavior toward Jenna in his own mind?
4. Why didn't Jenna immediately admit to Audrey that Jared had struck her?
5. At what point should Jenna have gotten out of the relationship (or gotten help if she couldn't break away emotionally)?
6. Why do you think Jenna has stayed in the relationship as long as she has?
7. If Jenna stays in this relationship, what do you think her future holds?
8. If you knew someone like Jenna, how would you help?
9. If you knew someone like Jared, what could you say to him?

Name: _____

Love is about bringing out the best in each other. Healthy relationships require equality, individuality and compromise. In an abusive relationship, one partner takes all the power and control. This causes an imbalance in the relationship and often prevents the other person's individuality and opinions from being expressed.

But abusive relationships usually start off just as happily as healthy ones. Would you be able to see when a dating relationship becomes overly restrictive and demanding? Would you be able to sense if there was an unequal balance of power and control in your relationship?

Part One: When would you leave a relationship? *(check all that apply)*

- _____ When you realize you have to check in with your partner all the time in order to avoid an argument?
- _____ When you find that your partner is putting so much pressure on you to spend all your time with him/her that you are no longer spending time with friends or participating in the activities you enjoy?
- _____ When your friends remind you how many times you have cancelled plans with them at the last minute to be with your partner?
- _____ The first time your partner forces you to do something you don't feel good about?
- _____ When you find yourself making excuses for your partner's behavior?
- _____ When you realize that you are working so hard to make your partner happy that you feel worn out and tired?
- _____ When you realize that the relationship leaves you feeling bad about yourself most of the time?
- _____ When you realize you are dressing differently or wearing your hair differently just to please your partner?
- _____ When you realize that no matter what you do, you can't please your partner?
- _____ The first time your partner unfairly accuses you of flirting with someone else?
- _____ The first time your partner restrains you physically when you're trying to walk away from an argument?
- _____ The first time your partner curses at you or calls you an offensive name?
- _____ The first time your partner slaps you?
- _____ The first time your partner leaves a mark on your body?
- _____ The first time your partner sends you to the emergency room?

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

Consider the following statement from a young man.

"Come on, it's her own fault. She shouldn't have been wearing such a low-cut shirt. I told her not to go to the party like that. I mean, she should dress like that just for me. She was putting herself out there like a tramp for all the guys to look at her. I got really mad when she kept telling me not to "paw at her." Like I was embarrassing her? I don't think so. Why was she dressed like that if she wasn't inviting me to do as I liked? It really ticked me off when her friends started giving me dirty looks. After all, she's my girlfriend, I can tell her whatever I want. She was acting slutty and I told her so. And then she refused to leave when I told her it was time to go. If she just went along with things and didn't keep pushing my buttons, everything would have been fine. Men can't just let women run all over them. Anyway, I was kind of worked up, and I couldn't stop myself from slapping her."

In small groups of two to three students, address the attitudes conveyed by his statement. Write a brief statement in which your group answers these questions:

- What is wrong with this young man's view of the situation?
- What mistaken beliefs did he accept?
- What harmful attitudes did he express?
- What harmful stereotypes did he express?
- What does he need to understand and do differently?

Refer to these fact sheets as you make your list:

What is Relationship Abuse?

The Whys of Relationship Abuse

If You Know an Abuser

When you have finished, compare your group's statements to the Suggested Answers on the next page.

Name: _____

Suggested Answers

How many of the following points did your group come up with?

1. He was treating the girl as an object. Her feelings and wishes didn't matter to him.
2. He blamed his girlfriend for his negative feelings and bad behavior instead of admitting that his behavior was his own fault.
3. No matter how a woman dresses or behaves, she does not deserve to have her body touched in ways she does not want. A woman who dresses sexy is seeking appreciation of her attractiveness—she is not inviting groping or other unwanted sexual behavior or comments, even from her boyfriend.
4. He doesn't see girls as his equal. He feels that because he is the male, he must control his girlfriend. He shows an obvious disregard for his girlfriend's opinions, desires and decisions.
5. He didn't realize that it is never okay to call someone degrading names—doing that is verbal abuse.
6. He didn't realize that just because he is in a dating relationship with someone, he does not own that person.
7. He didn't realize that he does not have the right to keep his girlfriend from doing what she wants and spending her time as she pleases.
8. He didn't realize that everyone is responsible for his or her actions whether sober or not. Abusers may use drugs or alcohol as an excuse for saying hurtful things or abusing a dating partner.
9. He didn't realize that it is never okay to use physical force against someone—that is abuse.

Name: _____

Think about your expectations of a dating relationship as you write down your responses below.

1. These are the qualities I really appreciate in others:

2. I do not like it when people do the following:

3. I will not tolerate the following behaviors:

4. This is how I expect to be treated by someone I date:

5. In a dating relationship you can expect that I will:

6. This is how I expect to feel when I am with someone I date:

7. If my dating partner says or does things to hurt me, I will:

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 7A

FACT VS. MYTH

Test your knowledge of relationship abuse by reading each of the statements below and deciding whether it is a fact or a myth. Circle your answer— **FACT** or **MYTH**.

1. A partner who calls all the time to “check up on you” is demonstrating his/her love. **FACT** **MYTH**
2. Jealousy and possessiveness are signs of true love. **FACT** **MYTH**
3. Relationship abuse consists only of physical violence. **FACT** **MYTH**
4. Men are battered by women just as often as women are battered by men. **FACT** **MYTH**
5. Using alcohol or other drugs is a cause of dating violence. **FACT** **MYTH**
6. An occasional punch or slap is not considered abuse. Everybody loses it once in a while. **FACT** **MYTH**
7. If someone stays in an abusive relationship, then the situation must not be so bad after all. **FACT** **MYTH**
8. Girls who stay in abusive relationships have no one to blame but themselves. **FACT** **MYTH**
9. Guys have to be strong, so they have to be “in control” in dating relationships. **FACT** **MYTH**
10. Dating violence happens mostly to people who provoke it. Victims bring the abuse on themselves. **FACT** **MYTH**
11. Young people will frequently tell someone about dating violence when it happens to them. **FACT** **MYTH**
12. If your dating partner hits you, he or she will most likely be so sorry that he or she will never do it again. **FACT** **MYTH**

The Answer Key for this activity is provided on the next page.

Name: _____

Answer Key

- 1. MYTH** A partner who calls all the time to “check up on you” is demonstrating his/her love. *The person is demonstrating massive insecurity. This is not healthy behavior in a relationship. A healthy relationship is based on trust.*
- 2. MYTH** Jealousy and possessiveness are signs of true love. *Jealousy and possessiveness are signs that the person sees you as a possession. They are the most common early warning signs of abuse.*
- 3. MYTH** Relationship abuse consists only of physical violence. *Physical violence is only one form of relationship abuse. Abuse can be physical, sexual, verbal, emotional or psychological—or a combination of these.*
- 4. MYTH** Men are battered by women just as often as women are battered by men. *95 percent of the reported incidents of assault in relationships are committed by males, according to the U.S. Bureau of Justice. However, relationship abuse can be directed at men as well as women, and can occur in same-sex as well as opposite-sex relationships.*
- 5. MYTH** Using alcohol or other drugs is a cause of dating violence. *Alcohol and other drugs are just an excuse to justify the abuser’s use of violence. The cause of dating violence is the abuser, who is making the choice to engage in this behavior. Substance abuse and dating violence are two different issues that need to be addressed separately.*
- 6. MYTH** An occasional punch or slap is not considered abuse. Everybody loses it once in a while. *Even an occasional punch or slap is never okay! It is abuse—and it is a criminal act.*
- 7. MYTH** If someone stays in an abusive relationship, then the situation must not be so bad after all. *It is difficult to leave an abusive relationship for many reasons: fear of the abuser’s threats, loss of self-confidence, not recognizing the relationship as abusive, belief that the abuser needs their help and belief that the abuser will change, to name a few.*

The Answer Key for this activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 7C

FACT VS. MYTH

- 8. MYTH** Girls who stay in abusive relationships have no one to blame but themselves. *The abusers are solely responsible for the abuse and for instilling fear in their victims. To end the abuse, abusers must be held responsible for their behavior and possess a willingness to change.*
- 9. MYTH** Guys have to be strong, so they have to be “in control” in dating relationships. *In an abusive relationship, the abuser feels a need to exert power and control over his or her partner. In healthy relationships, both partners share responsibility for decisions, support and encourage each other’s goals, respect the other’s opinions, thoughts and friends, negotiate conflicts and compromise, disagree with each other respectfully and feel listened to and respected.*
- 10. MYTH** Dating violence happens mostly to people who provoke it. Victims bring the abuse on themselves. *Abusers believe they have the right to use abuse to control their victims. They see the victim as less than an equal. The decisions that abusers make about when they will abuse, how frequently they will abuse, what the severity will be and where the abuse will take place has nothing to do with the victim’s demeanor or behavior.*
- 11. MYTH** Young people will frequently tell someone about dating violence when it happens to them. *Teenagers are reluctant to disclose that they are victims of abuse for many reasons. They may: fear losing independence if they tell a parent; believe that they can handle the situation; fear retaliation; feel ashamed or embarrassed; hope the abuse will end; not see themselves as victims; feel no one will believe them; feel there will be a stigma attached to being a victim; feel responsible for the abuse; feel others will blame them; fear being ousted if they are in a same-sex relationship.*
- 12. MYTH** If your dating partner hits you, he or she will most likely be so sorry that he or she will never do it again. *Abusive episodes are rarely isolated. The pattern of abuse usually continues, and abusive incidents increase in frequency and severity over time.*

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 9

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Work in groups to plan a presentation to help your peers understand the impact of relationship abuse. Include the following in your presentation:

- What are the latest statistics on relationship abuse in the United States?
- What are some of the common myths and misconceptions about relationship abuse?
- What can students do to keep from becoming *victims* of relationship abuse?
- What can students do to keep from becoming *perpetrators* of relationship abuse?
- What should a person do if he or she is a victim of relationship abuse?
- How do gender stereotypes contribute to relationship abuse? What should students do when they hear others use sexist language and make degrading comments about a dating partner?

For your relationship abuse awareness campaign, you should do one of the following:

- create a slogan and make a poster
- create a slogan and prepare a brochure

In your poster or brochure, remember to include warning signs, tips on helping a friend, tips for an abuser and where to go to get help.

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 10

SPEAK OUT

Part One: Form small groups, and cut the following sayings into strips of paper. Taking turns, each person will draw a strip of paper and speak for one minute on the topic as it pertains to relationship abuse. Group members will then have 15 seconds each to comment on the topic. Make sure one topic is finished before the next person draws his or her slip of paper.

Extreme jealousy isn't a compliment—it's a problem.

A healthy relationship is based on trust and equality, not power and control.

My strength is not for hurting.

The culprit behind most violence against women is the friendliest face of all—that of their spouse or lover.

Trust your gut.

People don't suddenly turn into abusers when they become adults. It starts in their young dating relationships.

Enjoying your relationship means enjoying your life.

We live in a society that, by its silence, tolerates violence. Don't stand on the sidelines—stand up.

Part Two: On a separate sheet of paper, write a paragraph on the topic you chose.

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 11A

ARE YOU IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP?

This sheet is private. Think about your current relationship, and answer these questions honestly. If you are not currently in a relationship, think about a relationship you have been in or the relationship of one of your friends. In response to each question, circle **Yes** or **No**.

Y	N	Does your partner isolate you from your friends and family or ask you to miss special events, such as family parties, to spend time with him/her?
Y	N	Is your partner excessively jealous? Does he/she get angry if you talk to, spend time with, or speak warmly about other boys/girls? Does your partner accuse you of flirting with other people even when you were not?
Y	N	Does your partner want you to spend all of your time with him/her? Does your partner get angry if you spend time with friends other than him/her?
Y	N	Does your partner want you to call him/her often to check in—or call you several times or show up to make sure you are where you said you'd be?
Y	N	Does your partner call you names, yell at you or make fun of you and then tell you that you are "too sensitive" or that he or she was "just kidding" when your feelings are hurt?
Y	N	Does your partner try to embarrass or humiliate you in front of other people?
Y	N	Does your partner treat you roughly, such as play-wrestling, grabbing, shoving, pinching or hitting you?
Y	N	Does your partner blame you for how he/she feels or acts?
Y	N	Does your partner tell you what styles of clothes, hair or makeup to wear?
Y	N	Does your partner demand to know all the details of where you've been and what you've done when you're not together?

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 1 1 B
ARE YOU IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP?

Y N	Has your partner threatened to harm you or himself/herself if you break up?
Y N	Does you partner tell you that no one else would want you, that you are nothing without him/her?
Y N	Are you afraid to talk about your feelings or disagree with your partner for fear of threats or insults? Are you always careful and nervous about what you say to your partner?
Y N	Do you find yourself making excuses to others for your partner's behavior?
Y N	Do you find yourself apologizing to your partner for things you've never done just to get the relationship back on a good footing?
Y N	Does your partner throw or break things in anger?
Y N	Has your partner threatened to spread gossip about you, or out you if you're part of a same-sex couple?
Y N	Does your partner make all the decisions or make you feel like you're unable to make decisions?
Y N	Does your partner pressure or force you into sexual activity?
Y N	Does your partner try to keep you from leaving after a fight or leave you somewhere after a fight to "teach you a lesson?"

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, talk to someone. No one deserves to be abused. If you are being hurt in your relationship, confide in a friend, relative or adult you trust, or call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1 (800) 799-SAFE for confidential help.

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 12A

IS YOUR FRIEND IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP?

This sheet is private. Look at these questions to determine if your friend is in an abusive relationship. Think about your friend's relationship, and answer these questions honestly. In response to each question, circle Yes or No.

Note: The abuser is sometimes referred to as "he" and the victim as "she" in this survey because this is the case in most, but not all, instances of relationship abuse.

Y	N	Did your friend's dating partner sweep her off her feet and declare his love very early in the relationship?
Y	N	Does your friend's dating partner get jealous if she looks at or speaks casually with another boy, even if it is completely innocent?
Y	N	Did your friend used to be more outgoing and involved with friends and activities? Has she lost interest in activities she used to enjoy?
Y	N	Does your friend's dating partner expect her to call often to check in—or does he call your friend several times a night or show up to check up on her?
Y	N	Does your friend's dating partner call her names or put her down in front of other people and then laugh and say he was "only kidding"?
Y	N	Does your friend seem worried about upsetting her dating partner or making him angry?
Y	N	Does he frequently roughhouse or play-wrestle with her?
Y	N	Do they talk on the phone several times a day or for long periods of time to the exclusion of everything else?
Y	N	Does your friend's dating partner tell her how to dress or wear her hair or makeup?
Y	N	If he calls, pages or text-messages her, does your friend feel she must call him back immediately?

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 12B

IS YOUR FRIEND IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP?

Y N	Has your friend become very critical of her own appearance, talents or abilities?
Y N	Does your friend have bruises or other injuries she can't explain—or do the explanations she gives fail to make sense?
Y N	Does your friend's dating partner drink or use drugs?
Y N	Does your friend often apologize for her dating partner's poor behavior and make excuses for him?
Y N	Does your friend frequently feel she has to explain herself to her boyfriend or often say she's sorry?
Y N	Does your friend frequently cancel plans at the last minute for reasons that sound untrue?
Y N	Does your friend's partner accuse her of flirting with other people even when she was not, or accuse her of doing other things she hasn't done?
Y N	Is he aggressive in other areas of his life, such as putting his fist through walls, or hitting, breaking or throwing objects when angry?
Y N	Have your friend's weight, appearance, grades or demeanor changed dramatically?
Y N	Does he demand to know all the details of where your friend has been and what she has been doing when they are not together?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, talk to someone. **If you suspect your friend is in an abusive relationship, talk with her or with an adult you trust.** National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1 (800) 799-SAFE.

Source: www.drjillmurray.com/jill/resources/how_to_know.html

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 13A

ARE YOU AN ABUSER?

This sheet is private. Think about your current relationship, and answer these questions honestly. If you are not currently in a relationship, think about a relationship you have been in or the relationship of one of your friends. In response to each question, circle Yes or No.

Note: The abuser is sometimes referred to as "he" and the victim as "she" in this survey because this is the case in most, but not all, instances of relationship abuse.

Y	N	Do you ask your partner to miss special events, such as family parties, to spend time with you?
Y	N	Are you jealous to the point of getting angry if your partner talks to or about another boy (or girl)?
Y	N	Do you find yourself getting angry if your partner wants to spend time with other friends?
Y	N	Do you call your partner several times a night or show up to check up on where he/she is and what he/she is doing?
Y	N	Do you call your dating partner names or make fun of your dating partner and then say you were "just kidding" or that he/she was "too sensitive" when his/her feelings are hurt?
Y	N	Do you try to embarrass or humiliate your partner in front of other people?
Y	N	Do you roughhouse with your partner, such as play-wrestling?
Y	N	Do you blame your partner when you feel angry or act violently?
Y	N	Do you tell your partner what styles of clothes, hair or makeup to wear?
Y	N	Do you demand to know all the details of where your dating partner has been and what he/she has done when you're not together?

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 13B

ARE YOU AN ABUSER?

Y	N	Have you threatened to harm yourself or your dating partner if he/she breaks up with you?
Y	N	Do you tell your partner that he/she is lucky to have you because no one else would want him/her, or that he/she is nothing without you?
Y	N	Do you ever accuse your partner of picking a fight when he/she disagrees with you?
Y	N	Do you often criticize or insult your dating partner, or put down your partner's accomplishments or goals?
Y	N	Have you pressured or coerced your dating partner to perform sexual acts against his/her will?
Y	N	Do you throw or break things in anger, or punch holes in walls?
Y	N	Have you intentionally tried to frighten or intimidate your dating partner or threatened him/her with physical violence?
Y	N	Have you kicked, hit, shoved, strangled or thrown objects at or near your dating partner?
Y	N	Have you abandoned or threatened to abandon your dating partner in a dangerous or unknown place?
Y	N	Have you ever blamed your violent behavior on drinking or using drugs?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, please call (800) 799-SAFE for confidential help. Abusive behavior can be stopped only if the abuser chooses to seek help and change abusive patterns.

FACT SHEETS

Name: _____

- 40 percent of 14 to 17-year-olds know at least one student who has been the victim of dating violence.
- An estimated 33 percent of high school/college-aged young people experience relationship abuse.
- Nearly one in five teenage girls said a boyfriend had threatened violence or self-harm if presented with a break-up.
- One in four teenage girls who have been in relationships admit they have been pressured to perform sexual acts.
- 26 percent of teenage girls in a relationship report enduring repeated verbal abuse.
- 80 percent of teens regard verbal abuse as a “serious issue” for their age group.
- 20 percent of dating couples report some type of violence in their relationship.
- Relationship violence is the number one cause of injury to women between the ages of 15-44—more than car accidents, muggings and rapes combined.
- Battering is the second leading cause of death for women 20-45 in the United States today.
- Of the women between the ages 15-19 murdered each year in the United States, 30 percent are killed by their husbands or boyfriends.
- Nearly 80 percent of girls who have been physically abused in their intimate relationships continue to date their abuser.
- 70 percent of pregnant teenagers are abused by their partners.
- Relationship abuse can be directed at men as well as women, but young women ages 16-24 experience the highest rates of relationship violence.
- Gay, lesbian and bisexual teens are as likely to experience violence in same-sex relationships as youths involved in opposite sex dating.

*Sources: Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ACADV)
Liz Claiborne Inc. study on teen dating abuse by Teenage Research Unlimited, February 2005.
University of Cincinnati Psychological Services Center
Office of the Attorney General, Washington State
National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center
Children Now/Kaiser Permanente poll, December 1995*

Name: _____

WHAT IS
RELATIONSHIP ABUSE?

Definition of Relationship Abuse:

- Relationship abuse is a pattern of assaultive and controlling behaviors used by one person against another in order to gain or maintain power in the relationship.
- Relationship violence is not about getting angry or having an occasional disagreement. In an abusive relationship, one partner has an ongoing pattern of intentionally behaving in ways that cause fear, degradation and humiliation to control the other person.
- Forms of relationship abuse can be verbal, emotional, psychological, physical and sexual. Relationship abuse can include threats, intimidation, belittling words and actions, violence and sexual coercion.

Patterns of Abuse:

Relationship violence is not a one-time incident. The abuse generally occurs in a cycle that will repeat itself.

Stage 1: Tension building

Things get tense between you and your dating partner. The abuser becomes more irritable and may pick fights with you or yell at you for no reason. You feel like you can't do anything right and that things could blow up at any moment. You are especially careful not to "set him off."

Stage 2: Explosion

The abuser "explodes" in an outburst of anger or violence that can include emotional, verbal, sexual and/or physical abuse. Examples: The abuser might scream and yell in a way that scares or humiliates you; threaten to hurt you; shove, hit or kick you, slam you against a wall, grab your neck, etc.; rape you or force you to go further sexually than you want to.

Stage 3: Honeymoon

The abuser apologizes and promises that it will never happen again. He may try to make up by telling you he loves you or buying you flowers or other gifts. The abuser may shift the blame for the explosion to someone or something else, possibly saying that you did something to cause the abuse or saying he was drunk or stressed out. The victim may stay in the relationship because she believes him and sees the honeymoon phase as the "real him."

Abusive episodes are rarely isolated. The pattern of abuse usually continues, with abusive incidents increasing in frequency and severity over time.

Name: _____

According to psychologist and relationship expert Dr. Jill Murray, the ten signs of relationship abuse can be divided into two categories as follows:

Emotional/Verbal Abuse:

1. Isolating your partner from friends, family and outside activities that don't include you
2. Calling your dating partner insulting names or using degrading terminology to describe her
3. Showing jealousy and possessiveness about your dating partner
4. Controlling how your dating partner dresses, how much makeup she uses, with whom she talks; giving unsolicited advice; excessive text-messaging and using your cell phone to check up on her
5. "Crazy-making" and rule-changing behaviors; threats of self-harm if your dating partner leaves you
6. Having different standards for your dating partner than you do for yourself

Sexual/Physical Abuse:

7. Roughhousing or play-wrestling
8. Holding your dating partner's hand too tightly or putting your arm around her waist or shoulders too tightly
9. Pushing, shoving, hair-pulling, grabbing, restraining and other violent behaviors that are painful, even if they don't leave marks or bruises
10. Touching your dating partner's body in ways that are not consensual or make her feel uncomfortable; making threats (implied or real) to leave the relationship if your dating partner doesn't consent to sexual activity

Name: _____

CHARACTERISTICS OF A
HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

In Healthy Relationships:

- Partners share responsibility for decisions
- Both partners take responsibility for their actions
- There is honest communication; each feels safe expressing feelings
- Partners support and encourage each other's goals
- Both respect the other's opinions, thoughts and friends
- Partners make each other feel comfortable
- Partners can negotiate conflicts and compromise
- Partners can disagree with each other respectfully
- Partners want each other to grow and be happy
- Partners encourage each other to pursue separate activities/interests
- Each feels listened to and respected, even when there is a difference of opinions
- Partners can be honest about sex
- Each trusts the other to spend time with other friends that may include members of the opposite sex

Name: _____

What Factors Contribute to Relationship Abuse?

Abusers may:

- feel they have the right to control their dating partner
- think masculinity equals aggressiveness
- believe in rigid gender roles such as "A real man is always in charge"
- think they will lose the respect of others if they are attentive or supportive of their dating partner
- not view their dating partner as an equal
- cover up their own low self-esteem by dominating others
- have trouble dealing with anger
- have been abused themselves or witnessed one parent abusing another

Victims may:

- see jealousy and possessiveness as signs of love
- think they are responsible for solving the abuser's problems
- feel there is no one they can turn to for help
- think they can persuade the abuser to change
- feel strong peer pressure to have a boyfriend or girlfriend, no matter the cost
- be afraid to be alone
- not recognize the abuse for what it is
- feel they do not deserve better treatment
- mistakenly believe that by enduring an abusive relationship, they are proving how grown-up they are

This fact sheet is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

Why Doesn't the Victim Leave?

A victim may:

- have little or no experience with healthy dating relationships
- believe that being involved with someone is the most important thing in his or her life
- confuse jealousy with love
- not see himself or herself as a victim
- feel no one will believe him or her
- have lost touch with friends
- cling to the fact that the abuser acts nice sometimes
- fear losing independence if he or she tells a parent
- believe that he or she can handle the situation
- feel ashamed or embarrassed
- hope the abuse will end
- fear retaliation if they break up
- feel there will be a stigma attached to being a victim
- feel responsible for the abuse
- feel others will blame him or her
- fear being "outed" if they are in a same-sex relationship

Name: _____

GETTING OUT OF AN
ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP

Breaking up with an abusive partner is often very difficult. Abused young people should know they deserve better treatment, that they are not alone, and that the abuse is not their fault.

What to do to stay safe and end an abusive relationship:

- Take the abuse seriously—tell the abuser to stop and help him or her to get counseling.
- Avoid being alone with the abuser or being alone in situations where he or she might unexpectedly appear and threaten you.
- Do not meet the abuser alone. Do not let the abuser in your home or car when you are alone.
- Tell others about the abuse—the more isolated you are from friends and family, the more power he or she has over you and more opportunity your abuser has to control and abuse you.
- Always tell others where you are going and when you expect to return.
- If the abuse happens at school, report it to a school counselor or security officer.
- Keep a log of the abuse. You may need it for evidence if you have to take legal action.
- Develop a safety plan and rehearse what you will do in the event that the abuser becomes violent.
- Get help from professionals. There are places in your community where you can get information and help: Rape crisis centers, shelters, health services, counseling centers, youth organizations, doctors, churches or spiritual centers, emergency hotlines and the legal system can help keep you safe.

Things to remember:

- You deserve better. Do not put up with abuse.
- You are not alone. People from all different backgrounds and all across the country are in or have been in abusive relationships.
- It is not your fault that your partner abuses you. It is a choice the abuser makes.
- The longer you stay in the abusive relationship, the more intense the violence will become. It does not get better over time.
- Being drunk or high is not an excuse for being abusive.
- No one is justified in hurting you just because he or she is angry.

Name: _____

As a friend, you may witness abusive behavior first-hand or you may notice indirect signs that lead you to suspect that your friend is in an abusive dating relationship—a change in your friend’s clothes or makeup style, lowered self-esteem, or a change in the amount of time she spends with her boyfriend. If you suspect a friend is being abused, you can help her by showing that you care. Let her speak confidentially about her situation. You may be the only person with whom she feels comfortable. You can help a friend in these ways:

- Do not ignore the signs of abuse. Talk to your friend.
- Express your concerns. Tell your friend you are worried and why.
- Help your friend recognize the abuse for what it is; point out that her partner’s behavior is not normal or acceptable. If she says, “It’s really not that bad,” tell her it is serious and will most likely only get worse.
- Do not blame your friend. Assure her that she is not responsible for the abuse. You can never make someone else hurt you.
- Listen to your friend’s feelings.
- Do not judge your friend.
- Believe her.
- Do not minimize her struggle.
- Point out your friend’s strengths, gifts and positive qualities.
- Let her know that she doesn’t deserve to be treated badly.
- Be supportive as she gets over the relationship.
- Offer to go to counseling sessions with her.
- Encourage your friend to confide in a trusted adult.
- For your safety and the safety of your friend, never put yourself in a dangerous situation with the victim’s partner. DO NOT confront the abuser or try to mediate.
- Call the police if you witness an assault.
- If you suspect abuse but do not witness it, tell an adult you trust such as a parent or a school principal, nurse or guidance counselor.

Name: _____

Abusers often use excuses to justify their violent behavior. You need to remember that it's all about POWER and CONTROL—not about anger, stress, drugs, alcohol or some complaint about what their partner does or doesn't do. Hurting, threatening or belittling someone is an effective way to maintain control over that person.

If someone you know is abusive:

- Talk to the abuser about his behavior. Tell him, "I'm not going to sit here as your friend and watch this happen and not say anything about it."
- Be specific about what you witnessed and how it made you feel: "I didn't like it when you told your girlfriend that she was fat in front of all of us. It must have made her feel really bad."
- Tell the abuser that what he is doing is wrong.
- Let him know that physically abusing someone is a crime and will have legal consequences. Remind him that he could be arrested for violent behavior and have to go through life with a criminal record.
- Let him know that abuse is always a choice. It is a learned behavior that can be unlearned with help—as long as he has a commitment to change.
- Let him know that he is responsible for his actions, that he cannot blame his violent behavior on anger, stress, drugs, alcohol or what his partner does or doesn't do.
- Educate yourself about relationship abuse.
- Urge him to seek help. He can talk to a counselor, coach, member of the clergy or any other trusted adult. He can call a hotline, such as the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1 (800) 799-SAFE.

Name: _____

DATING RIGHTS AND
RESPONSIBILITIES

Dating comes with both rights and responsibilities. As you read the lists below, consider whether you are fulfilling your responsibilities and respecting your own rights and the rights of your dating partner.

I have the right to:

- always be treated with respect
- expect others to respect my own body, thoughts, opinions and property
- choose and keep my own friends
- change my mind at any time
- not be abused physically, emotionally or sexually
- leave a relationship that is not healthy for me
- say no to any requests that make me uncomfortable
- be treated as an equal
- disagree with others' opinions
- live without fear of my dating partner's anger
- be heard
- have my own feelings and be able to express them
- have friends, activities and space aside from my partner

I have the responsibility to:

- not threaten to harm myself or anyone else
- encourage my dating partner to pursue his/her own dreams
- support my dating partner emotionally
- communicate honestly, not manipulate
- know my values
- not do anything that makes me feel bad about myself
- not humiliate or demean my dating partner
- refuse to abuse anyone else physically, emotionally or sexually
- take care of myself
- allow my dating partner to maintain his/her individuality
- respect myself and my dating partner
- be honest with my dating partner and expect honesty in return

Sources: Office of the Attorney General, Washington State < www.atg.wa.gov/violence >
Domestic Violence Advocacy Program of Family Resources, Inc. < www.acadv.org/dating.html >

Name: _____

If you need to talk to someone:

National Domestic Violence/Abuse Hotline
(800) 799-SAFE
TTY (800) 787-3224

National Organization for Victim Assistance
(800) TRY-NOVA

National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
(800) 537-2238

Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network
www.rainn.org
(800) 656-HOPE

Other places to go for help:

- teachers, school counselors, school nurses
- local rape crisis centers
- doctors and other health professionals
- police
- battered women's shelters

Name: _____

Helpful URLs

Alabama Coalition against Domestic Violence

<www.acadv.org/dating.html>

Break the Cycle

Engages, educates and empowers youth to build lives and communities free from domestic and dating violence

<www.breakthecycle.org>

CampusBlues.com

“Relationship Abuse”

<www.campusblues.com/reabu.asp>

ChooseRespect.org

CDC Department of Health and Human Services

<www.chooserespect.org>

GirlsHealth.gov

“What are the Signs that I Am in an Abusive or Unhealthy Relationship?”

<www.girlshealth.gov/safety/relationships.htm#4>

KidsHealth.org

“Abusive Relationships”

<www.kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/relationships/abuse.html>

Love Is Not Abuse

<www.loveisnotabuse.com>

Making Waves

Educating and involving teens in dating violence prevention

<www.mwaves.org>

National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center

<www.safeyouth.org/scripts/topics/datingviolence.asp>

Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network

<www.rainn.org>

Teenwire.com

Planned Parenthood Federation of America

Information on relationships and sexual health for teens

<www.teenwire.com>

Name: _____

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- "Relationship Abuse." University Police Department. University of Florida. 5 Sept. 2006 <www.police.ufl.edu/pdf_files/relationship%20abuse.pdf>
- "Relationship Violence Awareness." The Office of the Dean of Students. University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. 6 Sept. 2006 <<http://deanofstudents.unc.edu/relationships/whatisit/index.html>>
- "Teen Dating Violence." Office of the Attorney General, Washington State. 5 Sept. 2006 <www.atg.wa.gov/violence>
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Name: _____

**OTHER PROGRAMS
FROM HUMAN RELATIONS MEDIA**

<i>Open Arms? Open Eyes! Power, Control and Abuse in Teen Relationships</i>	VHS/print or DVD/print
<i>Silence Ain't Sexy</i>	VHS/print or DVD/print
<i>Am I Normal?</i>	VHS/print or DVD/print
<i>Dealing with Teen Dating Abuse: Matters of Choice</i>	VHS/DVD/print curriculum
<i>Curriculum in a Box: Teen Challenges and Choices</i>	VHS/DVD/print curriculum
<i>Curriculum in a Box: Conflicts and Connections</i>	VHS/DVD/print curriculum
<i>Curriculum in a Box: Relationships</i>	VHS/print or DVD/print
<i>Dating for Real: Let's Talk about Sex</i>	VHS/print or DVD/print
<i>Dating for Real: What Do You Want?</i>	VHS/print or DVD/print
<i>Dating for Real: Putting it Together</i>	VHS/print or DVD/print
<i>Dangerous Relationships</i>	Full-color poster
<i>"Don't Listen, Leave" Violence Prevention Poster</i>	VHS/print or DVD/print
<i>Exploring Healthy Relationships</i>	Folding display
<i>Sexual Harassment</i>	VHS/print or DVD/print
<i>Take Charge: Resisting Sexual Pressure</i>	VHS/print or DVD/print
<i>Toxic Relationships</i>	Full-color poster set
<i>Violence Prevention Poster Set</i>	VHS/print or DVD/print
<i>When Relationships Break</i>	VHS/print or DVD/print

Visit our website for detailed descriptions of the above programs.

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