

The first step to stopping abuse is understanding what it is. Below are specific abusive behaviors and reasons why people start (and stay in) abusive relationships. If you need help, call 1-800-LifeNet and talk to someone. All calls are strictly confidential.



Physical Abuse

Hitting, spitting on, slapping, choking, grabbing, shaking, throwing things, threatening to hurt

Sexual Abuse

Being sexually demanding, forced or unwanted sexual activity, refusing to use contraception, rape

Financial Abuse

Demanding or stealing money, not letting someone work

Why would someone treat his or her partner like this?

Someone who is abusive may feel little control over other aspects of his or her life. In response they attempt to control their boyfriend or girlfriend. Someone who is abusive may have seen abuse or been a victim of abuse so these behaviors seem normal. No matter the reason, abusing someone is always a choice and is always wrong.

Why would someone stay in a relationship if he or she is treated like this?

- Love for his/her partner.
- Guilt about ending the relationship.
- Feeling at fault for the problems.

Similar to some abusers, some people in abusive relationships have seen abuse or been a victim of abuse so these behaviors seem normal. Often, someone stays in an abusive relationship because his or her boyfriend or girlfriend keeps promising to change. Getting out of an abusive relationship is often a very hard thing to do.

For immediate assistance or referrals call 1-800- LifeNet. Another good resource is the National Teen Dating Abuse hotline. Trained peer advocates, teens just like you, can help you locate help and talk about your concerns. Call 24 hours a day 1.866.331.9474 or online chat from 4pm to 2am at www.loveisrespect.org

How to identify teen dating violence...

Teen dating abuse is when a person uses power to control his or her partner. Sometimes abuse can be obvious but there are also more subtle types of abuse including emotional and psychological abuse. Different types of abuse are described below.

Emotional/Psychological Abuse

Yelling, name calling, threatening, putting down in front of others, destroying possessions, limiting who someone sees or talks to, constantly checking up on someone, telling someone how to dress

What you can do to support healthy relationships

How we act around our friends and family and how we react to things we see and hear can help support healthy relationships. If we stand by and say nothing when someone is abusive to another person or when someone tells a joke or story that supports abuse, we are sending a message to the abuser that this behavior is okay.

Below are things all of us can do:

- Don't put up with or use language that supports abusive behavior and attitudes. This is language like "wife-beaters" and "bitch-slap."
- Treat everyone in your life with the respect that we all deserve.
- Be an example for friends and sibling who are younger than you. Show that you care about this issue and they will care too.
- Think about how the movies and shows you watch, the games you play, and the websites you visit affect your attitudes about abusive behaviors.
- Don't laugh at jokes or stories that support abusive behavior and attitudes.