
Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

A Parent toolkit for How
to Start the Conversation
with your Teen

CARE RESOURCES ARE HERE FOR YOU

How to access us:


Available for emergency support at
(530) 752- 3299

Email us at ucdcare@ucdavis.edu



center for advocacy,
resources & education

WHAT IS TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH?



February is a time when young people and their loved ones join together to spread awareness and educate on the issue of teen dating violence.

STATISTICS:

- 1 in 3 teens in the United States will experience physical, sexual or emotional abuse by someone they are in a relationship with before they become adults
- Adolescents in abusive relationships often carry these unhealthy patterns of violence into future relationships

In 2010, Congress declared the month of February to be the National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month.

Talking to your teens about dating violence is not easy but it is important to be as authentic as possible about the challenges we face in relationships.

Teens have to learn that even when in a relationship, they have a right to autonomy, respect, and privacy. For example, being in a relationship does not mean that they have to agree to a sexual encounter or cannot change their mind.

We are working to break the cycle of violence by providing support and education to teen survivors, their families, and their communities.

STARTING THE CONVERSATION

Even though talking about relationships with your growing adolescent may not be easy, it is an essential part of preparing them for adulthood.

This does not mean just warning them about the dangers they should be aware of, this means educating them on how to communicate their boundaries to their partner about their time, emotions, or body.

If you have a child in your life that you are close to, take this as an opportunity to talk with them about healthy relationships

PLACES TO START

How are things going?

A question like this allows you to ease them into a conversation before jumping into a heavier topic.

Have you ever seen abusive behaviors between partners?

This question allows you to define abuse within a relationship and compare your definition to theirs.

How are relationships portrayed in the media?

Talk about how some portrayals of relationships may romanticize or minimize abusive behaviors.

What kinds of relationships do your friends have?

What is their current perception of relationships? Do they have expectations of gender roles? This will help shape how you continue the conversation.

What makes a relationship healthy?

Partners in a healthy relationship respect each other's individual differences and personal boundaries. They do not hurt their partner(s) emotionally, sexually, or physically.

Where can you get help if you or a friend needs it?

Let them know that you are always there for support and familiarize yourself with available resources. For assistance in finding your local resources, you may contact CARE.

DISCUSSING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP VALUES & WARNING SIGNS WITH TEENS

No two relationships will look the same since different people will define relationships in different ways. There are certain behaviors that can help guide you to have healthy relationships.



In a healthy relationship, you and your partner are both

Honest

Respectful

Trusting

Equal

Communicating

Enjoying personal
time away from each other

Making mutual choices

There is a spectrum of relationships, from healthy to unhealthy to abusive, some typical warning signs include:

- Extreme jealousy or insecurity
- Any form of physical harm
- Possessiveness or controlling behavior
- Explosive outbursts, temper, or mood swings
- Pressuring you or forcing you to have sex
- Putting you down frequently, especially in front of others
- Isolating you from your friends or family (physically or emotionally)
- Checking your phone or social media accounts without your permission



HOW TO TALK TO TEENS ABOUT CONSENT

Educating youth about the importance of empathy, healthy communication, setting boundaries, and respecting other people's boundaries and, of course, consent is key to preventing dating and sexual violence.

TIPS ON TALKING TO TEENS

Nip "locker room talk" in the bud

Teach your kids that it is inappropriate to speak of others like they're objects

We must model how to talk about crushes as real people

Talk honestly with kids about partying

State that you don't want them to use drugs and alcohol but you know partying happens

Teach them to help peers who are too drunk and that victims are not at fault

Keep talking about sex and consent

Continue to talk about sex and consent to show your teen how important these issues are to you

This also normalizes talking about consent and will make communication with partners easier

Create an explicit distinction between sex and assault. State that sex is not sex without consent.

Create an explicit distinction between sex and sex assault. State that sex is not sex without consent

Make it clear that sexual assault is never the victim's fault and that if someone needs their help, they should provide support

CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES

for staff and/or their teens

Center for Advocacy, Resources & Education (CARE)

<http://care.ucdavis.edu>

Confidential resources for any UCD student, staff, or faculty who has been impacted by sexual assault, intimate partner violence, stalking, and sexual harassment.

Academic & Staff Assistance Program (ASAP)

<http://hr.ucdavis.edu/departments/asap>

Confidential, cost-free assessment, intervention, consultation and referral services to all UC Davis and UC Davis Health faculty, staff and their immediate families.

Office of Ombuds

<http://ombuds.ucdavis.edu>

Confidential, independent, impartial and informal problem-solving and conflict management resource for all members of the UC Davis and UC Davis Health campus communities.

Empower Yolo

<http://empoweryolo.org>

24-hour crisis intervention, emergency shelter, confidential counseling, legal assistance, and other services for individuals and families affected by domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, and child abuse.