



Teen Dating Abuse Safety Plan

If you are in a relationship that has been frightening or violent, chances are it will happen again, even if your boyfriend or girlfriend has promised that it won't. For your own safety, it's important to be prepared just in case.

Remember, you do not have any control over your boyfriend/girlfriend's behavior. You do have control over how you prepare for it and respond to it.

Take a few minutes to respond to these statements and prepare your safety plan.

- These are the cues I've seen that my boyfriend/girlfriend is getting angry or violent:
- These are some situations I've been in where I haven't felt safe:
- If I think there might be an argument, I will try to go to a place where other people might hear and/or a place where there is less risk of injury.
(Avoid kitchens, bathrooms, garages, rooms without an exit, or being near anything that could be used as a weapon.)
- These are people I trust and can ask for help:
- This is my code word. I can share it with people I trust and use it to let them know I'm scared or need help:
- When I share my code word, I can tell the people I trust what kind of help I want. I can also tell them what not to do. Here is what I will tell them:
- If I'm with my boyfriend/girlfriend and am not feeling safe, here are some things I can say or do to get away:
- Exercise, confiding in someone you trust, or doing things that make you feel happy or successful are some ways to help manage the pressure of a difficult relationship.

Some people use drugs or alcohol to cope with their problems. But they can drain your energy, cloud your judgment and make you more vulnerable. Here are some things I can do to help myself cope:

- If I can't think of anyone I trust to talk to about my relationship, I can call a domestic violence or sexual assault program or crisis line at any time without giving my real name. I can ask them to help me find someone I can trust.

No one deserves to be abused. This is not my fault.

Adults, such as teachers, counselors and health care providers, are required by law (In North Carolina) to report abuse happening to anyone under age 18.

Safety planning if you decide to break up

If you decide to break up with an abusive boyfriend or girlfriend, it is important to have a safety plan in place before attempting to end the relationship. Sometimes during and after the break up are the most dangerous periods in the relationship.

If you are interested in a court order to protect you from your boyfriend or girlfriend, you may contact the Randolph County Family Crisis Center, Inc. at (336) 626-5040, for more information. If you are being assaulted or are afraid that an assault is about to occur, you can always call 911 or the police.

- I will plan the breakup carefully with the help of people I trust. If I don't have friends I can trust, I can talk to a parent, teacher or other adult. I can also call my local domestic violence or sexual assault crisis line anonymously. This phone number is (336) 629-4159. The more people who know what's going on and can look out for me and support me, the safer I am. These are the people I can trust to help me:
- It is not safe to break up with my partner in an isolated place. I will try to do it in public with people nearby who are part of my safety plan. If necessary, I will do it by phone, letter or email. This is where and when I will break up with my boyfriend/girlfriend:
- This is who I will ask to be watching out for me during the break-up:
- I will be very clear with my boyfriend/girlfriend that I am ending the relationship and that my decision is final. These are the words I will use:
- I will try to be prepared for my boyfriend/girlfriend's reaction. It could be violent, or he/she may be very sad, or may try to be very sweet and win me back.

- After breaking up, I will avoid being alone with my ex-boyfriend/girlfriend or being in a situation where she/he might try to corner me or talk me out of the break-up. This is what I will do if my ex tries to talk to me at my home, work, school or elsewhere:

- This is what I will say if my ex calls me:

- After breaking up, my ex may try to use other people to get through to me. If this happens, here is what I will say to them:

- Some other things I can do to keep myself safe:
 - Keep a cell phone or calling card with me, along with important phone numbers.
 - Ask friends, family and co-workers to screen my calls and not to relay notes or messages from my ex.
 - Block my ex's screen name so she/he cannot use Instant Messaging to bother me. Prevent my ex's access to my page on Facebook, MySpace, or other web sites where I share information.
 - Change my routine so I'm harder to locate.
 - Ask an adult that I trust at school to help me stay safe when I am there.
 - Have friends go to and from school with me and walk with me between classes.
 - Tell friends, family and co-workers to call school staff or the police if they see my ex bothering me.
 - Have someone I trust travel with me, sit with me, stay by me or watch out for me at my job, school events and other activities.
 - Arrange to call someone I trust to let them know that I have arrived safely or that I'm OK. If I do not call as planned, I will tell them to call the police.

Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Agency Near me:

Randolph and Montgomery County Family Crisis Center, Inc.

Asheboro Location:

624-A South Fayetteville Street, Asheboro, NC 27203

Business Phone: (336)626-5040

Crisis Line: (336) 629-4159

Archdale Location:

3201 Archdale Rd, Archdale, NC 27263

Business Line: (336)431-0072

Crisis Line: (336)434-5579

Troy Location:

225 N. Main St., Troy, NC 27371

Business Line: 910-571-9748

Crisis Line: 910-571-9745

Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationships

People in healthy relationships respect each other. They can talk honestly and freely to each other and share power and control over decisions. They trust and support each other and respect each other's independence. In contrast, an *unhealthy relationship* is unbalanced. One partner (a person in the relationship) tries to control the other.

Table I. Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationships

| <i>Healthy Relationships</i> | <i>Unhealthy Relationships</i> |
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| Equality —Partners share decisions and responsibilities. They discuss roles to make sure they're fair and equal. | Control —One partner makes all the decisions and tells the other what to do, or tells the other person what to wear or who to spend time with. |
| Honesty —Partners share their dreams, fears, and concerns with each other. They tell each other how they feel and share important information. | Dishonesty —One partner lies to or keeps information from the other. One partner steals from the other. |
| Physical safety —Partners feel physically safe in the relationship and respect each other's space. | Physical abuse —One partner uses force to get his/her way (for example, hitting, slapping, grabbing, shoving). |
| Respect —Partners treat each other like they want to be treated and accept each other's opinions, friends, and interests. They listen to each other. | Disrespect —One partner makes fun of the opinions and interests of the other partner. He or she may destroy something that belongs to the other partner. |
| Comfort —Partners feel safe with each other and respect each other's differences. They realize when they're wrong and are not afraid to say, "I'm sorry." Partners can "be themselves" with each other. | Intimidation —One partner tries to control every aspect of the other's life. One partner may attempt to keep his or her partner from friends and family or threaten violence or a break-up. |
| Sexual respectfulness —Partners never force sexual activity or insist on doing something the other isn't comfortable with. | Sexual abuse —One partner pressures or forces the other into sexual activity against his/her will or without his/her consent. |
| Independence —Neither partner is dependent upon the other for an identity. Partners maintain friendships outside of the relationship. Either partner has the right to end the relationship. | Dependence —One partner feels that he/she "can't live without" the other. He/she may threaten to do something drastic if the relationship ends. |
| Humor —The relationship is enjoyable for both partners. Partners laugh and have fun. | Hostility —One partner may "walk on egg shells" to avoid upsetting the other. Teasing is mean-spirited. |

The information in the above table has been adapted from the Liz Claiborne-sponsored web site www.loveisnotabuse.com, Youth Resource www.youthresource.com/our_lives/healthy_relationships, and the Center for Young Women's Health at www.youngwomenshealth.org/healthy_relat.html.

