

# Understanding Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships

## Worksheet For Teens



This worksheet is designed to help youth better understand boundaries, consent, and the signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships as well as how to support a friend.

According to data from [CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Survey in 2019](#), U.S. high school students who reported dating in the previous 12 months before the survey reported:

- About 1 in 12 experienced physical dating violence
- About 1 in 12 experienced sexual dating violence

Understanding the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships can potentially save lives. It's also important to talk about boundaries and in the context of all types of relationships—family relationships, friendships, and romantic relationships.

### Signs of a Healthy Relationship:

Arguing is not necessarily a sign of a healthy relationship. It is completely normal for people to disagree with one another. It is a sign that we are human. What matters most with disagreements is how they're handled—utilizing healthy communication to resolve potential conflicts.

- Equality
- Healthy Conflict Resolution
- Independence
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Trust

### Signs of an Unhealthy Relationship:

Learning the different behaviors in unhealthy relationships enables you to identify them in your own relationship with either a romantic partner, friend, or even family member. Most abusive relationships start out great making it more difficult for people to end or leave.

- Belittling
- Guilt
- Isolation
- Manipulation
- Possessiveness
- Volatility

### Boundaries:

Boundaries are limits you set for yourself in relationships. Identify your boundaries by taking note what makes you feel uncomfortable. Boundaries can change over time. If your friend or partner respects you, they will respect your boundaries.

- You have the right to set any boundary
- Have honest conversations with friend or partner about behaviors you feel are unhealthy
- Have open, ongoing conversations about boundaries
- Nobody should have to compromise their boundaries

### Consent:

- A choice made without pressure, manipulation, or under the influence of substances
- Anyone can change their mind at any time; consent is reversible (no means no!)
- Saying yes to one thing does not mean yes to something else; consent is specific

### How to Support a Friend:

If you or a friend might be experiencing a challenging time or if you're concerned about a potentially unhealthy relationship, tell a safe adult! You can also help a friend by providing support.

- Ask open-ended questions
- Avoid blaming, guilt, or shaming
- Focus on the unhealthy behaviors
- Expect to have more conversations
- Offer options and resources

**National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-7233 or Text START to 88788**

Additional resources available at <https://irespectandprotect.com/for-teens/#resources>.

*Review the following scenarios and answer the questions below.*

1. Your partner asks you to skip hanging out with your friends and stay with them.

How would you respond?

2. You suspect your friend's romantic partner is being controlling and possessive because they're demanding to know the passcodes and passwords to your friend's phone and social media accounts.

How would you respond?

3. You share something with a close friend, asking them to keep it a secret. You find out they broke that trust.

How would you respond?

4. Your partner is pressuring you to have sex, but you tell them no saying you're not ready. They reply, "But I love you, don't you love me?"

How would you respond?