

Parents and Caregivers' Information Sheet

Grade 9 - 2024-25

MY HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

MY TEEN DOESN'T HAVE ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS, HOW DOES THIS TOPIC CONCERN ME?

It's never too early to talk to your child about healthy relationships or dating violence prevention. Living with your first romantic relationships can bring out a variety of emotions. Being prepared for this experience can improve how it unfolds. When they are young, they are taught to share their toys, to be polite, etc. The learning of social relationships continues throughout life. Learning to be a good partner is also very important to have fulfilling romantic relationships. Making room for conversation - even if you don't think your teen is having an intimate relationship - is an important factor in preventing relationship violence.



HOW CAN I EQUIP MY TEEN TO RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS OF A HEALTHY OR UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIP?

- A healthy relationship is above all an egalitarian relationship in which each party feels respected, accepted, and secure. A healthy relationship is based on several essential points:
 - Honesty: we can share our emotions, we tell each other the truth and we are responsible for our actions.
 - Respect: we highlight each other's feelings and admit when we are wrong.
 - Equality: we make compromises and share decisions and tasks.
 - Safety: we respect everyone's limits (physical, emotional, and digital) and we control our anger.
 - Support: we listen without judgment, we trust ourselves and we encourage the happiness of the other.
 - Communication: we discuss things that are important to us and to the relationship.
- Conversely, an unhealthy or abusive relationship is often an unequal relationship in which there is anxiety, uncertainty, or even danger. Disagreements exist in interpersonal relationships, however, no one should feel threatened. Signs of an unhealthy relationship can include:
 - Physical violence: being pushed, hit, destroying property, or being prevented from entering or leaving a space.
 - Control: being told what to do, what to wear, whom to hang out with. Receiving threats and be forced to do certain things.
 - Humiliation: receiving insults or being put down in front of other people.
 - Unpredictability: a partner who gets angry easily and you don't know what triggers their bursts of anger.
 - Pressure: being pushed to do things you don't want to do or are not ready for.

HOW TO GUIDE MY TEEN TOWARDS HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS?

Refer to the resources below! Several organizations push for the promotion of healthy relationships and equip young people to discern the indicators of unhealthy relationships.

- Lead by example, demonstrating the importance of core values and principles in interpersonal relationships, such as respect, listening, collaboration, honesty and equality.
- Create an open space for questioning and ask your teen questions about their relationships and dating.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS YOUR TEEN IS AT RISK:

- Your teenager only participates in activities that include their partner or refuses to participate in activities that their partner would not like to participate in.
- Your teenager is worried about participating in activities that do not include their partner.
- Your teenager's partner is constantly texting them to track their movements.
- Your teenager has suddenly put aside goals and activities that previously meant a lot to them.
- Your teenager is cut off from friends or family because their partner doesn't get along with them.
- Your teenager's partner uses false compliments or doesn't hesitate to put them down.
- Your teenager changes the way they dress, put on makeup, or changes their eating habits because their partner is making comments.

Reference: Uneportegrandeouverte.ca,
Centre canadien de protection de l'enfance inc., 2011

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE CONVERSATION WITH YOUR TEEN?

- Offer examples and discuss healthy relationships around you or on TV.
- Encourage open conversations about it.
- Avoid pushing your teenager if they are not ready to talk about it. Try again at another time.
- Seize the opportunities that arise daily.
- Opt for several short informal discussions instead of a large formal discussion. This is less intimidating and promotes normalization.
- Reinforce the message that romantic relationships are fun and positive!
- Emphasize that violence is never acceptable.
- Discuss the options available to your teenager if they witness dating violence.
- Remind your teenager that they can always say no to situations that make them uncomfortable. They must also respect the rights of others.




HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO ENCOURAGE A CONVERSATION WITH YOUR TEEN:

- Ask your teen for their thoughts on what makes a relationship great. What changes from one relationship to another? You can start the conversation by telling your teenager about the qualities you look for in the relationships you build with others (for example: honesty, respect, humour).
 - Do your friends have romantic or intimate relationships? How are their relationships? What would you like for qualities in your future partner?
 - Have you ever witnessed unhealthy or abusive relationships in school with your friends? How did you feel about that?
 - What would you do if you witnessed abuse in a friend's relationship? What would you do if this happened to you?
 - How would you react if your partner texted you all day long asking what you are doing?
- Be sure to remind your teenager that they can always come to you if they are concerned for their well-being or that of a friend.

For more information: loveisrespect.org



Resources

 **Important!** If you are concerned about your adolescent's health, ask a professional for help, or call the helplines mentioned below.

Do not hesitate to communicate with the school staff: the counselor, the teacher or the principal. Your family doctor can also help, as can the following resources:

- **Kids Help Phone:** to confide in somebody, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Anonymous and bilingual. Toll-free number: 1-800-668-6868. kidshelpphone.ca
- **Phobies-Zéro (French only):** support and self-help group for people with anxiety, panic disorders, phobias and agoraphobia. 514-276-3105 or toll-free 1-866-922-0002.

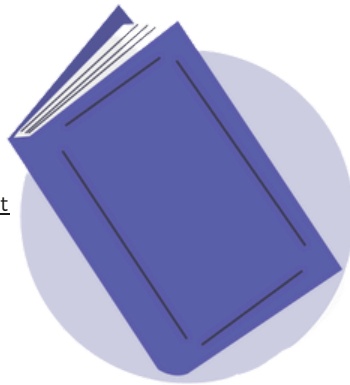


RESSOURCES EN FRANÇAIS

[Parents cyber-avertis](#)

[Communications et relations - Amour et amitié : la dépendance affective](#)

[Jeunesse j'écoute - Relations saines et malsaines](#)



RESOURCES IN ENGLISH

[Canadian Women's Foundation](#)

[Love is Respect - Healthy Relationships](#)

[JoinOneLove - Relationships 101](#)

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