

Does this sound familiar?

"Steve gets angry, and then tells me it's always my fault."

Sara, age 17

"Whenever we fight, I'm afraid to say what I want because I don't know if he's going to hit me."

Tasha, age 15

"He drives like a maniac just to make me scared."

Lee, age 17

"I feel pressured into doing sexual things that I don't want to, sometimes it's just not worth the fight."

Maritza, age 16

"I feel I can't do anything right, because she always tells me I'm stupid."

Chris, age 14

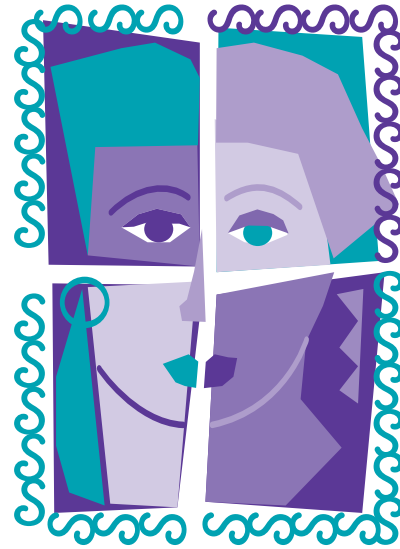
"Tyrell never let's me see my friends anymore, he always gets jealous and accuses me of cheating."

Monique, age 15

"He used to only push or grab me, but this last time he really hurt me."

Vicki, age 18

You are not alone.



Who gets abused?

Anyone could be a victim of dating or domestic violence. It doesn't matter if you are 14 or 40, white or black, rich or poor, gay or straight. No matter what, it is not YOUR fault.

In unhealthy relationships the physical or emotional abuse may not happen all the time. Abuse may happen in a pattern that can be hard to recognize. Even if your partner has been violent only a few times it is still abuse. Over time, the violence usually gets worse.

It is sometimes hard to leave a violent relationship because of feelings of guilt, denial, love, fear, or hope that things will get better.

Help When Love Hurts

Talk to someone. You can call a **hotline** to talk about what you are going through and have your questions answered immediately while remaining completely anonymous.

Counseling or support groups are helpful for you to talk with others who are in similar situations. You can talk about your feelings in an atmosphere where you'll be believed and listened to.

A **legal advocate** can explain your legal rights, options and provide emotional support. They may be able to go with you to the police station, court or help you obtain an order of protection.

If you don't feel safe where you are staying, you may want to talk to a hotline counselor about **safe housing**.

VIBS provides **FREE** and **CONFIDENTIAL** services to teens dealing with dating violence.



VIBS
24 HOUR HOTLINE
631-360-3606

on the web: www.vibs.org
e-mail: hotline@vibs.org
teens@vibs.org

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What is holding your relationship together?



LOVE

A healthy relationship is based on trust and respect. Each partner supports the other, tries to understand each other's experiences, and feels free to express his or her needs.

Some signs of a healthy relationship are:

- ☞ good communication
- ☞ sharing thoughts and feelings
- ☞ having friends and interests outside the relationship
- ☞ trust and respect
- ☞ no abuse

OR FEAR

Abusive relationships can start just like healthy ones – full of love, excitement and romance. As time goes on, what once felt loving or flattering starts to feel controlling and even frightening.

Some signs of an abusive relationship are:

- ☞ excessive jealousy
- ☞ threats and accusations
- ☞ name calling and humiliation
- ☞ possessiveness
- ☞ violence – hitting, forced sex, intimidation, shouting

The Bill of Personal Rights



I have the right to be treated with respect

I have the right to express my opinions

I have the right to show my feelings

I have the right to feel safe

I have the right to have other friends and outside interests

I have the right to privacy and time alone

I have the right to say "No"

I have the right to start a relationship slowly

I have the right to be myself

I have the right to spend time with my own friends

I have the right to tell a partner that violence will not be tolerated

I have the right to end a relationship

How to Help a Friend in an Abusive Relationship:

If your friend is being abused, take the situation seriously, listen and be supportive. Tell them they don't deserve to be abused and it's not their fault. The only person responsible for the violence is the abuser. Violence is a choice the abuser makes to gain control. Both the victim and the abuser can get help separately.

Some referrals and resources are:

- ☞ School social workers/psychologists
- ☞ Teachers
- ☞ Family
- ☞ Hotlines
- ☞ This brochure

respect

humor

commitment

trust

honesty

love

communication

jealousy

shame

guilt

threats

isolation

control

