

Healthy Relationships

WHY IT MATTERS

Dating violence occurs when one partner tries to maintain power and control over the other through one or more forms of abuse, including verbal, emotional, physical, sexual, and financial abuse. Dating violence affects both females and males, and does not discriminate by racial, social, or economic background. Help is available to teens who are involved in an abusive relationship, and no one deserves to be hurt or threatened. Every individual should, and has a right to be respected, be happy, and feel safe.

Healthy Relationship Quiz

- ♥ Do you feel safe and comfortable in your relationship?
- ♥ Do you spend time with friends and family outside of your relationship?
- ♥ Is your privacy respected and can you spend time alone?
- ♥ Can you express your feelings without fearing your partner's reactions?
- ♥ Do you feel comfortable refusing affection, a date, or other activities?

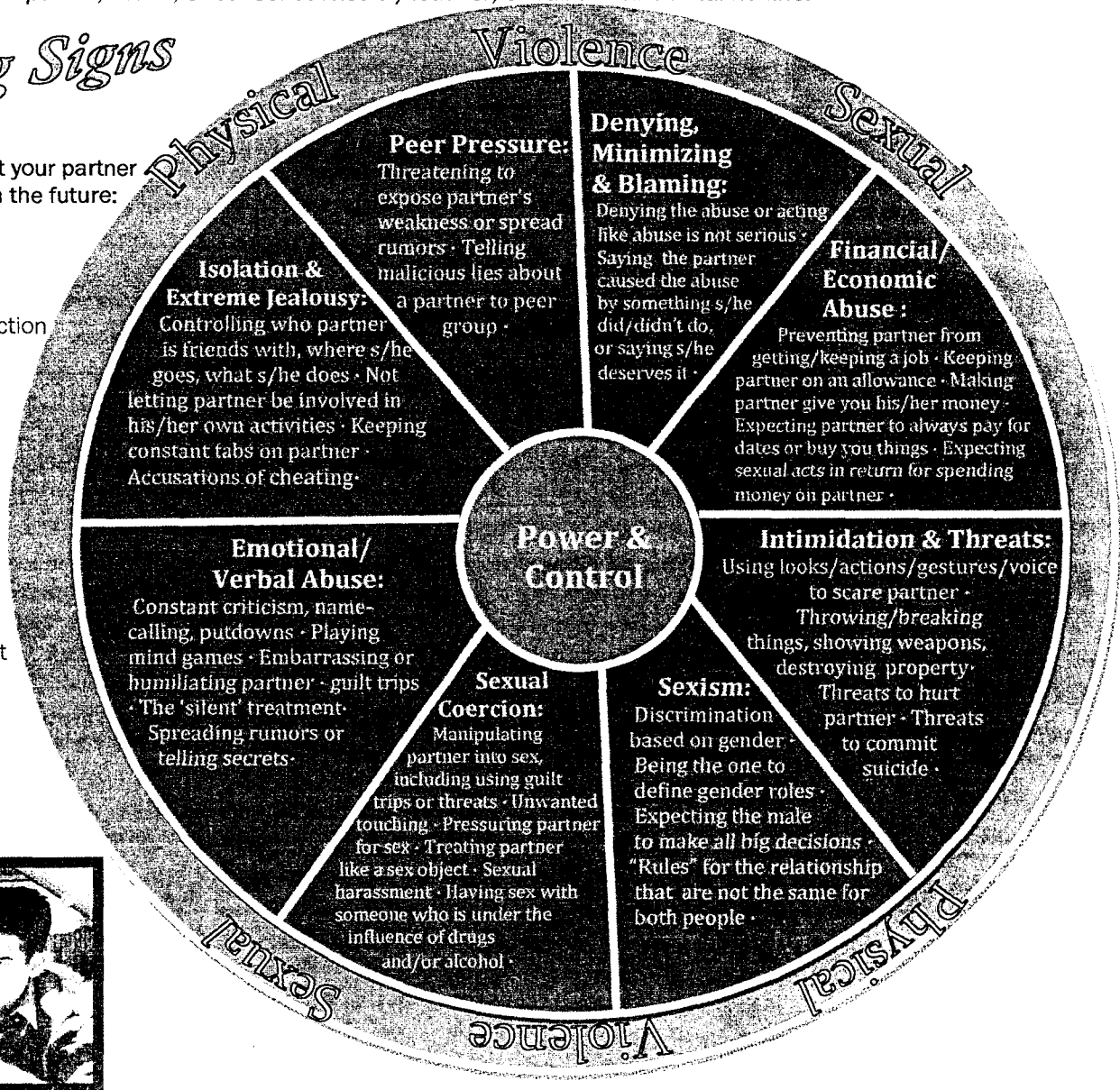
Studies show that, as a relationship gets more serious, abuse and violent behaviors will escalate.

If you answer "no" to any of the questions above, consider discussing your relationship with someone you trust, such as a parent, friend, or school counselor/teacher, or call a confidential hotline.

Warning Signs

Early warning signs that your partner may become abusive in the future:

- Extreme jealousy
- Controlling behavior
- Demands Sex or Affection
- Unpredictable mood swings
- Calls you hurtful or mean names
- Harms animals or children
- Slaps, pushes, or hits during an argument
- Limits your time with friends and family
- Threatens violence



How to date safely & prevent abusive situations:

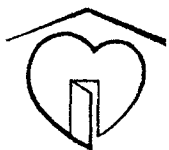
- ✓ Let a friend or family member know where you are going, especially in the beginning of a relationship. Consider double-dating for the first few times out.
- ✓ Memorize important numbers, keep a cell phone handy, and carry enough money for other transportation in order to get home (like a cab, subway, bus, etc.)
- ✓ Share your feelings and do not be afraid to say "no." Be firm and straightforward in your relationships.
- ✓ Be aware of your decreased ability to react when using drugs or alcohol.
- ✓ If you go to a party, make sure you have a plan for getting home safely.
- ✓ Trust your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable, find a way to calmly remove yourself from the situation.

Are you in a dangerous relationship? Next Steps:

- ✓ Get help immediately. What friends/adults can you tell? Talk about the relationship, your fears, and an action plan.
- ✓ Inform people at school (principal, teachers, security, etc.) in order to be safe.
- ✓ Always walk with a friend to school, classes, or after-school activities.
- ✓ Consider changing your cell phone number, route to school, and locker.
- ✓ Keep a record of the abuse by taking pictures of bruises or damaged property, and keeping a journal.
- ✓ Call the police to report the abuse.
- ✓ Do not see your partner alone. If you have to meet in person, meet in public and with your own friend.
- ✓ Contact a local domestic violence advocacy agency for support and more information.



Teen Power and Control and Equality Wheel adapted from the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, Duluth, Minnesota and www.michigan.gov/datingviolence; Image of couple from: <http://www.scottcounseling.com/wordpress/teen-dating-abuse/2008/02/01/> Hand image from: <http://nimis540.wordpress.com/2008/08/07/why-to-importance-holding-hands/>



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of Abused Families Inc

Washington County
Domestic Abuse and
Sexual Assault Services

