THINGS NOT TO SAY OR DO

- Don't be critical of your friend or his/her partner.
- Don't ask blaming questions such as: "What did you do to provoke him/her?", "Why don't you just break up with your partner?" or "Why can't you handle him/her?"
- Don't pressure your friend into making quick decisions.
- Don't assume he/she wants to break up with his/her partner or that you know what's best for your friend.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Start a peer education program on teen dating violence and present programs to classes at school or in your community.
- Ask your school library to purchase books about living without violence and the cycle of violence.
- Raise awareness by making posters or hosting programs at your school during Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October.
- Produce plays in your drama program that address teen dating violence or domestic abuse.

Don't forget to take care of yourself. Helping someone can be lots of work. Recognize your own efforts and reward yourself for helping a friend in need.

PLACES TO CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

- Local battered women's shelters or rape crisis centers
- California Youth Crisis Line 1-800-843-5200
- National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233
- Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network Hotline 1-800-656-4673
- The Legal Aid Foundation
- The public library

For further information on this program and other crime prevention material, write to:

Crime and Violence Prevention Center
California Attorney General's Office
P.O. Box 944255
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550

http://caag.state.ca.us/cvpc

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Teen Dating Violence

Crime and Violence Prevention Center
California Attorney General's Office

Teen dating violence is similar to adult relationship violence. It includes hitting, yelling, threatening, name calling, and other forms of verbal, sexual, emotional, and physical abuse. The number of incidents and the severity of the abuse increases as the relationship continues. Teen dating violence can be as lethal as domestic abuse. Dating violence affects about one in ten teen couples. Very few tell anyone who could help, such as a parent, a teacher, a counselor, or the police.

Questions to ask in identifying abusive behavior

- Does your partner get jealous when you go out or talk with others?
- Does your partner constantly check up on you?
- Do you find your partner saying "I can't live without you?"
- Does your partner frighten or intimidate you?
- Are you constantly apologizing for your partner's behavior?
- Do you feel like you have to justify everything to your partner?
- Does your partner try to impose restrictions on the way you dress or your appearance.
- Are you unable to disagree with him/her?
- Does your partner put you down, but then tell you he/she loves you?
- Have you been held down, shoved, pushed, hit, kicked, or had things thrown at you by your partner?
- Does your partner make you choose between him/her, or family and friends?
- Has your partner forced or intimidated you into having sex?
- Are you afraid to break up with your partner because you fear for your personal safety?

If you answered yes to one or more of the above questions, then the relationship may be abusive. Part of ending the violence is breaking the silence about the abuse. You CAN find a way out. Talk with someone who can help, such as your parents, a teacher, a school guidance counselor, a parent of one of your friends, a coach, an advisor, or your employer.

THINGS TO DO WHEN ENDING AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP

- Keep a dated record of the abuse.
- Do not meet your partner alone or let him/her in your home or car when you are alone.
- Avoid being alone at school, at work, and on the way to and from places.
- Vary the routes and times you travel to and from home, school, or work.
- Tell someone where you are going and when you plan to be back.
- Plan and rehearse what you would do if your partner confronted you or became abusive.

HOW TO HELP A FRIEND WHO IS IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP

- Talk to your friend and be nonjudgmental when discussing the abuse.
- Listen to your friend and believe him/her.
- Let your friend know that violence under any circumstance is unacceptable.
- Express your understanding, care, concern, and support.
- Point out your friend's strengths. He/she may not see his/her own abilities and gifts because of being blinded by the effects of the abuse.
- Encourage your friend to confide in a trusted adult. Offer to go with him/her for help.
- Talk to a trusted adult if you believe your friend's situation is getting worse.
- Help your friend by suggesting a counselor or an advisor you trust.
- Never put yourself in a dangerous situation by being a mediator.
- Call the police if you witness an assault.
- Read articles or books that could help you or your friend.