

# TALKING TO YOUR TEEN ABOUT HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

## 4 KEYS TO A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP



**Trust**



**Honesty**



**Respect**



**Communication**

Trust, honesty, respect, and communication are crucial keys to a healthy relationship every teenager needs to understand as they begin dating and engaging in romantic relationships. As a parent/guardian, it is important to model and instill these 4 keys as standards in your teen's life and relationships.

### Boundaries and Pressure



Boundaries are difficult for teens to set and stick to under pressure. Talk openly with your teen about what boundaries they wish to set so you can support them in their relationships. You can discuss physical touch, public displays of affection, and amount of time they wish to spend with their relationship partner versus with friends, family, and extracurriculars. Encourage them to come to you if boundaries are not respected.

### Technology and Relationships



Texting and social media can complicate relationships and communication. Setting expectations for your teen's phone use and teaching them to maintain privacy, communicate safely online, and use their phone for healthy communication is crucial in their relationships. Discuss what access you expect to have to their phone, who can and can't see their location, and the consequences of sending or posting inappropriate messages or pictures.

## HOW DO I ENCOURAGE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS?

- Talk about healthy relationships with and really listen to your teen. Guide them so they can recognize healthy and unhealthy relationships for themselves.
- Model what a healthy relationship looks like in your relationship.
- Find opportunities for teaching moments. Lyrics, TV, movies, etc. have messages worth discussing. You can talk about the messages that are unhealthy in popular media and reinforce family and personal values.
- Make your expectations clear to your teen. If they are in a compromising situation, they can use you as an excuse to get out of the pressure.
- Spend time getting to know your teen's friends and dating partners. Inviting them over for dinner or family time gives you the chance to see how they behave, interact with adults, and treat your child.

1 in 3 teens in the US experiences physical, emotional, or sexual abuse from a relationship partner before they become adults. For more information on healthy relationships or teen dating violence awareness and resources, go to <https://www.loveisrespect.org/>

If your youth is struggling with their mental health, it may be time to look into mental health services. Touchstone Health Services provides comprehensive behavioral health services. Check out what we offer or call us today!



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