



NETWORK TO
ELIMINATE
VIOLENCE IN
RELATIONSHIPS



PROJECT YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

Designed for the use with Pre-teen Children

Funded by the
Government of Canada's
Community Services Recovery Fund

Canada 

About Project Youth Violence Intervention and Prevention

This project is a helpful guide for children, from 10 to 18 years old, to learn about having positive healthy relationships. It teaches children how to notice the signs of relationship violence, which means when someone is being hurt or treated badly by someone they know, like a friend or family member. Children can also learn what to do if they or someone they care about is going through this tough situation.

The guide encourages children to take action and speak up against any kind of relationship violence. It's all about keeping everyone safe and happy. There are tips on how to talk to a trusted adult, such as a parent, teacher, or counselor, and how to support friends who might need help.

This toolkit is created for children, age 12 and under. It helps them understand these important things in a simple and easy way, with fun activities and stories that make learning easy and interesting. Children age 12 and younger can learn how to have healthy relationships and what to do if something doesn't feel right. It's never too early to learn about being kind, respectful, and safe in all relationships!

Also, remember: These symbols signal external links, that is to say, by clicking on them you will be guided to external materials:

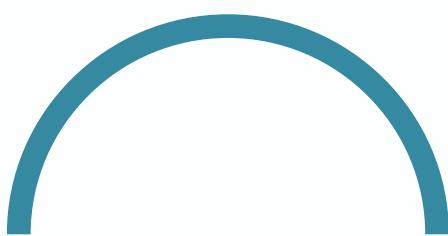
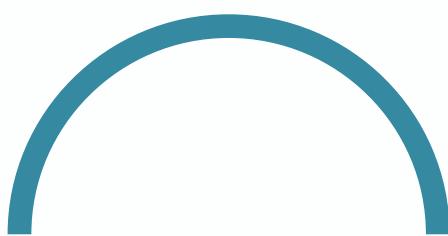


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Chapter 1

Healthy Relationships



Objectives

By the end of first chapter, you will be able to:

1. Recall the key characteristics of healthy relationships.
2. Explain the importance of consensual and healthy relationships in your lives.
3. Demonstrate the ability to identify non-verbal signs that someone may not be giving consent.
4. Analyze scenarios to determine if boundaries are being respected and how to assert your own boundaries.
5. Assess the characteristics of your own relationships to determine if they are healthy.
6. Develop strategies for building and maintaining healthy relationships in your lives.

What is a Healthy Relationship?

A good and healthy relationship is like a warm, cozy blanket on a cold day. It makes you feel safe and understood. In a good relationship, people support each other, respect each other's rules, and talk openly and honestly. It's like having a best friend who cheers you on and helps you when things are hard. Just like a plant needs sunlight and water to grow, a good relationship needs trust, kindness, and understanding to be healthy. So, if you feel happy, respected, and valued in your relationship, it's probably a good one!

People in a Healthy Relationship...

Treat each other with respect

Listen to each other

Talk to each other openly and honestly

Say good things about each other

Enjoy spending time with each other

Trust each other

Respect each other's boundaries

Can set boundaries without any fear

Everything is consensual



An Important Part of Every Healthy Relationship: Consent

Consent means asking before you do something with another person, like playing a game together. It's important to make sure everyone agrees and feels happy about it. So, always ask others if it's okay before you do something together, and respect their answer!

No Means No, but other things may mean no as well!

Sometimes, when someone doesn't say 'yes,' they might still be saying 'no' with their body language or how they look. Just like how a closed door means you can't come in, not getting a clear 'yes' from someone in a relationship means you should stop. Pay attention to how they appear and if they seem unsure or uncomfortable, check with them before doing anything. Remember, it's important to have a clear and happy 'yes' before doing anything together.



Non-verbal signs that someone may not want to do something or may not be consenting can include:

- Pulling away or trying to create space.
- Avoiding eye contact.
- Tensing up.
- Pushing the other person away.
- Trying to leave.
- Freezing or looking scared.
- Making unhappy faces.
- Crossing arms or legs defensively.
- Not responding or ignoring cues.
- Crying or looking upset.
- Shaking or trembling.



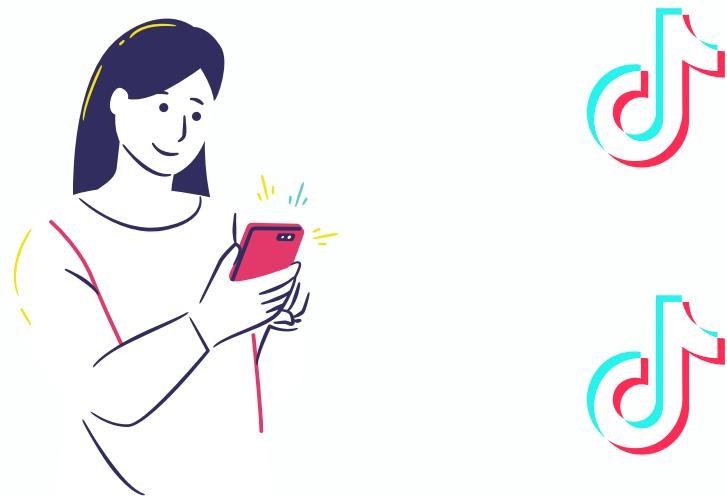
It's important to always respect these non-verbal signals and to seek clear verbal consent!



Setting Boundaries



Setting boundaries is like drawing lines on a map—it shows where you start and others stop. Just like how you wouldn't want someone coming into your room without asking, boundaries in relationships are about deciding what's okay and what's not okay for you. It's important to state your boundaries clearly and politely, whether it's about space, time, or behavior. Boundaries help make a safe and respectful place where everyone feels good. So, don't be scared to say what you need, because boundaries are important for good relationships!



How to Set Boundaries

- Take some time to think about what makes you feel comfortable and what doesn't. This can help you know where you need to set boundaries.
- Be clear about what you want. Say how you feel using "I" statements, and don't blame or criticize the other person.
- Starting with setting small boundaries and then moving to bigger ones can make setting boundaries easier.
- Once you've set a boundary, keep to it. Being consistent is important for having and keeping healthy boundaries.
- Taking care of yourself is really important for setting and keeping boundaries. Your needs and well-being matter, and it's okay to want your values and boundaries to be respected. It's also important to think about being part of a family and community, and to respect their values and ideas too. For example, if your family likes spending time together, you might need to set limits on how much time you spend on your phone. Or, if your school has rules about how to behave, you might need to follow those rules even if your friends are doing something different. Balancing your needs with the expectations of your family and community can help you handle relationships and duties better.
- If you're finding it hard to set boundaries, it's okay to ask for help. Talk to friends, family, teachers, or a therapist for support and advice.

Successful Examples of Setting Boundaries



Aarya and Alex are friends who like to study together. One day, Alex asks if they can study at Aarya's house instead of the library. Aarya feels uncomfortable studying at home with someone else, so she tells Alex, "I like studying at the library because it's quiet and public." Alex understands and agrees to keep studying at the library.



Sarah has a lot of schoolwork and activities. Her friend, Soren, keeps asking her to skip studying and go out instead, even though Sarah wants to focus on her grades. Sarah tells Soren, "I need to focus on my studies right now. If you keep asking me to skip studying, I may need to take a break from our friendship." Soren keeps pressuring Sarah, so she takes a break from their friendship until he respects her priorities.



During a group project, Amir notices that his classmate, Jess, often texts him late at night with project questions. Amir wants to help but feels uncomfortable texting late. He tells Jess, "I prefer not to text late at night. Can we discuss project questions during the day?" Jess understands and agrees to only text Amir during the day.



Exercises for Setting Boundaries

- Take some time to think about your personal boundaries in different areas of your life, like at school, work, relationships, and self-care. Write down what is important to you and where you feel comfortable or uncomfortable.

- Practice setting boundaries in front of a mirror or by writing it down. This can help you become more comfortable with saying no when needed.

- Close your eyes and imagine a situation where you need to set a boundary. Picture yourself confidently telling your boundary to another person.

- Write down some boundary-setting sentences that feel real to you, such as "I'm not comfortable with that," or "I need some space right now." Practice saying these statements out loud to yourself.

- Keep a journal and write about situations where you felt your boundaries were not respected and how it made you feel. Then, write about how you could have set a boundary in that situation and how it might have changed the result. This can help you prepare for boundary setting with someone in the future!

How Do I Set Boundaries with People Older Than Me?



Setting boundaries with parents, teachers, or anyone older than us might seem scary, but it's really important. It shows that you respect yourself and helps you have good relationships while looking after yourself.

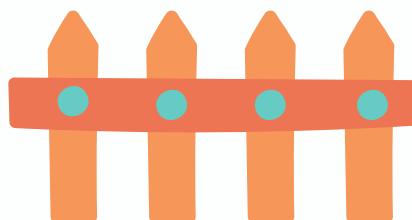
Think about what makes you feel good or not so good when you're with adults. Knowing this will help you know where to set boundaries.

When you talk to adults about your boundaries, be clear and confident but still respectful. Use "I" statements like "I need ..." or "I feel ..." instead of blaming them.

Find a quiet time to talk to them about your boundaries, when they can focus on you. Also, don't talk to them if they're upset about something else! Wait until they're calm and ready to listen.

Remember, some people might not respect your boundaries at first, but it's important to stick to them. Stay calm and firm, and explain your reasons kindly.

If you're finding it hard to set boundaries, talk to a friend, family member, or counselor for advice and support.





Example of Setting Boundaries with Older People

Your aunt sometimes tells you what to do and makes you feel bad about your choices. You can tell her politely that it bothers you. For example, you can say, "I don't like it when you criticize me. Let's talk without judging each other." If she keeps doing it, you might need to take a break from talking to her until things improve.



Seek Support!



Talk to a grown-up you trust, like a teacher or counselor, about how to set boundaries with adults. They can help you figure out what to say and support you as you practice setting boundaries.

Recognizing the Boundaries of Others

Respecting others' boundaries is key to having good relationships. It's like following road signs—knowing where it's okay to go and where it's not. Watching for cues, like what people say and how they act, helps us understand if they're okay with something. Respecting boundaries means respecting their personal space, feelings, and independence. It's important to listen, ask before doing something, and not cross lines they've set. When we respect others' boundaries, we make our relationships safe and respectful for everyone.





Examples of Recognizing the Boundaries of Others

- You're at a party with friends, and one friend looks uncomfortable when the group talks about something sensitive. You want to make sure they feel safe. You quietly ask if they're okay or need a break from the conversation. They appreciate your concern and take a moment to collect their thoughts. Respecting their boundaries shows empathy and helps everyone feel safer at the party.
- You and your friend are close, but they're going through a tough time and need space. You've been checking in more often, but they're not responding. They tell you they need space to deal with things and may not be available as usual. You respect their boundary and give them space, showing you can support each other even when it means respecting boundaries.
- In a school group project, one classmate seems uncomfortable with a task that needs them to talk in front of others. Instead of assuming, you ask them privately if they're okay with it. They admit they have anxiety about public speaking. By respecting their discomfort, you find a solution that works for everyone and builds trust in the group.

Exercises to help you be more mindful of others' boundaries:

- Pay attention to how people act and look to understand how they might feel. Notice when someone seems uncomfortable or distant. Even if they don't say it, you should still be respectful and kind.
- Practice with a friend to see how well you can understand each other's boundaries. This will help you get better at noticing cues from others. You'll also learn to accept when someone says "no."
- Listen carefully when someone talks to you. Don't cut them off or think about what you'll say next. This will help you understand their feelings and boundaries better.
- Write in a journal about times when you might have not respected someone's boundaries and when you did. Think about what you could have done differently.
- Ask friends or family if you're good at recognizing and respecting their boundaries. Use what they say to get better at understanding boundaries.

Communication Matters

Talking openly about feelings, needs, and concerns is key to strong relationships. It means sharing emotions and worries without fear of being judged. It's about creating a safe space where everyone feels listened to and supported.

By talking openly, we build trust. These conversations help us solve problems and make our relationships stronger. Open dialogue lets us understand each other, making our relationships more meaningful.

Imagine talking to a friend about a problem. In an open dialogue, both of you would listen and understand each other. You'd feel comfortable sharing your feelings, knowing your friend cares. Your friend would do the same, creating a safe place for honest talk. There would be no judgment or criticism, only support. This kind of talk helps your friendship grow, as you both feel respected and heard.

My Relationship Rights

1. Express my opinions and have them respected
2. Change my mind
3. Choose if and when I want to have sexual activity or to use safer sex practices
4. Have my needs be as important as others' needs
5. Not be emotionally, physically, or sexually abused
6. Choose to stop having sexual activity at any time
7. Choose my friends and/or partner(s) without discrimination or pressure from others
8. Fall out of love or end a friendship and/or a relationship without fear of negative repercussions and/or violence
9. Set clear boundaries that are respected
10. Say no

My Relationship Responsibilities

1. Listen carefully to others and show respect, even if you don't agree. Try to understand their point of view.
2. Respect that people can change their minds about decisions or plans.
3. Respect your partner's choices about sexual activity and always consider their comfort and boundaries.
4. Remember that others have needs as important as yours. Try to find a balance that works for everyone.
5. Treat people with kindness and respect, and avoid any form of abuse.
6. Always make sure you have clear and enthusiastic consent for any action.
7. Understand that others have the right to end a relationship or friendship without fear of harm.
8. Respect others' boundaries and don't pressure them into doing things they're not comfortable with.
9. Accept it if someone says no to a request or invitation.

My Legal Rights and Obligations



It's important to understand your legal rights as a person and why you should stand up for them. These rights are meant to keep you safe and protect your well-being. They include being protected from harm and abuse, having access to education and healthcare, and being able to express your views and have them respected. You also have the right to privacy and freedom of thought and religion.



To have a better understanding of your rights as a person under the age of 18, please view [here!](#)

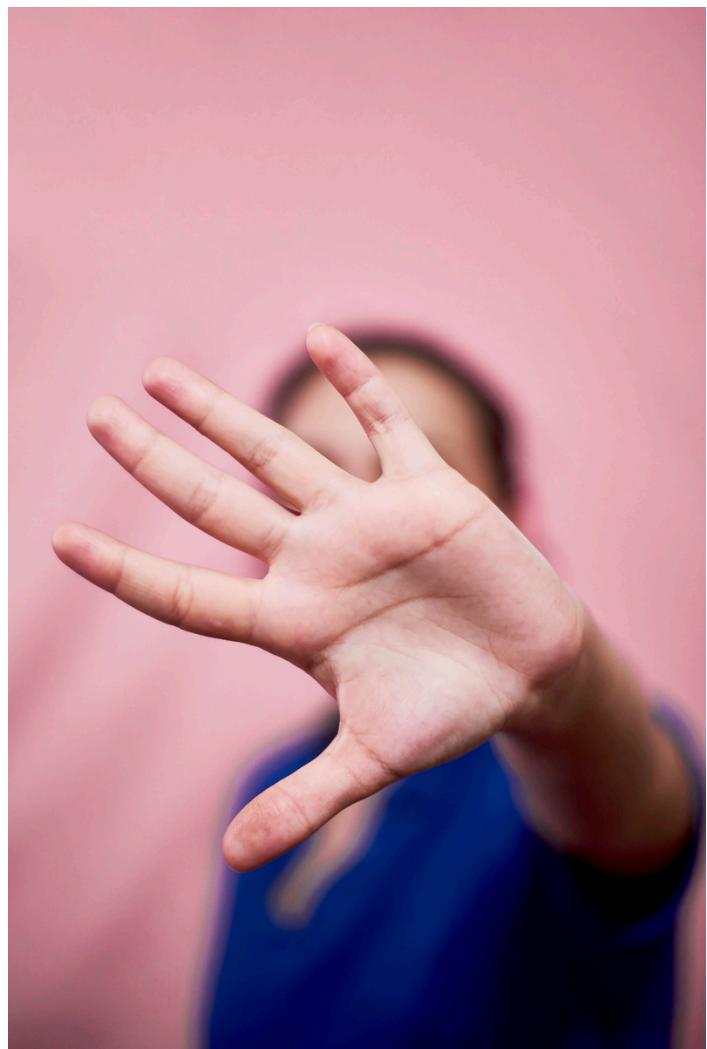
You should also know your legal responsibilities and understand what actions are criminal. Visit the following website to learn more about what counts as a crime. It's important to know that children can also commit crimes and may face legal consequences.



Check out [here](#) to know more about what actions are considered criminal!

Chapter 2

Relationship Violence



Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Recall the characteristics of unhealthy and violent relationships.
2. Explain the different forms of relationship violence and what they have or have not in common.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the cycle of abuse in relationships with imaginary scenarios.
4. Examine the impact of societal norms and values on individuals' vulnerability to violence through discussions.
5. Assess statistics related to relationship violence to increase awareness and understanding of how violence disproportionately affects different individuals with different identities.
6. Develop strategies to recognize and address unhealthy relationship dynamics.

What Is Relationship Violence?

Relationship violence (RV) is any kind of abuse—like physical, emotional, spiritual, sexual, or financial—that happens between people who have a relationship. It can happen to anyone, no matter their age, gender, race, or how much money they have. RV is also called by other names like intimate partner violence (IPV), domestic violence, neglect, dating violence, family violence, battery, child neglect and abuse, bullying and cyberbullying, elder abuse, male violence, sextortion, and stalking. RV is a serious crime that affects many people in Canada, but there are ways to prevent it.



DIFFERENT FORMS OF RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE

Make sure to check out the links for more information!

Physical: Physical violence means hurting someone on purpose. This can cause physical pain or injury that may last a long time. For example, hitting, punching, kicking, slapping, pushing, choking, throwing objects, using a weapon to harm someone, hurting pets, destroying property, etc. are all acts of physical violence.



Emotional: Emotional violence is when someone uses words or actions to control, scare, or isolate another person, or to make them feel bad about themselves. An example of emotional violence is when someone constantly puts you down, criticizes you, or makes you feel worthless. This can be done through hurtful words, insults, or manipulative behavior that undermines your self-esteem and makes you doubt yourself. Emotional violence can also involve threats, intimidation, or isolating you from friends and family to control you. It can also be done by excluding you from activities or by isolating you.



Sexual: Sexual violence is when someone touches you in any way or performs sexual acts on you without your permission. It can also happen when someone continues the sexual act even after you've told them to stop, or if they make you do sexual acts that are unsafe or embarrassing to you.



Financial: Financial abuse is when someone uses money or property to control or take advantage of another person. An example of financial abuse is when someone controls all the money in a relationship and refuses to let the other person access it. They might also force the other person to give them money or use their credit cards without permission, leaving the victim without the means to support themselves or make their own financial decisions. It may be that they make you buy them lunch or pay for their entertainment.



Neglect: Neglect is when someone who is supposed to take care of you doesn't provide you with things you need to stay healthy and safe. An example of neglect is when a caregiver doesn't give a child enough food to eat, doesn't provide them with proper clothing or shelter, or doesn't take them to the doctor when they are sick or injured.

Cyberbullying and Sextortion: Cyberbullying is when someone uses the internet or technology, like smartphones or social media, to embarrass, hurt, mock, threaten, or be mean to someone else online. Sextortion is a form of blackmail where someone threatens to distribute intimate images or videos of another person unless they provide them with more explicit and sexual material, money, or other forms of compensation. It can also involve threats to harm the victim or their loved ones if they do not comply with the demands. Sextortion is a serious crime that can have severe emotional and psychological consequences for the victim.



Harassment: Harassment involves repeatedly following, contacting, or watching over someone in a way that makes them feel threatened, intimidated, or unsafe. It can involve sending frequent texts or repeatedly asking for your location, ranging from every few minutes to several times per day. It can be in person or through social media.

Bullying: Bullying is emotional and physical abuse. It is when someone repeatedly behaves aggressively and intentionally hurts or harms another person to have power over them. Example is when someone spreads the word that you are not to be trusted or states they are going to beat you up if you tell anyone what you saw.

Social Control: Social control is when rules and expectations from society or family limit a person's freedom and rights. An example may be that the family does not want you to engage in a romantic relationship. It can be control if you do not share the same values as your parents and you can not work out a way that works for both of you.

Characteristics of a Violent Relationship

Control

One person tries to control the other's behavior, decisions, or activities.



Intimidation

There is a pattern of threatening or frightening behavior to manipulate or control the other person.

Physical Violence

This includes hitting, punching, kicking, pushing, or any other form of physical harm to you, your pet, or your property.

Emotional Abuse

This can involve insults, humiliation, threats, or constant criticism.

Isolation

The person who is abusive might try to keep the other person away from friends, family, or other people who can help. This makes it easier for the abuser to keep hurting them when they don't have anyone to turn to for help.



Characteristics of a Violent Relationship

Jealousy

Feeling overly jealous or possessive can be a sign that a relationship could become violent.



Blaming

The abusive person often blames the other person for their behavior or for "provoking" them.



Cycle of Violence

Sometimes, in a bad relationship, things get tense, then there's violence, and then the abuser says sorry and acts nice. But then, the violence happens again, and the cycle repeats.



CYCLE OF ABUSE

1. TENSIONS BUILD

The abuser creates tension and the survivor's stress builds.

2. INCIDENT

The abuser lashes out through physical, verbal, psychological or sexual abuse tactics to dominate the survivor.

4. CALM

Things seem peaceful, maybe even better than before. But often, this doesn't last long before the cycle starts over.

3. RECONCILIATION

The abuser makes excuses or attempts to apologize for the incident. Gaslighting is common, aka, "Nothing happened."

Note: The Cycle of Abuse was originally created by psychologist Lenore Walker.

The Cycle does not represent all cases of domestic violence.

DomesticShelters.org

Characteristics of a Violent Relationship

Denial, Gaslighting, and Minimization

The abusive person might say the abuse isn't a big deal or didn't happen, which can make it hard for the other person to realize they're being abused. They might also try to make the other person doubt their own memory or feelings, which is called gaslighting.



GASLIGHTING



Making you question reality

Convincing you that a problem isn't a problem

Reverse Victim Offender

Lying even when there is proof

Projects their own behavior on you

Telling you you're imagining things

RAY
FAMILY THERAPY

Credit: [Ray Family Therapy](#)

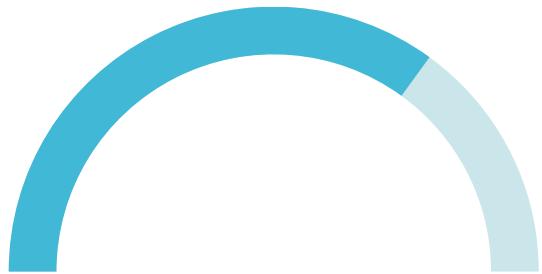
Power and Control Wheel



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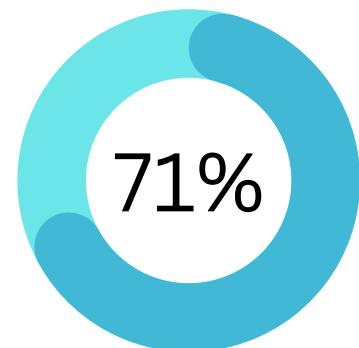
Did You Know...

In 2021, more children and youth experienced family violence than before the pandemic in 2019. Compared to 2020, there was also a higher rate of family violence involving children and youth.



70% of relationship violence is NOT reported to the police.

Some groups of people are more likely to experience relationship violence. This includes Indigenous peoples, those who need care, immigrants, and people who are not financially independent.



According to Canadian Health Survey on Children and Youth (CHSCY) (2019), 71% of Canadian youth aged 12 to 17 reported that they had experienced at least one form of bullying (physical, verbal, social or relational, cyberbullying, etc.) in the past year.



25%

Relationship violence makes up more than a quarter (over 25%) of all violent situations reported to the police.

Settings Where Relationship Violence May Occur

Relationship violence can happen in many places, like at home with family or partners, among neighbors, in communities, schools, workplaces, and even in gangs. It can affect anyone, no matter their sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, or other factors.

Household

Violence can happen at home to anyone, including babies, children, adults, and older people.

Residential care

Not giving people what they need, like food or medical care, and controlling them are signs of relationship violence in residential care centres.

Education

Sometimes, people can be mean or hurtful in schools or post-secondary institutions to teachers or other students.

Cyberbullying

Sending mean or threatening messages by email, text or social media, posting embarrassing rumors, stories, pictures, jokes or any content online that causes humiliation is RV.

Workplace

At work, relationship violence can begin with things like name-calling or excluding someone and can get worse, even turning into physical or sexual violence.

Why Does the Violence Continue?

CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

In an abusive relationship, there's often a cycle of tension, then an explosion of violence, followed by a period of calm and apologies. The person might feel hopeful during these calm times, thinking the situation will get better.



LOW SELF-ESTEEM

People who are abused may feel bad about themselves, especially because the abusive person makes them feel worse. This can make them feel like they need the abusive partner and make it hard for them to leave. Abusers might feel insecure or not good enough themselves, so they use violence and bullying to control others and feel better about themselves.

FINANCIAL DEPENDENCE

Money can be a big factor. People who rely on their abusers for money might worry about being poor or not having a place to live if they leave.



MANIPULATION AND GASLIGHTING

Abusers might try to control and confuse others by tricking them or making them doubt themselves. This can make it hard for abused people to see the abuse or think they can end the relationship.



LACK OF SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Abused people might feel alone, without people to support them or help them. If they don't know about places that can help, they might feel stuck and unable to leave the abusive relationship.



HOPE FOR CHANGE

Some people might hope the abuser will change, especially when the partner seems sorry and promises to do better.

Why Does the Violence Continue?

SHAME, FEAR, AND GUILT

People might feel bad or blame themselves for the abuse, which can stop them from getting help or telling someone about it. They might also worry that the abuser will hurt them if they tell anyone, so they keep quiet.



LACK OF AWARENESS OR EMPATHY

People might not know what a healthy relationship looks like or why violence is wrong. Some people might not understand how others feel, which can make it easier for them to act harmfully without thinking about the results.

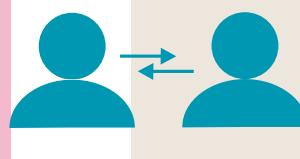


ENVIRONMENT

Some people might learn to bully from what they see at home, from friends, or from TV and social media. Problems at home, like seeing violence or not getting enough attention, can make children behave aggressively, including bullying others.



SOCIAL DYNAMICS



Sometimes, wanting to be like others in a group can lead to bullying and violence. People might feel they need to act a certain way to fit in with their friends.

POWER IMBALANCE

Relationship violence often happens when one person thinks they are more powerful or stronger than the other. This can be made worse by how schools or communities are set up.



CULTURAL AND SOCIAL NORMS

Some norms and rules make people not see bullying as a big deal or think it's okay to be mean. For example, some think that men should be more powerful than women, which can lead to violence.

Factors Specific to Indigenous Peoples

Historical Trauma

Indigenous communities have faced long-lasting pain from colonization, forced moves, and being told to give up their culture. This can affect people and communities for a long time.

Displacement and Land Disputes

Many indigenous peoples have been forced to move out of their lands, making it hard to keep their culture and traditional ways.

Systemic Discrimination

Indigenous peoples often face unfair treatment in things like school, work, and healthcare, which makes it harder for them to succeed.

Economic Marginalization

Indigenous communities may not have as many job options or money, which can make life difficult.

Health Disparities

Indigenous populations may not have enough access to healthcare.

Limited Legal Protections

Some indigenous peoples don't have enough laws to protect their land, resources, and culture, which makes them easy targets to get hurt.

Stereotyping and Prejudice

Some people have wrong ideas about indigenous peoples, which can lead to unfair treatment.

Lack of Representation

Indigenous communities may not have enough say in politics and decisions, so the rules and policies may not help them enough.

Factors Specific to LGBTQ2SIA+ Individuals

- Worried about others knowing they are not straight when they are still not ready to tell everyone, or fear of being rejected by their friends.
- Feeling like their partner is their only connection to the LGBTQ2SIA+ community.
- Scared of facing homophobia, transphobia, and hatred from those who are supposed to help.
- Not knowing where to find LGBTQ2SIA+ support.



Factors for Immigrants

- Feeling stressed and judged after moving.
- Worries about being stereotyped and feeling alone, leading to silence.
- Struggling with the changes after moving, like money and status.
- Having trouble with English or French and not knowing where to get help.

Factors for Immigrants from Colonized Countries

- Carrying the pain of past laws in Canada.
- Facing discrimination based on how they look, like skin color or tattoos.



Warning Signs

What You Might Notice in People Experiencing Relationship Violence

Remember, these signs don't always mean abuse is happening, but they could be a sign that someone needs help. If you think someone might be experiencing abuse, tell someone who can help, like a teacher or counselor.

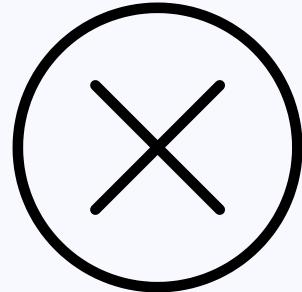
Emotional/Psychological Violence

- Living in Fear
- Feelings of Shame, Guilt, or Embarrassment
- Low Self-Esteem
- Depression or Other Mental Illness (PTSD)
- Eating and Sleeping Problems
- Loss of Energy
- Self-Blame and Self-Harm
- Suicidal Thoughts/Tendencies
- Isolation



Sexual Violence

- Poor Body Image and Low Self-Esteem
- Inability to Have Healthy Intimate Relationships
- Unplanned Pregnancy
- Reproductive & Gynaecological Problems
- Self-Harm or Risky Behaviors
- Flashbacks or Triggers
- Dissociation:
- Substance use:
- Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms:



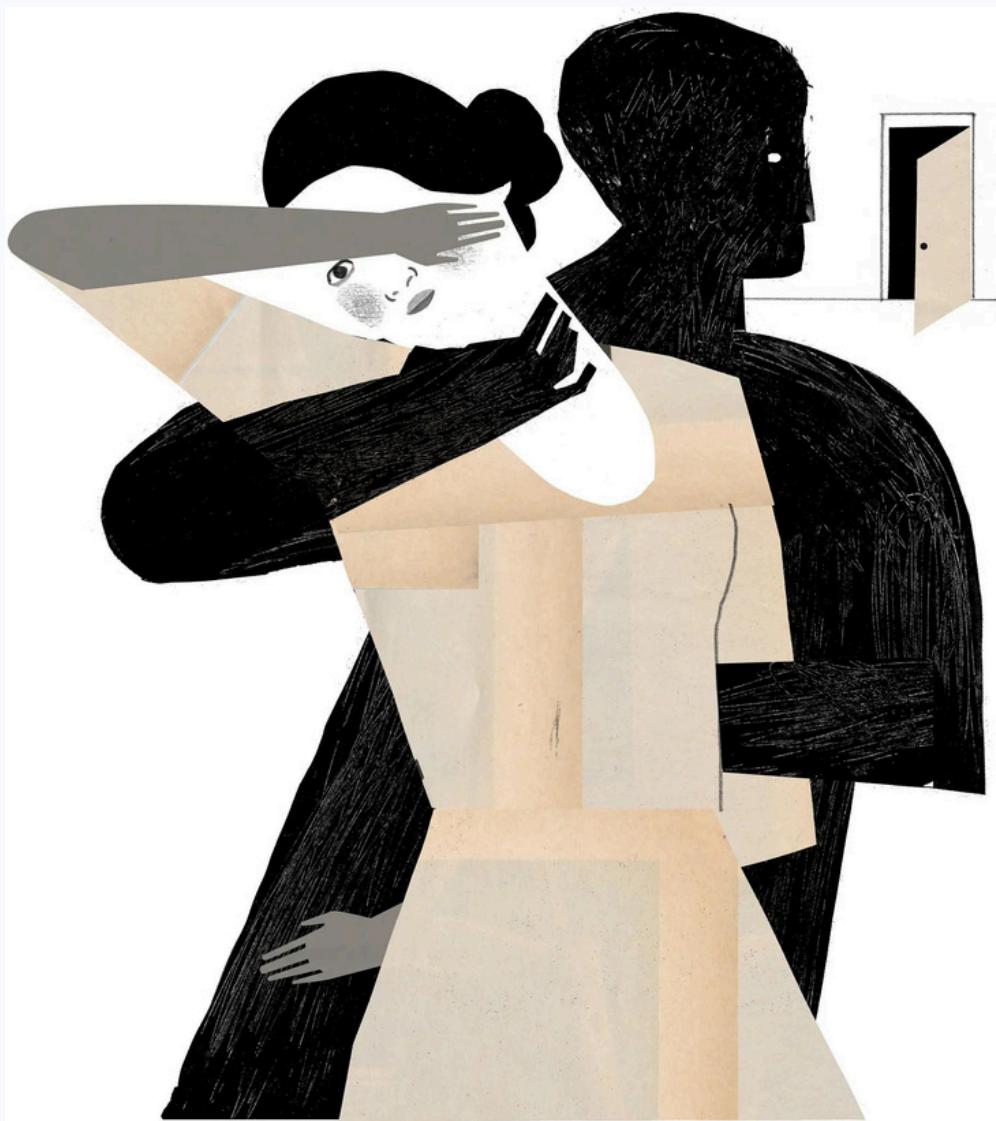
Physical violence

- Disability such as blindness, deafness, loss of mobility
- Broken bones and/or teeth
- Head or spinal injuries
- Cuts, concussions, headaches and bruises Living in isolation
- Hiding injuries



Financial Violence

- Limited access to money or transportation
- No access to bank accounts
- Not allowed to work, attend job fairs or training
- No control or say in how money is spent
- Forced to work in a family business where there is no pay and no child support



Credit: New York Times

Risk Factors



Risk Factors for Relationship Violence

History of Violence: Someone who has been violent before might be more likely to be violent again.

Substance Use: Using drugs or alcohol can make someone more aggressive and likely to be violent. It may also be a coping mechanism for being survivors of violence.

Power Imbalance: When one person has a lot more power than the other, it can lead to abusive behavior.

Low Self-Esteem: Feeling bad about oneself can lead to trying to control others to feel better.

Jealousy and Possessiveness: Being overly jealous and wanting to control someone can lead to abusive behavior.

Family History: Growing up in a violent home can make violence seem normal.

Social Isolation: Not having friends or family around can make it harder to get help.

Lack of Education and Awareness: Not knowing what a healthy relationship looks like can lead to unhealthy behavior.

Signs of Abusive And Violent Behavior to Watch For

Excessive Jealousy: Always being suspicious and jealous.

Isolation: Trying to keep the partner away from friends, family, or social activities.

Controlling Behavior: Monitoring the partner's whereabouts, controlling money, or making decisions without agreement.

Stalking or Harassment: Following, showing up unexpectedly, or spying. Harassing the partner or their friends online or in person.

Threatening Behaviors: Threatening to harm or kill the partner or anyone close to them.

Verbal or Emotional Abuse: Insults, humiliation, degradation, or threats meant to hurt emotionally.

Physical Violence: Hurting the partner physically, like hitting, slapping, or pushing. Also, damaging property or harming pets.

Sexual Coercion: Forcing or pressuring the partner into unwanted sexual activities.

Unpredictable Mood Swings: Frequent and extreme mood changes that create fear and tension.

Possessiveness: Treating the partner as if they're property, not an individual.

Manipulative Behavior: Tricking others and using guilt to control the partner.

Ways to Intervene

Before getting involved, ask yourself if it's safe. If the situation is violent or getting worse, don't intervene directly. Instead, call 911.

If you think someone is in a violent relationship, here's how you can help:

Listen and Believe: Listen without judging and believe what they tell you.

Offer Support: Let them know you're there for them and offer to help.

Safety Planning: Help them create a plan in case they need to leave quickly or decide to stay. To safety plan:



Encourage Professional Help: Suggest they talk to a counselor, therapist, or support group. Also, recommend reaching out to trusted individuals, like family and friends.

Provide Resources: Share information about local shelters, hotlines, and support services.



Respect Their Choices: Ultimately, it's their decision. Respect their choices and offer support without pressure.

An Important Resource: Kids Help Phone: Call 1-800-668-6868 (toll-free) or text CONNECT to 686868. Available 24/7 for anyone in Canada aged 5 to 29 who needs confidential and anonymous care from trained responders.

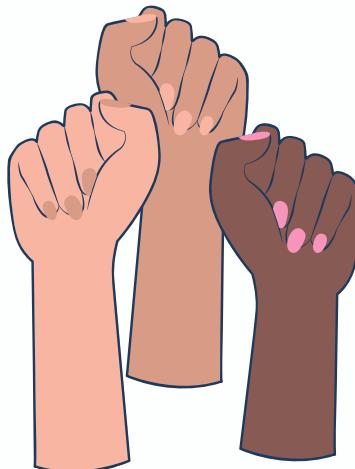
Social Determinants of Health

Systemic inequalities, like racism and gender norms, can make violence more likely to happen. For example, when women are expected to accept everything they are told, they may be less likely to speak out against abuse. Toxic masculinity, which values violence in men, can also lead to violence.

It's important to challenge these harmful ideas to prevent violence. Discrimination based on race, ability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or nationality can also make people more vulnerable to violence by limiting their access to resources and fostering resentment.

Examples

Racial minorities sometimes don't get the same fair treatment as others, which can lead to problems. For example, they might not get the same good healthcare, education, or safe places to live. This can make life harder for them and might even put them in dangerous situations. For instance, some children may not have enough food, so they might have to do things they don't want to do just to get lunch at school.



To stop violence, we need to change the way people think about aggression and dominance. We should promote understanding, respect, and fairness for everyone. By creating communities where everyone feels safe and important, we can help stop violence.

What Can We Do about Social Inequalities?



We can all help make our communities better by learning about fairness and equality. When we see something unfair, we can speak up. We can also help by volunteering and being a good friend to others. Together, we can make our communities more inclusive and peaceful.



For more information on how to support a friend, check this website out:



To help friends facing discrimination or violence, you can start a safe group where everyone shares their feelings to listen and support each other. This shows that no one is alone. Respect each other's experiences, even if they are different from yours. You can also join a workshop about fairness and equality. Watch documentaries, read articles, and discuss how to make things better. This helps you understand and take action against discrimination.



Chapter 3

How to Maintain a Healthy Relationship



Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

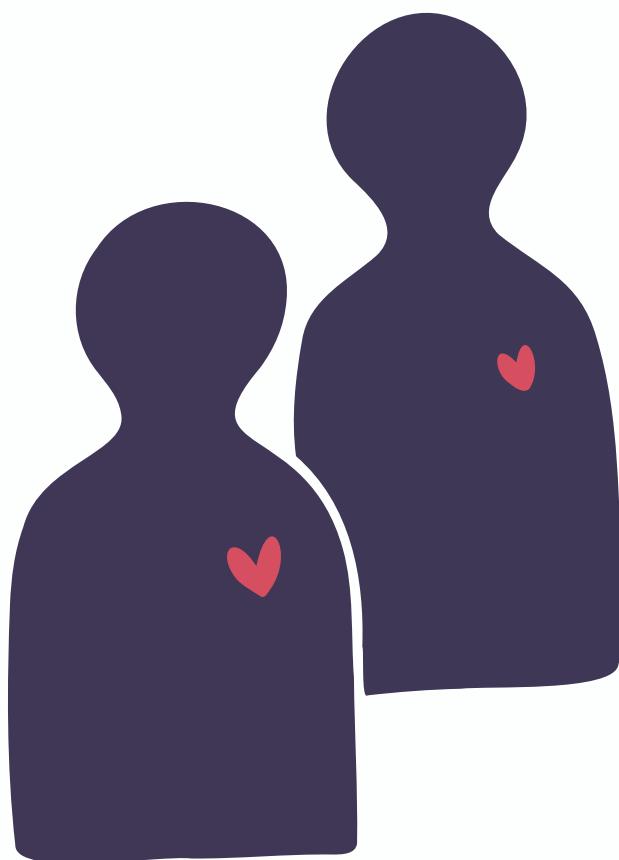
1. Describe effective communication strategies in relationships.
2. Explain the importance of mutual respect in a healthy relationship.
3. Discuss the role of empathy in understanding and supporting others in a relationship.
4. Apply conflict resolution strategies to address disagreements in a relationship.
5. Demonstrate active listening skills in a relationship setting.
6. Analyze the impact of different communication styles on relationship dynamics.
7. Compare and contrast healthy and unhealthy relationship patterns.
8. Develop a plan to maintain a healthy relationship over time.
9. Create strategies to navigate challenges and changes in a relationship.
10. Evaluate personal communication skills and identify areas for improvement in maintaining healthy relationships.
11. Critique media portrayals of relationships and their influence on relationship expectations.

How to Maintain a Healthy Relationship

Healthy relationships need effort from both sides. Communication is key—be open, honest, and respectful. Listen carefully and understand each other's feelings. Respect boundaries to feel safe and respected. Support each other's goals and enjoy successes together. Spend quality time but also give space for individual interests. Conflict happens, but learn to resolve it calmly and positively.

Also:

- Have a positive relationship with yourself.
- Celebrate differences.
- Listen actively to others.
- Be present and give people time.
- Improve your communication skills.
- Be understanding.



Example

Leila and Maya have been best friends for as long as they can remember, and they always make sure to talk things out when they have disagreements. Recently, Leila's family decided to move to a new town, which meant she would have to change schools. Leila was worried about leaving Maya and their other friends behind. However, Maya listened to Leila's concerns and understood how important the move was for her family. They talked about ways to stay connected, like video calls and visits during school breaks. Maya supported Leila's decision and promised to stay in touch no matter what. Through their open communication and support for each other, Leila and Maya were able to navigate this big change in their friendship and remain close despite the distance.



Active Listening Techniques

Active listening is when you really focus on what someone is saying, not just hearing the words. You remove all other thoughts and focus on the person. You pay attention to their tone, body language, and emotions to understand their message completely. You show you're listening by nodding, making eye contact, and giving feedback. You might ask questions to make sure you understand. Active listening helps build trust, resolve conflicts, and create strong relationships.



Photo Credit: Wide Lens Leadership

Exercise: Practicing Effective Communication in Relationships

1. Choose a partner to participate in this exercise with you.
2. Choose a specific topic and have a focused conversation about it with your partner.
3. Use active listening techniques to ensure you understand your partner's perspective. This includes maintaining eye contact, nodding to show understanding, and summarizing what they've said.
4. Practice expressing your thoughts and feelings clearly and calmly. Use "I" statements to express your emotions and avoid blaming language.
5. Discuss a specific topic or issue that is important to both of you. This could be a decision you need to make together, a conflict that needs resolution, or simply a topic you both find interesting.
6. Reflect on the conversation afterward. What did you learn about your partner's perspective? How did your communication skills impact the discussion?
7. Repeat this exercise regularly to continue improving your communication skills and deepening your understanding of each other.



Exercise: Maintaining a Healthy Relationship



1. Reflect on a past or current relationship (friendship, family, romantic) that you consider healthy and fulfilling.
2. Identify three key aspects or behaviors that contribute to the health of this relationship (e.g., open communication, mutual respect, quality time together).
3. Write a brief description of how each aspect or behavior is demonstrated in your relationship.
4. Consider how you can apply these aspects or behaviors to other relationships in your life.
5. Share your reflections with class/ a trusted friend, family member, or counselor, and discuss how you can incorporate these practices into your relationships.



The Importance of Talking to a Trusted Adult

Talking to a trusted adult is important because they can offer advice, support, and help you access resources. If you don't have anyone you trust, try to find someone you can talk to. Most parents would want to help if they knew you wanted support, even if they may not know how to initially. Having conversations with someone can lead to finding solutions and getting the support needed. It's important to choose an adult you feel comfortable with and who you trust to keep your conversation confidential, especially when discussing sensitive topics.



Case Study: Sarah's Story

Sarah is 16 years old, and she has been experiencing bullying at school for several months. The bullying started when a group of classmates began calling her names and making hurtful comments about her when they realized she is attracted to girls. Sarah tried to ignore the bullying at first, hoping it would stop on its own, but it only seemed to escalate.

Sarah's grades started to decline, and she began avoiding school altogether, which concerned her parents. One day, Sarah's parents noticed bruises on her arms and asked her about them. Sarah broke down and admitted that she had been physically bullied by a group of youth in addition to the verbal bullying.

Feeling overwhelmed and scared, Sarah's parents immediately contacted the school principal to discuss the situation. The principal took the bullying allegations seriously and launched an investigation. The bullies were identified and faced disciplinary action, including counseling and a suspension from school.

Sarah also began seeing a counselor to help her cope with the emotional impact of the bullying. With support from her parents, school, and counselor, Sarah gradually started to feel more confident and safe at school. She learned strategies to deal with bullying, such as assertively standing up for herself and seeking help from adults when needed.

Over time, Sarah's grades improved, and she regained her enthusiasm for school and social activities. The experience taught Sarah the importance of speaking up about bullying and seeking help from trusted adults. She became an advocate for anti-bullying initiatives at her school, helping to raise awareness and support other youth who were experiencing similar challenges.



Role Modeling

Role models are important because they show us how to behave and what to believe in. Children often look up to adults like parents and teachers as role models. These adults can teach Children good things like being kind, caring, and respectful. But if adults act badly, children might copy that too.

Adults can also show children how to handle tough situations. If adults stay calm and solve problems peacefully, children will learn to do the same. But if adults get angry or fight, children might learn to do that too.

It's good to think about the adults you look up to and how they act. Try to find people who are kind, honest, and strong. Watch how they deal with tough times and learn from them. Remember, others might look up to you too, so try to be a good role model by being kind and respectful to others.



Case Study: Maya's Experience with Role Models

Maya is a 14-year-old student who has always looked up to her older sister, Sofia, as a role model. Sofia is confident, kind, and excels in school and extracurricular activities. Maya admires her sister's ability to balance academics, sports, and social life effortlessly.

One day, Maya overhears Sofia talking to a friend about skipping school to go to a party. Maya is shocked and disappointed, as she has always seen Sofia as a responsible student. She feels torn between her admiration for her sister and her own values of honesty and integrity.

Maya decides to talk to Sofia about what she overheard. Sofia admits that she made a mistake and assures Maya that she is still learning and growing, just like everyone else. She apologizes for not setting a better example and promises to do better in the future.

This experience prompts Maya to reflect on her own role as a potential role model for her younger cousin, who often looks up to her. Maya decides to be more mindful of her actions and words, knowing that she has the power to influence others, just like Sofia influenced her.

Through this experience, Maya learns that role models are not perfect and that it's okay to make mistakes. What's important is acknowledging those mistakes and striving to be a positive influence in the lives of others. Maya's relationship with Sofia deepens as they both learn and grow from this experience.



Co-Regulation and Support Systems



Co-regulation and support systems are important for our feelings and mental health. Co-regulation means how we control our emotions when we're with others. It's really helpful when we're stressed or facing problems. When we see someone else staying calm during hard times, it can help us feel calm too.

Support systems are people who help us emotionally, practically, and sometimes financially. Having a strong support system can help us manage our emotions better. For example, talking to someone when we're stressed can make us feel better. Having supportive relationships can also help us handle tough times better.

Support systems can include family, friends, teachers, and mental health professionals. It's important to keep these relationships strong and ask for help when we need it. By having supportive relationships and learning to control our emotions with others, we can become stronger and feel better overall.

Secure Attachment

Secure attachment is like having a strong and happy connection between a baby and their main caregiver, usually a parent. The baby feels safe and protected, which lets them explore and learn about the world. This special bond is super important because it helps the baby grow up feeling good about themselves and makes it easier for them to make friends and have good relationships when they grow up.

This special bond happens when the caregiver is always there for the baby, responds quickly when the baby needs something, and gives lots of love and comfort. When this happens, the baby learns that they can trust their caregiver and that the world is a safe place.

When this special bond doesn't happen, it can make it hard for us to feel close to others or trust them. We might feel scared to get close to people, but also really want to be close to them. We might feel like we need a lot of reassurance from others but also worry about being rejected. This can make us feel not good enough or like we can't handle our emotions well.

Having a secure attachment helps us learn to manage our feelings. When we don't have this, we might have a hard time controlling our emotions, which can lead to outbursts or feeling numb inside. Not having a secure attachment when we're young can also make it more likely to have mental health issues when we're older, like feeling anxious or sad a lot.

Understanding secure attachment is important for building healthy relationships and feeling good about yourself. Here's how you can use this knowledge to improve your relationships:

1. Think about how your early relationships with caregivers shaped how you connect with others now.
2. Try to be understanding and caring towards others, especially those close to you.
3. Talk openly and honestly with your loved ones about your feelings and listen to theirs.
4. If you're having trouble with relationships, talk to someone you trust or a mental health professional for support.
5. Work on being a reliable and trustworthy friend or partner to build secure attachments with others.



Case Study: Lily



Lily, a 14-year-old girl, feels lonely and struggles to connect with others, including her peers. Her parents are often away for work, leaving her feeling neglected at home. These challenges come from her early experiences of inconsistent caregiving. As a result, Lily finds it hard to trust others and fears getting close to them.

Lily is working hard to improve her situation. She attends therapy to work through her feelings and has joined school clubs to make friends. Through these efforts, Lily is learning to trust others and believe in herself. She is hopeful for a future where she can have meaningful relationships.

To know more about different attachment styles, see here:



Secure Attachment

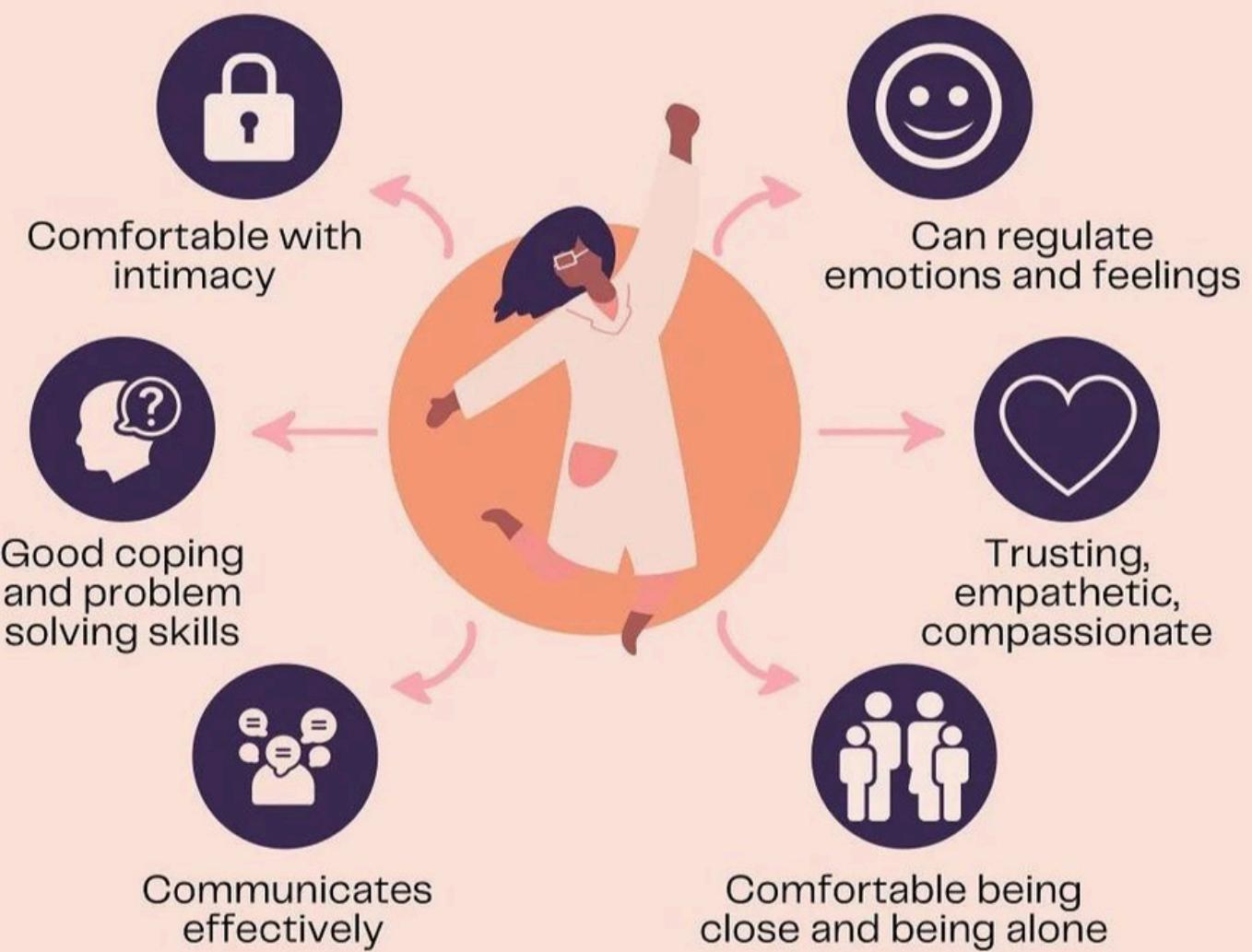
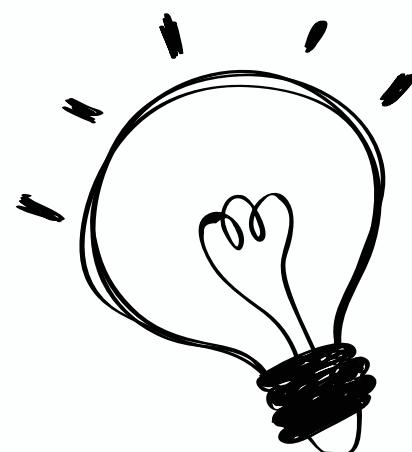


Photo Credit: [Simply Psychology](#)

Emotional intelligence and Self-Regulation skills

Emotional intelligence (EI) and self-regulation skills are super important for doing well in life, making good friends, and feeling happy. EI means knowing and handling your own feelings and understanding how others feel. Self-regulation is about controlling your thoughts and actions, especially when things are tough. Learning these skills can help you feel better, make smarter choices, and have better friendships. Here's a quick look at what they involve:

-  Recognizing emotions: Knowing and naming your feelings is the first step in EI. It's about understanding why you feel a certain way.
-  Managing emotions: Once you know your feelings, you can learn to handle them. This means not letting your emotions take over and affect how you act.
-  Empathy: Empathy means understanding how others feel. It's an important part of EI and helps you see things from someone else's point of view.
-  Social skills: Having good social skills means being able to talk to others, solve problems with them, and work well in a group.
-  Self-awareness: Being self-aware means knowing your own strengths, weaknesses, and what matters to you. It helps you understand why you do the things you do.
-  Self-regulation: Self-regulation is about controlling your actions, handling stress, and being able to change your plans when needed. It helps you stay calm and focused when things get tough.
- 



Self-care, Self-love

Taking care of yourself and loving who you are is really important for feeling good. Self-care means knowing when to take a break, setting limits, and doing things that make you feel better. Self-love is about accepting yourself, being kind to yourself, and knowing you're important.

Self-care can include:

- Playing outside
- Eating healthy food
- Exercising
- Sleeping enough
- Doing things you enjoy
- Talking to someone you trust when you're feeling down

Self-love means:

- Being nice to yourself
- Saying positive things to yourself
- Forgiving yourself when you make mistakes
- Celebrating things you do well
- Being around people who make you feel good
- Doing things that make you happy

I matter



8 types of self care

PHYSICAL



nutrition
exercise
sleep

MENTAL



mindfulness
self-talk
therapy

EMOTIONAL



gratitude
triggers
journal

SPIRITUAL



meditate
nature
yoga

INTELLECTUAL



read
learn
hobbies

ENVIRONMENT



clean
safety

SOCIAL



boundaries
connection

FINANCIAL



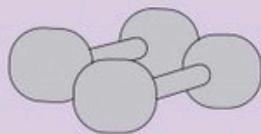
budget
save

Photo Credit: ScottsDale Recovery

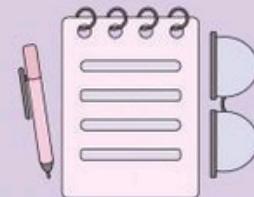
Some Ideas for you to Explore!



DRINK WATER



EXERCISE



LEARN NEW THINGS



SKIN CARE



DAILY REGIME



GET MORE SLEEP



EAT WELL



FIND A HOBBY



LOVE YOURSELF

Photo Credit: Wellness Road Psychology



Self-Esteem



Self-esteem is about how we feel about ourselves and how much we think we matter. It's important for our health and for having good relationships because it affects how we think, feel, and act.

Here are some things that make up our self-esteem:

Feeling like we deserve respect and kindness, no matter what we do.

Accepting ourselves, including our strengths and weaknesses.

Believing we can do things and handle problems.

Feeling like we belong and are accepted by others.

Doing things that match our beliefs and values.

When our self-esteem is low, we might talk badly about ourselves, always want approval from others, be afraid to fail, or avoid trying new things. But when our self-esteem is healthy, we can bounce back from tough times, have good relationships, and feel good about ourselves.



How can we improve our self-esteem?

1. Be kind to yourself: Treat yourself with care and understanding, especially when things are hard.
2. Set small, doable goals: Break big goals into smaller parts to feel more confident as you achieve them.
3. Think positive: Replace negative thoughts with ones that are fair and real.
4. Celebrate your wins: Be proud of what you've done, even the little things.
5. Get help when you need it: Talk to people you trust or a counselor for support and advice.



Conflict Resolution

Conflict is when people have different needs, ideas, beliefs, or goals and they struggle to agree. It's a normal part of life and can happen with friends, family, teachers, or anyone else. Often, conflicts arise because people don't understand each other.

Managing Conflict

1. Talk to the other person to find out their opinion of the situation, and tell them yours.
2. Set some rules. For example, we will speak one at a time, listen to each other, not talk while the other is talking, or call each other names.
3. Identify the problem clearly.
4. Agree on what each person wants when the conflict is fixed.
5. Look for solutions to the problem.
6. Think of as many solutions as possible.
7. Select those solutions which will give each person something that they want and agree with them.
8. Make a plan on how to give each person something that they want.



Assertiveness

Assertiveness means speaking up for yourself in a nice way. It's being able to say how you feel, ask for what you want, or disagree politely. You can also share your ideas, say no without feeling bad, or stand up for someone else.

Importance of Being Assertive

An assertive communication style can help us do the things we want to do. Being assertive shows you respect yourself and others. People who speak assertively send the message that they believe in themselves.

Three Communication Styles

Passive

When a person holds back what they really think or feel

Example:

If you ask Paula what movie she wants to see, she's most likely to say, "I don't know, what do you want to see?" She usually lets others decide things, but later regrets not saying what she wanted. It bothers her that her friends do most of the talking. But when Paula tries to break into the conversation, she speaks softly that others talk over her without realizing.

Assertive

When people speak up for themselves honestly and respectfully

Example:

When you ask for Ben's opinion, he gives it honestly. If he disagrees with you, he'll say so — but in a way that doesn't put you down or make you feel wrong. Ben is interested in your opinion, too. He listens to what you have to say. Even when Ben disagrees with you, you still feel he respects your point of view.

Aggressive

When a person forcefully states opinion or ignore others' opinions

Example:

Janine has no trouble speaking her mind. But when she does, she comes across as loud and opinionated. Janine dominates the conversation, often interrupts, and rarely listens. If she disagrees with you, she lets you know — usually with sarcasm or a putdown. She has a reputation for being bossy and insensitive.



When we feel angry, it's often because we're actually feeling scared, sad, or frustrated. Anger can be like a shield we use to protect ourselves from these other feelings. It's important to understand this so we can deal with our emotions in a healthy way. Instead of just getting mad, we can try to figure out what's really bothering us. Maybe we're feeling hurt or afraid. By understanding our true feelings, we can find better ways to handle them and talk about them with others. So, the next time you feel angry, think about what might be causing that feeling and try to understand the deeper emotions behind it.

ANGER ICEBERG

Anger is a secondary emotion, which means it is triggered by another emotional experience that was present first. Anger is a front for vulnerable feelings that are hard to express safely.

What lies beneath your anger?



Anger Management

Anger might seem like the main problem, but the real issue is often the feelings hiding underneath.



It may seem as though anger is all you feel, but if you slow down and breathe, you will discover other feelings.

Anger Management

What we can do to manage our anger?

Express your strong feelings safely and then talk to someone about what's really bothering you. It's important to find a way to let out your emotions in a good way, like doing exercise or art, or talking to someone you trust. This can help you understand why you're feeling so angry and find better ways to deal with it. It's okay to feel these big emotions, but it's important to deal with them in a way that helps you feel better.



Three Questions to Ask Yourself When You Are Feeling Angry

1. How can I prioritize my self-care at this moment?

For instance:

- I could focus on my breathing
- Take a short break
- Go for a walk
- Practice positive self-talk
- Address underlying feelings rather than just anger.

Anger Management

Three Questions to Ask Yourself When You Are Feeling Angry

1. How can I prioritize my self-care at this moment?

For instance, I could:

- Focus on my breathing
- Take a short break
- Go for a walk
- Practice positive self-talk
- Address underlying feelings rather than just anger.

2. What steps should I take regarding the situation?

For instance, I could:

- Focus on what is currently important and true.
- Clearly and openly represent myself.
- Ask for what I need effectively.

3. How can I approach this situation with respect?

For instance, I could:

- Use "I" statements
- Allow myself time to cool down before communicating
- Avoid placing blame on the other person
- Select my words thoughtfully



Anger Management

Anger is a feeling we get when something upsets us. It can lead us to other feelings and help us stand up for ourselves. It can also show us more about how others feel. Anger can be a way to let out our emotions and protect ourselves.

Anger is a strong feeling we all feel sometimes. It's okay to feel angry, but what we do when we're angry is important. We can learn to deal with anger in a healthy way so we don't hurt ourselves or others. It's important to recognize our feelings and respond to them in a calm and positive way.



Chapter 4

Peer Pressure and Bullying



Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Identify different types of peer pressure and bullying behaviors.
2. Describe the potential impacts of peer pressure and bullying on individuals and communities.
3. Analyze strategies to resist negative peer pressure and respond effectively to bullying situations.
4. Evaluate the role of bystanders in preventing and addressing bullying.
5. Demonstrate effective communication and assertiveness skills to navigate peer pressure situations.
6. Apply problem-solving skills to address and resolve conflicts arising from peer pressure and bullying.
7. Discuss the importance of seeking support from trusted adults and resources when experiencing or witnessing peer pressure and bullying.

Name:

Class:



BULLYING AND PEER PRESSURE

Task: Jot down your thoughts on what constitutes bullying versus peer pressure. What do they have in common?

- 1) What kind of activities is considered bullying?

- 2) What behaviors are acts of peer pressure?

What is Peer Pressure?

Peer pressure is when people our own age try to get us to do something. It can be good or bad. Sometimes it's hard to say no because you want to fit in. You might feel like everyone else is doing it, so you should too. You might also say yes because you don't want to hurt someone's feelings or you're not sure how to say no.

Types of Peer Pressure

Rejection

Pressure by threatening to end a relationship or a friendship

Unspoken Pressure

Simply seeing all your peers doing something or wearing something can be a form of pressure

Insults

Making a person feel bad for not doing something, so that they eventually will

Reasoning

Pressure by giving a person reasons why they should do something

To Deal with Peer Pressure

1. Listen to your gut. If you feel uncomfortable, even if your friends seem to be OK with what's going on, it means that something about the situation is wrong for you.
2. Plan for possible pressure situations. If you'd like to go to a party, but you believe you may be offered alcohol or drugs there, think ahead of how you'll handle this challenge. Decide ahead of time – and even rehearse – what you'll say and do.
3. Arrange a “bail out” code phrase you can use with your parents. You might call home from a party at which you feel pressured to drink alcohol and say, for instance, “can you come drive me home? I have a terrible headache.”
4. Learn to feel comfortable by saying “no”. For example, “No thanks, I've got a soccer game tomorrow.”
5. Hang out with people who feel the same way you do. Just having one other person stand with you against peer pressure makes it much easier for both people to resist
6. Blame your parents: “Are you kidding? If my mom found out, she'd kill me.”
7. If a situation seems dangerous, don't hesitate to get an adult's help.





EFFECTIVE WAYS FOR TEENS TO OVERCOME PEER PRESSURE

- 1 Stay mindful of your feelings and ask yourself if the situation feels right to you, even if your peers seem okay with it.
- 2 Struggling to say no? Plan and stay prepared to get out of an uncomfortable situation by making a good excuse.
- 3 Remember, not everybody will like you. Don't force yourself to please them if you are not okay with a situation.
- 4 Have a friend who shares a similar personality as you and can show the right path when under pressure.
- 5 When stressed, don't resort to toxic habits. Instead, try listening to music, talking to your parents or friends, and doing your favorite activity.
- 6 Take a deep breath of courage and tell the person pressuring you about your feelings.

Photo Credit: Mom Junction

Example

Read the following scenario and think of possible solutions.

I am having problems with my friends at school. We are a group of five. I enjoy being with them and doing things, but sometimes after school we go together and do things I do not feel good about, like stealing and smoking cigarettes. Another time they found a can of paint and sprayed words on the garden wall. I have sometimes said I do not feel it is right, but my friends have all laughed and teased me and called me names. They say that if I do not want to do these things with them, then I must leave the group. I do not want to be without friends, but I feel bad doing these things.



Solution Ideas

- Ask a trusted adult for help or advice
- Think of excuses to leave; for example: “I have to go home for dinner or I have soccer practice”.
- Use the “bail out” code.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is when someone tries to hurt or control another person. It can happen in different ways, like saying mean things, hitting, or excluding someone from a group. Bullying often happens more than once and can make the person being bullied feel really bad. It's important to stop bullying and make sure everyone feels safe and respected. Here are some types of bullying:

1. Verbal bullying: Saying mean things to someone.
2. Physical bullying: Hitting, kicking, or hurting someone physically.
3. Social bullying: Excluding someone from a group or spreading rumors about them.
4. Cyberbullying: Bullying that happens online, like sending hurtful messages or sharing embarrassing photos.
5. Sexual bullying: Making unwanted sexual comments or advances.
6. Prejudicial bullying: Bullying someone because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, or disability.
7. Sextortion: Threatening to share private photos or messages unless the person does something in return.

What to do if You Are Being Bullied

Remember, you have the right to feel safe and respected, and there are people who can help you address bullying behavior. If you are being bullied, it's important to take action to protect yourself.

1. Stay calm: Try not to get upset. Bullies often want to see a reaction from you.
2. Get help: Talk to someone you trust, like a parent, teacher, or counselor. They can help you make a plan to stop the bullying.
3. Set boundaries: Tell the bully firmly that their behavior is not okay and you won't tolerate it.
4. Write it down: Keep a record of what happens, write down when and where the bullying occurred.
5. Tell someone: If the bullying is at school, tell a teacher or principal. If it's online, report it to the website. If it's at home, talk to a trusted adult.
6. Take care of yourself: Do things that make you feel good, like hobbies or spending time with friends.
7. Talk to a professional: If the bullying is really bothering you, it might help to talk to a counselor or therapist. They can give you more support and advice.

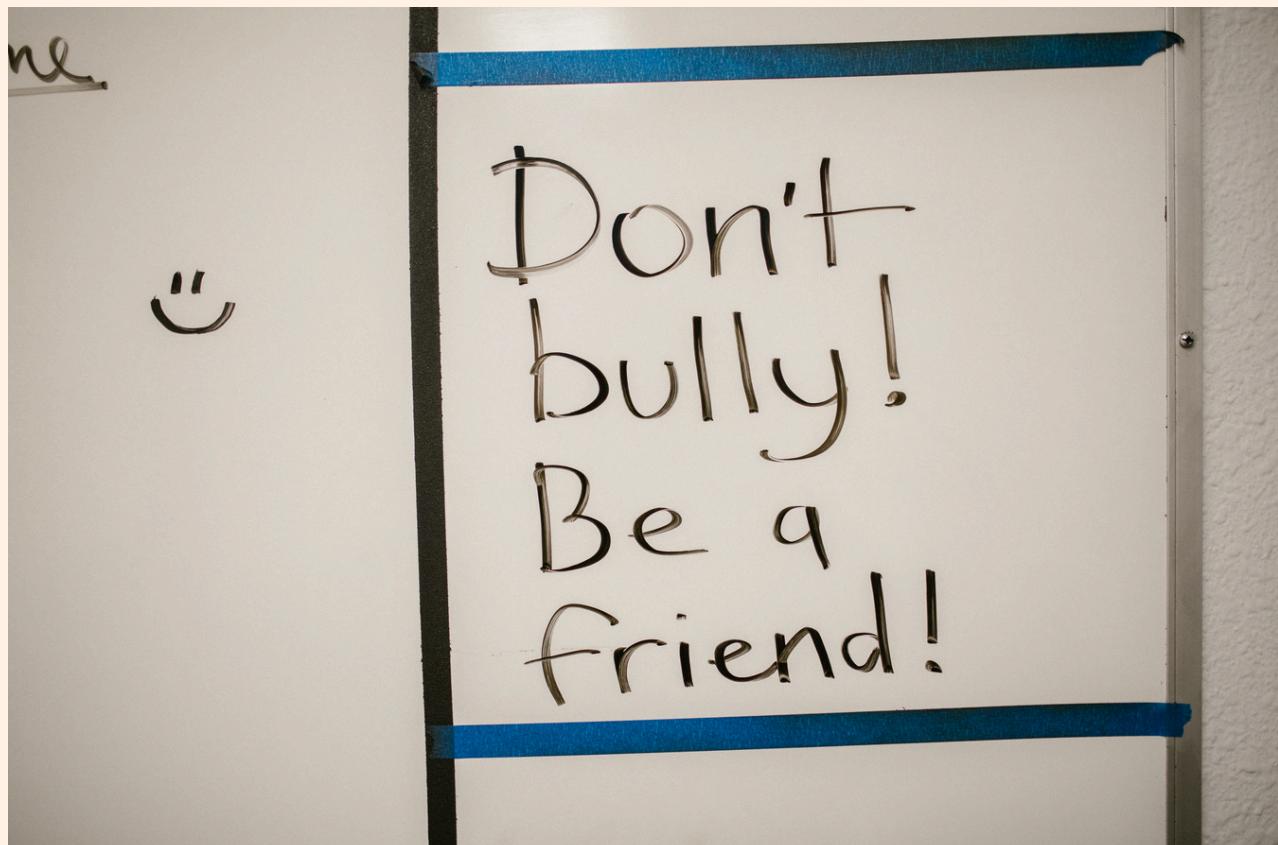
Important Resources

If you need immediate help, dial 911

9-8-8: Suicide Crisis Helpline

24/7 mental health line: 604.951.8855 | 1.877.820.7444

Kids Help Phone: Call 1-800-668-6868 (toll-free) or text CONNECT to 686868.



What to do if you Witness Someone Being Bullied

You can help stop bullying:

1. Speak up: If you see someone being bullied, tell a teacher, parent, or another adult. Let them know what's happening so they can help.
2. Support others: Be a friend to someone who is being bullied. Offer them your friendship and stand up for them.
3. Be kind: Treat everyone with kindness and respect. Be a role model for others by showing how to be a good friend.
4. Educate others: Teach your friends and classmates about bullying and why it's wrong. Encourage them to be kind and inclusive.
5. Be a leader: Lead by example and stand up against bullying. Show others that bullying is not okay and should not be tolerated.

Be Safe!

Before you step in to help someone being bullied, make sure you're safe too. If the bullying is physical or dangerous, get help from an adult or call 911. Think about how you can help without making things worse. It's important to support others who are being bullied, but your safety is also very important.



Some Steps You Can Take



Stay calm and think about what to do: First, try to stay calm and figure out what's happening.

Offer help: If you see someone being bullied, go and talk to them. Let them know you're there to help.

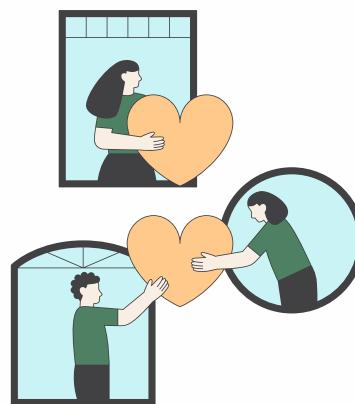
Speak out: If you can, tell the bully that what they're doing isn't right. You can also show you're not okay with it by using your face, body, and actions to say you don't like it.

Get an adult: If the bullying keeps going, or if it gets worse, find a grown-up you trust, like a teacher or parent, and tell them what's happening.

Be kind: Be there for the person who was bullied. Let them know you care about them and that it's not their fault.

Tell someone: It's important to tell someone in charge, like a teacher or principal, about the bullying so they can help stop it.

Check in: Keep checking on the person who was bullied to make sure they're okay and still feel supported.



Impacts of Bullying

Bullying can make you feel really bad and affect your health, especially if you keep it to yourself. Many children who are bullied don't talk about it because they're scared or embarrassed. But keeping it inside can make things even worse.

Here's how bullying can affect you:

1. It can make you feel sad, anxious, and not good about yourself, and these feelings can last a long time.
2. It can make it hard for you to make friends and keep them, and you might feel like you're all alone.
3. Bullying can make you react differently to things that scare you.
4. It can make it tough for you to focus in school and do well, which can lead to problems with your grades.
5. Some children who are bullied might start acting out or hurting themselves.
6. Bullying can make you more likely to have mental health problems like feeling really sad or scared a lot of the time.
7. It can also make it hard for you to get along with others and trust people, which can make you feel even more lonely.
8. Being bullied can even make your body feel bad, giving you headaches, stomachaches, or trouble sleeping. In some cases, it might even cause health problems later on.





NETWORK TO
ELIMINATE
VIOLENCE IN
RELATIONSHIPS

SIGNS OF

BULLYING

Be aware that not all children who are bullied will show these warning signs:



How to Help

Act immediately. Stay calm and model respectful behavior.
Get police help or medical attention immediately if:

- A weapon is involved.
- There are threats of serious physical injury.
- There are threats of hate-motivated violence.
- There is sexual abuse.
- Anyone is accused of an illegal act, such as robbery or extortion.

Learn more at stopbullying.gov

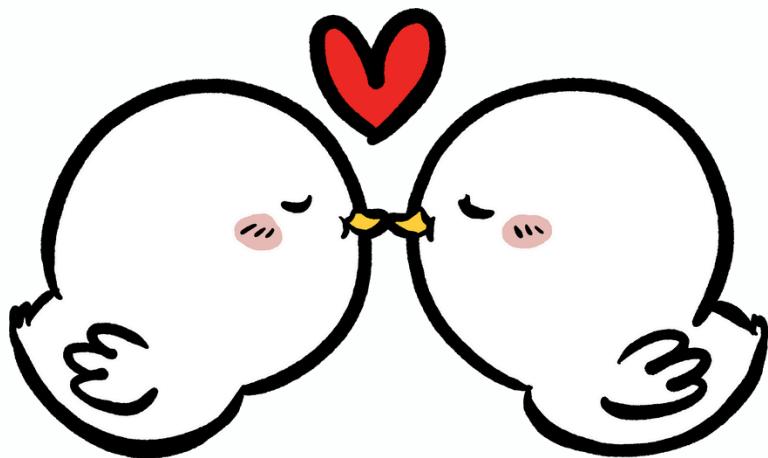


OKLAHOMA
State Department
of Health

#BULLYINGISNOTOK

Chapter 5

Healthy Sexual Relationships



Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Recognize and recall the key components of healthy sexual relationships, including communication, respect, and consent.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of consent in sexual relationships, including the age of consent laws in their region.
3. Apply the concept of consent to various scenarios to determine if it is present or lacking.
4. Analyze the factors that can influence consent, such as power dynamics, coercion, and intoxication.
5. Evaluate the impact of unhealthy sexual relationships on individuals and communities.
6. Create strategies for promoting healthy sexual relationships and preventing sexual violence in their communities.
7. Reflect on their own attitudes and beliefs about consent and healthy sexual relationships.

Healthy Sexual Relationships

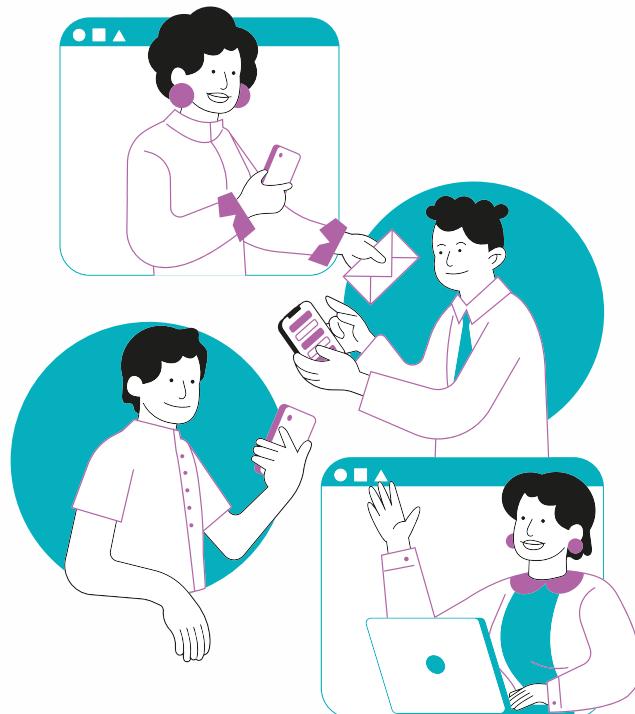
Sex includes many different things besides just intercourse. It's about the physical, emotional, and social parts of being intimate and reproductive. There are lots of ways to be sexual without having intercourse. These activities are called "non-penetrative sex" and include:

- Kissing and hugging: This is when you kiss, hold each other, and touch in a loving way.
- Touching each other's bodies: This is when you touch each other's bodies in a way that feels good.
- Oral sex: This is when you use your mouth on your partner's genitals for pleasure.
- Mutual masturbation: This is when you and your partner touch each other's genitals for pleasure.
- Erotic massage: This is when you use massage to make each other feel good and excited.
- Role-playing and fantasy: This is when you pretend to be someone else or imagine different situations to make sex more exciting.



Many children today learn about sex from online videos, which can show things that are not realistic or healthy. Watching these videos can give you the wrong ideas about sex and relationships. It might make you think that your body or the way you have sex should be a certain way, which is not true.

It's better to get information about sex from reliable sources like educational websites, books, or adults you trust. These sources can give you accurate information about sex, your body, how to have healthy relationships, and how to respect others. They teach you about consent, which means both people agree to what they're doing. They also talk about how important it is to communicate and understand each other, which is key for having healthy relationships.



Healthy Relationships in Sex!

In a healthy relationship, people trust each other, talk openly, and respect each other's feelings. It's like a dance where both partners understand what the other wants and respects their boundaries. Consent is really important in a healthy relationship. It means both people are happy and agree to what they're doing. They feel safe to talk about what they like and what they don't like. They also talk about how to stay safe during sex. Trust is also key. It helps both people feel safe and valued in their relationship. Overall, a healthy relationship is a place where both people feel good, respect each other, and understand each other's feelings.



Photo Credit: Hands of Hope

Before Having Sex

Remember, you have the right to decide what happens to your body and health. It's important to be informed, talk openly, and make your well-being a priority in any sexual situation.

1. Understand consent: Consent means agreeing to do something freely and enthusiastically. Everyone involved should agree to what's happening.
2. Know your rights: Learn about your rights regarding sexual health, like getting contraception (birth control) and testing for sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
3. Practice safe sex: Use condoms and other methods to protect against pregnancy and STIs. It's important for your health.
4. Communicate openly: Talk openly with your partner about what you both want and don't want. Good communication helps build a healthy relationship.
5. Respect boundaries: Respect your partner's limits and make sure they respect yours. It's important to feel safe and comfortable.
6. Get reliable information: Be careful where you get information about sex. Look for trustworthy sources like Amaze (<https://amaze.org/us/>) and Planned Parenthood (<https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/parents/sex-and-sexuality>). You can also talk to a trusted adult, like a parent or teacher, who can give you accurate information and advice. There's no shame in asking questions! Your sexuality is a normal part of who you are.



Before Having Sex

7. Get tested: If you're thinking about having sex or are already sexually active, it's important to get tested for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) regularly. Even if you feel healthy, some STIs don't show any symptoms, so testing is important for your health and the health of your partners. Also, consider getting vaccinated against STIs. For more information, check out this website: <https://www.fraserhealth.ca/health-topics-a-to-z/sexual-health/protect-yourself-against-stis/vaccines-for-stis>
8. Think about your feelings: Remember that sex can have emotional effects, too. It's okay to take your time and wait until you feel ready. Make choices about sex based on how you feel inside and when you're comfortable. No one should pressure you into doing something you're not ready for.
9. Know where to get help: Learn about the sexual health resources available to you, like school counselors, doctors, or community groups. These places can offer support, information, and help if you need it.
10. Listen to your gut: Trust your instincts and put your own well-being first in any sexual situation. If something doesn't feel right or you're unsure, it's okay to say no and leave the situation.



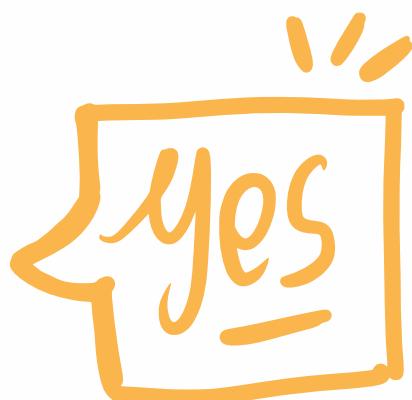
Age of Consent to Sexual Activity in Canada: At Least 16

In Canada, the age of consent is a rule that says you have to be a certain age to agree to have sex. The minimum age is 16, but it can be lower if both people are close in age and there's no power difference between them. For example, a 15-year-old and a 16-year-old who both agree to have sex and are in a similar situation are okay.

However, if there's a big age gap, the older person is usually seen as having more power and influence. This means that even if the younger person says yes, it might not be seen as a real yes because of the power difference. For example, if a 20-year-old and a 14-year-old agree to have sex, it's not allowed because the 20-year-old has more power and could be taking advantage of the younger person.

In Canada, having sex with someone under 16 when there's a big age difference is against the law, even if the younger person seems to agree. It's important to understand these rules and make sure that any sexual activity is consensual and legal.

For more information, check out here:



- Consent only counts if the person is completely sober and fully understands what they are agreeing to and if they are able to consent.
- Consent needs to be given from all people involved
- All parties can change their minds AT ANYTIME (whether it is in regards to sexual activity or consenting to something else).
- YOU choose who you want to have sex with
- YOU choose what sexual activities YOU are willing to do
- YOU choose what birth control YOU want to use



Consent DOES NOT Count:

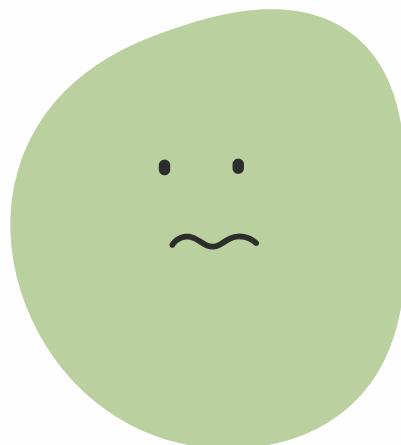
- If someone else gives consent for you
- If the person you are getting consent from is under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- When the person trying to get consent is forcing the other person by abusing a position of trust, power or authority
- When the other person either verbally or through actions show that they do not want to have sex or perform a sexual activity
- When someone who initially consented either verbally or through actions shows they do not want to continue
- When you are a minor and your partner is older than you by more than the legally permissible age difference

No!!



Stealthing

Removing a condom without someone knowing or agreeing is called "stealthing." It's like breaking a promise because it's a way of tricking someone during sex. It's wrong because it's not fair and can make the other person feel scared or uncomfortable. It can also make it easier for them to get pregnant or catch an infection. Consent means both people agree to everything that happens during sex, and changing the rules without asking is not okay. It's important for people to talk about what they want and respect each other's choices when it comes to being safe during sex.



About Consent: This is Not Consent



an everyday feminism comic

Visit us at: everydayfeminism.com

Photo Credit: Everyday Feminism

Chapter 6

Internet Safety



Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

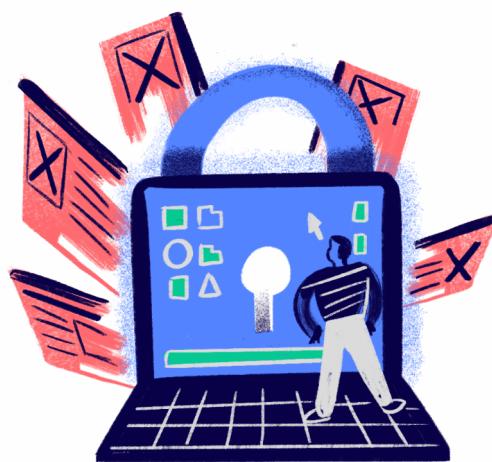
1. Recall the definitions of cyberbullying, sextortion, and grooming.
2. Understand the risks and consequences associated with cyberbullying, sextortion, unsafe sexting, and grooming.
3. Apply strategies to protect yourself from cyberbullying, sextortion, unsafe sexting, and grooming.
4. Analyze scenarios to identify signs of cyberbullying, sextortion, unsafe sexting, and grooming.
5. Evaluate the effectiveness of different approaches to prevent and respond to problems such as cyberbullying, sextortion, unsafe sexting, and grooming.
6. Create a personal safety plan for online interactions.
7. Reflect on the impact of online behaviors on oneself and others, and consider how to promote a safer online environment.

Internet Safety

Internet safety is super important when we use the internet, just like wearing a seatbelt in a car keeps us safe. It helps us protect our personal information and stay safe from cyberbullying, scams, and fraud. By being careful about what we share online, we can also protect our reputation. Internet safety is all about being in control and staying safe while we explore the digital world.

What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is a type of bullying that happens online or on digital devices. It is when someone uses technology, like social media or texts, to be mean or hurtful. This can include spreading rumors, sharing embarrassing pictures, or sending mean messages. Cyberbullying can make people feel really bad about themselves, and it's not okay. It's important to know how to stay safe online and get help if you see or experience cyberbullying.



Some tips for preventing cyberbullying

1. Be careful about what you share online. Think before you post and avoid sharing personal information or things that could make you uncomfortable.
2. Use privacy settings to control who sees your posts and information. Keep your location private and be cautious of sharing it with apps or websites.
3. Be careful when clicking on links or downloading things from the internet. Some things could be harmful.
4. Keep your passwords safe and don't share them with anyone.
5. If someone is being mean to you online, block them and report them to the website.
6. If you're being bullied online, talk to an adult you trust for help.
7. Treat others online with kindness and respect. Don't say or do things that could hurt someone's feelings.



Sextortion

Sextortion is when someone threatens to share private pictures or videos of you unless you give them something they want, like money or more pictures. They might get these pictures by tricking you, forcing you, or hacking into your devices. It's a form of blackmail and can be really scary. If this happens to you, it's important to talk to a trusted adult right away for help.



Some Tips for Preventing Sextortion

1. Be cautious about who you share personal information with online, especially intimate photos or videos.
2. Use strong, unique passwords for your online accounts and enable two-factor authentication when possible.
3. Be wary of unsolicited requests for personal information or images.
4. Keep your devices secure by regularly updating software and using reputable antivirus software.
5. If you receive a sextortion threat, do not respond to the blackmailer and report the incident to the authorities immediately.
6. Educate yourself and others about the risks of sextortion and the importance of online safety.





Learn more about sextortion and how to prevent and address it here:



Learn about what to do if you are a survivor of sextortion here:



SEX TORTION RED FLAGS

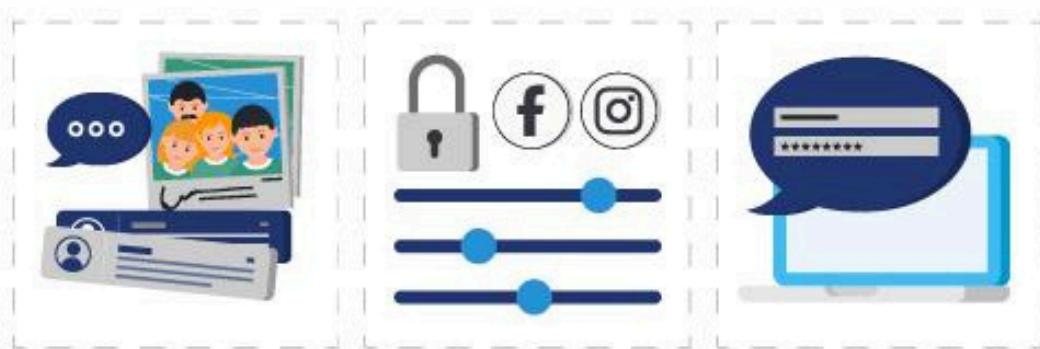
 Person does not have a working camera	 Conversation does not add up
 Person turns conversations to "adult" right away	 Profile has limited photos
 Use of fear tactics	 Misspelled words in profile
 Profile has low followers/friends	 Fast-paced contact

More information at police.msu.edu



Photo Credit: Michigan State University

Stay Safe Online!



DON'T POST TOO
MUCH PERSONAL
INFORMATION

USE YOUR SOCIAL
MEDIA PRIVACY
SETTINGS

USE A
NICKNAME ON
DATING SITES

HOW TO PREVENT SEXTORTION

NEVER ACCEPT
UNKNOWN FRIEND
REQUESTS

DON'T CLICK
ON LINKS OR
DOWNLOAD FILES

COVER YOUR
WEBCAM

INSTALL GOOD
ANTIVIRUS
SOFTWARE



[Photo Credit: VPN Overview](#)

Sexting

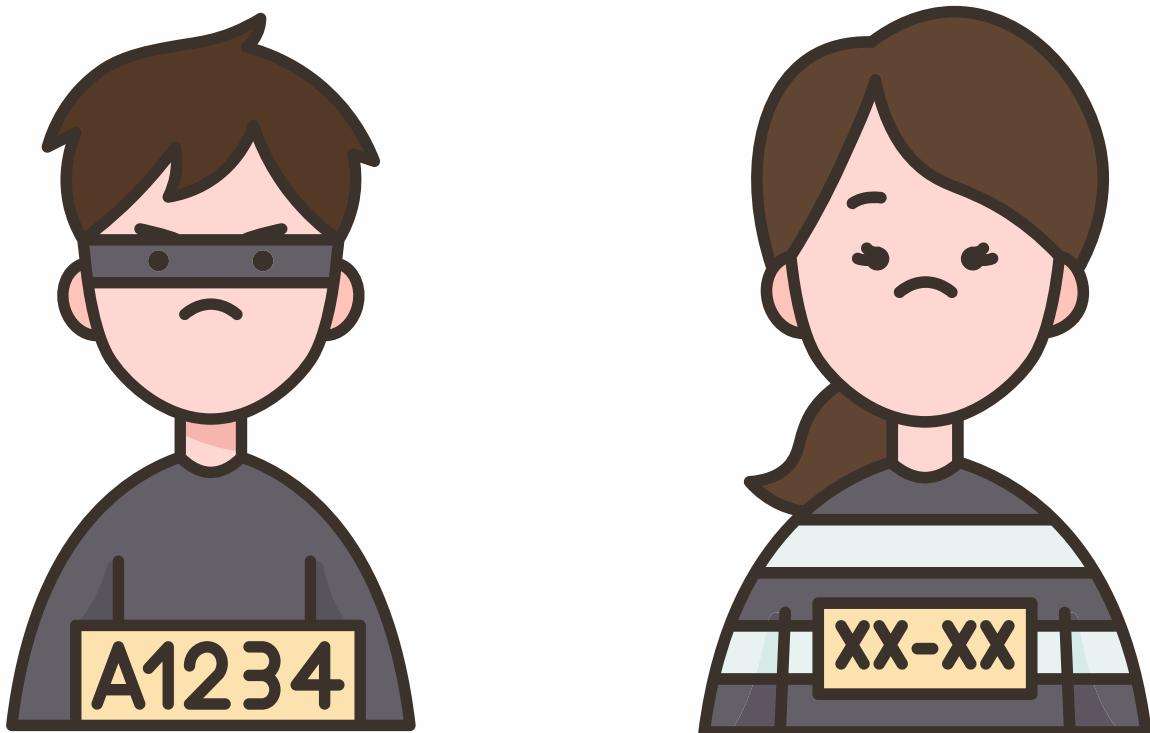
Sexting is when people send or get messages, photos, or videos that are about sex. They use phones or computers to do this. Some people do it to explore their feelings about sex or to feel close to someone they like. But it can be risky because sometimes these messages or pictures can be shared without permission. So it's important to think about what might happen and talk openly with the person you're sending messages to about what's okay and what's not.

Keeping sexting safe involves several important steps:

1. Consent: Never ever share someone's content without their consent. Never send someone sexual material without their consent.
2. Privacy: Use secure messaging apps or platforms that offer end-to-end encryption to protect your privacy, and use the option where the app deletes your messages after your partner has viewed them. In such private settings, the app usually lets you know if the person has taken a screenshot of your content.
3. Trust: Only sext with people you trust and who have demonstrated respect for your boundaries.
4. Boundaries: Set clear boundaries about what you're comfortable sharing and respect your partner's boundaries as well.
5. Safety measures: Avoid including identifying information in photos or videos, such as your face, tattoos, or recognizable background.
6. Delete responsibly: If you decide to delete sexts, make sure to do so securely to prevent them from being recovered.
7. Communication: Keep open communication with your partner about your feelings, boundaries, and any concerns that arise.

It's important to know that sexting can cause serious problems if not done safely and with agreement. Sometimes, people have been bullied or pressured because of sexting. For example, someone might use pictures or messages to force or trick others into doing things they don't want to do. This can make people feel very bad about themselves and alone, which can be really bad for their mental health. Sometimes, people who have been bullied or pressured through sexting have felt so upset that they have thought about or tried to hurt themselves. It's very important to think about your safety and how you feel when you're online and to get help if you feel really upset or scared.

It is always a good idea to know if what you are doing is legal or a crime. To know about the laws regarding sexting, nudes, and sexual activities regarding your age you can check here:



Grooming



Grooming is when a person tries to make friends with someone, usually a child, to prepare them for future harm. The groomer might give gifts, be nice, or say things to make the child trust them. The goal is to make the child feel close and comfortable so the groomer can hurt them later on. Grooming can happen in person or online. It's important to watch out for signs of grooming and tell a trusted adult if you think someone is trying to groom or harm you.

Online grooming is when someone tries to befriend a child online to harm them. The groomer pretends to be someone else, like a friend or a nice adult, to trick the child. They might say nice things, give gifts, or threaten to get the child to trust them and do things they shouldn't. Online grooming can happen on social media, messaging apps, or games where children hang out online. If you think someone is trying to groom you online, block them and tell a trusted adult right away.



Signs that someone may be grooming youth online can include:



1. Extra attention: The groomer may give you a lot of attention, say nice things, or give you gifts to make you feel special.
2. Keeping it secret: The groomer might tell you to keep your friendship a secret from your family or caregivers.
3. Being alone: The groomer might try to keep you away from your family and friends, so you only rely on them.
4. Tricking you: The groomer might use tricks to make you do things you don't want to do, like making you feel guilty or saying you owe them something.
5. Talking about things that make you uncomfortable: The groomer might start talking about things that are not okay, like sex or other inappropriate topics, to see how you react.
6. Trying to control you: The groomer might try to control what you do, like checking your messages or pressuring you to do things you don't want to do.
7. Signs to watch for: If you or someone you know starts acting differently, like being secretive about who they talk to online, getting gifts from someone online, or avoiding friends and family, it's important to talk to a trusted adult. They can help keep you safe.

If you are experiencing cyberbullying, whether it is sexual or not, there are several steps you can take to address the situation:

1. Ignore them: It's best not to reply to the bully, as this can make things worse.
2. Keep the proof: Save any mean messages or posts, and write down when you got them.
3. Block the bully: Use the settings on your device to stop the bully from sending you messages or seeing your stuff.
4. Tell someone: Talk to a grown-up you trust, like a parent, teacher, or counselor, about what's happening.
5. Report it: If the bullying is happening online, use the reporting tools on the website or app to let them know what's going on.
6. Get help: If the bullying is making you feel really upset or scared, it might help to talk to a counselor or therapist.
7. Take care of yourself: Do things that make you feel good, like hanging out with friends or doing something you enjoy, to help you feel better.

**It's important to
remember that being
targeted online is not your
fault, and there are people
who can help you navigate
this difficult situation. You
do not deserve to be
bullied. No one does.**



Chapter 7

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)



Objectives

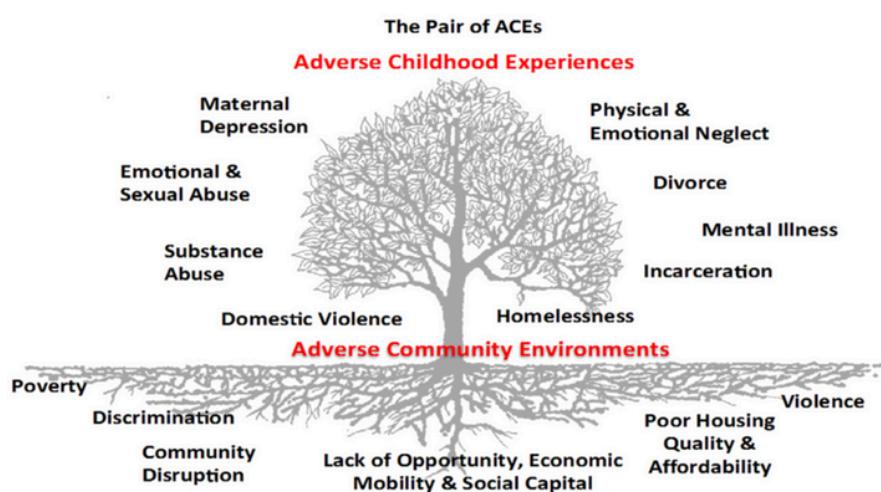
By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Recall the definition of ACEs and examples of adverse experiences.
2. Understand the impact of ACEs on mental and physical health.
3. Apply strategies for mitigating the effects of ACEs and promoting resilience.
4. Analyze the relationship between ACEs and the development of coping mechanisms and behaviours.
5. Evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and support systems for individuals affected by ACEs.
6. Create a plan for creating healing practices for yourself and others around you.
7. Reflect on personal experiences and biases related to ACEs and consider ways to support individuals impacted by ACEs.

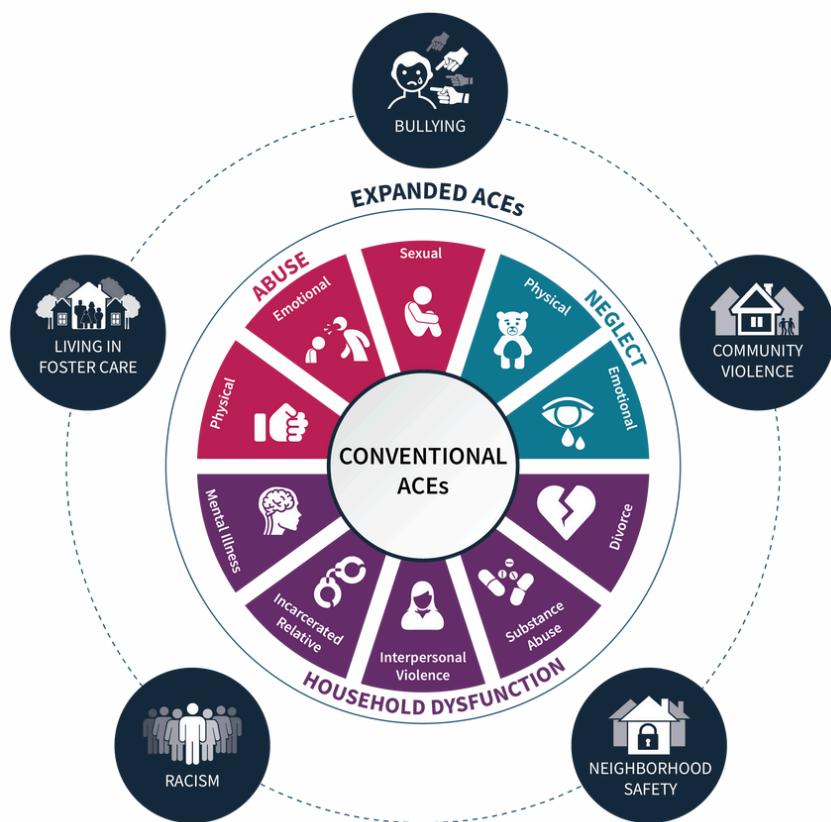
What are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are difficult things that happen to children before they turn 18. This can include being hurt or mistreated, seeing violence at home, or having a family member with a drug or alcohol problem. It can also mean parents who are no longer together, living in poverty, or feeling like you're not cared for. These experiences can be really tough and can affect how children feel and act as they grow up. It's important to know that if you've been through ACEs, it's not your fault, and there are people who can help you feel better.

ACEs also include other things like facing racism, living in places with war, and growing up in neighborhoods with not a lot of money. These experiences can really impact how a child grows and feels, affecting their health and well-being for a long time. Children facing racism may feel bad about themselves and be under a lot of stress. Growing up in places with war can be scary and leave children feeling unsafe. Living in neighborhoods with not a lot of money can mean seeing violence, using drugs, and not having much access to things that help them do well in life. Dealing with these kinds of ACEs means looking at the big picture and understanding how a child's life and surroundings can affect them in many ways.



ACEs



Source: Cronholm, P. F., Forke, C. M., Wade, R., Bair-Merritt, M. H., Davis, M., Harkins-Schwarz, M., Pachter, L. M., & Fein, J. A. (2015). Adverse childhood experiences: Expanding the concept of adversity. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 49(3), 354–361.

Impacts of ACEs

When bad things happen to us when we are young, like having parents who fight a lot, experiencing violence, or feeling like we are not safe, it can have long-lasting effects as we grow up. These experiences can make us feel scared, stressed, sad, or angry. They can also make it hard for us to trust others or feel good about ourselves. As we get older, ACEs can lead to problems with our health, like feeling sick more often or having trouble sleeping. They can also make it harder for us to do well in school or get along with others.

For more information about ACEs and their consequences, you can check this website out:



Experiencing tough things when you're young, like abuse or neglect, can make it harder to have healthy relationships when you're older. These experiences, called Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), can lead to problems with handling feelings and dealing with stress. This can make it more likely for someone to have unhealthy relationships where there's violence or mistreatment.

When someone goes through ACEs, they might learn negative ways of dealing with problems or communicating from what they saw or experienced. This can make it more likely for them to act in hurtful ways in their own relationships.

ACEs can also affect how the brain develops and can lead to mental health issues, using drugs or alcohol, and feeling bad about themselves. All of these things can make someone more likely to have unhealthy relationships and be at risk for relationship violence.

Substance Use

When we feel stressed, our bodies and minds can react in different ways. Stress can come from many things, like school, relationships, or problems at home. When we experience a lot of stress, it can be hard to cope, and some people might turn to substances like alcohol or drugs to try to feel better. This can be especially true for people who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences. When people use substances to cope with stress, it can sometimes lead to problems with addiction or other health issues. Also, while it may provide a temporary relief, our bodies and minds will feel even worse once the effects of the substance wear off. It's important to find healthy ways to cope with stress, like talking to someone you trust, practicing relaxation techniques, or engaging in activities you enjoy.



Peer Bullying and ACEs

Experiencing bullying from peers can be an ACE and can have long-lasting effects on how we feel about ourselves. It can make us feel scared, embarrassed, and alone, which can hurt our confidence and how we feel inside. Bullying can also make us feel like we have no power or control over what's happening, which are things that can happen in Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

When bullying happens, it can make our environment feel unsafe and unwelcoming, which can lead to other problems like feeling sad, worried, or even turning to things like drugs or alcohol to cope. That's why it's really important for us to recognize when bullying is happening and to do something about it, so that everyone can feel safe and supported.

Well... I have had some bad experiences. Now what?

The effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) can be healed with the right help. One important thing is to build resilience, which means learning how to cope with tough situations and having people who support you.

- Therapy, talking to someone, and joining support groups can also help you feel better.
- Having a safe and stable environment is really important. This means having routines, setting boundaries, and being around people who care about you.
- Taking care of yourself and your feelings can help you heal and feel better.

To know more about how to reduce the effects of stress and adverse childhood experience, you can also check these resources with many informative tips and explanations:





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