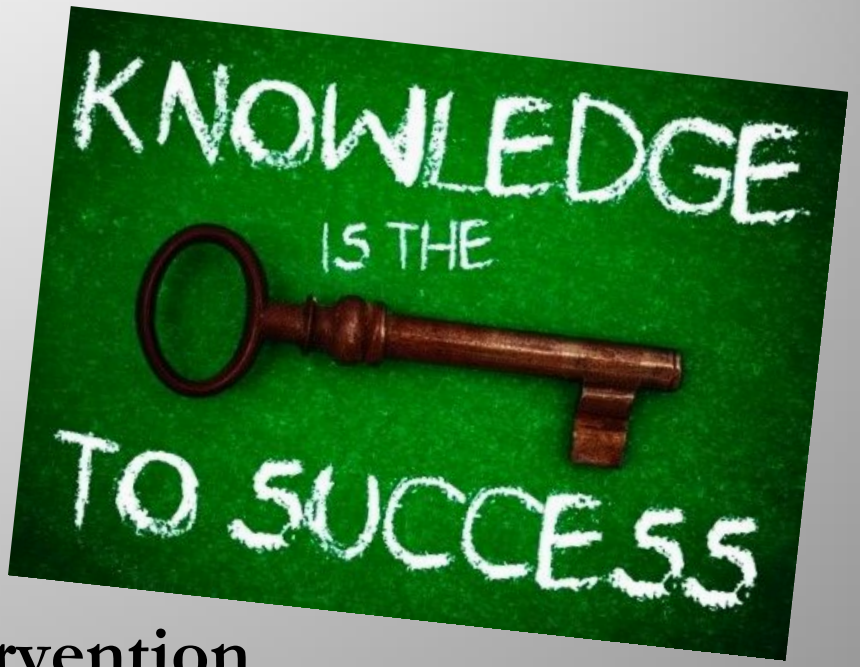
TEEN RELATIONSHIPS

The Healthy

&

THE HARMFUL

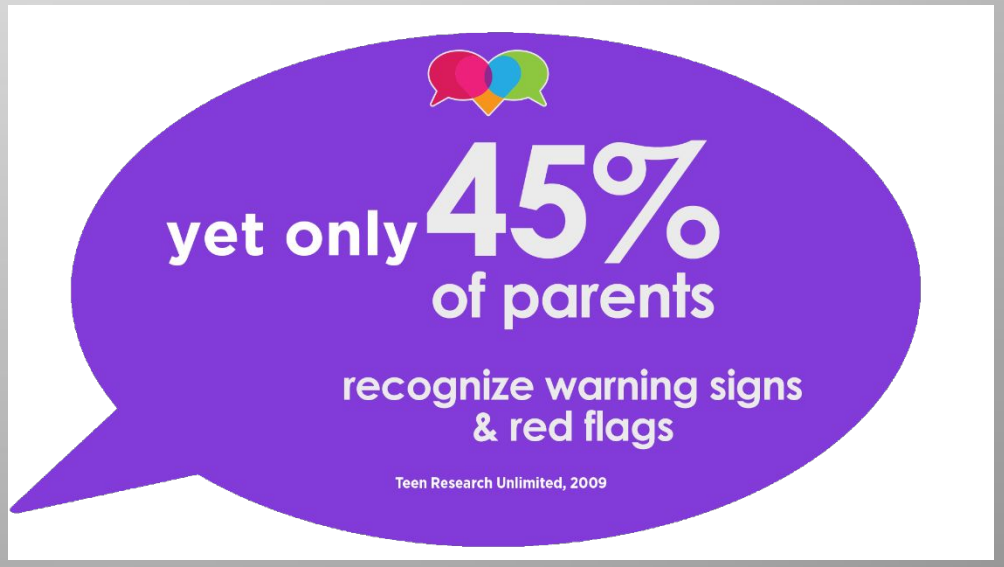
Relationships
The Healthy & The Harmful
Agenda



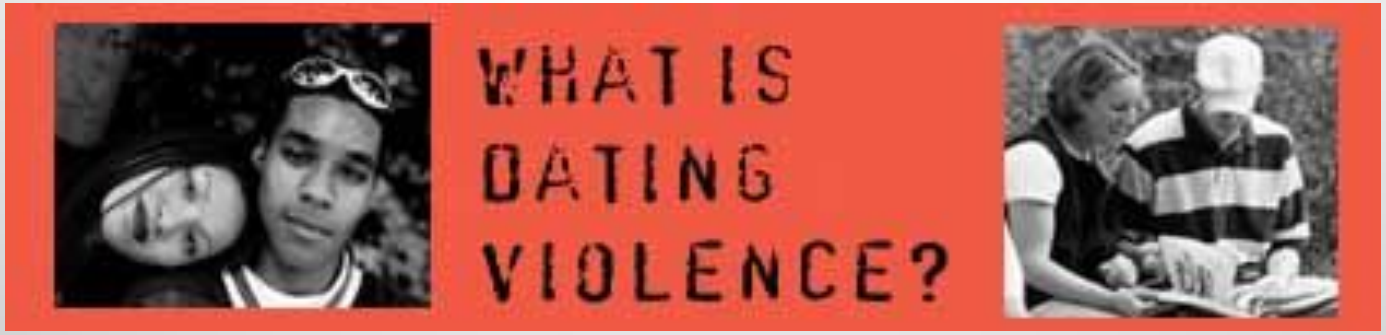
- Dynamics of teen dating abuse
  - What are teens experiencing
  - What are the red flags
  - Trends
    - Do's & Don'ts of appropriate intervention
      - Raise awareness
        - Dispel myths
        - FAQ

Would you know if a teenager was in an abusive relationship?

82%
of parents
think they could tell if their child
was in an abusive relationship


yet only 45%
of parents
recognize warning signs
& red flags
Teen Research Unlimited, 2009

- **1** in **3** High school relationships involve some sort of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse
- 1.5 million students experience physical abuse from a dating partner in the U.S **each year**

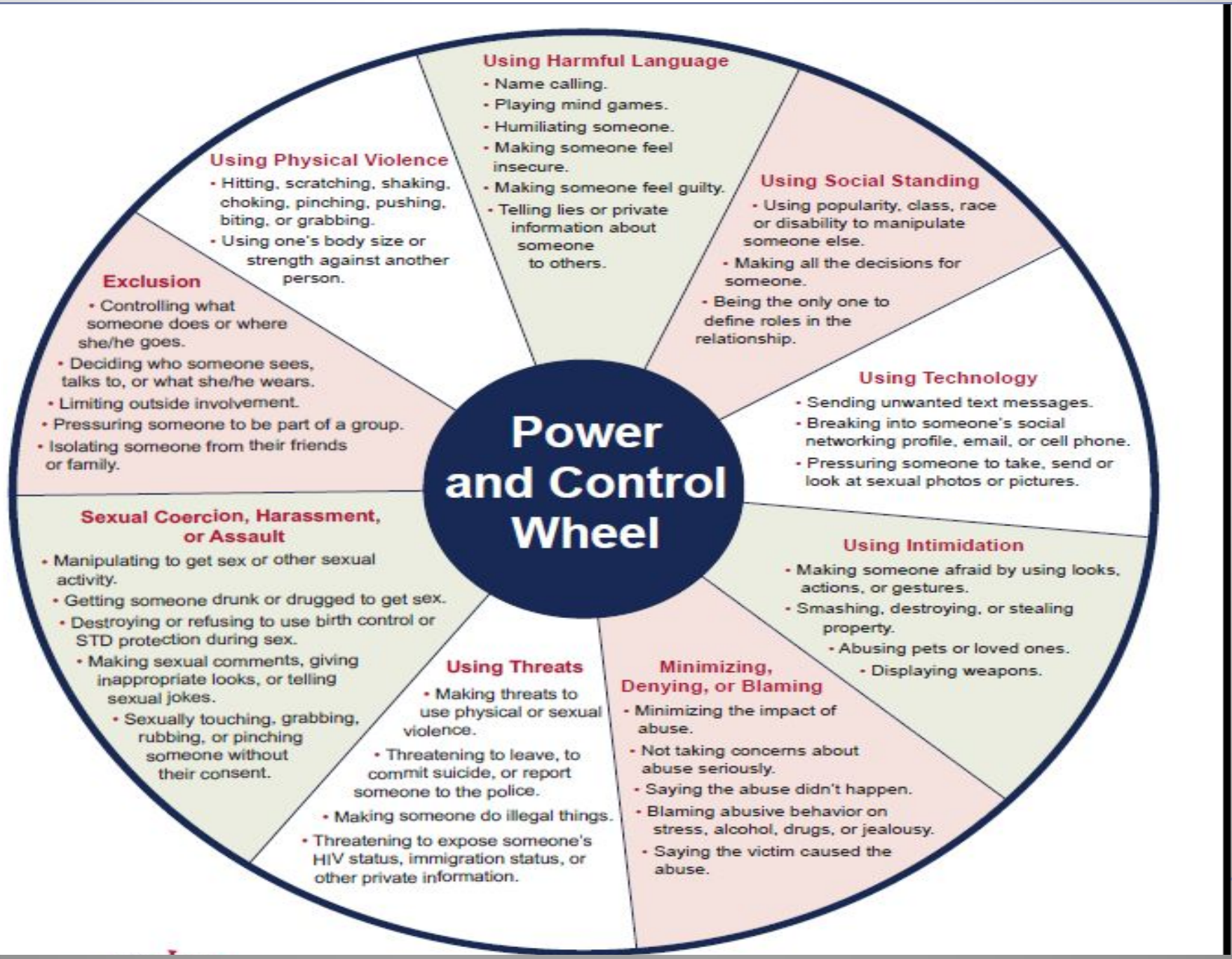


Pattern of unhealthy or abusive behavior in which one

partner exerts and maintains

POWER & CONTROL

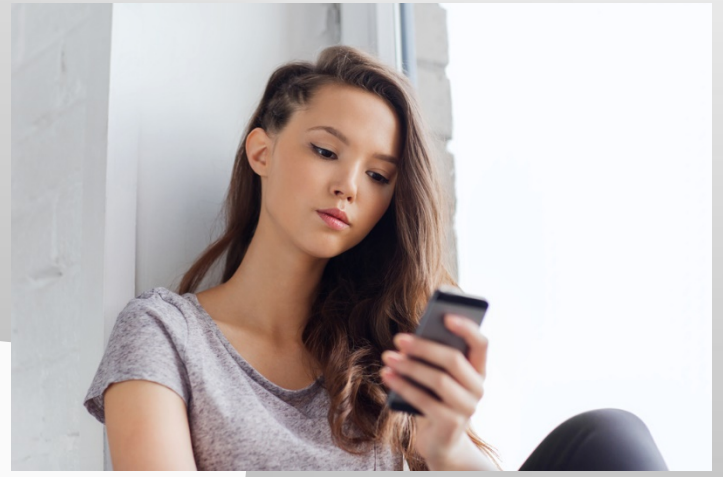
over another partner

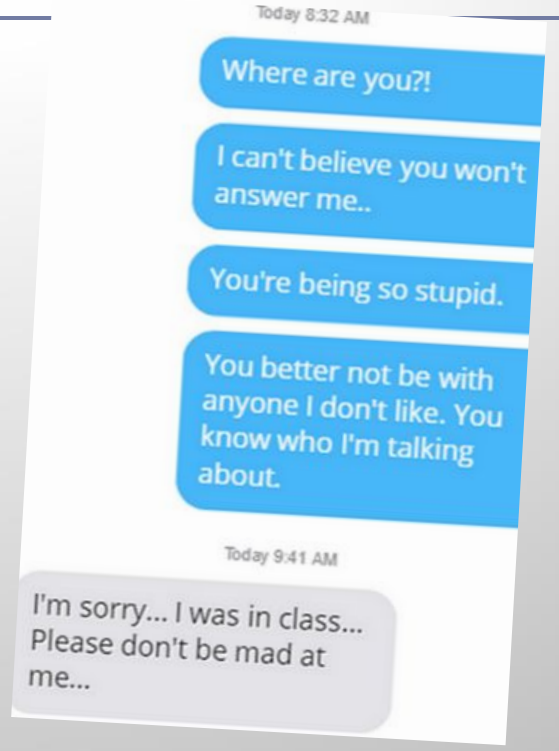

Power and Control Wheel
Using Harmful Language
• Name calling.
• Playing mind games.
• Humiliating someone.
• Making someone feel insecure.
• Making someone feel guilty.
• Telling lies or private information about someone to others.
Using Social Standing
• Using popularity, class, race or disability to manipulate someone else.
• Making all the decisions for someone.
• Being the only one to define roles in the relationship.
Using Technology
• Sending unwanted text messages.
• Breaking into someone's social networking profile, email, or cell phone.
• Pressuring someone to take, send or look at sexual photos or pictures.
Using Intimidation
• Making someone afraid by using looks, actions, or gestures.
• Smashing, destroying, or stealing property.
• Abusing pets or loved ones.
• Displaying weapons.
Minimizing, Denying, or Blaming
• Minimizing the impact of abuse.
• Not taking concerns about abuse seriously.
• Saying the abuse didn't happen.
• Blaming abusive behavior on stress, alcohol, drugs, or jealousy.
• Saying the victim caused the abuse.
Using Threats
• Making threats to use physical or sexual violence.
• Threatening to leave, to commit suicide, or report someone to the police.
• Making someone do illegal things.
• Threatening to expose someone's HIV status, immigration status, or other private information.
Sexual Coercion, Harassment, or Assault
• Manipulating to get sex or other sexual activity.
• Getting someone drunk or drugged to get sex.
• Destroying or refusing to use birth control or STD protection during sex.
• Making sexual comments, giving inappropriate looks, or telling sexual jokes.
• Sexually touching, grabbing, rubbing, or pinching someone without their consent.
Exclusion
• Controlling what someone does or where she/he goes.
• Deciding who someone sees, talks to, or what she/he wears.
• Limiting outside involvement.
• Pressuring someone to be part of a group.
• Isolating someone from their friends or family.
Using Physical Violence
• Hitting, scratching, shaking, choking, pinching, pushing, biting, or grabbing.
• Using one's body size or strength against another person.

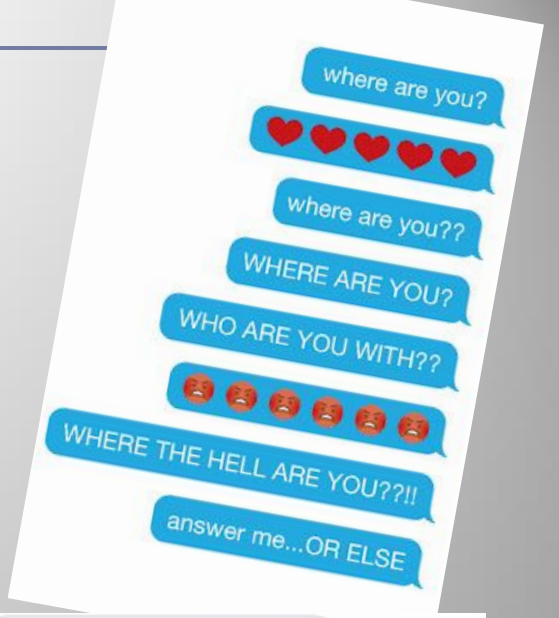
BEHIND THE SCREENS

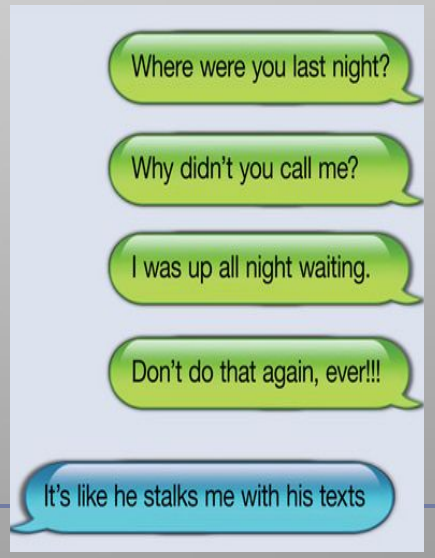
TECHNOLOGY IS A MEANS OF CONSTANT CONTROL...

What does it look like?

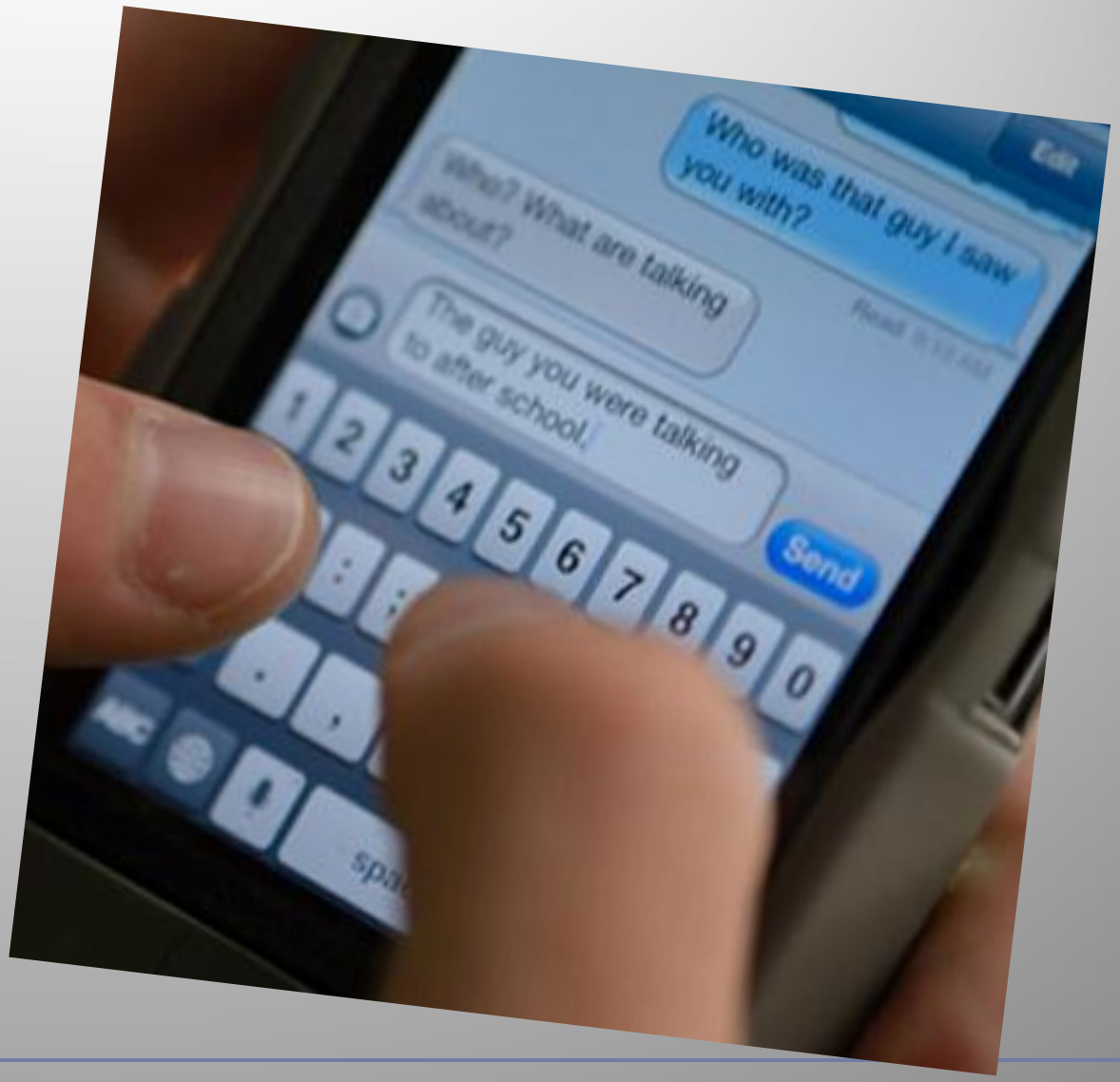








- Sending threatening or intimidating messages
- Making someone feel guilty, anxious, or even afraid for not answering a text
- Monitoring someone's phone to keep watch of who they're talking to, texting…



Forms of Digital abuse

- Using a partner's social without permission…

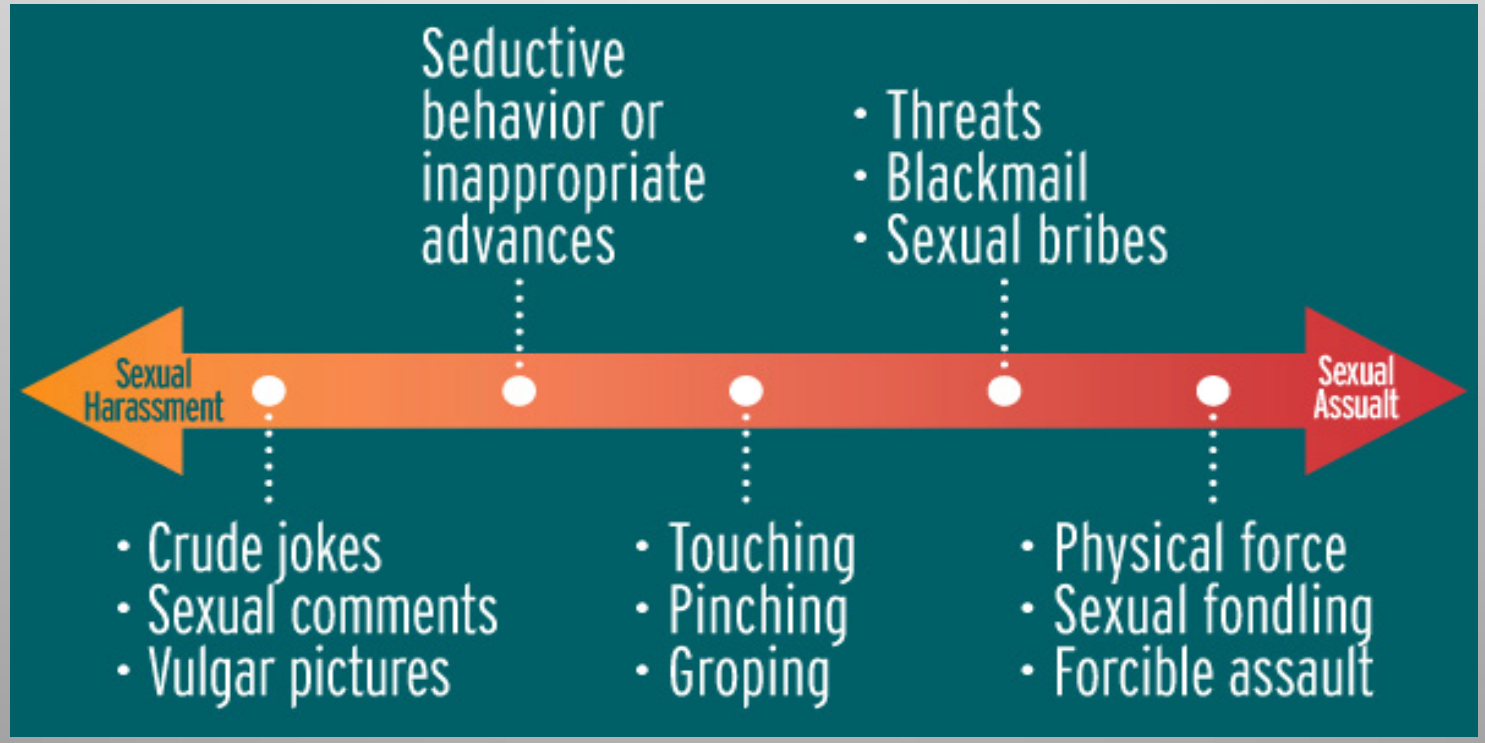
  to post rumors, embarrassing pics, nasty names…

- Using likes or posts from your social to harass you
- Demanding to know passwords

Teenage girls describe brutal pressure from boys to text nude photos - and incessant threats and harassment if they refuse

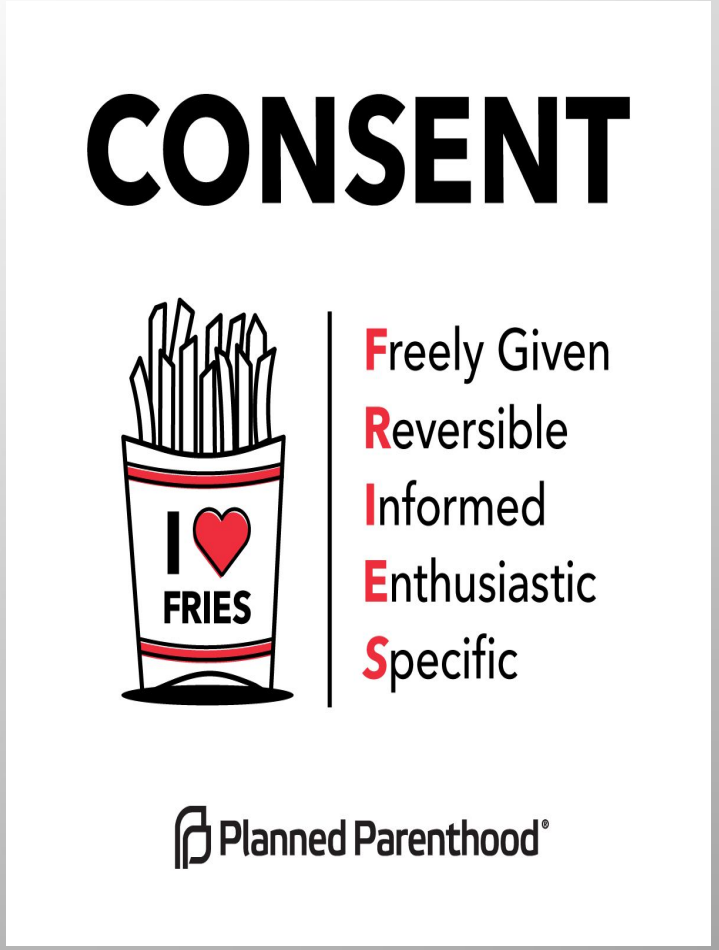
“I sent my boyfriend a naked pic after he insisted and was going to break up with me. Now he is threatening to send it to everyone if I don't have sex with him, I'm 15.”

Continuum of sexual abuse



Consent must be:

Freely given. Consenting is a choice you make without pressure, manipulation, or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
Reversible. Anyone can change their mind about what they feel like doing, anytime. Even if you've done it before, and even if you're both naked in bed.
Informed. You can only consent to something if you have the full story. For example, if someone says they'll use a condom and then they don't, there isn't full consent.
Enthusiastic. When it comes to sex, you should only do stuff you WANT to do, not things that you feel you're expected to do.
Specific. Saying yes to one thing (like going to the bedroom to make out) doesn't mean you've said yes to others (like having sex).

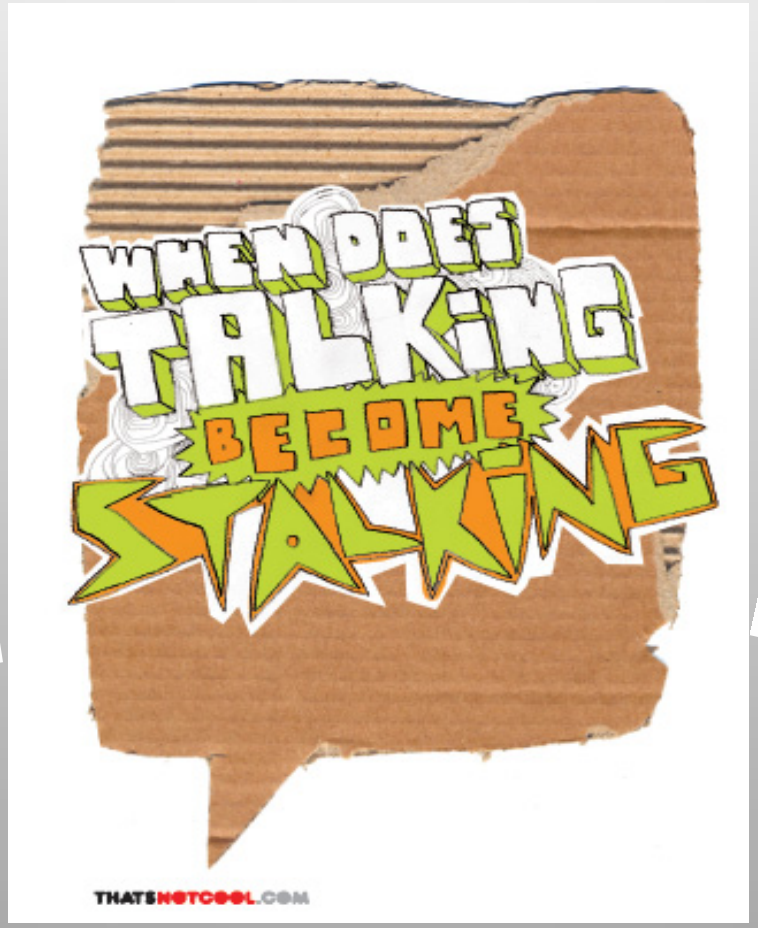


ATTENTION
please

Red flags

- Jealousy
- Possessiveness
- Control
- Checking up
- Past history
- Unrealistic expectations

WHEN DOES
AFFECTION
BECOME
OBSESSION
THATSNOTCOOL.COM


WHEN DOES
TALKING
BECOME
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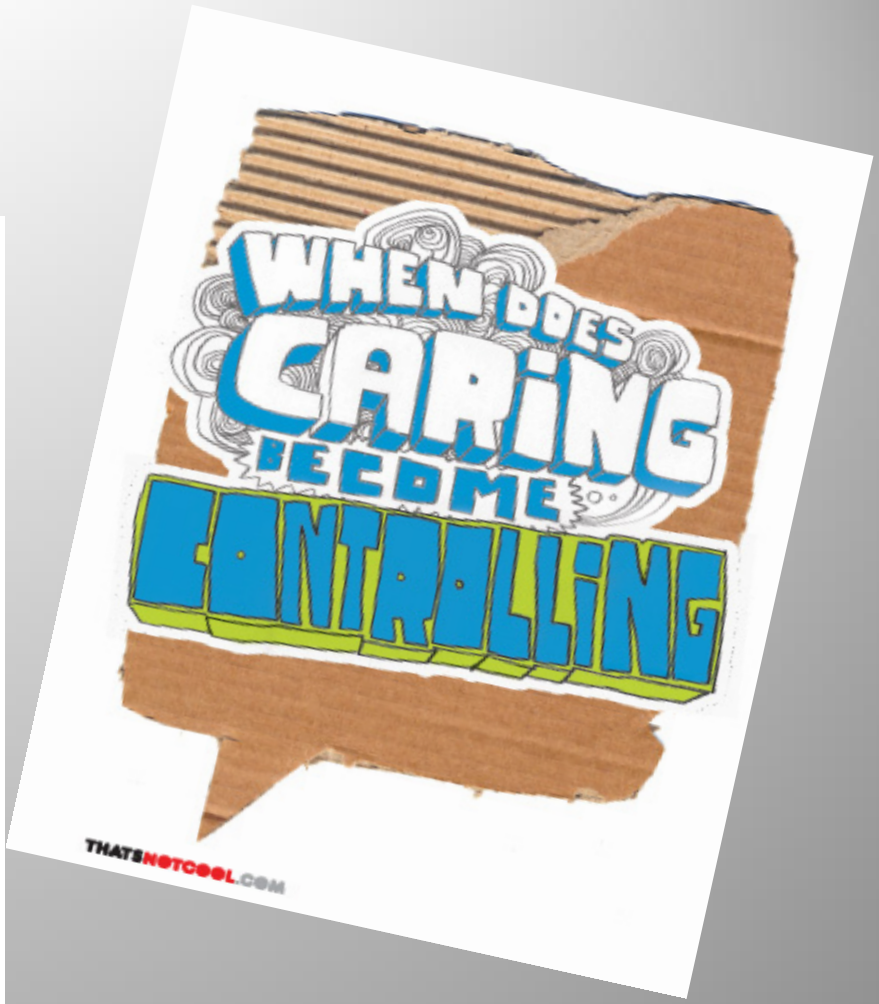

WHEN DOES
CARING
BECOME
CONTROLLING
THATSNOTCOOL.COM

Why would someone stay?

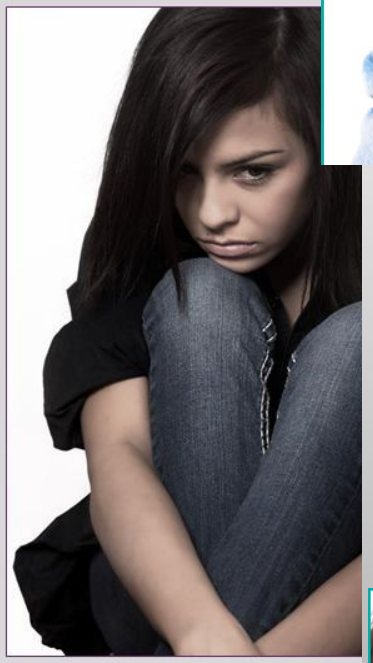
Barriers for teens

- but I love him/her
  - unaware of abusive behavior
- Location
- No access to resources
- Limitations
- Rumors, threats, and so much more…

- “He was always very remorseful afterwards and he would beg me to forgive him.”
- “My parents were going through a divorce, I wanted to prove I could stick with someone.”
- “He pressured me to stop hanging out with friends. Soon, I had none.”
- “I had this terrible fear of letting my parents down. It consumed me.”
- “My friends told me I was so lucky to have someone so caring…and so hot.”
- “I worried that no one would believe me if I told, everyone loved him.”
- “She didn’t want me to be with my friends. She said I should be enough. I thought that was part of a commitment.”
- “I heard someone say, that’s what you get for talking to another guy, she deserved it.”

Red Flags: Victim Behavior

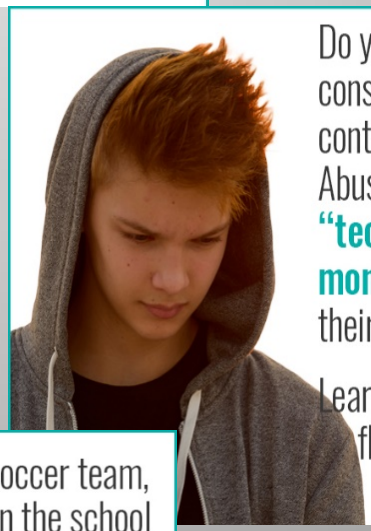
- **Social behavior changes**
  Examples: withdraws from activities, no longer gets along with friends, dresses differently
- **New risky behaviors**
  Examples: drug use, alcohol, partying, sex
- **Academic changes**
  Examples: truancy, grades decline
- **Mood changes**
  Examples: Depression, anxiety, irritability
- **Physical signs**
  Examples: Physical marks on victim, holes in walls of home/signs of struggle, covering up when seasonally inappropriate



DATING ABUSE Tools for Talking to Teens
a project of JWI and the Avon Foundation for Women

Are you noticing drastic changes in a teen's appearance? **Controlling what a partner wears** is one form of dating abuse.

Learn how to spot the warning signs at **datingabuse.jwi.org**



Do you know a teen who constantly scrambles to contact his or her partner? Abusers often use a **"technology leash" to monitor and control** their victims.

Learn how to spot other red flags for dating abuse at **datingabuse.jwi.org**

If a teen quits the soccer team, turns down a role in the school play, or stops hanging out with friends, it could be **a sign of dating abuse**.

Partners often try to **isolate their victims**.

Talk to the teens in your life about healthy relationships!

6 Tips for Parents Talking About Dating Abuse

- **1. Educate yourself.**

Learn warning signs of abusive behavior. You can give your child examples of different actions partners take in a healthy relationship, including having trust, being honest, and communicating with each other. Share a list of relationships in your child's life that are healthy, and explain why they are considered to be so.

- **2. Listen.**

Teens may be nervous or worried to share their experiences with their parents. They may be concerned that they will be in trouble with their parents and they won't understand their situations. If your child opens up to you, listen without judgment. Explain to them that the abuse is not their fault and they should not feel ashamed. Your support is crucial for your child to feel comfortable ending an abusive relationship.

- **3. Understand the risks.**

If your child is involved in an abusive relationship, it's important to understand the dangers they may be facing. While a typical reaction may be to give an ultimatum to end the relationship, parents should first assess the unhealthy behaviors. If a child is engaged in a dangerous, and possibly life-threatening situation, parents should take steps to stop the abuse from continuing. There are **resources** to guide parents and anyone concerned about a loved one experiencing abuse, including contact **the NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE at 1-800-799-7233.**

6 Tips for Parents (continued)

- **4. Focus on the abusive behaviors.**

  Because your child may still have feelings for their partner when they talk to you, it is best to avoid talking badly about their partner and the relationship. Instead, discuss the specific unhealthy behaviors, such as jealousy, belittling, and manipulation. Your teen can then better understand on their own why they need to leave the situation without feeling like you don't respect them.

- **5. Show your concern.**

  Point out the specific concerns you have about the abuse they are experiencing. Your child should understand that they deserve to be in a relationship where they are respected and treated like an equal.

- **6. Be supportive.**

  It isn't easy for any victim to confront the abuse they are experiencing and share it with another person. As a parent, offer your support to help them open up. Create a space where your child can feel comfortable talking with you. Honor your child's decision to seek help. Offer resources for additional support on how they can move forward with their experiences, understanding that you will be by their side as they begin their healing journey.

- *Sources:* **Loveisrespect** *and* **One Love Foundation**

Take a minute….

what do you want?

what do you want to skip?

You can have a healthy relationship when **you**:

- Learn to identify the early warning signs of an abusive relationship;
- Understand that you have choices;
- Identify healthy boundaries; and
- Believe you are valuable and deserve to be treated with respect.

Think Safety

- **Trust your instincts – if something makes you uncomfortable, talk to someone about it**
- **If breaking up**
  - **do so in public**
  - **tell someone**
- **If stranded, who could you call for a ride home**
- **Route to school, location of locker**
- **Identify what adult(s) you can talk to about abuse or if something is confusing you**
  - **Including people at school – teachers, counselors…**

Confused about Relationships?

Text a Peer Advocate:

“loveis” to 22522

Teen Dating Abuse Hotline
1-866-331-9474

Source:
LoveIsRespect.org, a partnership between the National Dating Abuse Helpline and Break the Cycle.

Any
Questions
?

OUT

Break the Cycle
Empowering Youth to End Domestic Violence

LOVE IS NOT ABUSE

DO SOMETHING .ORG

love is respect org

THATS NOT COOL .COM

LET YOUR HEART RULE

The End