TEEN DATING VIOLENCE PREVENTION: SIGNS OF RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE FOR PARENTS

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It's important to talk with girls about the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships and their right to be respected and safe. Relationship or dating violence is not limited to physical violence and may include emotional abuse, such as threats, intimidation, or blaming the person for the abuser's actions.

Discuss these behaviors to help girls recognize different types of relationship violence and the warning signs. Use it as a conversation starter and let her know that if she has questions about a relationship that she should turn to a trusted adult.

Relationship violence can be characterized by one or more of the following behaviors. Some behaviors may initially seem to be light or playful and become more serious and hurtful over time.

Violent physical behavior	• slapping, hitting, punching • making threatening looks or gestures • destroying property; harming pets
Unwanted sexual behavior	• committing acts of sexual aggression • forcing a partner to participate in sexual acts against the partner's will • taking sexual pictures or having sexual pictures (digital or hard copy) and sharing with others without knowledge or consent of partner • threatening to do the above
Emotionally/verbally hurtful behavior (including controlling or criticizing behavior)	• withholding physical contact • withdrawing support and affection • shaming and embarrassing partner • making a partner feel guilty for "causing" violence • threatening to harm partner's pets, friends, or family • spying on a partner • calling or texting/messaging constantly • demanding to know partner's whereabouts • isolating a partner from others, etc. • expressing disapproval of partner's clothes, looks, friends, beliefs

Reference: www.loveisrespect.org

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