

# Healthy Relationships Protect Teens



## A Parent's Handbook

Why you need to talk to your 11-to-14-year-old about teen relationships and pressure to engage in risk behaviors

**Start Strong Idaho**

**Building Healthy Teen Relationships**



## Healthy Relationships Positively Influence Decision-Making

Adolescence brings rapid emotional, psychological, and physical changes. It is a natural phase of separation from parents and experimentation with peers.

As your child transitions from elementary school to middle or junior high school, friendships gain importance and peer groups begin to form, sometimes taking priority over family relationships. As your son or daughter begins spending more time away from home, we want to know how to help our pre-teens and young teens form healthy relationships. As peer influence increases, and 11-to-14-year-olds are still learning to control impulses,

parents need to provide guidance on healthy teen relationships.

Pre-teens and young teens who learn to develop healthy relationship skills are more likely to have healthy relationships throughout their lives. The types of relationships your son or daughter forms with his or her friends often sets the stage for the types of friendships and dating relationships will choose as an older teen.

Pre-teens and young teens learn how to act in relationships from parents, siblings, friends, and the media. Some sources may provide inaccurate, incomplete, or inappropriate information that 11-to-14-year-olds may imitate in their own relationships.

As a parent, you should provide reliable and accurate information to your 11-to-14-year-old about healthy relationships: what a healthy

relationship feels like, looks like, and sounds like. One of the most effective ways of teaching your child about healthy relationships is to model positive qualities in your own relationships. Even when you think your teen is not listening or watching you, they often are.

Pre-teens and young teens start to explore the idea of a boyfriend or girlfriend, interacting mainly through cell phones, IM (instant messaging), social networking sites like Facebook or MySpace, or at school. Parents need to understand that pre-teens and young teens often have relationships with someone they consider a boyfriend or girlfriend, but do not consider themselves as "dating." Parents should consider "hanging out" with friends at the mall or going to a movie as an early form of dating.

*Healthy teen relationships are the most effective protection against adolescent risk behaviors.*

Pressure on young teens and teens to engage in adolescent risk behaviors - sexual activity, alcohol or drugs, and/or violence - is often interconnected with unhealthy or abusive teen relationships.

Healthy teen relationships can positively influence your son or daughter's ability to make safe and good decisions when pressured to engage in adolescent risk behaviors. So, keep reading this handbook to find out more!

## Parenting Tips

Understand adolescence is a natural phase of separation and experimentation

Even when you think your teen is not listening or watching you, they often are

"Hanging out" is an early form of dating

Healthy teen relationships can positively influence decision making on sexual activity, alcohol or drugs, or abusive teen relationships

## Teach Your Pre-Teen or Young Teen About Healthy Relationships

You can help your 11-to-14-year-old recognize the characteristics of healthy relationships by talking with your son or daughter about healthy relationships and listening to his or her opinions. Spend time listening and talking with your pre-teen or young teen every day. Continue being active in his or her school and activities.

Maintain family traditions and involve other trusted adults in his or her life.

Monitor and set limits on the use of technology and ask his or her opinion about unhealthy relationship messages in popular music, books, video games, television, and movies. Music lyrics and other popular media offer great teachable moments. When appropriate, express your concern or opinion about the accuracy of the popular media, sexism, racism, or violence.

Encourage your son or daughter to recognize and discuss the full range of emotions or feelings (positive and negative) that connect people to one another. It is important to help your pre-teen or young teen to understand that without an awareness and understanding of emotions, it is difficult to build or maintain healthy relationships. Encourage emotional awareness - the ability to recognize moment-to-moment emotional feelings and to express his or her feelings appropriately.

### Parenting Tip

Ask your pre-teen or young teen what do you think:

Healthy relationships look like?

Healthy relationships feel like?

Healthy relationships sound like?

## Characteristics of Healthy Relationships

Engage your pre-teen or young teen in discussions about peer or dating relationships using the following guidelines for characteristics that a healthy relationship should include:

**Respect** – Are you accepted by your friends for who you are? No one should pressure you into doing things you are not comfortable with, such as drinking, drugs, or unwanted physical contact.

**Safety** – Do you feel safe emotionally and physically in all your relationships? Emotional safety means you feel comfortable being you without fear of being put

down. Physical safety means you are not being hurt or pressured into unwanted physical contact.

**Support** – Do your friends care for you and want what is best for you? Your friends should understand if you are unable to hang out because you need to study for a big test or if a parent has asked you to spend time with your family.

**Individuality** – Do you pretend to like something you don't or be someone you aren't just to fit in or be liked by certain people? Be yourself; after all, being an individual is what makes you you!

**Fairness and Equality** – Do you have an equal say in your friendships and relationships? From the activities you do together to the friends you hang out with, you should have an equal say in the choices made in all your relationships.

**Acceptance** – Do your friends or girlfriend or boyfriend accept you for who you really are? You shouldn't have to change who you are or compromise your beliefs to make someone like you.

**Honesty and Trust** – Are you always honest and are your friends honest with you? Honesty builds trust. You can't have a healthy relationship without trust. If you have ever caught a friend in a lie, you know that it takes time to rebuild your trust.

**Communication** – You and your friends should listen to one another and hear one another out. Do you talk face-to-face (not just text) about your feelings? One of the most important characteristics in any healthy relationship is effective communication. Assertive and respectful communication can help you deal with conflict and make good decisions. Good communication builds the foundation for healthy relationships.





## Understand Risk Behaviors and Pressures on Pre-Teens and Young Teens

As your 11-to-14-year-old negotiates middle or junior high school, he or she will struggle with the pressure to fit in and may be exposed or pressured to experiment with risk behaviors, such as early sexual activity, alcohol or drug use, or violence. The connection between adolescent risk behaviors and peer or dating relationships is often overlooked. Unhealthy or abusive peer or dating relationships almost always add to the pressure to participate in risk behaviors. It will often be the pre-teen or young teen's skills in negotiating, decision-making, and problem-solving in the context of relationships that will determine his or her degree of risk.

Healthy peer or dating relationships can protect pre-teens and young

teens from the pressures to engage in risk behaviors. As parents, we need to teach our 11-to-14-year-olds the skills needed to identify and develop healthy relationships before they are exposed to pressures to engage in risk behaviors.

### Pressure to Fit In

Pressure to conform to what other pre-teens and young teens decide is acceptable (what's cool or not cool) is one of the strongest pressures faced by this age group. Pre-teens and young teens want to be accepted for who they are, but it can be difficult, if not impossible, if they are worried about being humiliated, bullied, threatened, or even hurt. These pressures are particularly real for pre-teens or young teens who seek more individuality, have unusual interests, come from different cultures, have a different sexual orientation, or who are noticeably different in any way.

### Pressure to be Sexually Active

Many pre-teens and young teens have unrealistic expectations about romantic relationships. For some pre-teens and young teens, having a boyfriend or girlfriend is a fun part of adolescence. For others, the pressure to change their beliefs, values, or boundaries in order to keep a boyfriend or girlfriend is tremendous.

How you talk with your pre-teen or young teen should vary by age depending on the topic being discussed. Be aware that between the ages of 11 and 14, sexual activity can range from sending sexually

suggestive text messages to oral sex or sexual intercourse.

Teens face much more pressure today to be "racy" and sexually active at an earlier age than ever before. Both boys and girls report feeling these pressures. According to a recent study nearly one in three pre-teens say they have been in a boyfriend/girlfriend relationship. Sadly, more than one in four of those pre-teens say that having sex is a part of pre-teen dating.

Pre-teens and young teens need to know the difference between dating and sex. Dating is not an avenue to sex; it is an opportunity to get to know someone better. Sex should be discussed openly before dating starts (even group dating), and pre-teens and young teens should recognize that abstinence is always an option. It is important that you share your values and concerns before your pre-teen or young teen starts dating.

## Strategies to encourage healthy relationships

- Be sensitive to the pressures of adolescence and provide understanding, support, and guidance – but know the limits you must set for your pre-teen or young teen's safety.
- Be involved. Encourage and support your pre-teen or young teen's individual interests and involvement in his or her school or community.
- Create positive connections and interactions with your pre-teen or young teen.
- Be an assertive parent – not too strict or too loose – with a balance of sensitivity and firmness. Be firm about expectations and the consequences of actions.
- Encourage and model healthy and safe relationships. Discuss what a healthy relationship looks like, feels like, and sounds like.
- Express clear values and expectations. Talk about your views, especially your views on sexual activity, alcohol and drugs, abusive relationships, and other risk behaviors such as self-harming (e.g., cutting) and eating disorders.
- Prepare your pre-teen or young teen to handle the pressures of adolescence. Role playing will help your child prepare for the exposure to risk behaviors.
- Promote positive and assertive communication and problem solving skills. Practice "I statements" such as "I am uncomfortable and want to go home."
- Encourage your child's emotional awareness - the ability to recognize moment-to-moment emotional feelings and to express all feelings (good and bad) appropriately.
- Encourage equality in gender roles and behavior.

## New Pressures on Teens & Risks of Technology

More than any previous generation, today's pre-teens and young teens are connected to one another, and to the world, via digital technology. Recent data suggests that social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace have surpassed email as the preferred method of communication in all age groups. While today's pre-teens and young teens may be more digitally savvy than earlier generations, their lack of maturity and life experience can quickly get them into trouble with these new social venues.

*The days of having to talk on the phone in the kitchen in front of the whole family are long gone...*

Teen relationships are impacted by cell phones and social networking sites. It is not uncommon for pre-teens or young teens to have a "boyfriend" or "girlfriend" via his or her cell phone or a social networking site without ever having talked in person. It is important that you talk with your pre-teen or young teen about social media and monitor their use of social networking sites to help them navigate this new online social world.

As a parent, you should learn about these electronic technologies first hand – there is simply no better way

to learn than to have a profile yourself. Let your pre-teen or young teen know that his or her use of technology is something you want and need to know about. Technology use will vary by age. Pre-teens are likely to be using more instant messaging and texting, while young teens may also use social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace.

Make sure you are clear with your pre-teen or young teen about what you consider appropriate "electronic" behavior. Just as certain language is unacceptable in your house, make sure you let your pre-teen or young teen know what is and is not allowed online. Give reminders of those expectations from time to time. It doesn't mean you don't trust your son or daughter, it just reinforces that you care about him or her enough to be paying attention.

Talk with other parents about what their kids of similar ages are using for social networking sites. Ask your pre-teen or young teen about those technologies as a starting point for discussion. If they are in the same peer group, there is a good chance they are all using the same sites together. For example:

- For pre-teens: "Let's look together at your text log today. I'd like to see who's been texting you."
- For young teens: "Mrs. Smith told me Jennifer uses Facebook. Is that something you've thought of doing? Do you already have a profile? If so, I'd like to see it."

Parents need to consider creating limits on the use of these technologies. For example, consider telling your pre-teen or young teen to leave the phone on the kitchen counter to charge during the night so they won't be pressured to respond to text messages or talk after they have gone to bed.

punishment to possible legal action in the case of sexting or bullying. Remember to make a point of discouraging your pre-teen or young teen from gossiping, spreading rumors, bullying, or damaging someone's reputation via texting or other technologies.



Emphasize that everything sent over the Internet or by cell phone can be shared with the entire world. So, it is important your pre-teen or young teen uses good judgment in sending messages and pictures and that he or she set appropriate privacy settings on social media sites.

Parents need to discuss with kids of every age what "good judgment" means and the consequences of poor judgment – ranging from minor

Quizzes on social networking sites are popular with young teens. For example, "What Disney Character Are You?" or "What Color Converse Are You?" Once a young teen answers a quiz, the results are usually posted on their "wall" for their other friends to see. Talk with your young teen on how to make the decision on what quizzes to answer. Caution them that many of the quizzes on social networking sites have offensive or sexually inappropriate content.



To keep your 11-to-14-year-old safe, have your pre-teen or young teen show you where the privacy features are for the social networking sites he or she is using. The more private the settings, the less likely inappropriate material will be received by your pre-teen or young teen or sent to his or her circle of friends.

You need to be aware of the ages of use for the sites your pre-teen wants to use, including game sites such 'Webkinz.' Many sites are for ages 13 and older (for example, 13 for Facebook and 14 for MySpace), and even the sites for younger kids require parental consent.

Be sure you know where your pre-teen or young teen is going online and have access to those sites: instant messaging,

Facebook, MySpace, etc. You might consider asking that you and your pre-teen or young teen are "friends" with each other. This isn't snooping—this is information your pre-teen or young teen is making public. If everyone else can look at it, why can't you? Talk with your pre-teen or young teen specifically about his or her notions of what is public and what is private. Your views may differ but you won't know until you ask, listen, and discuss. This is one way of showing them you are there. It will provide a checks and balances system by having an adult within arm's reach of his or her profile, and is important for kids of all ages, including pre-teens and young teens.

As a parent, you will need to strike a balance between safety concerns and the normal developmental need of young teens to separate from their parents. As a safety precaution,

parents should consider some level of monitoring of your pre-teen or young teen's use of these technologies. Periodically check chat logs, emails, files, and social networking profiles for inappropriate content, friends, messages, and images.

Be transparent about any type of monitoring and let your pre-teen or young teen know what you are doing. Transparency is critical to continue to build trust between you and your child. Some families may check once a week and others more sporadically. Other parents might consider formal monitoring systems to track your pre-teen or young teen's email, chat, instant messaging, and image content. Whatever level of monitoring you choose as a parent, talk with your teen and let them know why you are concerned about their safety. As your child ages, you should allow them more privacy and autonomy.

It is important to know the warning signs of trouble, for example: skipping activities, meals, and homework; weight loss or gain; or a drop in grades. If these issues are occurring due to your pre-teen or young teen being online when he or she should be eating, sleeping, or participating in school or social activities, your son or daughter may have a problem with the Internet or other technologies. Contact your school counselor, pediatrician, or family physician for advice if any of these symptoms are occurring.

## Parenting Tips

**There is no better way to learn than to have a social networking profile yourself**

**Talk with your pre-teen or young teen about responsible use of cell phones, instant messaging, and social networking sites (Facebook and MySpace)**

**Be aware of age requirements for Facebook and MySpace**

**Set limits and monitor use of cell phones and the Internet**

## The New Problem of “Sexting”

“Sexting” refers to sending a text message with a photograph of a person who is naked, engaged in a sexual act, or is otherwise inappropriate. According to a recent survey, about 20 percent of teen boys and girls have sent such messages. The emotional pain it

causes can be enormous for the teen in the picture as well as the sender and receiver – often with legal implications. You must begin the conversation about sexting before your pre-teen or young teen has a problem – either receiving an inappropriate text or being pressured to send one. You should introduce the issue of sexting as soon as your child is old enough to have a cell phone.

### Discuss responsible and safe cell phone use

As a parent, you should talk with your pre-teen or young teen about the following issues involving the use of cell phones:

**Safety** – Do not give your phone number to anyone you do not know. Do not answer any calls or reply to any texts unless you know the caller. Always answer when a parent calls or texts. As a parent, you may want to review and approve your pre-teen or young teen’s contact list.

**Phone usage** – Do not send abusive or humiliating texts or pictures or make pranks. If you are bullied on the phone, save the messages, and show a parent. Know and follow your school policy on cell phones. Turn the phone off while you are doing your homework and at bedtime. At night, consider leaving the phone in the kitchen for charging until the next morning.

**Inappropriate usage** – Do not use your phone to send threatening phone or text messages or to intimidate others. Bullying or being mean with a cell phone, while less personal, is no less wrong. Do not use your phone to cheat in school. Texting answers to tests or using a phone to search the web during a test is cheating.

**Cameras** – Sending or forwarding sexually explicit photographs is against the law. If you receive any pictures from friends that make you uncomfortable, tell a parent or an adult you trust about it. Also, secretly taking photos or taking video clips of someone invades that person’s privacy and is wrong.

**Accountability** – Be responsible for helping out with the bill (paying for the texting, pay for half, chores in exchange for the phone bill, etc.). Review the bill together. Consider drafting an agreement about the cell phone and bill. Discuss when it is or isn’t appropriate to use the cell phone.

**Consequences** – If any of the above rules are broken, the phone will be taken away for a period of time to be determined by the severity of the violation.

Here are some tips for how to begin these conversations with your pre-teen or young teen:

- Talk to your pre-teen or young teen, even if the issue hasn’t directly impacted your community. Start the conversation with questions like, “Have you heard of sexting?” or “Tell me what you think sexting is.” For the initial part of the conversation, it is important to first learn what your pre-teen or young teen’s understanding of the issue is and then add to it with an age appropriate explanation.
- Use examples appropriate for your pre-teen or young teen’s age. For younger children with cell phones, alert them that text messages should never contain pictures of people – kids or adults – without their clothes on or kissing or touching each other in ways that they’ve never seen before. For older children, use the term “sexting” and give more specifics about sex acts they may know about. For young teens, be very specific that “sexting” often involves pictures of a sexual nature, is considered pornography, and may be illegal.
- Make sure your pre-teen or young teen understands that sexting is serious and considered a crime in many jurisdictions. In all communities, if he or she “sexts,”

there will be serious consequences, quite possibly involving the police, suspension from school, and notes on his or her permanent record that could hurt his or her chances of getting into college, the armed forces, or getting a job.

- Monitor headlines in the news for stories about “sexting” that illustrate the very real consequences for

### Warning signs of use of technology and unhealthy relationships

- Relationships with friends or peers that require constant contact
- Sleeping with a cell phone under his or her pillow or on his or her chest
- Having irrational reactions to being without a phone or Internet access or having to answer the phone right away
- Substantial increases in the amount of time spent talking, texting, or on social networking sites
- Taking unnecessary risks such as using a cell phone at inappropriate times (during class, etc.)

both senders and receivers of these images. Start a conversation about these headlines with questions like: “Have you seen this story?”, “What did you think about this?”, or “What would you do?” Rehearse ways your pre-teen or young teen can respond if asked to participate in inappropriate texting.

Parents are encouraged to support school and community efforts to educate parents, teachers, and students on issues involving sexting.

*[New Pressures on Teens and Risks of Technology and The New Problem of Sexting was adapted from the American Academy of Pediatrics website.]*

## Creating Positive Connections with Your Pre-Teen or Young Teen

It's never too early to teach your pre-teen or young teen healthy relationship skills and to be concerned about risk-taking associated with his or her friendships and romantic relationships. Eleven years of age may seem early to talk about difficult issues like sexual activity, alcohol or drugs, or dating abuse, but being preemptive is effective. You need to talk about potentially difficult issues with your pre-teen or young teen before they emerge as real problems. Talking with you will help your son or daughter develop the skills to handle the pressures of adolescence.

Talking with your pre-teens or young teens about these difficult issues shouldn't be a single conversation, but an open and ongoing dialogue. Keep the lines of communication going and

*Let them ask you anything and create opportunities for them to start the conversation. Make sure your pre-teen or young teen knows that you are always there for his or her questions or concerns.*

look for opportunities to engage your 11-to-14-year-old in conversations about healthy relationships. The surest way to keep the dialogue going is to show that you respect and welcome your pre-teen or young teen's opinions, thoughts, and ideas.

## Effective Ways to Talk with Your Pre-Teen or Young Teen

Before you start a conversation about healthy relationships with your 11-to-14-year-old, you should examine your own values, behaviors, and experiences with relationships. Think about what kind of behaviors and ethics you have modeled. What were your first relationships like? What problems came up? How did you resolve conflict in the relationship?

Think about what a healthy relationship is to you. From watching you, your pre-teen or young teen will learn more about how to treat others than from anything you might say. You don't have to be a perfect role model. If you want your pre-teen or young teen to talk with you and be honest about his or her own experiences, you have to be honest about your own experiences. (you do not have to share all of your experiences).

Relationships between adolescents can seem incredibly intense and all consuming to them – just because your child is young doesn't mean that he or she cannot fall in love or wonder about sex. However, because your child has had few relationships to compare with, he or she may be even



more vulnerable than an adult to an unhealthy or abusive relationship.

### Create Opportunities for Discussion

Anywhere that is comfortable for the both of you is a good place to be, as long as you have privacy and enough time to discuss whatever issues might come up. Watching a TV show together or in the car often provide opportunities. Try to wait and listen, let silence fill the space instead of immediately asking questions. Most pre-teens and teens will talk given the opportunity.

### Always be Available

If you can, drop everything and listen anytime your pre-teen or young teen

wants to talk. When the opportunity for discussion presents itself, make sure your pre-teen or young teen knows that he or she has your undivided attention. Let them ask you anything and create opportunities for them to start the conversation. Make sure your pre-teen or young teen knows that you are always there for his or her questions or concerns. If you do not know the answer, seek out the answer together.

### Watch for Signs

Watch for signs of your pre-teen or young teen wanting to talk, such as hanging around but not necessarily saying anything or saying that he or she does not feel well when there doesn't seem to be anything physically

wrong. If your pre-teen or young teen tells you that he or she wants to talk to you, but says it is “no big deal,” don’t believe it. Simply by bringing the subject up, your pre-teen or young teen is telling you that it is a big deal – that it is something of importance to him or her.

### **Be a Good Listener**

Support your pre-teen or young teen and confirm that you are a good resource and a non judgmental listener. Avoid giving critical or judgmental comments, even if you don’t agree with what he or she says or feels. Provide realistic strategies for confronting problems effectively.

### **Start Talking Early**

The majority of pre-teens and young teens think that parents should start talking with their children about sex, love, and relationships when they are 11 or 12 years of age. Most teens report that it would be easier for them to delay sex and avoid pregnancy if they were able to have more open, honest conversations about these topics with their parents.

### **Talk with Your Pre-Teen or Young Teen on His or Her Level**

Younger teens and pre-teens don’t always understand when you speak to them in abstractions. Real life examples work better. Share your own experiences, especially the ones where you made mistakes and learned from those mistakes. Describe situations you experienced when you were your



pre-teen or young teen’s age, but remember to maintain boundaries – be a parent, not a friend.

### **Understand the Questions Your Pre-Teen or Young Teen Asks, and Answer those Questions Honestly**

If you are not sure what exactly your pre-teen or young teen is asking, say so. Once you understand what is being asked, give an answer that is honest and correct. Don’t worry about not being an expert. Even if you don’t know the answer to a question now, you can always find out more information. If you don’t know how to answer the question, say so and assure your pre-teen or young teen that you

can research it and come up with a solution together.

### **Strategies for Relationship Safety**

Once your pre-teen or young teen has formed peer groups and is hanging out with peers, or is ready to begin group or individual dating, consider developing a strategy for safety that you and he or she develop together.

Developing a strategy is generally more effective than establishing “rules.” Think about who and what you are trying to protect by creating rules. Are you trying to protect your pre-teen or young teen against sexual activity, alcohol or drug use, or abuse or violence? Do traditional dating

rules protect him or her against these common parental concerns? Not necessarily. Parents and pre-teens or young teens should develop a strategy together to protect what is important to both of them. When coming up with a strategy for safety, consider the following:

- Defining dating with your pre-teen or teen – is it hanging out with a group of mixed gender peers, talking on the phone with a “boyfriend” or “girlfriend”?
- Discuss the age when the early forms and later forms of dating will be permitted.
- Encouraging your pre-teen or young teen to listen to and trust his or her instincts.
- Discussing the safety of group dates versus individual dates. Parents need to understand that group dates do not always mean a safe date, especially when drugs or alcohol or sexually active pre-teens or young teens are involved. or the group is comprised of people your teen does not know.
- Planning for an uncomfortable or dangerous social situation by letting your pre-teen or young teen know that you are always available to come pick him or her up – whenever or whatever the situation – no questions asked.
- Providing your pre-teen or young teen with emergency money and a cell phone as a means of contact.

- Establishing a prearranged password indicating the need for intervention or help. In an emergency your pre-teen or young teen can either call you and say the password or can text you or a friend who knows what the password means. Be sure to create a password that can be easily worked into a conversation.
- Setting firm limits on acceptable age differences. Strongly consider not allowing pre-teens or young teens to date someone who is three or more years younger or older. During adolescence, an age difference of three years or more may indicate an imbalance of power and control and substantially increases the risk of dating abuse, alcohol and drug use, and/or sexual activity.
- Talking about avoiding alcohol or drugs and discussing the decreased ability to react to dangerous or uncomfortable situations under their influence.
- Encouraging your pre-teen or young teen to set limits on sexual contact and communicating those clearly.

## Warning Signs of Unhealthy Relationships

Trust your instincts. A parent's intuition will often signal the first signs of trouble, whether that means alcohol, drugs, an abusive relationship, or anything else that worries you. If you feel that your pre-teen or young teen is experiencing problems that are too difficult for you to handle, seek help from a pediatrician, school counselor, social worker, mental health counselor, or faith-based organization. Some warning signs can include:

- Calls frequently to find out where your son or daughter is, who they are with, or what they are doing.
- More than 3 years age difference in middle, junior or high school dating relationships.
- Has to be with friend, boyfriend or girlfriend all the time.
- Your son or daughter cries a lot about the relationship.
- The friend, boyfriend, or girlfriend acts jealous, possessive, or controlling and makes all the decisions in the relationship.
- Follows your daughter or son, or shows up uninvited.
- Isolates your son or daughter or restricts contact with family and friends.
- Before the relationship started, your son or daughter had more friends or activities than now.
- Grades have declined in the past weeks or months.

## National Resources

### National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline

Phone: (866) 331-9474

TTY: (866) 331-8453

Website: [www.loveisrespect.com](http://www.loveisrespect.com)

## Idaho Resources

### Start Strong Idaho: Building Healthy Teen Relationships

**Website: [www.startstrongidaho.com](http://www.startstrongidaho.com)**

Start Strong Idaho

A project of the Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence

300 E. Mallard Dr., Ste. 130, Boise, ID 83706

Phone: (208) 384-0419 or (888) 293-6118 Fax: (208) 331-0687

### Idaho Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Project: No Means Know

**Website: [www.nomeansknow.com](http://www.nomeansknow.com)**

Idaho Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Project

A project of the Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence

300 E. Mallard Dr., Ste. 130, Boise, ID 83706

Phone: (208) 384-0419 or (888) 293-6118 Fax: (208) 331-0687

## Other Resources

Wolfe, David. A., *What Parents Need to Know About Teens: Facts, Myths, and Strategies*, CAMH, 2007.

For more information on Start Strong Idaho contact the Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence at 1.208.384.0419

"Support for this *Healthy Relationships Protect Teens: A Parent's Handbook* was provided by a grant from Start Strong: Building Healthy Teen Relationships, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation."

# **Start Strong Idaho**

## **Building Healthy Teen Relationships**

**Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence**

**Idaho Department of Education**

**St. Luke's Children's Hospital**

**American Academy of Pediatrics – Idaho Chapter**

**Boys & Girls Clubs of Ada County**

**Boys & Girls Club of Nampa**

**Central District Health Department**

**Idaho Department of Health & Welfare**

**Men Today/Men Tomorrow**

**Silver Sage Girl Scout Council**

**Treasure Valley Family YMCA**

**Nampa Family Justice Center**

**Idaho Legal Aid Services**

**FACES**

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