

February is Teen Dating Violence Month. I know most of you aren't teens anymore, but dating violence is still something we should be aware of. This month our weekly bulletins will concentrate on dating violence.

What is relationship violence?

Relationship violence is when one person in a relationship is abusive or controlling toward the other person – especially when they disagree about something.

Relationship violence is sometimes called dating violence, domestic violence, or intimate partner violence. In some relationships, both partners act in unhealthy or unsafe ways.

Relationship violence can include:

- Physical violence, like pushing, hitting, or throwing things
- Sexual violence, like forcing or trying to force someone to do something sexual
- Threats of physical or sexual violence, which may include threatening to hurt another person or a pet
- Emotional abuse, like embarrassing a partner or keeping that person away from family and friends

How do I know if my relationship might become violent?

Relationship violence can start slowly and be hard to recognize at first.

Try asking yourself these questions:

- Does my partner respect me?
- Does my partner blame me for everything that goes wrong?
- Does my partner make most of the decisions in our relationship?
- Am I ever afraid to tell my partner something?
- Do I ever feel forced to do things that I don't want to do?
- Have I ever done anything sexual with my partner when I didn't want to?
- Does my partner promise to change and then keep doing the same things?

How can relationship violence affect health?

Some health effects are easy to see, like physical injuries. But the stress of relationship violence can also lead to other serious problems like:

- Eating disorders
- Depression, anxiety, or other mental health problems – like panic attacks, trouble sleeping, or thinking about suicide
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) – a type of anxiety disorder
- Trouble trusting people and building relationships
- Drinking too much alcohol or using drugs

Trust your instincts.

You are the expert on your life and relationships. If you think your relationship is unhealthy or you are worried about your safety, trust your gut.

Barton Campus Safety

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