

TRUTH SPOTLIGHT

on dating violence

THE RELATIONSHIP SPECTRUM

All relationships exist on a spectrum from healthy to abusive, with unhealthy somewhere in the middle.

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS ARE BASED ON EQUALITY & RESPECT

You make decisions together and can openly discuss whatever you're dealing with, like relationship problems and sexual choices. You enjoy spending time together but can be happy apart.

- respect
- good communication
- trust
- honesty
- equality

UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS ARE BASED ON ATTEMPTS TO CONTROL THE OTHER PERSON

One person tries to make most of the decisions. He or she may pressure their partner about sex or refuse to see how their actions can hurt. In an unhealthy relationship, you feel like you should only spend time with your partner.

- breaks in communication
- pressure
- dishonesty
- struggles for control
- inconsiderate behavior

ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS ARE BASED ON AN IMBALANCE OF POWER & CONTROL

One person is making all the decisions—about sexual choices, friend groups, boundaries, even what's true and what's not. You spend all of your time together and feel like you can't talk to other people, especially about what's really happening in your relationship.

- accusations
- mistreating
- blame shifting
- isolation pressure
- manipulation

WHY PEOPLE STAY

Those who haven't dealt with dating abuse before sometimes wonder why survivors don't simply walk away, not realizing that ending an abusive relationship is far more complicated than other break-ups. One of the simplest ways to support survivors is to understand why they may not leave.

- intimidation from verbal or physical threats
- shame that they've done something wrong
- normalized to abusive environments
- low self-esteem
- fear of the consequences

See more details at www.thehotline.org

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD

Being a parent of someone in an abusive dating relationship makes a difficult situation even harder. Knowing or even suspecting that your child is in an abusive relationship can be frightening and frustrating.

Understanding how to support them lovingly and in non-judgmental ways will help you maintain the connection your children need to feel comfortable reaching out for help.

If you're ready to help someone affected by dating abuse in your life (or want to learn more about what support might look like), visit loveisrespect.org for conversation starters, expert support, safety resources, and more.

Excerpts taken from www.loveisrespect.org