

# Warning Signs

These are some of the signs of teen dating abuse:

- Your partner has a history of bad relationships.
- Your partner blames others for his/her problems.
- Your partner gets serious too quickly - is too quick to say "I love you."
- Your partner believes himself/herself to be superior to you, and does not take your opinions seriously or treat you as an equal.
- Your partner has unpredictable mood swings - you worry about how he/she will react.
- Your partner is jealous and possessive - checks up on you, wants to know where you are at all times.
- Your partner faults you when he/she mistreats you - says that you provoked the reaction, or "pushed my buttons."
- You find yourself making excuses for your partner's behavior.
- Your partner is controlling - is bossy, makes all the decisions.
- Your partner uses guilt trips - says "If you loved me . . ." or "I need you so much."
- Your partner isolates you from your family and friends.
- Your family and friends warn you about the person, or have told you they are concerned for your safety.
- Your partner uses drugs or alcohol as an excuse for being abusive.
- Your partner pressures you for sex.
- Your partner is scary - threatens you, or makes suicide threats.
- Your partner is violent - intimidates you with threats of physical harm to you or others.
- Your partner always apologizes for abusive behavior - says "I promise I'll never do it again."

## My **RIGHTS** in a Dating Relationship . . .

- I have the right not to be abused - physically, emotionally or sexually.
- I have the right to “fall out of love” with someone.
- I have the right to live without threats of violence or revenge for my dating choices.
- I have the right to have my own opinions and be able to express them.
- I have the right to have my needs be as important as my partner’s needs.
- I have the right to grow as an individual in my own way and not be criticized for it.
- I have the right to suggest activities or to refuse to participate in activities I don’t enjoy.
- I have the right NOT to accept responsibility for someone else’s behavior.
- I have the right to change my mind.
- I have the right to have my own friends and my own space separate from my partner.
- I have the right to say “no” and to have my limits respected.
- I have the right to refuse sex at any time for any reason.
- I have the right to tell my partner I need affection.
- I have the right to be respected and loved, and to live a peaceful life.

*Are there any additional rights that you think should be included on this list?*

## My **RESPONSIBILITIES** in a dating relationship . . .

- It is my responsibility not to inflict physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse on my partner.
- It is my responsibility to communicate clearly and honestly.
- I cannot blame anyone but myself if I am abusive to another person.
- It is my responsibility to determine my own limits, and stick to them.
- Alcohol and drugs can never be used as an excuse for abusive behavior.
- It is my responsibility to treat other people the same way I want to be treated.
- I am responsible only for my own actions, not for my partner’s actions.
- It is my responsibility to get counseling for myself if I realize I am abusive.
- It is my responsibility to find support and information from a reliable source, if I’m being abused.
- It is my responsibility to respect the limits of others, and not violate their limits.
- I will recognize my own needs and honor them.
- It is my responsibility to understand that my dating relationship is just one part of my total life.
- I have the responsibility to check my actions and decisions, to determine whether they are good or bad for me.
- I am entitled to set high goals for myself.

*Are there additional responsibilities that you think should be included on this list?*