

Make a safety plan together.

Here's a start...

If I feel unsafe at school I will talk to _____, call/text _____, or go to _____.

I will never be alone, especially in or at the _____

If my boyfriend/girlfriend does something to make me feel unsafe I will ask (*friends, teachers or counselors*) _____ for help.

I will use _____ as my code word so my family and friends will know I need help.

If he/she comes to my house, calls, texts, or contacts me through any social media site after I have ended our relationship I will...

- Save my text/voice messages.
- Report incident to law enforcement
- Call HJP Hotline **1-800-439-2323**

Signed _____

Staying in an abusive relationship isolates you from friends and family, makes it hard to keep their respect, leads to risky behaviors, and shuts life down rather than filling it up with joy.

Is it worth that?

Frightened? Confused? Not sure who to ask for help?

Call our 24-hour Hotline

1-800-439-2323

You'll find someone who cares available 24/7 to listen, provide crisis intervention and support, and help you make a plan to get and stay safe.

Deaf or hard of hearing – call our hotline using your local relay service.

Just want information? To volunteer or donate?

Reach us at...

HOULTON	207-532-4004
MADAWASKA	207-728-3199
FORT KENT	207-834-7395
CENTRAL OFFICE	207-764-2977
PRESQUE ISLE	fax 207-764-8631

By email at...

info@hopeandjusticeproject.org

Or visit our main office...

209 State Street
PO Box 148
Presque Isle, ME 04769



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Hope & Justice Project



Parents, kids, and dating abuse

24 HOUR HOTLINE **1-800-439-2323**

hopeandjusticeproject.org

Parents, kids, and dating abuse

You've given your kids a lot of love and care over the years, guiding them toward responsible adulthood. Still when the time comes, it's hard to let them go out into the wild world on their own. Colic and diapers start looking good next to car keys and dating.

Dating?? Most likely your son or daughter will get through this phase with the average number of joys and sorrows, hopes and disappointments. But, he or she just might be the one out of every three U.S. teenagers who will experience dating abuse.

Dating abuse is when one partner uses a pattern of hurtful or confusing behavior to control the other. It's just like domestic violence. It's just as wrong. And it doesn't always involve bruises and black eyes.

What can you do?

Recognize it

Does your son or daughter...

- ▶ Seem unusually stressed or anxious?
- ▶ Seem to be giving – and giving in – a lot, and it's never enough or the right thing to keep his partner happy?
- ▶ Risk being hit, ridiculed, left, or retaliated against on social media if she expresses her opinion, says 'no', or disagrees with her dating partner?
- ▶ Never have time for family or friends?

Does your teen's dating partner...

- ▶ Keep tabs on him by texting or calling constantly?
- ▶ Try to isolate her from friends and family?
- ▶ Act jealous?
- ▶ Have mood swings and get angry a lot?

Here's something else to think about – might your son or daughter be an abuser? Do you see signs of jealousy, disrespectful attitudes, frequent threats or bouts of anger?

Reject it

- ▶ Don't shy away from the subject. Let your teen know about dating abuse, that no one deserves it, and no one has the right to do it.
- ▶ Talk about what makes a healthy relationship – one that is based on honesty, trust, support, and respectful communication.
- ▶ Model respect and concern for others, especially a spouse or romantic partner.
- ▶ Understand that your son may not recognize abuse when it starts – and he may be reluctant to admit something isn't quite right. If your daughter – or you – are questioning something, it's probably with good reason. Make sure she knows you, teachers, law

enforcement officials and domestic violence advocates are available to help – and that coercion and violence have no place in a relationship.

- ▶ Teach healthy problem-solving techniques. Point out that disagreements are natural, but the goal isn't to "win." It's more important to learn to listen and understand another perspective.

Respond to it.

- ▶ Listen. Don't make assumptions.
- ▶ Ask how you can help. Offer whatever support you can. Remind your son or daughter that being victimized is not EVER his/her fault.
- ▶ Suggest resources, including the Hope & Justice hotline – 1-800-439-2323.
- ▶ Respect your son/daughter's choices and confidentiality – You'll probably want to come to the rescue, but rescue attempts often can put him/her in a worse spot.
- ▶ Don't assume that ending the relationship will end the abuse. Only the abuser controls the abuse.
- ▶ Don't accept excuses for abuse. There aren't any.

We also encourage you to organize workshops and schedule speakers about dating abuse and healthy relationships in your school or community.

Call us.



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