

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

AN 8-SESSION GROUP FOR TEENAGERS TO PROMOTE HEALTHY  
DATING RELATIONSHIPS AND REDUCE TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

A graduate project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

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Marriage and Family Therapy

By

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## DEDICATION

First and foremost, I would like to dedicate this project to my mother, Ana, who I owe this degree to. She has taught me that with hard work and dedication, I could accomplish my goals, dreams, and aspirations. She has pushed me to pursue higher education with encouragement and consistent interest in my career and professional life. She has been and will always be my shoulder to lean on, my rock, and my life. Thank you mom for providing me with this lifelong accomplishment.

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My hard work, dedication, and motivation is because of you guys!

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## ABSTRACT

### An 8-SESSION GROUP FOR TEENAGERS TO PROMOTE HEALTHY DATING RELATIONSHIPS AND REDUCE TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

by

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Master of Science in Counseling, Marriage and Family Therapy

With the understudy of teen dating violence and the advancement of technology as years pass. The need for early intervention on dating violence for teenagers can prevent future relationship abuse and/or domestic violence. This project demonstrates previous studies done to promote teenage healthy relationships. This 8-week project was designed for school counselors and clinicians to support students in a school setting or a community agency offering services for at risk youth. Proper implementation will help students develop skills to prevent victimization in the future through psycho-education and offering support to process experiences and feelings.

## **Chapter I**

### **Introduction**

The purpose and need of this project is to explore dating violence amongst teenagers from ages 13 to 18 years. As time progresses, teens are becoming prone to abusive relationships. According Vagi, Olsen, Basile and Vivolo-Kantor (2015), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC] conducted a survey for youth at risk which found that one in ten high school students experience physical violence from a dating partner each year). Tharpe et al. (2011) posit that various forms of abuse in dating relationship, including psychological, physical, and sexual, indicate that one in four adolescents report experiencing dating violence and between 15% and 40% report being the perpetrator. Often this is associated with past family abuse and/or misconceptions of abusive behavior. In a study that examined the predictors of perpetration and victimization of dating violence in adolescence, Makin-Byrd and Bierman (2012) found that aggressive family dynamics in childhood and early adolescence are factors that contribute to possible teen dating violence. This paper will provide statistical studies, which explore the prevalence in the different types of abuse arising in teen dating violence, developmental predictors and factors, cultural influences and diversity, effects of risky sexual behaviors and sexual consent, social media and the use of technology as a tool for the perpetrator, and the overall health effects of experiencing abuse in a dating relationship.

This paper will also elaborate on theory applications to target teen dating and violence, primarily through group counseling for teenagers. Utilizing group counseling will promote a safe and comfortable environment where teenagers can share their experiences and relate with one another. This will serve as both a psycho-education and a support group to discourage and reduce abuse and violence in teen dating relationships. Various methods will be discussed and used to create a safe place to share their feelings in a group setting through art therapy and cognitive therapy. Cognitive therapy will focus on clarifying misconceptions between a healthy relationship and an abusive relationship. This will help members take control of their life and take a not knowing stance, creating a positive and safe therapeutic rapport. Lastly, demonstrate and encourage the group members to express their thoughts, feelings and emotions without fear. To making members experts of their own life and taking a not knowing stance to create positive and safe therapeutic rapport, validating each member's thoughts and feelings.

### **Statement of Need**

Looking at the high percentages reported by the CDC (2012) on teen dating violence, it is important to address the issue of teen dating violence at an early age to help prevent abusive relationships in the future. Studies that will be discussed in the literature review will elaborate on the increasingly problem of teenagers being victimized by a dating partner. This project will meet the need by providing an eight-session group counseling for middle school and high school



level adolescence. This group will ensure that teens receive general information on abuse as well as provide a safe place to share experiences to address immediate need according to the participant. Reviewing previous studies will show the great need for this group counseling for teens.

### **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this psycho-educational/support group is to create a safe place for teens to share their current dating experiences and to learn about abusive relationships. Teens will also learn coping skills for present abusive experiences, if any, and gain knowledge the difference between a healthy relationship and an abusive relationship to create assertiveness and increase self-confidence. The length of each session would be one hour per week for 8 sessions. Teens will be allowed to retake the group counseling voluntarily and depending on their need. This group will also engage teens during session and with weekly activities that are meant to process topics discussed in session.

### **Statement of Significance**

This curriculum will be of benefit for high schools, middle schools, and community agencies serving counseling services for at risk youth or teens that have history of being exposed to domestic violence. At schools (high school and middle school level) students can be referred by their teacher, school counselor, or voluntarily join. Students referred are those who are exhibiting risky behaviors such as excess promiscuous behavior, drug use, and exposure to domestic violence, and any student interested in processing their feelings and experiences.

At an agency, adolescent clients exposed to domestic violence and who can benefit from processing their experiences in their home. This project will benefit teens by educating, processing their feelings, and intended to prevent future victimization in adulthood.

### **Terminology**

The following are terms and abbreviations that are used throughout this project.

Psychoeducation – the education about symptoms that can cause psychological stress, offered to individuals and their families to help empower them and deal with their situation in an optimal way (Australia’s Institute of Professional Counselors, 2016).

Interparental – According to the Merriam Webster Online Dictionary (2016), interparental is defined as the existing between two parents.

In order to better understand teen dating violence, it is necessary to review studies and research regarding the issue, which will be covered in the following chapter.

## **Chapter II**

### **Literature Review**

It is important to understand the significance of teen dating violence (TDV), also known as adolescent relationship abuse (ARA). According to Taylor and Mumford (2016), violence in teen relationships is becoming a serious issue, which is being recognized by the public health and violence prevention fields, and by state and federal legislators in the United States. These researchers define adolescent relationship abuse as a negative act caused by an adolescent toward another adolescent whom are involved in a dating/romantic relationship. Abusive acts include: physical, emotional, verbal, psychological, or sexual abuse (Taylor & Mumford, 2016). Research is limited on this relatively new topic of concern in mental and public health circles and in society at large, but studies and surveys have been conducted and the topic is gaining recognition. Miller et al. (2014) developed a study called “Start Strong,” an independent evaluation designed to promote healthy relationships in middle school aged students. According to Miller et al. (2014), in their “Start Strong” program, one in 11 high school students report currently being or report have been purposely physically abused by a boyfriend or girlfriend. Therefore, early initiatives to promote healthy relationships will help students become more aware of this problem (Miller et al., 2014). The purpose of this review is to help promote healthy relationships for teenagers transitioning into adulthood and to prevent and deter violence in teen dating.

## **Teen Dating and Violence – An Overview**

Sadly, violence is regularly a part of relationships, and adolescent relationships are no different. Negative outcomes resulting from teen dating violence include physical and emotional problems. Antle, Antle et al. (2010) state that 8% of males and 9% of females have ended up in a hospital from injuries by a dating partner. In adolescent development, environmental influences such as social surroundings are a huge influence for either positive or negative outcomes in healthy development. According to the CDC (2012), 9% of teens nationally report being physically abused by their dating partner, and 30% of adolescent males and females report being psychologically abused (name-calling, insulting, verbal aggression, etc.) by their boyfriend or girlfriend. These percentages are important for clinicians to consider when working with teens and their social development, particularly when working on peer relationships and romantic relationships.

There is some research that demonstrates the effects of teen dating violence. Banyard and Cross (2008) examined the negative effects of teen dating violence victimization in school and social settings. The researcher examined the association between education outcome and mental health problems with dating violence victimization. It was hypothesized that adolescent relationship abuse can be associated with higher risk of negative school outcomes, higher depressed mood, suicidal thoughts and substance abuse. The results of this study did indeed find that there were high rates of dating violence victimization in younger and

older adolescents and, as predicted, there was an association in victims of teen dating violence with mental health concerns and more negative educational outcomes. In this study, there was limited data to correlate it with teen dating violence and substance abuse (Banyard & Cross, 2008).

In addition to traditional methods of bullying and violence, technology is a newer method being used as a tool to attack a victim in a dating relationship. Utilizing technology to abuse a partner is understudied, but falls within the category of cyber bullying with peers. According to Alvarez (2012), research on the prevalence of cyber bullying in teen relationships and teen victims of dating violence indicates that the perpetrator utilized technology either by preventing/limiting the romantic partner from using a computer or cellphone, or by using these devices to send the victim threatening messages, to humiliate them online, or to send harassing pictures (Alvarez, 2012). As mentioned earlier, violence in teen relationships can cause negative effects. This is also true of cyber bullying or cyber abuse. Although more research needs to be done specifically relating cyber abuse with teen dating violence, it can be said that the effects of cyber dating abuse may be very similar to the effects of bullying. In general, Alvarez (2012) contends that the effects of cyber-victimization are severely traumatizing for teens and result in negative effects such as fear, lower self-esteem, embarrassment, isolation, helplessness, higher risk of depression, and suicidality. In addition, adolescent relationship abuse may result in higher risks of substance abuse, risky sexual activity (and perhaps unwanted pregnancy or

sexually transmitted diseases), low self-esteem or body image issues, and other mental health issues including suicide (Alvarez, 2012).

### **Developmental Factors and Predictors.**

In reviewing some predictors of the victimization and perpetration of dating violence amongst teens, Makin-Byrd and Bierman (2012) examined the predictors of dating violence. Victimization is a predictor and is associated with any physical injury and negative psychological outcomes, such as post-traumatic stress disorder and depression. In the development of potential dating violence in teens or relationship abuse, it is understood as an on-going process or flow of aggression in the life of an individual and their environment. In this flow or process, the child is vulnerable to be in difficult situations, clash with parents who are ineffective, escalating, harsh, and who are exposed to frequent aggression). The researchers explained how family dynamics and characteristics play a significant role in the development of children; therefore, it can also result in the emergence of dating violence. Additionally, when the family dynamics expose aggressive behaviors such as harsh parenting behavior, aggressive behaviors from child to control parent, and a compromised child-parent relationship, these are characteristics which can result in the development of dating violence in teens. The results of the study suggest that the risk of the development of future dating violence is intertwined with the fundamental ways of the exposure of aggressive-disruptive behavior problems in the home and school. According to the study, aggressive family dynamics during childhood and early adolescence influence the

development of dating violence, where children learn to respond aggressively in the home and then later on in life generalize to the behavior with future relationships. Also, some other risk factors or predictors that increase the chances of unhealthy relationships in teens are misconceptions that violence is acceptable, depression and anxiety are common, teens display aggression with peers, engage in early sexual activity, substance abuse, and, as mentioned above, they witnessed or experienced violence in the home (Makin-Byrd & Bierman, 2012).

Furthermore, according to Karlsson, Temple, Weston, and Le (2016), additional predictors that can influence the emergence of teen dating violence (TDV) are when children are bystanders of interparental violence at a young age and the acceptance of violence from any gender becomes normalized, it increases the chances of future relationship abuse. In their study, these researchers examined the effects on teens who witness interparental violence versus those who were not exposed to violence, mention the differences between these and the high chances of experiencing abuse in future relationships as teens and can go on into adulthood. They focus on the exposure of interparental violence by gender, including mother-to-father, father-to-mother, and parent-to-parent with unspecified gender, and how it influences the teen on becoming a perpetrator or a victim. Results revealed that indeed teens who were exposed to interparental violence reported higher acceptance of violence which resulted in experiencing abuse in their own relationships. There was no difference if the perpetrator was mother or father; however, the findings indicated more acceptance when it was

father-to-mother violence and there was significant predictor of both physical violence and psychological (Karlsson, Temple, Weston, & Le, 2016).

Other factors in adolescent development contribute to the emergence of dating violence. Exner-Cortens (2014) explored the framework of adolescent psychosocial development that influences the outcome of intimate relationships in teenage years. According to the researcher, adolescent romantic relationship can positively influence a teenager in the accomplishment of the development of social skills, as well as the identity of self and sexual development. Exner-Cortens explored several theories that influence the development of teenagers in relation with intimate relationships and their social environment. For example, the developmental stages of Erik Erikson, in the psychosocial stage-specific of crisis, an individual's personality develops as a result of a number of socio-emotional crisis that the person experiences throughout childhood. During the stage of identity versus role confusion, one answers questions about one's own self and this is a pivotal stage that can cause confusion in one's identity. The author states that Erikson saw that love in intimate relationships and during the process of finding one's identity, one projects his or her self-image to another. In addition, according to Erikson, intimacy is not developed until after the formation of identity. In contrast, the interpersonal theory by Sullivan states that intimacy is a key part of the development of one's personality. With the exploration of these theories, Exner-Cortens explores the importance of the process of development of



social identity in a teen's environment and how it is impacting his or her future dating/intimate relationships (2014).

### **Cultural Influences and Diversity.**

Adolescent relationship abuse is becoming more evident with time and across the United States. This topic has been understudied and needs more attention due to its effect and consequences in teens. Sabina, Cuevas, and Cotignola-Pickens (2016) conducted a longitudinal study on the rates of dating violence victimization among Latino teens considering risk factors, rates, and cultural influences. The researchers concluded that cultural factors were not distinguished between dating violence trajectories, but found that dating violence victimization was high for immigrant status families and will continue over time. The results revealed that 10% of Latino daters experienced physical abuse, 12% experienced sexual dating abuse in the past year. There was no significant difference between Latino, White, or Black youth in physical abuse victimization, but Latino teens did report higher rates of being sexually abused during teen dating (Sabina et al. 2016).

Black (2015) focused on the prevalence of TDV specifically targeting African American teens. A large sample of teens and the exposure to violence in their community, school, and home were examined. Their experiences were noted as predictors toward the acceptance of future relationship violence as perpetrator and victim. Similarly, to earlier discussion on the predictors of TDV, these researchers found that early exposure of violence in the home, school and

community results in more accepting attitudes about violence and more violent behaviors. African American youth in this study showed higher levels of risks and higher levels of violence. The study indicated that males were more exposed to violence in their school and community than females but females had higher acts of violence in relationships being both perpetrator and victim. The researchers also stated that violent interactions are socially accepted, especially when the perpetrator is female. They concluded and suggested that teen dating violence prevention programs should pay special attention to the real life environment of the teen rather than relying on general assumptions (Black et al., 2015). Black et al. (2013) conducted another study similar to the aforementioned study, but targeting Iraqi youth, being a culture that traditionally teens are not allowed to date. The researchers focused on the attitudes and perceptions of abuse. Those teens who disclosed that they were secretly in a dating relationship were used as the sample that provided the valid data for the purpose of this study. Black et al. found that cultural norms influence the teen's perceptions on TDV within their own relationships. For example, based on the Muslim culture, it is typically accepted that a husband can slap a wife when they are alone if he feels disrespected. Also teens are not allowed to date. The researchers noted that Arab Americans reported high levels of acceptance of violence between spouses. With this being said, teens do not receive much knowledge on TDV in cultures where they are not allowed to date openly. Also, when being exposed to their cultural norm where violence is accepted, they are more likely to continue with the same

accepting attitude throughout adulthood (Black et al., 2013). These two studies suggest that cultural diversity awareness is vital when focusing this issue with teens and one must be sensitive to each teen's cultural background.

Lastly, in regards to diversity, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community is also a population to pay attention to and help support. TDV is an issue throughout all teens regardless of gender, race, sexual identity, and social economic status. Therefore, being aware of the LGBT community as well is very important in educating them on TDV. Zweig, Lachman, Yahner and Dank (2013) focused on examining the prevalence on LGBT youth and their experiences in dating violence. Comparing the experiences of dating violence between LBGT youth and heterosexual youth, the researchers concluded that indeed LGBT youth reported significantly higher rates in dating victimization and perpetration than heterosexual youth. The researchers argue that the difficulty in explaining why LGBT youth are at higher risks is due to the limited research on this population, specifically in TDV. With the results of this study, in conjunction with limited past studies regarding LGBT, findings indicate that LGBT youth are at higher risk of victimization and perpetration for physical, psychological, and sexual abuse than heterosexual youth. Therefore, the awareness of this population needs to also be addressed (Zweig et al., 2013).

### **Prevalence and Types of Abuse**

The CDC (2014) conducted a survey of high school students to show data on the rates of physical and sexual abuse in teen intimate/dating relationships.

Results of this survey are significantly high and show the severity of this issue. This survey was conducted across 38 states and 20 urban school districts; the prevalence of both physical and sexual violence in teen dating relationships was 73.9% nationwide (. Other important data to consider taken from this survey was the percentages of the differences between female and male victims and the type of abuse. The survey showed that the prevalence of physical violence is higher in female students of 13% than male students 7.4%; students were from 9<sup>th</sup> grade to 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. When looking at the data for sexual abuse, the prevalence was also higher in female students, with 14.4% suffering from abuse in comparison with male students, of whom 6.2% experienced abuse, which was a significant difference. Other types of abuse such as emotional abuse and psychological abuse have little to no data. TDV can be experienced in several forms of abuse such as physical abuse, psychological and emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and other forms of abuse often perpetuated by social media and Internet sources (CDC, 2014). Following will be an explanation of the different types of abuse and the prevalence of each; physical, sexual, and psychological/emotional.

**Physical Abuse in Teen Relationships.** As previously described, physically abusive acts include any negative physical contact from one person towards another. Instances include pushing, shoving, slapping, kicking, pinching, and so on. When such acts are committed between intimate partner/romantic relationships, this becomes dating violence. Ybarra, Espelage, Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Korchamaros and Boyd (2015) examined the prevalence of types of

abuse in teen dating violence, concluding that between 5-13% of female youth and 7-12% male youth reported experiencing physical abuse in a dating relationship in their lifetime (Ybarra et al., 2015). Additionally, Marquart et al. (2007) explored the prevalence of dating violence in teenage victimization and the gender difference. Taken from a large sample of students from 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade level, results revealed that about 15.8% of respondents disclosed having a girlfriend or boyfriend being physically abusive (hit, push or threaten them), indicating that the odds of a female student experiencing physical abuse is about 3.5 times more likely that of a male student (Marquart et al., 2007).

**Sexual Abuse in Teen Dating Violence.** As previously noted, sexually abusive behaviors are defined as forcing another person to perform any type of sexual act from touching a person in any sexual way to sexual intercourse. Ybarra et al.'s (2015) also examined the prevalence of sexual abuse in TDV. Surveying a sample of 1680 teens that ranged from ages 12 to 17, the researchers found that 3% of female teens and 1% of male teens report being victims of sexual adolescent dating abuse in their lifetime. They also found that 14% of high-school aged females and 6% of high-school aged males reported sexual victimization in their dating relationships. This data demonstrates the increase of this issue within the past two years (Ybarra et al. 2015). East and Hokoda (2015) explored the risk factors for sexual dating violence victimization in adolescents, stating that according to national data from 2013, 14.4% of high school girls have experienced some form of sexual violence. In East and Hokoda's study, while

measuring the same sexual violence in adolescent relationships, the results indicated, based on the youth that participated in this study, 7.6% reported sexual victimization. The researchers concluded that one in ten high school students are affected by sexual violence in their dating relationship (East & Hokoda, 2015).

**Psychological/Emotional Abuse in Teen Dating Violence.** According to Ybarra et al. (2015), psychological and emotional abuse consists of a wide range of verbal and gestural attacks that result in affecting another person emotionally and psychologically. Such acts may include one or more of the following: intimidation, name calling, isolating partner, extremely jealous towards partner, threats, put downs, stalking behavior, critical, controlling behaviors etc. These researchers also added psychological abuse in their study and found that this type of abuse is the most common with 29% adolescent females and 28% adolescent males reporting to have been victims of psychological abuse from their partner (Ybarra et al., 2015). Bonomi et al. (2012) conducted another study in which they examined the abuse frequency, number of abusive partners, and age at first occurrence of dating violence in teen years. Specifically, on psychological abuse, the researchers mention that from the time the study was conducted and the last 12 months of the participants, 38.3% females versus 33.7% males report experiencing threats, insults, stalking amongst other verbal attacks from a dating partner (Bonomi et al., 2012). Data taken from these studies indicate the elevated occurrence of psychological and emotional abuse that needs to be targeted in teen dating violence.

## **Effects of Risky Sexual Behavior and Sexual Consent Awareness**

As stated above, sexual abuse is a type of partner-to-partner abuse. During the adolescent phase of a person's development, teens can become exposed to sexual activity. Reyes and Foshee (2013) posit that early exposure of risky sexual activity can carry over to adulthood. On a sample of 459 male adolescents, these researchers used a survival analysis to examine the predictors of sexual dating aggression perpetration onset across high school aged teens. The findings of this study were congruent with National Youth Survey; sexual aggression onset appears to have a peak in 10<sup>th</sup> grade becoming a sexual hazard rate increasing until age 16 then declined thereafter. This significant gap of developmental period is important to examine due to the long-term effects that may carry on to adulthood. The early onset of sexual coercion can develop a pattern of continued victimization throughout adulthood that may cause cumulative effects on psychological adjustment and other future health issues (Reyes & Foshee, 2013).

Sexually risky behavior can lead to a number of physical and mental health risk factors. Physical health effects include sexual transmitted diseases (STD) as well as unplanned pregnancies. Walsh and Ward (2010) collected data that has revealed that significant rates of new STD cases reporting one half of all STD cases are occurring in 15 to 24-year-old young adults. They found high rates of gonorrhea in 15-19-year-old women and 20-24-year-old in men, with at least one half of HIV infections in people under the age of 25. With these rates, it is

important to focus on the risky sexual behaviors involving teens. Teens obtain their knowledge from different resources, with media being the primary source of information. The researchers have found that television can negatively impact teens by providing stereotypical sexual attitudes that make teens engage in sexual intercourse before they are ready. On the contrary media can also serve as a positive informative resource as well by gaining information on STDs, sexual activity decision-making, safe-sex practices, and sexual consent (Walsh & Ward, 2010). This being said, it is important to be aware and monitor the sexual exposure teens engage in with media such as: television and magazines, and social media.

In addition, East and Hokoda (2015) examined the risks and protective factors for sexual and dating violence victimization. The researchers found that about forty percent of young adults reported experiencing a violent nonconsensual sexual act by a dating partner. They also added to the definition of sexual violence being a nonconsensual sexual act completed or attempted by another person, that dating violence with sexual violence, which is any aggressive, controlling, and abusive behavior toward one's romantic partner. These acts being committed in a dating relationship can lead to serious long lasting adverse consequences, including clinical depression, acute stress disorder, suicidality, physical somatization (head and stomach aches), self-injury, and unhealthy weight and body image issues (East & Hokoda, 2015).



Considering the importance of teaching teens to have a voice to consent for any sexual act and/or avoid such risky behavior, it is necessary to touch on previous efforts that have been made. Rowe, Jouriles, and McDonald (2015) created an assertive training program for teens called “My Voice, My Choice,” which consists of a 90-minute assertive resistance training program to reduce male-to-female sexual victimization. These researchers also suggest that women who utilize firm attitudes when saying “no” and fight back in these situations are more likely to escape than women who are more passive or polite. They also assert that girls and women who have a more confident and assertive self-presentation are less likely to be targeted victims. Rowe et al.’s training program demonstrates the importance to educate teens the importance of sexual consent and how they can be assertive and say “no” when they do not consent to such sexual activity. Results of the study indicate that a program such as “My Voice, My Choice” can have a promising positive effect for teenagers where it provides the opportunity to practice and master assertive resistance skills and how to escape potential threatening situations. The effectiveness of this particular sample indicated that 8 out of 36 participants in the waitlist condition and 4 out of 42 in the MVMC condition reported being sexually victimized during the 3-month follow-up (Rowe et al., 2015). Although the sample of this study is low, it has promising results of effectiveness for future larger samples.

### **The Use of Technology in Dating Violence: Cyber Abuse**

As the newer generations of today's youth advance in the world of technology, there has been a recent advancement in ways to perpetrate and engage in abuse against an intimate partner. Now, Reed, Tolman, and Ward (2016) have elaborated on digital dating abuse (DDA) that can accompany regular face-to-face abusive behavior. They explaining that the types of adolescent digital abuse or ADA that can arise as patterns of abusive behavior in regards to cell phones or computers involve control, pressure or threats made using such technology. As the nature of technology advances, communication has shifted to the growing use of the Internet and smart phones as new possibilities and new ways for psychological maltreatment. Reed et al. states that 75% of teens aged 12-17 use mobile phones, 60% of teens have their own computer, 92% of young adults 18-24 who are not in college use the Internet, and 100% of college students use the Internet. These numbers indicate the significance and importance of digital media in daily social interactions with peers and dating partners, indicating that young adults between the ages of 18-24 are most likely to use the Internet or a cell phone to communicate (Reed et al., 2016). Expanding on the significance of youth and the use of technology, Bennett, Guran, Ramos and Margolin (2011) also explored the effects of electronic victimization on young adults and found similar results. The researchers examined a sample of 437 participants, measuring four different categories that represent risky behaviors: direct hostility, intrusiveness, public humiliation, and exclusion. The findings revealed that 92% of the participants reported being victimized in at least one of the categories by a friend or a

romantic partner. The researchers also suggested that the category that was mostly mentioned in the results was humiliation and found that both female and male participants reported more electronic victimization by dating relationships than by friendships, that was also associated with other more traditional types of abusive behaviors (Bennett et al., 2011).

In addition to the impact of cyber bullying, the proliferation of technological tools has had a dramatic impact on dating relationships among teenagers. According to Zweig et al. (2013), cyber dating abuse can be conceptualized as a form of psychological abuse, but it has extended the opportunity for perpetrators to access victims at any time, even without being physically present, and the ability to publicly share private or embarrassing information about one's partner that will create a different type of experience for the victim. These researchers examined the association of cyber dating abuse, risky behaviors, and the emotional effects on the teenage victim of ADA. Findings indicated that indeed when teens experienced cyber dating abuse, either the perpetrator or the victim, displayed higher levels of: depressive symptoms, anger/hostility, engage in delinquent behaviors, risky sexual behaviors, and related to psychosocial adjustment (Zweig et al., 2013). To add to the previous study, Dick et al. (2014) utilized the aforementioned study to compare results and elaborated on a school-based and clinical health center demonstrating the prevalence of cyber dating abuse. These researchers compared their own results regarding the prevalence of cyber dating abuse to Zweig et al.'s study, which was

done in a school-base setting while their own research utilized a clinic-base setting. Zweig et al.'s findings reported a prevalence of 26% from the restricted youth of the school setting, while Dick et al.'s results expanded the sample to all youth from a clinical setting reporting a 41% of cyber dating abuse (both sexual and nonsexual) along with other types of abuse). The results suggest that cyber dating abuse is more common among youth who are seeking health care in a confidential clinical setting as oppose to the general youth in a school setting (Dick et al., 2014). Thus proving the need to prioritize and target on interventions to aid youth on this issue in and out of the school setting for young youth to young adults.

### **Effects of Dating Violence During Adolescence**

The early exposure to dating violence can result in a variety of consequences to the victims that can carry in to adulthood. Jouriles, Choi, Rancher and Temple (2017) contend that the high percentages of teens who have experienced any type of partner abuse, with statistics indicating that 10% of adolescent's experience physical abuse in relationships and of those victimized 30% report continued victimization to early adulthood. One of the most common consequences of partner violence is the presence of trauma symptoms that become a factor in reoccurring victimization of violence in later relationships. Trauma symptoms can interfere with one's ability to perceive violence and respond adaptively, specifically failing to notice, ignore or downplay signs of an unhealthy relationship (Jouriles et al., 2017). These researchers et al. (2017)

examined in their longitudinal study if experiencing physical violence in relationships as a teen can later become a factor of victimization in early adulthood. Their were significant and consistent with theoretical models that implicate the mental health consequences from dating violence is in fact a contributing factor for revictimization over time (Jouriles et al., 2017).

Additionally, other consequences caused by the experience of partner abuse, Foshee, Reyes, Gottfredson, Chang and Ennett (2013) elaborates on the consequences of adolescent dating abuse both physical and psychological. The researchers state,

“For women experiencing both types of abuse predicted depression symptoms, suicide ideation, and cigarette smoking, whereas experiencing only psychological abuse predicted heavy episodic drinking. For men experiencing both types of abuse were associated with depression only, whereas experiencing only psychological abuse predicted antisocial behavior, suicide ideation, and marijuana use” (2013, page 724).

The researchers conclude that depending on the type of abuse (physical or psychological) and the gender, different consequences occur, with both being detrimental to the future of the victim. For example, Physical abuse includes cigarette smoking for both boys and girls, though with only girls showing more marijuana use and psychological abuse included alcohol use for both boys and girls (Foshee et al., 2013).

Lastly, in a study of health consequences due to teen dating violence, Bonomi et al. (2013) utilized a survey to examine the association between health in late adolescence and the experience of dating violence. The study included the impact on the health of university students assessing current health (depression, eating disorders, binge drinking, smoking, and sexual behaviors) and dating violence victimization from age 13 to 19 (retrospectively asking their experience with abusive past dating relationships physical and non-physical abuse). The researchers' findings revealed a detrimental negative impact for females and males showing associations between physical/sexual dating abuse victimization and adolescent depression, increased eating disorders, and multiple sex partners and nonphysical abuse showing an increase risk of depression. Also, for males, physical and/or sexual abuse was associated with a high risk of eating disorders, post-traumatic stress symptoms, anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation, substance use, and overall diminished emotional well-being (Bonomi et al., 2013).

In reviewing these studies, one can conclude that teen dating violence victimization is detrimental to the health of the teens and can carry on to adulthood in a variety of ways that can be evident and/or undetected.

### **Theory Applications to Promote Healthy Relationships in Teens**

Focusing on dating violence in the adolescent stage of one's life is crucial for the future relationships in their adulthood. As previously discussed, teen dating violence is an upcoming new issue that needs further research and attention; but with the current research it is important to start paying attention to

this issue and target it to prevent or reduce dating violence amongst teenagers for future generations to come. According to Tharp et al. (2011), adolescent relationship abuse is a preventable issue that requires coordination, collaboration, and comprehensive prevention approaches. Three evidenced-based primary prevention programs for teen dating violence (TDV) already exist: “Safe Dates” and two models that come from “Dating Matters”, these utilize the standard-of-care model, teacher-administered prevention curriculum, and more comprehensive programs (“Dating Matters” is a program supported by the (CDC) to promote healthy relationships by targeting middle school students and utilizing an approach that is school-based and also includes parent involvement. The approach of including parents promotes the enhancement of protective parenting practices; encourage parent-child communication about sexuality and sexual risk behaviors (Tharp et al., 2011). According to Antle et al. (2010), the program “Safe Dates” focused and showed impact on physical and sexual violence, which has promoted change in attitudes and increased knowledge for high school students. But after a follow-up of a year after the program, the researchers found that no change in dealing with aggression was reported. Another program that was utilized for high school students called “Love U2 Relationship Smart,” which was a program that was based on completing 12 modules that totaled of about 12-18 hours in length. This program provided information for students on healthy/unhealthy relationship patterns, communication skills, and conflict resolution skills. To gauge the effectiveness of “Love U2 Relationship Smart,”

the researchers compared two groups and found that this program increased the knowledge and awareness of healthy/unhealthy relationships but there were changes over time with verbal aggression (Antle, et al., 2010). The impact of these aforementioned programs vary from being very effective as to the knowledge and awareness teens gain, but it does not demonstrate significant change in their actions or changes in behaviors toward dating violence abuse.

Expanding on other applications to target this growing problem of adolescent dating violence, other research has been conducted in regards to group counseling for middle school and high school age teens. Few programs have been implemented to support teenagers in schools and fewer to none have been conducted outside of school. According to Ball et al. (2014), a program called “Expect Respect” is a school-based 24-week support group for students who have been exposed to violence in relationships with the purpose to examine facilitators’ experiences and understand at a deeper level the nature of this issue. “Expect Respect” utilized a model in which promoted the development of group skills, choosing equality and respect in relationships, identifying healthy relationships by using empathy, communication, boundaries, consent, and handling rejection, and promoting nonviolent relationships in the community. This program separated boys and girls as well as same sex facilitators and by victimization and perpetration. The researchers found that for the effectiveness of a support group approach, many factors can enhance and contribute such as: support from the school where the group is being conducted, the development of a productive



supportive process, and participants' readiness and responsiveness to make changes in their lives. The facilitators of this program also concluded that based on the outcome of the interviews one is able to identify the student who needs a high level of care, those who need to be provided resources, more in depth background, also noticing the establishment of the cohesiveness of the group is especially important for a successful group counseling outcome. Overall, the outcome of this program demonstrate that the successful implementation of group counseling to prevent dating abuse in a school-based environment depends on the positive school culture and ongoing support for those teens that need more extensive support (Ball, et al., 2014). Based on this program. group counseling for teens can be very effective to prevent future relationship abuse in their life.

Lastly, other theory approaches and interventions can be implemented and added to enhance the effectiveness of a group counseling prevention program for teen dating violence. For example, according to Castle and Gilbert (2006), the use of a collaborative therapeutic approach can be integrated with these groups to promote self-efficacy and empowerment within themselves. Collaborative therapy is a framework which is sensitive to one structure and meets the clients' needs depending on where they stand while also promoting coping strategies for the client, supporting the client, and charting stressors to detect early warning signs. Also, adding other interventions such as art therapy to make the group more interactive would promote more involvement and engagement in sessions (Castle & Gilbert, 2006).

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the goal of targeting teen dating violence utilizing group therapy approaches is to provide a safe environment for teens to share and become more comfortable when processing any feelings that arise. When a positive environment where there is cohesiveness that has been established in the group, members will be able to become more open to process their experiences and receive the support that is being offered. This will allow the teen to become educated on the topic of relationship abuse and increase his or her awareness to better identify abusive relationships in his or her future and reduce violence in other relationships as well, and alleviate past trauma that may emerge during this process in a supportive and safe environment.

## **Chapter III**

### **Project Audience and Implementation Factors**

This graduate project was developed with the intention of implementing the delivery and understanding of the psychoeducational information presented in-group counseling in a school setting or community agency. Facilitators who provide this service can be the school counselor, intern school counselor, or trainee in the field of counseling who continuously attend workshops, trainings, and class lectures, along with weekly supervision. By implementing this project, facilitators can utilize this curriculum is person-centered and serve as support and to educate their students in a school setting and clients in a community agency. This chapter is designed to explain to the intended audience for teen dating violence and healthy relationships counseling group, and the outline for implementation of each eight (8) sessions.

#### **Target Population**

The intended audience for the healthy relationships counseling group is currently for adolescence from ages 13-18. With the implementation of this project/group-counseling proposal, the targeted population will bring knowledge and confidence to teens to promote healthy dating relationships at early age. Their school counselor, self-referred, will refer the audience and for agencies the Department of Children and Family Services depending on their exposure to domestic violence or at risk teens can refer the audience. In order to attend this group, the participant must an assessment with that facilitator and an interview to

best accommodate and to ensure the participant's goals can be met in a group setting. If the teen needs an individualized intervention or counseling the facilitator can refer the teen out to an agency or to a school counselor that will provide individual counseling for this student/client.

### **8-Session Group Counseling Outline**

This project is designed for the implementation when working with students at middle school or high school level. This is an eight (8)-session group that should meet at a weekly basis, and the following sections will outline session-by-session instructions.

**Session one.** Participants will engage in an icebreaker to get to know each other and start building rapport with one another and create a safe place. Student/Participant will sign an informed consent and agreement of confidentiality to ensure privacy for each participant. Facilitator will go over what it is to the participant to date or to have a boyfriend/girlfriend. Also, engage group in a discussion of what is a healthy relationship, signs of a healthy relationship. Lastly, participants will take a healthy relationships quiz and engage in an activity to demonstrate their currently relationship status.

**Session two.** In this session facilitators will initiate session by checking in with the participants and allow processing. Facilitators will present the power and control wheel to participant and provide a handout. A discussion on signs of an unhealthy relationship and identifying abuse in relationships will be addressed. Participants will be allowed thinking time and processing time to then share their

thoughts, feelings, and comments relating to topic. Then, group will compare healthy and unhealthy relationships and complete a worksheet that will be provided by facilitators.

**Session three.** Session will begin with check-ins with each participant. To proceed, this session will focus on explaining the cycle of abuse and discussing each type of abuse. Participants will be provided with a handout on the cycle of abuse providing a visual to each stage in the cycle and a brief explanation. Then, each type of abuse will be discussed (physical, emotional, psychological, and sexual). Commenting and sharing their personal experiences if any with each type of abuse will engage participants.

**Session four.** Check-in with participants and discuss any issues and allow processing if needed. This session will focus on dating violence utilizing technology. To open discussion facilitators will show a three-minute video called “The Warning Signs of Digital Dating Abuse” found can be found on Youtube (Love is Not Abuse, 2011). After watching this video, it will allow for open discussion on personal experiences of cyber abuse also including texting. Facilitators will elaborate on the significance of cyber abuse through social media. Also, the crucial effects and life-long consequences of texting/” sexting”. The end session, facilitators will show a one-minute video called “Think Before You Post” (Hayes, 2015).

**Session five.** Facilitators will initiate session by checking in with participants. Session will then focus on the topic of peer/partner pressure on the

use of drugs and alcohol and sexual consent. Facilitators will provide the group with information on the prevalence of risky sexual behaviors and the use of drugs and alcohol. Participants will share experiences or exposure to drugs and alcohol. Current knowledge to what consensual sex looks like to them and any situations they have encountered relating to topic. Facilitators will empower teen participants to be assertive and encourage utilizing strategies and skills to handle situations that may endanger their safety.

**Session six.** Session will be initiated with check-ins and processing if needed. Session will focus on educating students how to use effective communication. Facilitators will explain each type of communication: assertive, aggressive, communication blockers, and utilizing “I” statements. Facilitators will engage students/participants in an activity consisting of building a pyramid in pairs. One student will verbally guide his/her partner to build the pyramid with small cups while blind folded. This activity will demonstrate the importance of active listening and assertive communication. To end, participants will discuss activity by sharing their experience, thoughts, and feelings.

**Session seven.** Check-ins and processing will initiate session. Session will focus on the topic of self-esteem. Facilitators will elaborate on what is self-esteem, low and high self-esteem, and strategies to support a healthy self-esteem. Participants will complete a self-esteem worksheet then share about it in-group. Facilitators will explain the importance of healthy self-esteem. To end, participants will be left homework in which consists of completing a “Daily Self-

Love” worksheet. Each day for that week the participant will complete the sheet where it will remind them each day of positive qualities about themselves.

**Session eight.** This session will conclude the group. In this session participants will complete a short evaluation form and feedback of group overall. Participants will go over their thoughts and feeling of the homework that was left from previous session. To conclude group, facilitator will engage group in a final art project to allow the on-going promotion of positive self-esteem. Participants will create a positive affirmation jar “You Are”. Complete instructions of this art activity will be provided on the appendix of this project.

This chapter reviewed the targeted population for this group, as well as, the implementation of each session. The next chapter will conclude this project and postulate further considerations for work and future improvement.

## **Chapter IV**

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this project was to create a psycho-educational and support group where teenagers can feel safe and comfortable to share their experiences with their peers and facilitators. A time for teenagers to share in a non-judgmental environment, where their feelings, values, and thoughts are heard openly and facilitators are also culturally aware and sensitive. The curriculum is intended to educate and assist student at their crucial age of development to increase awareness in abusive relationships to decrease future victimization of domestic violence. With this said, the following will consider possible areas of development to further improve the support of this age group, being a crucial stage of development for a human being.

#### **Future Considerations**

The development of this project came about while noticing the understudy of this topic and population. As the development from adolescent to adulthood is a crucial stage where their environment and exposure can affect their future. It would also be beneficial to consider expanding research on the vulnerability of teenagers who have been exposed to severe domestic violence and other traumatic experiences.

Additionally, based on evaluations of the groups it would also be beneficial to consider if teens feel more comfortable in a group with same gender or mixing female and male teens. Certain interventions can become personal for



female teenagers where other topics can also make male teens uncomfortable to share with opposite gender.

Lastly, this group curriculum is designed for teenagers ranging from ages 13-18 who are having a hard time understanding abuse or those teens who have been exposed to abusive relationships and need to process trauma. Future work can be added to grow this project and promote self-advocacy and assertiveness for teenagers in their future.

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## **Appendix**

The following materials are designed for the implementation of the group counseling. In the appendix, the eight (8)-session curriculum is included with session outlines and handouts that will be utilized.



## Session 1 – Introduction to Healthy Relationships

### Session objective

Participants will learn signs and meaning to a healthy relationship.

### First session requirement

Participants will sign a confidentiality agreement stating they promise to not disclose or discuss group conversations. Also, each participant will sign a consent form to ensure their commitment to group sessions.

### Icebreaker activity

Participants will engage in a short activity to get to know each other. Each participant will write in a flashcard two truths and one lie about themselves. Each participant will read what they wrote and the rest of the group will try to figure out what is a lie and what is true about the participant sharing. This activity is intended to allow participants to start building positive rapport and group cohesion.

### Group discussion: Question opener

- What is a healthy relationship for you?
- What is dating?
- What does it mean to you to have a boyfriend/girlfriend?

### Session 1 discussion

A healthy relationship requires respect, trust, and open communication. Healthy relationships allow both partners to feel supported and connected but still independent. Communication and boundaries are two major components in a healthy relationship. Ultimately, a relationship is built by two people in which

agree to have a healthy relationship and decide what works for both and what doesn't. If something doesn't feel right, you each should have the freedom to voice your concerns to your partner.

“Dating,” means different things to different people. Love is Respect, a useful website for young people to gain knowledge on relationships, defines dating as two people in an intimate relationship. The relationship may be serious or casual, straight or gay, monogamous or open, short-term or long-term. Dating types or status can be going out, together, being with someone, seeing each other, just friends, or just hooking up, but it is important that regardless of the label, you and your partner should both accept the same definition for your relationship.

A healthy relationship is when two people develop a connection based on:

- Trust
- Mutual respect
- Honesty
- Support
- Fairness/equality
- Separate identities
- Good communication
- A sense of playfulness

Signs of a healthy relationship:

- Treats you as an equal and respects you.

- Asks your opinion and is comfortable with you having different opinions.
- Apologizes when he/she is wrong and accepts your apology when you are wrong.
- Encourages you in your goals and dreams.
- Never puts you down.
- Doesn't get angry when you spend time with your friends and family.
- Doesn't pressure you to do things you don't want to do.
- Doesn't require you to "check-in" or need to know where you are all the time.
- Is caring and honest.
- PARTICIPANTS CAN ADD MORE AND DISCUSS.

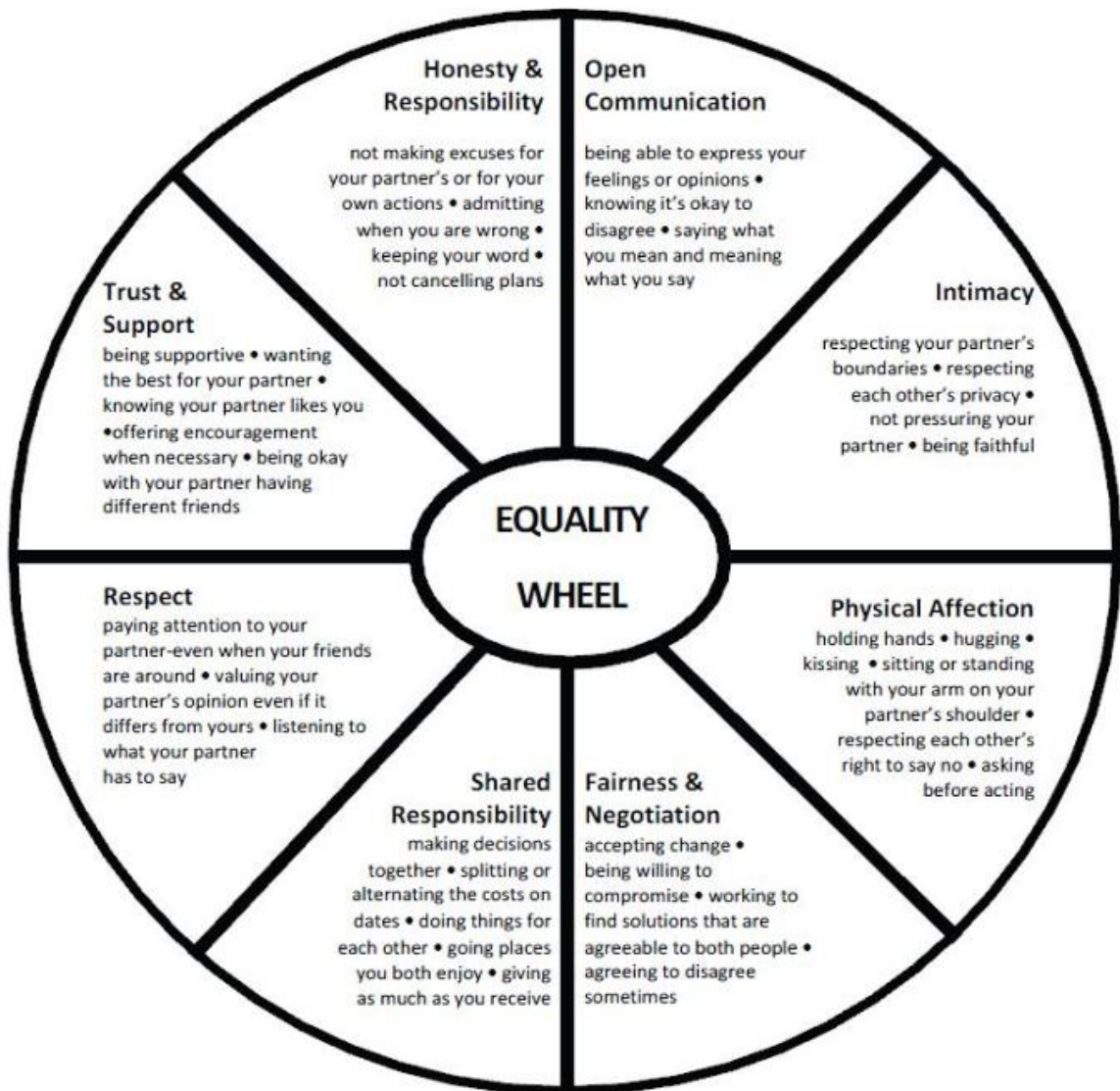
### Session Activity

Participants will answer a Healthy Relationship Quiz from [loveisrespect.org](http://loveisrespect.org) and then discuss with group.

<http://www.loveisrespect.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/HR-Quiz-final.pdf>

Session handout:

## Healthy Relationships Session 1 Handout



## Session 2 – Unhealthy Relationships

### Session objective

Participants will gain knowledge on signs of an unhealthy relationship, how to identify an abusive relationship, and introduce the Power and Control Wheel.

### To open

Facilitators will check-in with all participants regarding current feelings and any processing if needed.

### Open discussion conversation questions

- How would an unhealthy relationship look like for you?
- Do you feel you can identify abusive signs easily?

### Session 2 discussion

At time all relationships will have come type of conflict or argument. However, an unhealthy relationship will exhibit abusive behaviors more frequently that cause pressure and stress that is hard to avoid. The tension is unhealthy for both partners and may lead to problems in other areas in your life.

Some signs of an unhealthy relationship are:

- Calls/texts/IMs you constantly and/or checks your email or phone without permission.
- Embarrasses or insults you in front of other.
- Acts jealously and does not want you to spend time with others.
- Consistently criticizes your friends, clothes, or interests.
- Feel pressure to change who you are for the other person.
- Feel worried when you disagree with the other person.
- Notice one partner has to justify actions (where you go, who you see)
- Experience yelling or physical violence during an argument.
- Experience a lack of fairness and equality.

- PARTICIPANTS MAY ADD AND DISCUSS ALREADY KNOWN CHARACTERISTICS.

If some of your relationships have some of these characteristics it does not necessarily mean to end this relationship. The important part is to recognize how these characteristics affect you; you can begin to work on improving the negative aspect of your relationship to benefit both of you.

Distribute handout 1 (Compare healthy and unhealthy relationship) and handout 2 (The Relationship Spectrum)

Discuss both handouts with group. Both handouts are similar in context but can both be utilized to discuss differences in relationships. Allow group to discuss in pairs for about 5 minutes. Some discussion questions:

- What differences do you notice and have you experienced any of the examples mentioned?
- Do any of the characteristics mentioned surprise you? Why?

Then discuss with each pair their thoughts and feelings.

Distribute handout 3 (Power and Control Wheel)

Facilitators will go over the power and control wheel with group and have a short discussion on it.

To close session

Facilitators will leave a take home activity for group participant's handout 4 "How My Relationship Affects My Life".

## Handout 1 “Healthy vs Unhealthy Relationship”

### What is the difference between a healthy and an unhealthy relationship?

Compromise      Own friends  
Own hobbies      Support      Consistency  
Both are equal      Own interests  
Compliments  
Honesty      Respect  
Encouragement      Friendship  
Reliability  
Own Space      Privacy  
Love      Choices and options

Feeling anxious around the other person      Erratic Behaviour  
Obsessive behaviour  
Feeling overwhelmed      Lies  
Feeling trapped      Control  
Mistrust      Manipulation  
Abuse      Cheating  
Checking facebook/phone      Feeling scared  
Stalking      Criticism  
Over jealousy  
Wanting to know where you are all the time      Isolation  
No choices      Accusing you of cheating

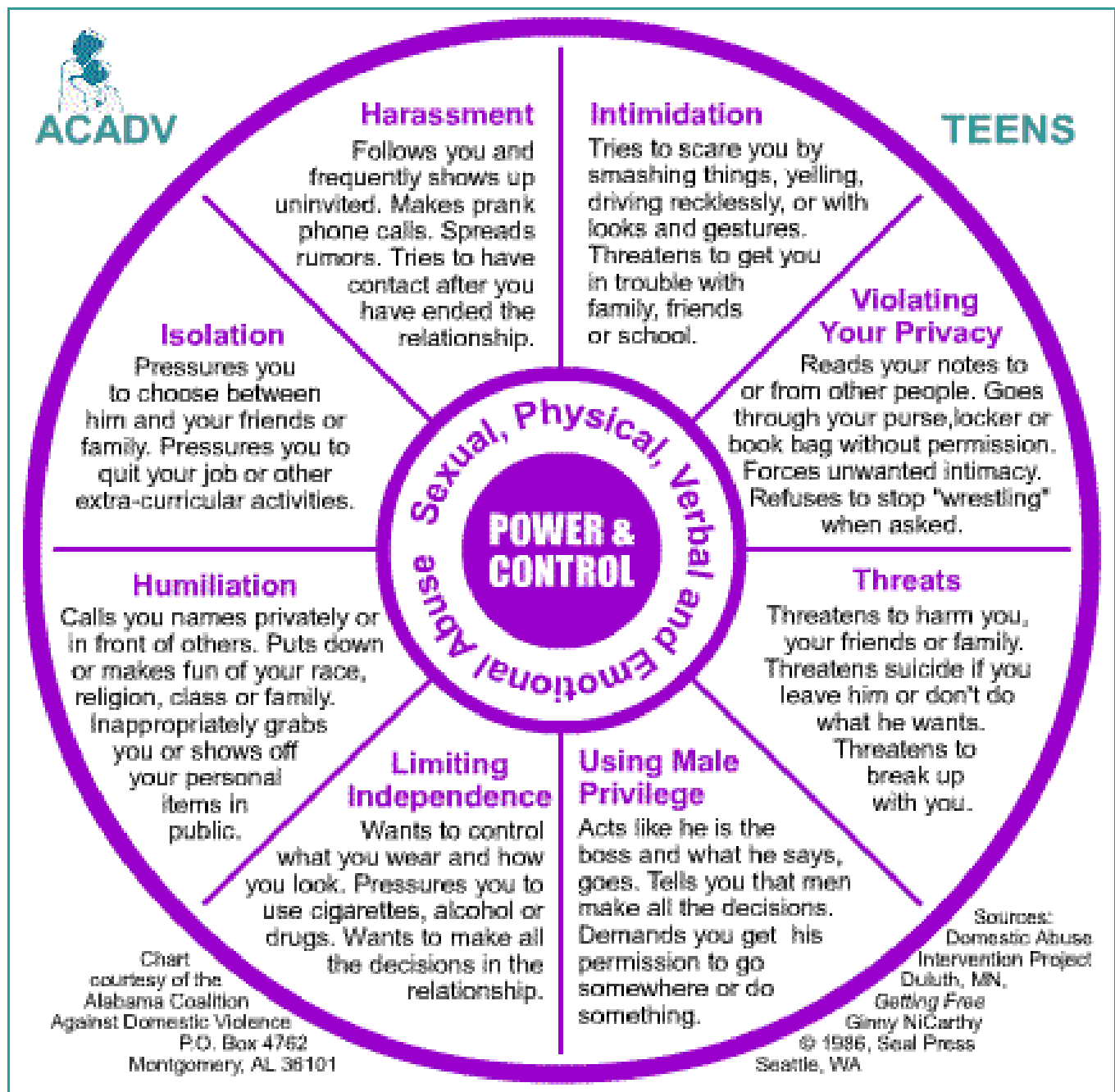
Domestic Abuse happens to many young people and everyone is affected in different ways. It's always best to talk to someone about it than keep it to yourself. You could talk to friends, family, teachers or a support worker at The Lookout.

## Handout 2 “The Relationship Spectrum”

Healthy	Unhealthy	Abusive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Communicating:</b> You talk openly about problems and listen to one another. You respect each other's opinions.</li><li>• <b>Respectful:</b> You value each other as you are.</li><li>• <b>Trusting:</b> You believe what your partner has to say. You do not feel the need to “prove” each other's trustworthiness.</li><li>• <b>Honest:</b> You are honest with each other, but can still keep some things private.</li><li>• <b>Equal:</b> You make decisions together and hold each other to the same standard.</li><li>• <b>Enjoying personal time:</b> You both enjoy spending time apart, alone or with others. You respect each other's need for time apart.</li><li>• <b>Making mutual sexual choices:</b> You talk openly about sexual and reproductive choices together. You both willingly consent to sexual activity and can safely discuss what you are and are not comfortable with.</li><li>• <b>Economic/financial partners:</b> You and your partner have equal say with regard to finances. Both partners have access to the resources they need.</li><li>• <b>Engaging in supportive parenting:</b> Both partners are able to parent in a way they feel comfortable with. You communicate together about the needs of the child(ren), as well as the needs of both parents.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Not communicating:</b> When problems arise, you fight or you don't discuss them at all.</li><li>• <b>Disrespectful:</b> One or both partners is not considerate of the other.</li><li>• <b>Not trusting:</b> One partner doesn't believe what the other says, or feels entitled to invade their privacy.</li><li>• <b>Dishonest:</b> One or both partners tells lies.</li><li>• <b>Trying to take control:</b> One partner feels their desires and choices are more important.</li><li>• <b>Only spending time with your partner:</b> Your partner's community is the only one you socialize in.</li><li>• <b>Pressured by the other into sexual activity:</b> One partner uses pressure or guilt on the other to have sex or do anything sexual at any point.</li><li>• <b>Ignoring a partner's boundaries:</b> It is assumed only one partner is responsible for making informed decisions.</li><li>• <b>Unequal economically:</b> Finances are not discussed, and/or it is assumed only one partner is in charge of finances.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Communicates</b> in a way that is hurtful, threatening, insulting or demeaning.</li><li>• <b>Mistreats the other:</b> One partner does not respect the feelings, thoughts, decisions, opinions or physical safety of the other.</li><li>• <b>Accuses the other of cheating or having an affair when it's not true:</b> The partner who accuses may hurt the other in a physical or verbal way as a result.</li><li>• <b>Denies that the abusive actions are abuse:</b> An abusive partner may try to blame the other for the harm they're doing, or makes excuses for abusive actions or minimizes the abusive behavior.</li><li>• <b>Controls the other:</b> There is no equality in the relationship. One partner makes all decisions for the couple without the other's input.</li><li>• <b>Isolates the other partner:</b> One partner controls where the other one goes and who they talk to. They may isolate their partner from family and friends.</li><li>• <b>Forces sexual activity or pregnancy:</b> One partner forces the other to have sex, or do anything they don't want to do sexually at any point. In relationships where pregnancy is a physical possibility, one partner may force the other to become pregnant.</li><li>• <b>Exerts economic control:</b> One partner controls the money and access to resources. Having an open dialogue about finances is not an option. This may include preventing a partner from earning an income or not allowing a partner access to their own income.</li><li>• <b>Engages in manipulative parenting:</b> One partner uses the child(ren) to gain power and control over the other partner, including telling the child(ren) lies or negative things about the other partner.</li></ul>



## Handout 3 “Power and Control Wheel”





## How My Relationship Affects My Life

**Ask yourself the following questions about how your relationship is affecting important areas of your life. Then think about any areas where you want to make changes, and talk with someone in your support system about how you can do this.**

**I am evaluating my relationship with:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **SCHOOL:**

- ☐ Does this person encourage me to do well in school? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Have my grades improved, fallen or stayed the same since I've been in this relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Does this person pressure me to skip school? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Have I ever missed or been late to school because of a fight with this person? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Have I ever quit a school group or club so I could spend that time with this person? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ If I want to go to college, does this person support this goal? \_\_\_\_\_

### **WORK:**

- ☐ Does this person support me in my job/career? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Have I ever missed or been late to work because of a fight with this person? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Does this person pressure me to miss work? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Do I talk to this person on the phone so much while at work that it gets in the way of my job? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Has this person ever shown up at my job to 'check up' on me because of jealousy? \_\_\_\_\_  
If so, has this caused me embarrassment or questions from co-workers or boss? \_\_\_\_\_

### **MY PHYSICAL HEALTH:**

- ☐ Have I ever had cuts, bruises, or other injuries as a result of a fight with this person? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Have I gained or lost a significant amount of weight since I've been in this relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Have I ever contracted a sexually transmitted disease from this person? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Have I had any unplanned pregnancies from this relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Have I ever been so upset about a fight with this person that I became physically ill? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Does this person ever threaten me physically or do dangerous things, like driving recklessly with me in the car? \_\_\_\_\_

(continued on next page)



## How My Relationship Affects My Life

(continued)

### MY EMOTIONAL HEALTH (LEVEL OF STRESS, FEELINGS OF SELF WORTH):

- ☐ Do I feel better about myself or worse about myself since I have been in this relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Do I ever think that "I am nothing" without this person - that I couldn't go on without him or her? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Do I feel more or less stressed, depressed or anxious? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Do I cry more or less frequently since I've been in this relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Do I have more trouble sleeping at night or sleep more than usual since I've been in this relationship? \_\_\_\_\_

### USE OF DRUGS/ALCOHOL:

- ☐ Have I started/increased or stopped/decreased smoking, drinking or using drugs since I've been in this relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Does this person pressure me to use drugs or alcohol? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Do I ever use drugs/alcohol to help myself calm down or feel better after a fight? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Do I ever use drugs/alcohol because I feel it will "loosen me up" and make me less inhibited around this person or around his/her friends? \_\_\_\_\_

### MY FAMILY & FRIENDSHIPS:

- ☐ How do my friends & family feel about this person? How does this person feel about them? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Have I grown apart from my friends & family since I've been in this relationship, or gotten closer? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Does this person ever act jealous of my friends/family and try to keep me away from them? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Has this person ever threatened or gotten into a physical fight with a friend or family member? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Has this person pressured me to quit a club, group or team? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Do I find myself lying to my friends & family to cover up for this person? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Do we each spend time separately with our own friends? \_\_\_\_\_

### MY ABILITY TO FUNCTION INDEPENDENTLY:

- ☐ Do I have control of my own money? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Have my living arrangements become dependent on this person? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Do I ever feel that I could not 'make it' without this person? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ In what other ways, positive or negative, do I think this relationship has affected my life? \_\_\_\_\_

## Session 3 – Types of Abuse and Cycle of Violence

### Lesson Objective

Students will gain knowledge on the types of abuse in a dating relationship, how to identify them, and learn about the cycle of violence.

### Session Opener

Facilitators will check in with students and provide processing time if needed. Then, facilitators and group will go over the take home assignment from previous session (How My Relationship Affects My Life?). Allow about 10-15 minutes to discuss and reflect.

### Conversational Questions

- What types of abuse are guys familiar with?
- Have you guys experienced any of those types of abuse or know anyone that has?
- Have you ever heard of “The Cycle of Violence”?

### Session 3 Discussion

- ❖ Some facts about dating abuse:
  - Nearly 1.5 million high school students nationwide experience physical abuse from a dating partner in a single year.
  - One in three girls in the US is a victim of physical, emotional or verbal abuse from a dating partner.
  - Violent relationships in adolescence can have serious consequences by putting the victim at high risk for substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior, and future domestic violence.
  - Half of youth who have been victims of dating violence and rape attempt suicide, compared to 12.5% of non-abused girls and 5.4% of non-abused boys.
  - Only 33% of teens who were in an abusive relationship ever told anyone about the abuse.

Allow a few minutes for reflections from participants regarding thoughts, feelings, experiences, and opinions.

❖ Types of Abuse:

- Physical Abuse – Behavior that is meant to cause hurt to another person's body or to control another person's physical freedom of movement. One person may abuse another using his or her own physical strength, using an object or weapon, using size or presence to intimidate or control the other. Ex.: hitting, slapping, punching, pushing, grabbing, kicking, pulling, choking, etc.

- Emotional Abuse – A way of hurting someone without necessarily being physical. It's when one person in a relationship tries to control the other person's feelings or thoughts in order to gain power over them. We can also recognize this type of abuse as verbal, mental, or psychological. Ex.: put-downs, intimidating, threatening, humiliating, guilt trips, yelling, cursing, lying, frequently criticizing, etc.

- Sexual Abuse – Sexual behavior that is forced, coerced or manipulated. It includes sexual harassment, can also be oral, and indecent exposure. Sexual abuse can go along with other types of abuse, because it can be physical (unwanted touching), emotional (using sexual behavior to humiliate), or verbal (calling someone sexual names).

❖ Cycle of Violence:

- The honeymoon Stage – Even the most abusive relationships usually start out romantic and loving. Many abusers act very sweet and kind, express a lot of love and make their partners feel special and cared for. This stage may be used to also manipulate reconciliation and make false promises.

- The Tension Building Stage – During this stage tension build in the relationship. There may be arguments, emotional abuse or minor physical abuse like grabbing or pushing. This can also be the stage

where minor name calling or yelling starts. Tension starts to create little by little making minor actions progress.

- The Blow Up Stage – This is the stage of explosion, where the abuse is at its worst, and it may include extreme physical abuse or sexual violence.
- Back to The Honeymoon Stage – After the “Blow Up” the abuser may apologize, be very loving and kind, and promise it won’t happen again. Because the abuser is so convincing, the partner will often try to forgive and forget. Unfortunately, the cycle usually repeats itself and the abuse gets worse.

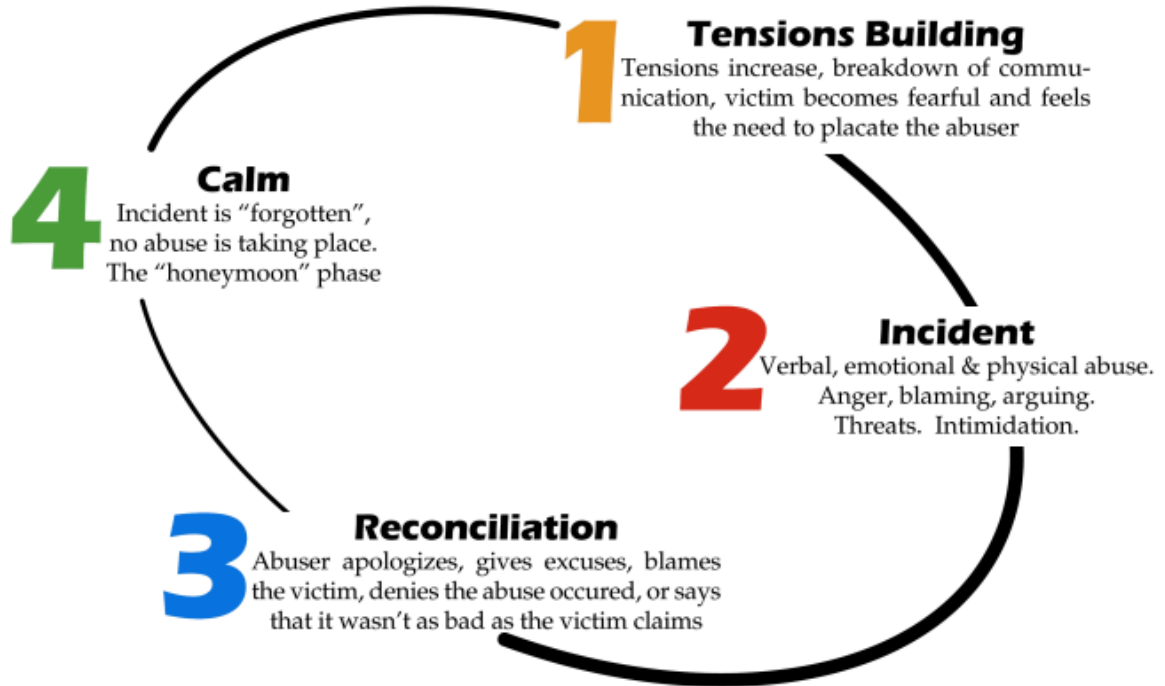
### Session Activity

Facilitators will distribute handout 1 (The Cycle of Violence). Participants can complete the worksheet in pairs. Then, briefly discuss with the whole group.

### Take Home Assignment

Facilitators will provide participants with handout 2 (Balancing You, Me, and Us) to complete through the week.

# Cycle of Abuse



Have you experienced this cycle in your relationship? If so, briefly write down behaviors you saw during each of these stages. Or think of a relationship from a movie, book or TV, and write down examples you saw at each stage of the relationship.

1. - The Honeymoon Stage:

2. - The Tension Building Stage:

3. - The Blow Up Stage/ Incident:

4. - The Reconciliation:

## Handout 2 – Balancing You, Me and Us.



### Balancing You, Me and Us

It's a romantic idea that when two people are in love they become one - but in reality, that way of thinking can sometimes be unhealthy. Another way to look at relationships is that two people, ME and YOU, overlap to create a third part of a relationship - US. If one of those three parts dominates, the other parts get neglected.

For example, if the relationship's all about ME, then I am focused on getting my needs met and expect you to make my needs your priority too - but your needs suffer.



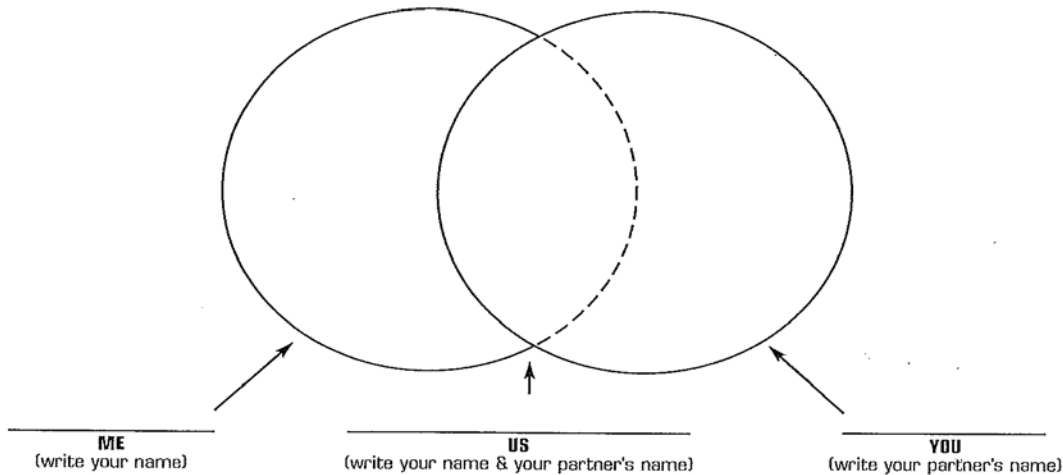
If the relationship's all about YOU, then I might spend all my energy trying to please you, but I do not take care of my own needs.



If the relationship is all about US, then we are both focused so intensely on the relationship that we each lose our individual identities.



In a healthy relationship, the ME, YOU and US are in balance most of the time. There might be days when I am having a problem so we focus on me, or you are celebrating a special accomplishment so we focus on you. But as a whole, we are able to achieve a balance between ME, YOU and US.



The overlapping circles above represent the three parts of a relationship - ME, YOU and US. Write your name and the name of your partner under the left and right circles. In the part of the circle that represents only you, write the things that are a part of you as an individual - for example, your close friends, family members, activities you enjoy by yourself, your education or career goals, talents and hobbies that are uniquely yours. Then do the same for your partner. In the center, where the two circles overlap to represent the US in your relationship, write things that you and your partner share together: special feelings, activities you enjoy together, friends that you have in common, special memories or future plans.

Now ask yourself: Are the Me, You and Us in your relationship in balance? \_\_\_\_\_  
If not, which part(s) need more attention? \_\_\_\_\_



## Session 4 – Technology and Social Media in Relationships

### Session Objective

Students will gain knowledge in the effects of utilizing social media, the Internet, and other technology to abuse others, specifically, dating partners.

### Session Opener

Facilitators will check-in with participants and allow processing time if needed. Facilitators and group will go over home assignment left from previous session. Allow a few minutes for discussion.

### Conversational Questions

- What are some social media sites that you use?
- What are some good things about social media and texting?
- What are some bad things about social media and texting?
- Have you ever had a bad experience with social media or texting?
- Are you familiar with the term “Sexting”?

### Session 4 discussion

Digital dating abuse is defined as the use of technology such as texting and social networking to bully, harass, stalk or intimidate a partner. This behavior is a form of verbal and/or emotional abuse perpetrated online. It is never ok for someone to do or say anything that makes you feel bad, lowers your self-esteem or manipulates you.

Some signs or abusive behaviors are:

- Tells you whom you can and can’t be friends with on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.
- Sends you negative, insulting or threatening emails, text messages, direct messages, tweets, etc.
- Uses these sites or phone location to keep tabs on you.
- Puts you down in their status updates.

- Sends you unwanted, explicit pictures and demands you to send some in return.
- Steals or insists to be given your passwords.
- Looks through your phone frequently, checks pictures, texts, and calls.

### Texting & Sexting

Now, texting and “sexting”, texting is currently one of the most common forms of communication. While it might be a great way of communication there are some things to look out for when it comes to texting. Some warning signs that one should be aware of is the constant texting from your partner to keep track of you throughout the day, sending harassing messages, humiliating messages, or even manipulating messages. Also, when your partner is constantly asking you for your phone to read your text messages to other people or reads them behind your back are signs to look out for.

Sexting – This form of texting is when you and your partner engaged in exchanging sexual messages, send inappropriate pictures or videos to one another. Even if you trust that your partner will be the only one to ever see the pictures, you can never guarantee that they will end up on someone else’s phone or online. It is important to play it safe and make it clear that inappropriate photos won’t be sent. Some abusers utilize photos to humiliate, as revenge, or damage a partner’s reputation.

### DID YOU KNOW...

SEXTING can also have legal consequences for you. Any nude photos or video of someone under 18 could be considered child pornography, which is always illegal. Even if whoever sent the image did so willingly, the recipient can still get in to a lot of trouble. May result in jail time and/or enlisting in the sex offender registry.

### Session Activity

Facilitators will put on the following videos and discuss with group:

- “The Warning Signs of Digital Dating Abuse”
- “Think Before You Post”

Watch each video and discuss thoughts, feelings, and opinions.

#### Take Home

Distribute handout 1 “Technology and Dating Abuse” for participants to take home.

## Technology and Dating Abuse

**1 in every 3** say they've been texted 10, 20, or 30 times an hour by a partner finding out where they are, what they're doing, or who they're with.

**1 in every 5** have been asked over cell phone or the internet to engage in sexual activity when they did not want to.

**1 in every 4** say they have been called names, harassed, or put down by their partner through cell phones & texting.

**Nearly 1 in 5** say that their partner has used a cell phone or internet to spread rumors about them.

Source: Tech Abuse in Teen Relationships Study by Teen Research Unlimited (TRU) for Liz Claiborne Inc. Research Topline. 2007

## Session 5 – Drugs, Alcohol, and Sexual Consent.

### Session Objective

Participants will gain knowledge on the effects of drug and alcohol, alternatives to cope with emotional issues, and the importance and meaning of consensual sex.

### Session Opener

Initiate session by checking in with participants and allowing processing if needed. Then, provide group with a verbal reminder of confidentiality and the seriousness of this session's topic. Also, remind participant they are in a safe place where they can share experiences and feelings without judgment.

### Conversational questions:

- Can you mention a few reasons that you are familiar with as to why people use drugs or consume alcohol?
- Have you ever been in a situation where drugs or alcohol were present?
- What are your personal feelings regarding drugs and alcohol?
- What does consent mean?
- How comfortable are you talking about sex?
- Can you have a conversation about these topics with your parents?

### Session 5 discussion

- Alcohol – Also known as Booze, Brew, Liquor, and Sauce. Drinking can affect your brain in short-term, but repeated drinking can also impact it, especially as a teen because your brain is still growing and developing.

◆ Short-Term consequences: Harder time making good decisions, you become less aware of your risky and inappropriate behavior, and less likely to recognize potential danger.

◆ Long-Term consequences: Research shows that drinking during adolescence could interfere with normal development and change the brain in ways that can have negative effects on information processing and learning, and increase the risk of developing an alcohol disorder later in life.

People drink for a variety of reasons. Some drink to experience new things, peer pressure, and/or to cope with stress or other emotional problems. It is important to know that unfortunately, drinking only makes any problem worse, not better.

- Overview of Drugs – Marijuana (dried leaves and flowers of the cannabis sativa or indica plant, contain more than 500 chemicals, THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) is responsible for psychotropic (mind-altering) effects.). Ecstasy or Molly (known as a “club drug” is an amphetamine causing psychedelic effects that are similar to the hallucinogens, this drug is in pill form.), Cocaine, Heroin, etc. All these drugs impair the brain in some form or another having long-term and short-term effects.

Allow students to have an open conversation about drugs and alcohol, to express their personal feelings, thoughts, and experiences.  
(15-20 minutes)

Have students watch the following short videos:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uvv5rtDYohg>  
(Drug Abuse/Risks to Total Health)

- <https://www.projectknow.com/research/substance-abuse-education-resources/>
- Sexual Consent – In a survey conducted in LAUSD to high school students, found that 11% of girls and 6% of boys reported being victims of unwanted kissing, touching or sexual intercourse with someone they were dating or had dated in the past year.
  - ◆ Consent, is a voluntary agreement between two people. Talking about sex, consent is when two sober people clearly communicate that they want to have sex with one another. Any person has the right to say “no” at any point during sex or leading to sex, regardless whether they are single, dating, hooking up, etc.
  - ◆ “Yes Means Yes” Law in California, this law makes clear that both parties must give “affirmative consent” before having sex. Affirmative consent means, “an affirmative, and conscious, and voluntary agreement to engage in sexual activity every step of the way”. In other words, silence, or lack of saying “no” to sexual activity, cannot be considered consent.
  - ◆ Always remember it is OK to say “no” if you feel uncomfortable or simple just does not want to.

Have students watch the following short video:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBFCeGDVAdQ> (Let’s Talk About Consent)

Allow students to have an open conversation about sex and consent sharing feelings, thoughts, experiences, and opinions.

Conclude session by reminding students that it is ok to talk about it and the importance of seeking help when needed.

Provide group with Handout/flyer 1 to take home as resource





## Session 6 – Effective Communication

### Session 6 Objective

Participants will gain skills to engage in effective communication. Participants will learn the difference of passive, aggressive, and assertive communication. Also, learn the use of “I” statements for positive communication.

### To open session

Check in with students and allow processing time if needed. Facilitators can refresh participants with overall feelings of group and how they felt with previous session, being such a heavy topic.

### Conversational questions

- How do you express your feelings and needs?
- Do you feel the way you communicate works for without causing issues?
- Is it easy for you to get a point across?
- Do you know what an “I” statement is?

### Provide group with handout 1 “Communication Styles”

### Session 6 discussion

Part of being in a healthy relationship (friendship or dating) is having good communication amongst each other. When we try to communicate something to another person it is important to be aware of how we are communicating, taking into consideration: tone, gesture, posture, finding the right time, honesty, and without attacking. If we are angry, it is important to stop, think, talk, and listen. In order for us to do so, we need to realize we are angry and try to calm down before reacting inappropriately.

There are different communication styles to differentiate and learn about to be aware of how we can effectively communicate.

- Passive Communication – When using passive communication, an individual does not express their needs or feelings. Passive individuals often do not respond to hurtful situations, and instead allow themselves to be taken advantage of or to be treated unfairly.

- ◆ Characteristics:

- Poor eye contact
    - Allows others to infringe upon their rights
    - Softly spoken
    - Allows others to take advantage

- Aggressive Communication: Aggressive communicators violate the rights of others when expressing their own feelings and needs. They may be verbally abusive to further their own interests.

- ◆ Characteristics:

- Use criticism, humiliation, and domination
    - Frequent interruptions and failure to listen to others
    - Easily frustrated
    - Speaking in a loud or overbearing manner

- Assertive Communications: With assertive communication an individual expresses their feelings and needs in a way that also respects the rights of others. This mode of communication displays respect for each individual who is engaged in the exchange.

- ◆ Characteristics:

- Listens without interrupting

- Clearly states needs and wants
- Stands up for personal rights
- Good eye contact

Engage in a discussion with participants regarding communication styles and relate them to their own communication style.

### Provide handout 2 “I” Statements”

Discuss “I” messages:

“I” messages allow you to tell people you want them to change their behavior without blaming them or putting them down. “I” messages create a positive atmosphere for communication and problem solving.

There are three main parts of an “I” statement:

1. **I FEEL ...**

(State the feeling)

*I feel hurt and angry ...*

2. **WHEN YOU ...**

(State the other person’s behavior)

*When you yell at me.*

3. **I WANT ...**

(State what you want to happen) *I want you to bring your voice down.*

# COMMUNICATION STYLES

**Passive > Assertive < Aggressive**

Too Nice	Firm	Mean
Suck it up	Clear Messages	Explosive
Hold it in	"I" Statements	Arrogant
Denial	Broken Record Technique	Oblivious
Subtle Manipulation	Well Respected	Manipulative
Guilt	Self-Accepting	Self-Absorbed
Shame	Self-Aware	Threatening
Low Self-Esteem	Self-Confident	Low Consideration of Others
Powerless	Powerful	Tyrannical/Out of Control
Latent Hostility	Comfortable	Hostile
Weak Boundaries	Well Defined, Clear Boundaries	Overbearing
Passive	Active	Attacking
"Door Mats"	Content	Dominant
Needs Acceptance	Self-Sufficient	Needs Power

EQ-2.Com



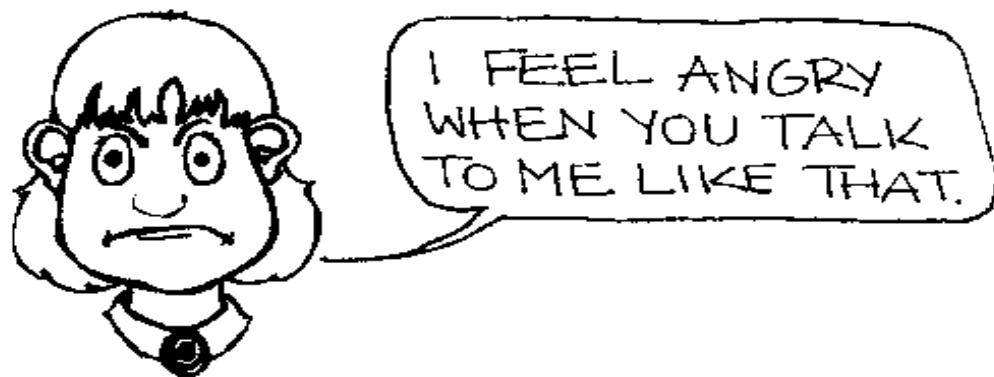
### Why “I” Statements?

*An “I” statement is a formula for starting a conversation without judging or blaming your friend and talking about your feelings.*

*“I” statements invite a conversation and encourage problem-solving.*

Start with	Continue with	For example
I feel...	Emotion	I feel concerned
When...	Situation	when you disappear at meals
Because...	Why	because I care about you.
So...	Suggestion	So, I hope we can...

Content outline provided by Leah Siskin



## Session 7 – Self-Esteem

### Session Objective

Participant will learn the importance of healthy self-esteem, the difference between low and healthy self-esteem. Facilitators will provide ways to boost participant's self-esteem.

### To open session

Facilitators will check in with participants and allow processing if needed. Facilitators will initiate session with positivity and excitement toward session topic.

### Conversation Questions

- What is self-esteem?
- On a scale from 1-10, how would you rate how good you feel about yourself, overall?
- Has there been a time where you had a negative attitude toward yourself?

### Session 7 discussion

Self-esteem is made up of the thoughts, feelings, and opinions we have about ourselves. That means self-esteem isn't fixed. It can change, depending on the way we think. Over time, habits of negative thinking about ourselves can lower self-esteem.

Healthy self-esteem is feeling good about yourself, and feeling that you are a worthwhile person. This doesn't mean being overconfident, just believing in yourself and knowing what you do well.

Sometimes, people don't even realize that they're thinking so negatively about themselves. But once you're aware of it, and know that the way you think is up to you, you can begin to change the way you think. And changing the way you think about yourself changes the way you feel about yourself. We can help our self-esteem by learning ways to shift our negative thoughts to positive ones.

Some ways to boost our self-esteem and confidence:

- Notice when you are thinking badly about yourself and try to change this.
- Stop comparing yourself to others – everyone is different.
- Try positive self-talk – think about the things you do well.
- Think of times you have tried something new and succeeded.
- Think about your qualities that have helped you in your life.
- Think about what makes you happy and make sure that you let yourself do these things
- Do things you know you are good at.
- Accept compliments when people give them to you.
- View mistakes as learning opportunities.

Facts about self-esteem at your age:

- Low self-esteem is a thinking disorder in which an individual views him/herself as inadequate, unlovable, and/or incompetent.
- Among high school students, 44% of girls and 15% of guys are attempting to lose weight.
- Over 70% of girls age 15-17 avoid normal daily activities, such as attending school, when they feel bad about their looks.
- 75% of girls with low self-esteem reported engaging in negative activities like cutting, bullying,



smoking, drinking, or disordered eating. This compares to 25% of girls with high self-esteem.

Provide group with handout 1 “Self-Esteem” and Handout 2 “Self-Assessment”

Handout to is to been done throughout the week to bring back to last session.

## Handout 1 – Self-Esteem



# TOP 10 WAYS TO LIFT YOUR SELF ESTEEM

- **Take Care of Your Body**

"Beauty begins the moment you decide to be yourself." – Coco Chanel
- **Dream Big & Set Small Goals**

"Anything can happen, child. Anything can be." – Where the Sidewalk Ends By Shel Silverstein
- **Connect With A Friend**

"I knew when I met you an adventure was going to happen." – Winnie the Pooh by A.A. Milne
- **Schedule Time to Indulge Your Creative Side**

"All grown ups were once children...but only a few of them can remember." – The Little Prince by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
- **See Beauty in Everyday Things**

"Above all watch with glittering eyes the whole world around you. Because the greatest secrets are always hidden in the most unlikely places." – Charlie and the Chocolate Factory by Roland Dahl
- **Plan a Random Act of Kindness for Someone Else**

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted." – The Lion and the Mouse by Aesop
- **Plan a Random Act of Kindness for Yourself**

"Talk to yourself like you would to someone you love." – The Gifts of Imperfection by Brené Brown
- **Dress Yourself to Tell a Story**

"If you have good thoughts...they will shine out of your face like sunbeams and you will always look lovely." – Matilda by Ronald Dahl
- **Express Your Needs to Someone You Trust**

"Be who you are and say how you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind." – Cat in the Hat by Dr. Seuss
- **Tell Yourself Each Day:**

"You are Braver than you believe, Stronger than you seem, Smarter than you think, and Loved more than you can imagine." – Winnie the Pooh by A.A. Milne

## Handout 2 – Self-Assessment

## My Strengths and Qualities

**Things I am good at:**

1	<hr/>
2	<hr/>
3	<hr/>

**Compliments I have received:**

1	<hr/>
2	<hr/>
3	<hr/>

**What I like about my appearance:**

1	<hr/>
2	<hr/>
3	<hr/>

**Challenges I have overcome:**

1	<hr/>
2	<hr/>
3	<hr/>

**I've helped others by:**

1	<hr/>
2	<hr/>
3	<hr/>

**Things that make me unique:**

1	<hr/>
2	<hr/>
3	<hr/>

**What I value the most:**

1	<hr/>
2	<hr/>
3	<hr/>

**Times I've made others happy:**

1	<hr/>
2	<hr/>
3	<hr/>

## Session 8 – Closing Session

### Session Objective

Facilitators and group will engage in an arts and craft activity to reinforce healthy self-esteem, positive self-talk, and confidence.

### Session discussion and activity

- Facilitators will provide instructions and engage participants in “I Am Jar” activity. Utilizing the worksheet, they completed from previous session.
- Facilitators will congratulate participants for their participation and provide them with a certificate.
- To conclude, facilitators will provide participants with evaluation form.

Facilitators will be responsible to have materials ready for art activity for participants.

Lastly, Encourage and remind participants to be proactive for future relationships utilizing knowledge learned from group and always seek help when needed, they are not alone. To utilize their jar when they feel they need to remind themselves how amazing they are.



## “I Am Jar” Instructions



### MATERIALS

- ♥ Canning jar (like a Mason jar)
- ♥ Label sticker
- ♥ Felt
- ♥ Craft glue
- ♥ Patterned scrapbooking paper

### DIRECTIONS

1. Remove the inner part of the lid and cut a circle piece of felt that same size.
2. Cut a slit in the center of the felt circle big enough to pass little notes through.
3. Glue the circular felt piece into the jar lid and let dry.
4. Write “I AM” on the label and stick on your jar.

5. Cut little strips of paper from the patterned paper.
6. On each strip, write something on the plain side that makes you amazing! (see sidebar for ideas)
7. Whenever you need a little reminder why you are amazing just being you, open the jar and read a note—in fact, make it a habit to start your day by reading one of your positive “I AM” notes!



**GIFT IDEA:** Turn this idea into a gift by making a “I Love You Because” jar. Fill the jar with reasons why you love that person. Great for best friends, siblings, moms, dads, and grandparents!

#### Examples of “I AM” Statements:

I am awesome ♥ I am nice to others ♥ I am strong  
I am good at math ♥ I am unique ♥ I am a great friend  
I am a loving person ♥ I am loved ♥ I am confident  
I am helpful to others ♥ I am liked by others  
I am beautiful inside and out ♥ I am special

## Group Evaluation

Name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: Male/ Female/Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer each question:

1. How was your overall experience attending group?

EXCELENT      GOOD      OKAY      BAD

2. Were facilitators knowledgeable to topic each session and prepared?

YES      SOMETIMES      NO

3. Would you recommend this group to a friend or family member?

YES      MAYBE      NO

4. What topic was your favorite?

5. What topic was you least favorite?

6. Do you think a topic needs improvement? What topic? Why?

7. Is there a topic that you would add that was not discussed?

8. Comments:

## Curriculum Resources & References

- [www.loveisrespect.com](http://www.loveisrespect.com)
- [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)
- [www.teens.drugabuse.gov](http://www.teens.drugabuse.gov)
- [www.projectknow.com](http://www.projectknow.com)
- [www.pewtrust.org](http://www.pewtrust.org)
- [www.teensource.org](http://www.teensource.org)