

Warning Signs for Teens

Are you in an abusive relationship?

Are any of these things true of you?

- your weight, appearance or grades have changed dramatically since you started seeing this person
- you worry about how they will react to things you say or do
- you feel that your needs and desires come second
- you think twice about expressing your own thoughts or feelings
- you worry you might make the "wrong" decision about what you wear, where you go and who with hang out with
- your family or friends warn you about this person or worry about your safety
- you are frightened of this person, maybe not before but lately

If you answered "yes" to even one of these signs, talk with someone for advice.

Warning Signs in a Dating Partner

Are any of these things true of your dating partner? Does the person you are dating...

- tell you they cannot live without you
- blame you for all their problems
- break or hit things to intimidate you
- threaten to hurt themselves or others if you break up
- act jealous, say jealous things, or forbid you to speak with certain people
- pressure you into having sex or force you to do sexual things you don't want to do by saying, "if you really loved me you would..."
- humiliate you and belittle your opinions
- slap or shove you in a seemingly playful way, but it happens often and doesn't seem right
- seem jealous and possessive about the time you spend with your friends
- constantly check up on you and ask where you are and what you are doing
- have severe mood swings or frequent bad moods
- want you to limit your other activities so you can spend more time together
- want your relationship to get too serious too quickly and refuse to take "no" for an answer
- blame past bad relationships on everything or everybody else instead of accepting any of the responsibility
- abuses drugs or alcohol and pressure you to take them also, even if you don't want to
- believe men should be in control and women should do what they're told
- treat you like property rather than a person they value

- call you names, kick, hit, or push you in anger
- get aggressive or abusive toward inanimate objects or animals
- force you to choose between being with them or with your friends or family
- lash out or blame you for having a bad day
- use or own weapons or have a history of violence and fighting
- blow minor disagreements or issues way out of proportion
- dislike your parents and friends
- hit, push, choke, kick or physically hurt you
- threaten to break up with you or accuse you of planning to break up with them
- disrespects their mother or generally treat their parents badly
- insult you, criticize you, especially in front of others
- brag about mistreating other people
- have trouble controlling their temper

Notice that being hit or physically abused is only one sign of an abusive relationship. **You can be in an abusive relationship without ever being hit.** Abusive partners are self-centered, immature, manipulative, can't appreciate the views or needs of others, shift blame onto others, don't take responsibility for the bad things they do or say, are possessive and treat people like their property, and put others down to feel good about themselves. They are disrespectful and may have problems keeping their emotions under control.