

# WHAT IS DIGITAL DATING VIOLENCE

## A GUIDE FOR ADULTS

Digital dating violence is a pattern of behaviours that control, pressure, or threaten a dating partner using digital technologies. Digital technologies are electronic tools, systems, devices and resources that generate, store or process data. Digital technologies include social media, online games, multimedia, mobile phones or the Internet<sup>1</sup>. Common examples of digital dating violence include texting and misusing social networks to bully, harass, stalk or intimidate a partner. Often this behaviour is a form of verbal or emotional abuse that is being perpetrated online.

In a healthy relationship, all communication is respectful whether in person, online or by phone. It is never OK for someone to do or say anything that intimidates another, lowers their self-esteem or manipulates them. Teens may be experiencing digital dating violence if their partner:

- Tells them who they can or can't be friends with on Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Facebook and other sites.
- Sends them negative, insulting or threatening emails, texts, tweets, DMs (Direct Messages) or other messages online.
- Uses sites like Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok and other sites to keep constant tabs on their partner.
- Puts them down in their status updates. For example, name calling and posting embarrassing information.
- Sends unwanted, explicit pictures and demands similar pictures in return.
- Pressures them to send explicit photos or videos.
- Insists that they be given the digital passwords or steals or manipulates the person to disclose the passwords.
- Constantly texts and makes them feel like they can't be separated from their phone for fear of disappointing them or of being threatened or punished.
- Looks through their phone frequently, checks on pictures, texts and outgoing calls constantly.

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<sup>1</sup> Hinduja, S. & Patchin, J. W. (2020). Digital dating abuse: A brief guide for educators and parents. Retrieved on September 22, 2020 from [www.cyberbullying.org](http://www.cyberbullying.org).

If you know someone who you think is experiencing digital dating violence, encourage them to chat with a trusted adult or seek help from one of the organizations listed below. Often digital dating violence may be part of a continuum of gender-based violence that can be both online and in person. BC teens are not alone and there are confidential safe support services available for them.

- [PEACE Program for Children and Youth](#)
- [Kid Help Phone](#)
- [Victim link](#)
- [KUU-US Crisis Line Society](#)
- [Society for Children and Youth BC Child and Youth Legal Centre](#)

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### *Spark Teen Digital Dating Violence Project*

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