

# WHAT IS TEEN DATING VIOLENCE?

Dating violence is a pattern of behaviours one person uses to gain and maintain power and control over their dating partner, where one person chooses to control the relationship through the use of force, intimidation, or fear. Because this often involves a pattern of behaviour, the abuse happens again and again, and can get more violent over time. It affects people regardless of race, class, gender, or sexual orientation. Dating violence can look different in each relationship, however even a one-time incident of dating violence is NOT ok.

Many people assume abuse means that physical violence is happening, but that's not always the case. Abuse comes in many forms. Violent words and actions are tools an abusive partner uses to gain and maintain power and control over their dating partner resulting in emotional abuse and manipulation.

## TYPES OF ABUSE

### Verbal Abuse

- Calling you names, insulting you and putting you down.
- Telling you what to wear, what to do and what not to wear and do.
- Calling, texting or emailing constantly.
- Always demanding to know who you're with and where you are.
- Threatening to hurt you.

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*Verbal abuse and emotional abuse often lead to physical violence. Just because a relationship is not physically violent does not mean that it is a healthy relationship.*

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### Emotional Abuse

- Going through your things without their permission.
- Acting jealous.
- Not letting you spend time with friends and family.
- Blaming you for everything.
- Accusing you of cheating on them.

## Physical Abuse

- Shaking, grabbing.
- Pulling hair.
- Slapping, punching, and kicking.
- Using objects or weapons to hurt you.
- Choking, strangling.

## Sexual Abuse

- Touching or kissing when you don't want to.
- Pressuring or forcing you to have sex or do other sexual things.
- Preventing the use of birth control.

## Financial Abuse

- Forbidding you to work.
- Refusing to work or contribute.
- Sabotaging work or employment opportunities.
- Controlling how all of the money is spent.
- Not allowing you access to your bank accounts.
- Forcing you to write bad checks or file fraudulent tax returns.
- Running up large amounts of debt on joint accounts, taking bad credit loans.
- Withholding funds to obtain basic needs such as food and medicine.
- Hiding assets.
- Stealing your identity, property or inheritance.

## Digital Dating Violence

- Tells you who you can or can't be friends with on Facebook and other sites.
- Sends negative, insulting or threatening emails, text messages, tweets, DMs or other messages online.
- Uses sites like TikTok, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and others to keep constant tabs on you.

- Puts you down in their status updates.
- Sends you unwanted, explicit pictures and/or demands you send some in return.
- Pressures you to send explicit video or texts.
- Insists on being given your passwords or manipulates you to provide them or steals them.
- Constantly texts and makes you feel like you can't be separated from their phone for fear of disappointing them or of being threatened or punished.
- Looks through your phone frequently, checks on your pictures, texts and outgoing calls.
- Tags you negatively in pictures on Instagram, Tumblr, etc.
- Uses any kind of technology (such as Find My Friends, spyware or GPS in a car or settings on a phone) to monitor your whereabouts.

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*Every relationship is different, but the things that unhealthy and abusive relationships have in common are issues of manipulation, power and control. Each type of abuse is serious and no one deserves to experience abuse of any kind.*

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If you or someone you know is or might be experiencing dating violence, chat with a trusted adult or seek help from one of the organizations listed below. Often one form of dating violence is part of a continuum of gender-based violence that can be both online and in person.

You are not alone and there are confidential safe support services available.

- [PEACE Program for Children and Youth](#) is counselling program for children and youth experiencing violence.
- [Kid Help Phone](#) crisis line is available 24/7 by call or text.
- [KUU-US Crisis Line Society](#) is a crisis phone line for Indigenous Youth.
- [VictimLink BC](#) is a referral and information service for victims of crime.
- [Society for Children and Youth BC's Child and Youth Legal Centre](#) provides legal support for children and youth.

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*Spark Teen Digital Dating Violence Project*

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*This document was published March 2022*

*Adapted for Canada from [Day One](#), New York, United States.*

