



## **Navigating Relationships Like A Girl**

### **Objectives:**

- Girls will be prepared to have more productive and healthy conversations with the people in their lives
- Girls will be able to list the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy dating relationships
- Girls will be able to define dating abuse and explain the different types of abuse
- Girls will know at least four "red flags" to watch for in a relationship that could indicate a person as abusive

### **Lesson Plan:**

1. Icebreaker (5 minutes)
2. How to Talk to Partners ABOUT STIs (10 minutes)
3. What is Dating? (5 minutes)
4. Activity: Healthy versus Unhealthy Dating Relationships (10 minutes)
5. Break (5 minutes)
6. Lesson: Types of Abuse (10 minutes)
7. Activity: "Is It Abuse If...?" (10 minutes)

### **Icebreaker Question: Why is sexual health important in the conversation of empowerment?**

- Open discussion with group
- Prompt girls to use information from the "Staying Safe Like a Girl" lesson if applicable

### *Facilitator notes*

- Understanding and taking hold of our sexual health helps us feel confident that we are taking steps toward taking care of ourselves and our bodies

- When we are safe and empowered surrounding sex, we are able to be more comfortable in our own skin

### **How to Talk to Partners About STIs**

- The facilitator begins by introducing a video by Planned Parenthood showing how to have conversations with a sexual partner about STDs and STIs (review last lesson if necessary)
  - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkVcpxOYhd8&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkVcpxOYhd8&feature=emb_logo)
- Facilitator resource: At home STI testing kit
  - <https://www.nurx.com/sti-healthy-woman-kit>
- Discussion questions:
  - How did people approach talking to their partner about STIs? What made those conversations easier for them?
  - What reactions did partners have in this video?
  - What are some of the positives that came out of these conversations? Where did each pair end up in terms of their relationship to each other?

### **Introduction: What is dating? (5 minutes)**

Facilitator should invite the girls to answer the following questions in a group setting:

- Why do people date?
- What does it mean to be dating?

### **Activity: Healthy versus Unhealthy Dating Relationships (10 minutes)**

Facilitator assists participants to differentiate between healthy and unhealthy dating relationships by creating two lists with qualities of each. An example of two lists is below for reference.

Healthy vs Unhealthy relationships

- *Healthy Relationships*
  - *Openly communicate with one another, Honest, Understanding, Treat each other equally, Be respectful, Respectful of family, beliefs, etc., Accept each other for who they are, Kind and considerate, Loving, Want the best for each other, Fun, Trust, Attractive, Good Hygiene, Faithful*
- *Unhealthy Relationships*
  - *Uncomfortable sharing thoughts and feelings, Lies and deceit, No concern for the others' well being, One has power or control over the other, Disrespectful, rude, hurtful with words/actions, Forceful, Threatening, Totally dependent on the other person, Isolated from others - friends/family, Abusive – verbally, physically, or mentally, Lack of trust, Fear of the other person, Manipulative, Lack of self-esteem, Insecure, Jealous, Possessive*

Facilitator asks participants a question:

- How do girls end up with partners with these negative qualities?

## BREAK

### Types of Abuse

- The facilitator defines dating violence” or “dating abuse” by explaining four types of abuse: *physical, verbal/emotional, mental/psychological, and sexual.*
- The facilitator explains that *all abuse is for the purpose of power and control; one person in a position over the other; inequality in the relationship.* (Power and Control Flower Handout can be used for clarification.)

### Physical Abuse

*The most commonly thought of abuse. Includes punching, hitting, slapping, kicking, or physically restraining someone against their will. Can also include invading personal space or making someone feel physically unsafe.*

### Verbal/Emotional Abuse

*When someone uses words like weapons as a way to degrade, beat down, or change someone’s perception about themselves in a negative way. Signs of verbal abuse may not be as evident as physical abuse and often it is harder to identify or prove.*

### Mental/Psychological

*When a partner makes the other doubt their own sanity or sense of self. An example is someone intentionally misplacing someone’s personal items to make them feel as though they are losing their memory/sanity. It can involve a person lying about the past to convince someone of these things. All of these examples surround the idea of power, where- if a person is degraded to a certain place where they do not trust themselves, they may rely more heavily on the other person’s judgement and therefore be dependent on them.*

### Sexual Abuse

*Can be a form of physical abuse, but can also include non-physical components. It can involve using sex as a weapon by forcing it on someone or withholding it from someone. Sex can be used as a way for someone to assign value/judge their partner. Someone might tell someone that they are not good at sex as a way to degrade them or tell them that sex is the only thing they are good for. There are often emotions behind sex that make it an easy way for someone with bad intentions to assert their dominance and control over someone else.*

- The facilitator should discuss ways to get out of abusive relationships by suggesting adults and others that can help.
  - It is sometimes difficult to realize in your own relationship that certain behaviors are out of the ordinary. Our feelings for others can blind us, so it is important that we talk through situations with close friends and trusted adults in order to get a well rounded picture on our relationship.

**Activity: “Is It Abuse If...?”**

Participants are asked their opinion about the following situations. With each, they are to decide if it is abuse or could lead to abuse. If they think it could lead to abuse, invite them to share how so.

The facilitator can use the what if scenario if no one thinks that the situation could lead to abuse.

- A guy picks up his girlfriend for class every morning, waits for her after every class at school and walks her home at the end of the day.
  - **What if...** She is not able to see her friends as much and they start getting more distanced from her? What if he is doing it to make sure that he is the only one she is seeing (including her friends) and so that he knows where she is at all times? Does the girlfriend really want her boyfriend around THAT often?
- A girl’s boyfriend makes a joke about the intimate part of their relationship in front of their collective group of friends. He apologizes after and says that it will never happen again, but she notices that people look at her differently and wonders if he is being truthful.
  - **What if...** he was doing this to show people that he “owned her” and did so in a way that also exposed her personal life so that other guys may not be interested in her in the future.
- A girl asks her boyfriend to spend more time with her and less time with his friends then keeps asking him until he grabs her arm a little tighter than usual and raises his voice. It didn’t hurt and maybe he was just having a bad day.
  - **What if...** this is a warning sign for future physical abuse. What should she do?

**Parent Email**

*The parent email section serves to engage parents or caretakers of the material the girls are learning each week and gives them a guide to further the conversation outside of Project Like a Girl. If the facilitator desires, they should send a “summary” of the lesson the day the lesson is taught.*

***Today’s Objectives***

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***Discussion Questions***

- *What are some kinds of ways people assert power and control over someone else?*
- *What are things you look for in a healthy relationship?*

# Power and Control Flower Handout

## Teen Dating Abuse Issues

