

Building Healthy Relationships in College

Everyone deserves to have healthy dating relationships. Relationships aren't always easy, but there is never an excuse for violence in a relationship. Healthy relationships are built on a foundation of respect. Knowing the signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships can help you in building new relationships in college.

Dating violence is very common among college students and can happen in heterosexual and same-sex relationships. In fact, 1 in 5 college women will experience violence in a relationship during college*. If you feel unsafe in a relationship, help is available both on and off campus. Learn more at <https://sites.allegcheny.edu/counseling/>.

Healthy relationships are based on the following to create a nurturing and loving environment:

Mutual Respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening non-judgmentally Valuing each other's opinions 	Separate Identities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having friends outside the relationship Exploring your individual identities
Trust and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respecting each other's personal space and time Overcoming issues of jealousy and resentment 	Good Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being honest with your feelings to yourself and your partner Communicating openly and truthfully
Honesty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accepting responsibility for yourself 	Forgiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forgiving past mistakes Admitting your own mistakes and apologizing
Fairness and Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being willing to compromise Seeking goals that satisfy both partners 	Fighting Fair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening to each other Not assuming things Not criticizing each other

Unhealthy or abusive relationships often use the following to gain power and control:

Isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Controlling where you go and who you see Making you believe they are the only one who cares about you Limiting activities outside the relationship 	Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making threats to hurt you, family, friends, belongings, or pets Threatening to leave or commit suicide
Intimidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making you afraid to use certain looks, actions or gestures Destroying property, abusing pets, displaying weapons 	Forcible Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manipulating or making threats in order to get sex Getting you drunk or drugging you to get sex

Physical and/or Emotional Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitting, pushing, slapping or kicking you • Putting you down • Playing mind games • Making you feel guilty 	Minimizing and Denying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being unwilling to take responsibility for the abuse • Making light of the abuse • Blaming the abuse on you
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Tables adapted from *Teen Relationship Equality Wheel* and *Teen Power and Control Wheel* from the Centralized Training Institute, Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network, 2009.

*Source: Schwartz, Jonathan P., Linda D. Griffin, Melani M. Russell, and Sarannette Frontaura-Duck. (2006). Prevention of Dating Violence on College Campuses: An Innovative Program. *Journal of College Counseling* (pp. 90-96)

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