

Workshop 2 - Healthy relationships, my child and me

How can I encourage my child to develop healthy relationships?

How do I make sure my child has healthy relationships?

My child does not have an unhealthy relationship, does this concern me?

How do I encourage conversations at home?

It's normal: Interpersonal relationships beyond the family

We all experience different types of interpersonal relationships in our lifetime. During adolescence, young people continue to discover interpersonal relationships outside the family: their friendships intensify, and their family relationships evolve when they discover their independence. Some also set out to discover romantic and / or intimate relationships, sometimes even professional relationships with their first job or volunteering experience.

Building new relationships is not easy. Young people base themselves on role models around them, whether in their families, through their peers or in the media. Adolescents, in the process of building their own identity, find themselves having to navigate these new human relationships with a variety of factors and sometimes confusing relationship messages.

As a parent or an adult that is close to a young adolescent, this transition can be a difficult step. Adolescents tend to distance themselves from their parents or family, and they do not share their feelings and information about their relationships as much as they did before.

This worksheet gives you some tips on how

to open up the dialogue about building healthy relationships and identifying the signs of possible unhealthy ones.

What is a healthy relationship vs. unhealthy?

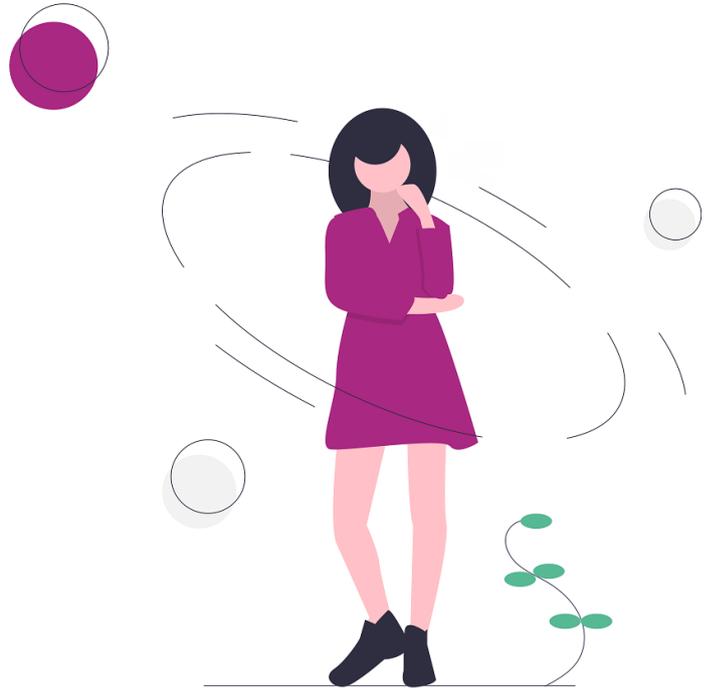
Above all, a healthy relationship is an egalitarian relationship in which each party feels respected, accepted and secure. A healthy relationship rests on several essential points :

- **Honesty:** we can share our feelings, we can tell the truth and we are responsible for our actions.
- **Respect:** we value everyone's feelings and admit when we are wrong.
- **Equality:** we make compromises and we share decision making and tasks.
- **Security:** we respect everyone's limits (physical, emotional and digital) and we control our anger.
- **Support:** we listen without judgment, we trust each other and we encourage the happiness of one another. notre colère.

- **Soutien** : on écoute sans jugement, on se fait confiance et on encourage le bonheur de l'autre.
- **Communication** : we discuss things that are important to us and to the relationship.

Conversely, an unhealthy or abusive relationship is often an unequal relationship in which there is anxiety, uncertainty or even danger. Disagreements exist in interpersonal relationships. However, no one should feel threatened. Signs of an unhealthy relationship may include:

- **Physical violence** : being pushed, hit, having our things destroyed or prevented from entering or leaving a space.
- **Control** : being told what to do, what to wear, who to hang out with. Receiving threats and be forced to do certain things.
- **Humiliation** : insults or being put down in front of other people.
- **Unpredictability** : a partner who gets angry easily and we do not know what triggers their episodes of anger.
- **Pressure** : being pushed to do things that you don't want to do or are not ready for.



How to recognize the signs that your youngster is at risk

Signs that may indicate that your child has a relationship with control or manipulation:

- Your child only participates in activities that include their partner or systematically refuses to participate in activities in which their partner would not like to participate.
- Your child is worried about participating in activities that do not include their partner.
- Your child's partner constantly sends them text messages to follow their every move.
- Your child suddenly puts aside goals and activities that in the past were very important to them.
- Your child is cut off from friends or family because their partner has reservations about them.
- Your child's partner makes false compliments or does not hesitate to belittle them.

Source: [TheDoorThat'sNotLocked, Canadian Centre for Child Protection Inc., 2011](#)

My child is not in an unhealthy relationship, does this concern me?

It is never too early to talk to your child about healthy relationships or to prevent romantic violence. Starting conversations - even if you don't think your child is in a romantic relationship - this is an important step in preventing violence in relationships. Here are some examples to encourage a conversation with your child:

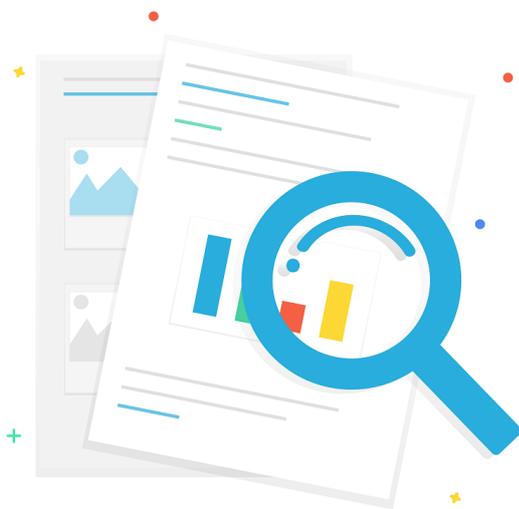
- Ask your child for their opinion on what makes a relationship harmonious. What is different from one relationship to another? You can start the conversation by telling your child the qualities that you look for in the relationships you establish with others (eg honesty, respect, humor).
- Are your friends in romantic or intimate relationships? How are their relationships? What would you like as a quality in your future partner?

- Have you ever witnessed unhealthy or abusive relationships at school between your friends? How did you feel about it?
- What would you do if you witnessed abuse in a friend's relationship? What would you do if it happened to you?
- How would you react if your partner texted you all day to ask you what you are doing?

Find out more – loveisrespect.org (EN)

How to prepare for a conversation with your child about healthy and unhealthy relationships:

- Offer your child examples of healthy relationships, point to healthy relationship behaviors that you can observe while watching TV or listening to music.
- Encourage open conversations on the subject.
- Avoid pushing your child if they are not ready to talk about it. Try again at another time.
- Reinforce the message that romantic relationships must be fun! Emphasize that violence is unacceptable.
- Discuss the options available to your child if they witness romantic violence.
- Remind your child that they can always say no to situations that make them uncomfortable. They also must respect the rights of others.



Resources

Don't hesitate to contact your school staff: the school counsellor, the teacher, or the school principal. Your family doctor can also help you, as can the following resources:

Kids Help Phone : to confide in somebody, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Anonymous and bilingual. Toll-free number: 1-800-668-6868. kidshelpphone.ca

Resources in French

- * Site internet [Parents cyber-avertis](#)
- * Fiche de ressources [UnePorteGrandeOuverte sur les relations malsaines chez les jeunes](#)
- * Site internet - [LigneParents.com Communications et relations – Amis et amour ; la dépendance affective](#)
- * Site internet [Jeunesse j'écoute – Relations saines et malsaines](#)

Resources in English

- * Information sheets [TheDoorThatsNotLocked – unhealthy relationship](#)
- * Website [Love is Respect – Healthy Relationships](#)
- * Website [JoinOneLove – Relationships 101](#)
- * Video [Love Better](#)

N.B : Veuillez noter que dans un esprit d'écriture inclusive, l'utilisation du féminin inclut le masculin et l'utilisation du masculin inclut le féminin.