

EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF ABUSE

ARE YOU IN DANGER OF BEING ABUSED?

EARLY WARNING SIGNS THAT YOUR RELATIONSHIP MIGHT TURN ABUSIVE

A romantic relationship should be a positive experience. Everyone wants to be loved and cared for. Sometimes, though, relationships can be unhealthy when one of the people is hurtful. Read this section to see if you are in an unhealthy relationship.

TYPES OF ABUSE

There are several ways a woman can be hurt by someone she cares about:

Physical abuse is physical force against you – your partner slaps, kicks, pushes, punches, holds you down, blocks doorways, prevents you from using the phone or drives fast to scare you, for example.

Emotional abuse is when your partner uses ways to hurt your feelings, such as calling you names, teasing you or telling you what to do.

Sexual abuse is when a partner forces you to do sexual things you do not want to do.

Someone who is abusive might also:

- Make you do sexual things that you do not want to do
- Have bad attitudes about women
- Say they will get sex somewhere else
- Use alcohol, drugs or bad words
- Use scary gestures like smacking their hand on furniture or clenching their fist
- Say they will hurt you
- Be violent towards your pets or other animals
- Break things you or someone else owns
- Scare you or others

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR RELATIONSHIP IS WRONG AND ABUSIVE?

The following quiz takes you through some "early warning signs" that women who have been in abusive relationships said they experienced.

DOES YOUR PARTNER MAKE YOU FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE BY:

- Telling you what to do or not do, where to go or not go
- Telling you who to be friends with
- Telling you what clothes to wear and how to wear your hair and make-up
- Telling you how to act
- Telling you who to talk to or not talk to
- Wanting you to tell them where you've been
- Phoning you to make sure you are where you said you would be
- Phoning you a lot each day
- Telling you what time to come home
- Not telling you when he is coming over
- Making all the big decisions
- Following you around
- Making you do something you don't want to do

DOES YOUR PARTNER NOT GIVE YOU TIME ALONE BY...

- Going through your things
- Listening to your phone calls
- Opening your mail and email
- Reading your diary
- Wanting to know what you say to others word for word
- Not leaving you alone – following you everywhere
- Asking friends and family about what you do

DOES YOUR PARTNER HURT YOUR FRIENDSHIPS WITH OTHERS?

- Tells you lies about what your friends have said about you
- Doesn't want you to go out with your friends without him/her
- Is mean to your friends so that they will stop visiting you
- Starts a fight with you right before you leave to go out with a friend
- Puts down your friends
- Tells you not to see your counsellor or social worker
- Doesn't want you to meet his/her friends
- Wants you to choose between them and your friends

Doesn't give you messages

DOES YOUR PARTNER WANT YOU TO NEED HIM/HER?

Takes control of the money

Doesn't want you to work

Doesn't want you to have your own bank account

Tells you that you are stupid and can't make it on your own

Tells you "no one else will love you"

May tell you to quit school

DOES YOUR PARTNER SHOW OTHER WARNING SIGNS?

Doesn't like himself/herself very much

Hurts your feelings

Blames you and others for his/her mistakes

Gets angry a lot

Doesn't care for others' feelings

Acts tough or not interested

Cares so much that he becomes controlling

Wants to 'own you' and is very jealous of what you do with others

Seems to be obsessed with you; has to be a part of everything you do

Not want you to go anywhere without him/her

Finds it hard to share his/her feelings well

Doesn't listen to you when you

QUIZ RESULTS

Add up all the answers you checked as true for you and:

IF YOUR TOTAL IS ZERO:

Congratulations, you probably are in a good and healthy relationship!

IF YOUR TOTAL IS BETWEEN 1 AND 9:

Be careful! You probably are in an unhealthy relationship

IF YOUR TOTAL IS TEN OR MORE:

Your relationship is not healthy and you might not be safe. Contact a counsellor!

WHAT TO DO NEXT

It's not your fault! You deserve better!

You took the quiz and feel like this is happening to you and you would like it to stop? You are not alone!

HERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU CAN DO:

- **Say 'No!'**
- **Protect yourself and make a safety plan (read our suggested safety plan below)**
- **Talk to someone you trust**
- **See your doctor**
- **Call 911 for help**
- **Think of a place where you can go for help – doctor's office, library, store, etc.**

- **Call us so that we can help you: Family Service Toronto: 416-595-9618**

OTHER GOOD NUMBERS:

Assaulted Women's Helpline: 416-863-0511 or 1-866-863-0511;

TTY 1-866-863-7868

Kids Helpline: 1-800-668-6868

Justice for Children and Youth: 416-920-1633

SAFETY PLAN

Here are some actions that you can take to be safe.

TIPS FOR SAFER DATING

- Meet in public
- Go out with a group of friends
- Carry money for the phone or bus, or take your cell phone
- Tell someone where you will be
- Take your I.D. with you
- Trust your instincts

SAFETY AT HOME

- Keep important numbers safe and close by
- Tell your neighbours or family that you may need their help – have a code word ready
- Make sure your door locks work
- If he is angry and you are scared, go to a room that is safe – it has a phone, 2 exits, and no weapons

SAFETY IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

- Use a different route to get to school, the bus or to the store
- Hide some clothes and your house key at a friend's house
- Get to know your neighbours and store clerks