



# Parent Guide

A Parent's Guide to  
Navigating Teen Dating  
Violence

**Support Line: 617-623-5900**

## Teach

- **Use Examples** – Start conversations about relationships using TV shows, music, news, community events, and personal experiences to highlight healthy and unhealthy dynamics.
- **Encourage Advocacy** – Teach them how to stand-up for others if they observe unhealthy treatment of their peers.
- **Reinforce Boundaries** – Remind them they have the right to say no and deserve respect.

## Discuss

- **Talk Openly** – Have a conversation with your teen about healthy relationships and allow them to articulate their values and expectations.
- **Offer Support** – Discuss options if they witness or experience dating violence, and reassure them they can come to you.
- **Prepare to make Mistakes** – Admitting that you don't have all the answers builds trust.

## Support

- **Acknowledge Pressures** – Teens face new and increasing pressures about sex, substance abuse and dating. Teens want their caregivers to take the time to listen and help them think through the situations they face.
- **Don't Push** – Your teen may not be ready to talk. Remind them that you are always there for them.

## Listen

- **Encourage Positivity** – Focus on the good and promote healthy relationships.
- **Stay Involved** – Get to know your teen's friends and interests.
- **Be Present** – Teens open up more when they have your full attention. Put away distractions, like your phone or work, and show them that you're truly interested in what they're saying.

