

HANDOUTS...

# Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationships

People in healthy relationships respect each other. They can talk honestly and freely to each other and share power and control over decisions. They trust and support each other and respect each other's independence. In contrast, an **unhealthy relationship** is unbalanced. One partner (a person in the relationship) tries to control the other.

## HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

## UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

<p><b>Equality</b>—Partners share decisions and responsibilities. They discuss roles to make sure they're fair and equal.</p>	<p><b>Control</b>—One partner makes all the decisions and tells the other what to do, or tells the other person what to wear or who to spend time with.</p>
<p><b>Honesty</b>—Partners share their dreams, fears, and concerns with each other. They tell each other how they feel and share important information.</p>	<p><b>Dishonesty</b>—One partner lies to or keeps information from the other. One partner steals from the other.</p>
<p><b>Physical safety</b>—Partners feel physically safe in the relationship and respect each other's space.</p>	<p><b>Physical abuse</b>—One partner uses force to get his/her way (for example, hitting, slapping, grabbing, shoving).</p>
<p><b>Respect</b>—Partners treat each other like they want to be treated and accept each other's opinions, friends, and interests. They listen to each other.</p>	<p><b>Disrespect</b>—One partner makes fun of the opinions and interests of the other partner. He or she may destroy something that belongs to the other partner.</p>
<p><b>Comfort</b>—Partners feel safe with each other and respect each other's differences. They realize when they're wrong and are not afraid to say, "I'm sorry." Partners can "be themselves" with each other.</p>	<p><b>Intimidation</b>—One partner tries to control every aspect of the other's life. One partner may attempt to keep his or her partner from friends and family or threaten violence or a break-up.</p>
<p><b>Sexual respectfulness</b>—Partners never force sexual activity or insist on doing something the other isn't comfortable with.</p>	<p><b>Sexual abuse</b>—One partner pressures or forces the other into sexual activity against his/her will or without his/her consent.</p>
<p><b>Independence</b>—Neither partner is dependent upon the other for an identity. Partners maintain friendships outside of the relationship. Either partner has the right to end the relationship.</p>	<p><b>Dependence</b>—One partner feels that he/she "can't live without" the other. He/she may threaten to do something drastic if the relationship ends.</p>
<p><b>Humor</b>—The relationship is enjoyable for both partners. Partners laugh and have fun.</p>	<p><b>Hostility</b>—One partner may "walk on eggshells" to avoid upsetting the other. Teasing is mean-spirited.</p>

*From: Choose Respect Action Kit, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*