



Engender
Equality

LOVE, SEX & INTIMACY

RESPECT AND SAFETY IN RELATIONSHIPS



This booklet is designed to help you think about love, intimacy and respectful relationships.

Whether you are dating, married, living together or separated, whether you are gay, lesbian, bisexual, straight, polyamorous, trans or intersex, being in unhealthy relationships is not good for you and in some situations can be a threat to your safety.

This booklet will help you to work out when a relationship is not healthy and how to take steps to take care of yourself.

We acknowledge the palawa/pakana people as the traditional and ongoing custodians of the lands known as lutruwita/Tasmania, and pay our respects to elders past, present, and emerging.

Always was, always will be Tasmanian Aboriginal land.

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QUIZ

In your relationship with your partner...	Yes	No
Have you felt pressured to give your partner your social media and/or email passwords?		
Have, or are, your relationships with your family and close friends changing?		
Have you experienced feeling unable to say 'no' to sexual activities?		
Have you experienced your partner speaking to you differently in front of friends and family than when you are alone?		
Do you feel like your partner is 'allowed' to participate in social activities that you are not?		
Do you, or have you started to, dress or express yourself differently than when you first met your partner?		
Do you, or have you started to, feel responsible for your partner's mistakes, circumstances or behaviours?		
Do you apologise for things to 'keep the peace'?		
Do you, or have you started to, regularly assess your partner's moods?		
Has your partner, become increasingly critical of your opinions, ideas or interests?		
Have any of your family or friends reflected to you that you have changed?		
Do you, or have you started to, feel that your partner is critical or unsupportive of your future goals, plans or dreams?		
Do you, or have you started to, experience your partner borrowing money and not paying it back?		
Do you, or have you started to, experience feeling guilt or caution when you want to spend money that is your own?		

In your relationship with your partner...	Yes	No
Have you ever heard yourself saying that your partner is 'only like that when they are drunk'?		
Have you ever heard yourself explaining that your partner is 'just going through a tough time' to excuse their behaviour?		
Do you, or have you started to, wonder if there is 'something' wrong with you?		
Have you experienced your partner 'just turning up' at unusual times and with unusual reasoning?		
Do you, or have you started to, feel that your partner is annoyed when you spend time texting other people or on social media?		
Does your partner, or have they started to, express criticism of your looks, body, weight or image?		
Does your partner, or have they started to, criticise your intelligence, mental health, abilities or achievements?		
Does your partner, or have they started to, try to help you change in a way that they have identified you need to?		
Have you experienced your partner using aggressive behaviour towards you that is physical or physically threatening?		
Have you explained your partner's behaviours by saying they have an 'anger problem'?		
Does your partner, or have they started to, lash out at you when things go wrong as though you are responsible?		

If you answered yes to one or more of these questions and experience any feelings of anxiety or concern about your relationship you may be experiencing controlling and abusive behaviours being used against you. We encourage you to speak to a counsellor or trusted person, otherwise you can contact 1800 RESPECT to speak with someone confidentially.

AM I USING CONTROLLING BEHAVIOURS IN MY RELATIONSHIP?

You may read this checklist and think you use some of the listed behaviours. You may find yourself excusing or finding reasons (that may sound viable to you) for the behaviours.

There are laws that govern our basic human rights to freedoms that are designed to protect individuals from becoming controlled by another person.

It would require sincere self-reflection, honesty and bravery to take responsibility for these behaviours. However, we believe you can be a part of the solution towards creating safe and respectful relationships for everyone.

NO PERSON BELONGS TO, OR IS THE POSSESSION OF, ANOTHER PERSON.



UNDERSTANDING YOUR RELATIONSHIP

WHAT EXACTLY IS A RELATIONSHIP?

There's no exact definition for it because people have different ideas of what forms a relationship. Some relationships are casual and fun and not too serious. Others are based around a need for romance, some are just for sex, while others are about being close to someone. Some relationships can be long term and some can be fleeting or spontaneous. Only you can decide what you want from a relationship, what type of relationship works for you and what you need to feel happy and safe.

When deciding about a relationship, it is okay to take time to ask yourself what you are looking for. Asking yourself what you want or don't want from a relationship, or what you do or don't like about someone can be a good place to start.

ARE YOU IN A HEALTHY OR UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIP? WHAT MAKES A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP?

"We like spending time together and having fun."

"I feel like I can always be myself around him."

"My partner loves me for who I am, regardless of how I look."

"We have a solid relationship but also spend time apart to be with our own

friends or family or work on our individual interests."

"Obviously we don't agree on everything all the time, however difference of opinions is not an issue and we can always talk about things honestly and respectfully. I am not criticised for having some different beliefs or views."

SIGNS OF A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP:

TRUST

You can trust that you can share your thoughts, feelings and opinions with your partner and know you can count on them to listen and respect what you have to say.

HONESTY

You can be honest about how you are feeling and what you want to do.

LOVE AND AFFECTION

You can openly express verbal or physical affection with your partner with feelings of being safe and respecting one another's boundaries.

RESPECT

You respect each other. You ask each other what you want to do and no one tries to control the other person. You respect your partner's decisions, feelings, thoughts and ideas. You respect each other's differences.

SUPPORT

You support each other to be better people. You share responsibilities and encourage each other to follow your dreams and goals.

FREEDOM

You share common interests, enjoy each other's company and feel happy when you are together, but you each also feel okay about having your own friends and interests outside the relationship. You can be your individual self while being in the relationship.

COMMUNICATION

During an argument you hear each other out and respect the other person when they share their perspective. You see each other as equals and there is no abuse of power.

BOUNDARIES

You are respectful of each other's boundaries when it comes to sexual behaviour and intimacy and what you are comfortable with in your style of relationship. You can say "No" when you want to and you can say "Yes" when you want to.

FEELING SAFE

You feel safe and comfortable with each other and your partner does not make you feel afraid or forced.

A healthy relationship is built on a foundation of trust, respect, compromise and understanding for one another, including being comfortable in each other's company.

SIGNS OF AN UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIP:

Working out whether you are in an unhealthy or abusive relationship isn't always easy to do.

"We fight a lot, about the smallest little things and then they shut me out."

"I feel anxious when they are around, and have found myself feeling unstable and moody around them."

"When they disagree with me they will yell at me, or if they are really angry they might push me and call me horrible names."

"They go through my text messages, and if I am talking to someone else they get jealous and ignore me afterwards."

"They are so possessive. They will get all upset if I don't see or speak to them for a bit when I am with my friends... they keep saying if I loved them and was serious about them then I'd only want to be with them."

"I'm scared to leave/I don't know how to leave."

YELLOW FLAGS:

Signs that something is not quite right in your relationship. These can also be the early signs that a relationship has the potential to become abusive:

LACK OF RESPECT

You go along with something even if you think it is not right because you feel bad about what happens when you are together.

BEING HELD BACK

They discourage you from doing what you want to do or are always negative about your decisions in life.

CONTROLLING BEHAVIOUR

They are always the one making the decisions. They may try to stop you seeing your friends or family.

FEELING OVERLY INFATUATED OR "CRAZY IN LOVE"

They are possessive, smothering and overly attached. They are constantly checking up on you.

GETTING BLAMED FOR YOUR PARTNER'S PROBLEMS

They may say things like, "This is your fault" or "If you didn't...then I would not have had to...". You may experience being manipulated into accepting their unhealthy behaviour towards you and you make excuses for their behaviour.

FEELING JEALOUS MOST OF THE TIME

Obsessive jealousy can often be mistaken for love, but it is an underlying form of control and possessiveness. If you respect and trust each other it shouldn't matter who you talk to or hang out with. Being accused of cheating or being unfaithful is a sign of jealousy and distrust.

TRYING TO CHANGE THE OTHER PERSON'S BEHAVIOUR

You are told by your partner, "My way or no way." They won't compromise or think about your needs.

YOU FEEL STRESSED

You feel scared, frightened, anxious or tense when your partner is around. You may feel like you are walking on eggshells.

REGULAR CONFLICT

You disagree or argue a lot and can't seem to resolve issues in a healthy way. The same arguments keep happening.

At first glance, some of these behaviours may not seem violent or controlling, but they are signs that a relationship can be damaging for the person on the receiving end, and may lead to social isolation, low self-esteem, anxiety and depression.



RED FLAGS:

Signs that you are in an abusive relationship and need to consider ending/changing the relationship and/or getting help:

Abuse is experienced in many different ways and isn't just limited to physical violence. Violence and controlling behaviour in a relationship isn't always obvious. An abusive relationship can include:

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Pushing, shoving, hitting, grabbing, kicking, slapping, pulling hair, choking, hurting your pets, family members or children, use or threat of weapons, driving dangerously, destroying your property, locking you out of the house, depriving you of sleep, food or medical care.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Forcing or manipulating you to have sex including any sexual activity without your consent (intercourse, masturbation, oral sex), causing you pain during sex,

coercing you into sex without protection against pregnancy or STIs, making you do things you don't like or want, calling you sexually degrading names that make you feel uncomfortable, telling you "you would do it if you loved me".

VERBAL ABUSE

Putting you down in public or in private, criticising your intelligence, looks, mental health, sexuality, body or abilities, name calling.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Blaming you for everything, comparing you with others to hurt your self-esteem, sulking and giving silent treatment, manipulating you. Threatening to harm you or themselves. Telling you that "no one else would want you".

SOCIAL ABUSE

Isolating you from family and friends by being rude to them, moving you to locations where you don't know anyone, forbidding or physically stopping you from seeing people, limiting your access to social media or your phone.

SPIRITUAL ABUSE

Not letting you go to church/ceremonies, forcing you to do things against your beliefs, not respecting your cultural background, using spirituality or religion to cause you harm, forcing you to participate in rituals that make you feel uncomfortable.

ECONOMIC ABUSE

Controlling all of the money and finances, not giving you access to bank accounts, not allowing you enough money to buy necessary items to live, taking the money you earn for themselves, manipulating you into giving them your money.

NO EXCUSE FOR ABUSE

An abusive relationship occurs when one person dominates, bullies, threatens, and controls the other in many ways – whether it be physical or any of the other ways described above.

Nothing you say or do is a reason to be abused. It is never okay to use abuse in a relationship.

IT'S ALL ABOUT RESPECT!

Nothing anyone says or does is a reason for a person to be abusive.

If you push your partner around, you may get your way, but you lose your partner's respect, support and love. If you realise you're crossing the line – stop! Seek help.

Someone respects you when they accept that you have a right to do and say what you want. Think about how you feel in

your relationships or in your friendships. Being around people who respect you and accept you for who you are helps to build your confidence. We all deserve to be treated with respect.

LISTEN TO YOUR FEELINGS (EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL)

Trust your gut feeling. Listen to your feelings and your body – this helps you work out if the way you are being treated is okay or not.

Ask yourself how do you feel about your relationship?

YOU CANNOT GET THEM TO CHANGE IF THEY DON'T WANT TO

The abuse will stop when they change their attitude. They need to accept that they don't 'own' you and that their behaviour is not healthy and not good for the relationship. You can't change their attitude or behavior for them.

Unfortunately, most people who have been in abusive relationships say it keeps happening, and gets worse, not better.

IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT

The abuse is not your fault. Everyone has the right to be treated with love, kindness and respect.

Even if they're upset with you about something, they can deal with their feelings by talking to you or to friends or family. They don't have to treat you like this and they too have choices about how they behave.



**YOU ALWAYS
HAVE OPTIONS.**

**IN A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP,
YOU MIGHT FEEL:**

*Safe
Unafraid
Treated with respect
Listened to and believed
Able to make decisions and choices
Emotionally supported
Allowed to ask for help
You are meeting your life goals and
living by your values*

**IN AN UNHEALTHY OR ABUSIVE
RELATIONSHIP, YOU MIGHT FEEL:**

*Anxious, stressed
Humiliated, guilty and blamed
Isolated, undeserving of help
Depressed
Scared
Unable to sleep
Angry
Overwhelmed, trapped, confused*

**WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU REALISE YOU ARE IN
AN UNHEALTHY OR ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP?**

You ALWAYS have options.

- ALWAYS trust your gut feeling – if it doesn't feel right to you, then chances are it's not.
- Give honest feedback to your partner and tell them how their behaviour affects you. If you are not feeling physically safe, try to talk to them over the phone rather than in person. When things have calmed down, try saying:
 - "I hated it when you swore at me. It made me feel awful. Don't do that again."
 - "Don't treat me that way. I have done nothing to deserve being yelled at like that."
- "If you are upset, tell me, it doesn't help that you're speaking angrily at me."
- "If you treat me like that again, it's over."
- "It is not okay for you to treat me that way."
- Tell them about what a respectful relationship should look like.
- Talk to someone else you trust about it – friends or family.
- Contact places for support.



IF YOU FIND YOURSELF IN THE ABOVE SITUATIONS OR IN AN UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIP, ASK YOURSELF:

- Is this what I really want?
- How is this relationship making me feel?
- What are the good things and bad things about breaking up, or staying?
- Are things getting worse as time goes on?
- Do I feel unsafe?
- Can I see myself being in a long term relationship with this person?

You may feel like you still love them, but feel trapped or scared of what they might do if you go. Talking to someone can help you decide.

If you see the **YELLOW FLAGS** of an unhealthy relationship and you are unsure how to change things, there are a number of support organisations that can offer you free and confidential support. Their details are at the end of this booklet.

If you see the **RED FLAGS**, then you are in an abusive relationship and you should seek help from one of the many support organisations listed at the end of this booklet. Leaving an abusive relationship can be a time when violence increases so it is important that you get urgent help so you can stay safe.

But remember:

IN AN EMERGENCY ALWAYS CALL THE POLICE (000)

HOW TO SUPPORT A FRIEND GOING THROUGH AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP

It isn't always easy to support a friend who is being abused or controlled. What you say to your friend can make a big difference to them at a difficult time.

If your friend feels supported and encouraged, they may feel stronger and be better able to make decisions.

If they feel judged or criticised, they might not tell anyone again or seek proper help and support.

DON'T

- Don't say "Why don't you just leave?"
- Don't blame or judge them.
- Don't over-analyse their relationship or try to work out why their partner is treating them abusively.
- Don't try to 'fix' the relationship.
- Don't tell them to leave as leaving can be the time when abuse escalates. To stay safe, encourage them to get specialist help.

DO

- Ask how they are and how the relationship is.
- Concentrate on supporting your friend.
- Tell them "I'm here if you need me."

- Listen to and believe them.
- Help them work out what their best options are.
- Let them know that you are there for them, whether they decide to stay or break up.
- Encourage them to access help – this improves safety.
- Offer to do things together but don't be disheartened if they decline. Respect that they may need space.

Let your friend know that they are not alone and there are support services that can help them decide what to do and make plans for their safety. These are listed at the end of this booklet.

SEXUAL RESPECT AND SEXUAL CONSENT

Sex is only one part of a relationship and whether it is kissing, touching, or having sex, it should always be something that you both want to do. Sex is not the only way to show affection or show you love someone.

Sex is meant to be something that makes you both feel good and no-one should ever pressure someone else into sex.

PLAYING GUILT TRIPS

It's not okay for someone to guilt-trip you into sex. If, when and how you have sex is up to you. Guilt trips may include comments like:



"If you loved me you would do it with me."

"Everyone else is doing it, you aren't normal if you don't."

"Oh, but I am so turned on right now, we can't stop."

"Don't you like it? What is wrong with you, are you frigid or something?"

"Everyone is doing anal. I don't understand why you won't?"

"Do we really have to use a condom? It feels so much better without it."

TRUST AND COMMUNICATION ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT IN A SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP

Ask yourself:

- How much do I trust them?
- Will they respect what I do and don't want to do?
- Can I talk with them about safe sex?
- How comfortable would I be saying no to them?

SOMEONE WHO LOVES YOU SHOULD RESPECT YOUR RIGHT TO DECIDE IF AND WHEN TO HAVE SEX

You need to make sure that your partner is just as enthusiastic about sex as you are, in other words they give their full consent. This is important, because sex without consent is against the law. Not only is sex without consent a crime, but it can also cause lasting emotional or physical damage to someone.

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN A PERSON HAS GIVEN THEIR CONSENT?

The only way you know is if they have told you. Sometimes even the person may look okay with what you are doing but on the inside they are not. The best way to determine is to just ask. Questions you can use are:

- "Does this feel nice?"
- "Do you want to stop?"
- "Would you like me to...?"
- "Are you comfortable if we...?"
- "Please tell me if you want to stop at any time."

Also, body language is a good sign they aren't comfortable with what is happening. This can include:

- Not being responsive to your touch
- Pushing your hands away or pushing you away

- Holding their arms around their body/
Turning their head away from you
- Stiff muscles

If you don't get a clear answer to the questions or you notice this type of body language, then you should stop what you are doing and talk to them.

You have the right to say no and you always have the right to change your mind at any time, regardless of how far things have gone.

Things you can say or do if you want to stop are:

- "No."
- "I would like to stop now."
- "I need to go to the bathroom."
- If you find it hard to use words, and you feel unsafe you can always pretend you are unwell (if you say you need to vomit this will quickly stop a situation).



DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND SEX

Drugs and alcohol can affect a person's ability to make clear decisions about sex and whether they want to be sexual with someone else. Drugs or alcohol can affect a person's ability to give consent. Having sex with someone when they are affected by drugs or alcohol and cannot give consent is equal to rape, because informed consent is not able to be given.

PORN IS NOT REALITY

Porn is really easy to access – sometimes even when you aren't even looking for it online! It's accepted that a lot of people look at it for fun, and porn can be helpful to help explore what we like and what turns us on. But keep in mind, the sexual behaviour in porn is most often not a true portrayal of a healthy, respectful, sexual relationship. Porn may turn you on or you may find it exciting, but always remember that porn is not reality.

Porn is a fantasy that portrays people as overt sexual beings who are open to many sexual practices. Many porn actors have worked hard to train their bodies to do a range of sexual acts and positions. They are professionals and are informed about what they are doing. It must also be noted that the body shapes portrayed in porn are not a realistic portrayal of the average body shape of women and men (just the same as all actors in movies and shows).

Porn is known to impact what you expect sex to be like, what turns you on and how you view men, women, and people of other gender identities. It can also make you think you're entitled to sex anywhere, any time, and in any way possible, with whoever you wish. On the other hand, this can also make you think you have to give into demands, regardless of your own wishes. Porn is not an accurate portrayal of how to treat someone during sex. You deserve respect during sex. Consent and pleasure should always come first. The key to achieving this is respect and communication.

Bottom line: If you are not sure, or it doesn't feel right, don't keep going. Tell the person you are with how you are feeling and ask them to stop. Honour what you feel in your body and your feelings.

Respect the other person's choices.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

"I KEPT ON PUSHING HIS HANDS AWAY BUT HE JUST PUT THEM BACK THERE, THEN I JUST FROZE, I WAS TOO SCARED TO SAY ANYTHING, IT WAS HORRIBLE."

If someone made you do sexual things, and you felt like you had **NO CHOICE** but to do it because you might have:

- Been asleep or unconscious and didn't know what was going on;
- Been under the influence of alcohol or drugs and felt out of it;
- Felt too scared to say no;
- Felt pressured into having sex;
- Been forced into doing sexual stuff because you'd been told that if you didn't, they'd break up with you or they wouldn't like you.

Then this is sexual assault/rape.

This can happen in relationships, within families, within social/community networks or with someone you have only just met. It can happen to anyone, regardless of their age, gender or sexual orientation.

It happens when someone makes you have sex or do something sexual when you don't want to (even if they are your partner). It happens when that someone you are with does not respect your wishes, or thinks that when you say 'no', it really means 'yes' and continues to force you to have sex or do sexual things even though you already said no. It doesn't only include sexual intercourse, it could be other sex acts such as oral sex or masturbation or penetration with other objects.

If you continue to say 'no' but you find it hard to argue or resist, or you decide that it is safer to go with what the other person has forced you to do – this is sex against your will and it is illegal.

Even if you kept silent, no one should touch you in a sexual manner unless you allow them to do so.

Sexual assault is not about love, it is about power and control.

No one should force you into sexual contact. Doing so is sexual assault and it's a crime that can be reported to the police. Remember, they have done the wrong thing and you are not in the wrong. There are support services you can contact if you have experienced sexual assault and they are listed at the end of this booklet.

STAYING SAFE WHILE USING DRUGS & ALCOHOL

Alcohol and drugs can be used in ways that are safer for you and your friends. Being aware of risks and safety can reduce the potential harms.

SAFE PARTYING

You can party safely by:

- Having a plan before you go out.
 - Do you have a safe place to sleep that you can get to late at night or do you need to find another option?
 - Do you have safe transport options and know how to get help if needed? For example, choosing a designated driver who doesn't consume any alcohol or other drugs or keeping some money aside so you can get a taxi.
 - Stick with friends and look out for each other.
 - Have a meeting place if one of you gets separated or agree to message each other if you decide to go home but can't see your friends to tell them.
 - If one of your friends is too wasted, help them to be safe, comfortable and not alone.
- Order your own drinks, and keep an eye on them. This is a good tactic to avoid drink-spiking as it will make it much harder for someone, whether it's a stranger or someone you know, to get near enough to your drink to spike it.
 - Avoid people who are being aggressive, angry, or antagonistic.
 - Practice safe sex if you decide to have sex and always ask for consent.
 - The effects of alcohol can be managed by knowing what a standard drink is and spacing out the time between your drinks. Shots have a high alcohol content – leave enough time after the first one to know how it may affect you before you have another. Drink water between your drinks. Be aware that a standard glass of wine is actually more than one standard drink, and that cocktails or mixed drinks may have more alcohol in them than you think.
 - Don't drink and drive: don't drink more than recommended amounts to stay under the limit (more than 2 standard drinks for men and 1 standard drink for women in the first hour, and 1 every hour after that). Even then, if you do not feel ok to drive, don't risk it.
 - It is illegal for provisional drivers to drink any alcohol when they are driving.
- It is always illegal to drive under the influence of illicit drugs
- If you are under 18: If everyone else is drinking and but you don't want to, then grab a soft drink – no one has to know it doesn't have alcohol in it. It is illegal to drink in public if you are under 18 so be aware that you are risking legal penalties if you do.
- Be aware that mixing alcohol and other drugs (including prescription medications) can increase or change the effect of them. If you don't know how they mix together, proceed cautiously and watch the effect before you add more to the mix.
- Safe injecting: If choosing to inject drugs then ensure you use clean injecting equipment, do not share needles, and dispose of needles and syringes safely after use. It is best that you inject yourself rather than getting someone else to do it. Your local Needle and Syringe Program can help you with safe injecting.
- It is impossible to know how potent illicit drugs are or what they are cut with.



DRINK SPIKING

Drink spiking is when drugs or alcohol are put in your drink without you knowing. This is illegal behaviour. The majority of drink spiking victims are young women, but drink spiking does happen to men and women of all ages.

Drink spiking is intended to expose you to high risk situations such as:

- Sexual assault and unsafe sex
- Physical harm from the drugs
- Assault
- Robbery

Drink spiking is often planned.

Regardless of what you may have voluntarily taken or had to drink, it is not your fault if someone chooses to add alcohol or drugs to your drink.

TIPS TO HELP YOU STAY SAFE WHEN DRINKING

It's not just strangers who can spike your drink, it can be friends and acquaintances too. Even water can be spiked.

It can happen at parties, pubs, clubs or any social situations including dates.

These drugs can be tasteless and odourless and you may not be immediately aware that anything has been added to your drink.

Have your drink with you at all times,

keep an eye on your drink and watch your friend's drinks also.

Watch your drink being poured and only drink from unopened cans and bottles.

Avoid sharing drinks and be wary of accepting drinks from people you don't know well. However, be aware that people that you know can also spike your drink.

If you feel dizzy or ill, ask someone you trust to take you to a safe place.

Try to stick with your group. Potential offenders may try to isolate you.

If someone is acting out of character or too drunk for what they have consumed, help them to a safe place and stay with them.

If you know of a drink spiker or a high risk venue, tell your friends. Consider telling the bar person or security at the venue. You can even call Crime Stoppers or the police and stay anonymous.

If you have been drinking and are sexually assaulted or abused, it is never your fault. The responsibility is on the person who does that.

ALWAYS LOOK OUT FOR YOUR FRIENDS. IF THEY APPEAR TO BE IN TROUBLE FROM USING ALCOHOL OR DRUGS THEN GET THEM TO A SAFE PLACE AND/OR SEEK HELP IF NECESSARY.

SEXTING

Sexting is when people share revealing pictures or texts with someone else via text message or social media. In Tasmania, there are laws that govern sexting for people who are under 18 years of age. These laws are to protect people from incidents of child pornography, especially where the recipient of the photos is older than the person sending them.

There are lots of low risk ways to send photos. For example, sending pictures of parts of your body without your face in them so you can not be identified, sending pictures that are suggestive but not explicit (a close up of your lips or mouth). You can send a picture of your face but add a more suggestive caption. It is up to you to set your boundaries but remember that once a photo is shared it is out of your hands and your control for many years into the future. Make sure all photos are taken on your phone (not your partner's) so you can edit and delete them as you wish.

WHAT IF YOU'RE FEELING PRESSURED TO SEND REVEALING PHOTOS?

"It was fun at the time but now I worry what's going to happen with those images of me. I wish I never did it."

Being naked is something we usually do when we feel comfortable with the other person and trust each other. It's ok if you don't want your photo taken or if you don't want to send a revealing photo to your partner. It's a personal decision.

Sometimes guys send dick pics. It is important to seek and obtain consent from both parties sending and receiving pictures. Sending a picture without consent may be experienced as sexual harassment, even if you are dating them.

Once something is sent it cannot be taken back and can end up in the hands of other people. Think carefully before you send a revealing picture, especially if it is explicit or identifies you.



Firmly say: No, I don't feel comfortable with that – it's ok, you're not being uptight if you say this, just telling the truth about how you feel.

YOU'VE SENT A REVEALING PICTURE OF YOURSELF – WHAT NOW?

You've sent a picture and you're worried about what could happen with it.

- Tell them you've changed your mind about the picture.
- Ask the person whom you've sent the picture to delete it immediately.
- Talk to a trusted person or contact a counsellor to work out what you can do.

WHAT IF YOU GET A SUGGESTIVE PIC OF SOMEONE - SHOULD YOU FORWARD IT ON TO OTHERS?

NO! It's not ok to forward on an image of someone else if they don't know about it and don't agree to it. It can be embarrassing and harmful for the person in the photo. If a friend sends you a picture like this, tell them it's not cool to share it.

USING ONLINE DATING SITES AND APPS

It is common to use online dating websites and apps to connect with others that you want to build friendships or relationships with.

USE YOUR BEST JUDGEMENT

Always keep in mind that people can pretend to be anything in a profile. Trust your gut and always know you are in control if you keep communicating with someone. There is always the block option in most sites and apps.

Watch out for these types of behaviours which raise red flags:

- They quickly ask to chat by phone or outside of the site or app.
- They ask for money or items.
- They want the relationship to go faster than you are ready for.
- They ask inappropriate questions or questions that make you feel uncomfortable.
- They give vague answers.
- They ask for or send revealing pictures and you are not comfortable with that.

AVOID give out your credit card number or bank information.

AVOID send money to someone you meet online.

Immediately stop communicating with anyone who asks you for financial or personal information.

Be careful with sharing personal info that may reveal your identity. Never include your last name, email address, home address, phone number or place of work in your profile or initial messages. Always remember someone online might not be who they say they are.



NEVER SHARE FINANCIAL INFORMATION AND BE CAREFUL WHEN SHARING PERSONAL INFORMATION.

TAKE YOUR TIME

Take your time in getting to know the person. Find out as much as possible before you agree to go any further or meet.

IF DECIDING TO MEET SOMEONE IN PERSON OR GO ON A DATE

- Choose the time and place wisely. Always have the first date in a public place or at a time where lots of people will be around, e.g. lunch dates, coffee dates.
- Do not drink too much alcohol or use excessive drugs until you know them better.
- Use your own transportation – do not rely on them to pick you up or drop you off.
- Tell at least one friend or family member where you are going and when you plan on returning, or check in with them during the date.
- Carry a fully charged mobile phone on you at all times with easily accessible emergency numbers.

Organise with a friend to call you if you send them an 'SOS' message so you can say there is an emergency and you need to leave, if you feel uncomfortable.

- Never feel pressured to have sex on a first date, or pressure them to have sex. If deciding to proceed with sex with someone you have met online then always have safe sex to protect yourself from pregnancy and STIs.

BE RESPECTFUL

Not every match or connection will be right for you. Consider whether this person feels right for you and if not, communicate this in a respectful way. If they choose not to continue then respect their wishes.

Be aware that anyone can hide behind an online profile and things may not appear as they initially seem. Always exercise caution until you know them better.

STALKING

Stalking is when someone obsessively or inappropriately monitors you in person or online without your permission or knowledge. You may be a victim of stalking if someone is:

- Repeatedly following you or spying on you.
- Repeatedly calling your home and/or work and/or mobile.
- Repeatedly sending you messages.
- Leaving unwanted gifts or items for you.
- Vandalising or damaging your property.

Stalking can be common after a relationship ends.

“My ex was following me home the week after we broke up... probably to see if I was seeing someone else. They were just always around me.”

“A guy from school (whom I have never spoken to) sends me private messages on Facebook and knows what I wear every day – it’s scary how much he knows about me.”

DID YOU KNOW?

STALKING IS AGAINST THE LAW AND IS A FORM OF INTRUSION OF YOUR PRIVACY.

WHAT DO YOU DO IF SOMEONE STALKS YOU ONLINE?

- Block them.
- Stop responding to their messages.
- Keep a record/diary of incidents, including the date, time, what happened, names of any witnesses etc. If it is through technology then keep emails, SMS messages sent to you or take a screenshot. Do not delete any messages.
- Report the person to the police.

WHAT DO YOU DO IF SOMEONE STALKS YOU IN PERSON?

- Contact the police right away or seek help from another service that you feel comfortable with.
- Make sure you tell a close friend or a family member of your whereabouts as soon as you know you’ve been stalked.



THINGS TO REMEMBER

ALWAYS ANTICIPATE LOVE AND RESPECT. Settle for nothing less.

We’re all unique and all worthy of love and respect and to be treated with kindness. Try not to focus on your mistakes or be too hard on yourself, instead, try to focus on positive things – what you like about yourself, your favourite things, or some future personal goals.

Remember, you are important and worthy. You don’t have to match up to anyone’s standards except your own.

YOUR RIGHTS

I have the right to ask for what I want.

I have the right to say no to requests or demands I can’t meet.

I have the right to express all of my feelings, positive or negative.

I have the right to change my mind.

I have the right to make mistakes and do not have to be perfect.

I have the right to follow my own values and standards.

I have the right to say no to anything when I feel I am not ready, it is unsafe or it violates my values.

I have the right to determine my own priorities.

I have the right not to be responsible for others’ behaviour, actions, feelings or problems.

I have the right to expect honesty from others.

I have the right to be angry at someone I love and to express this in a non-violent way.

I have the right to feel scared and say “I am afraid.”

I have the right to say “I don’t know”.

I have the right not to give excuses or reasons for my behaviour.

I have the right to make decisions based on my feelings.

I have the right to my own needs for personal space and time.

I have the right to have fun.

I have the right to be in a non-abusive environment.

I have the right to make friends and be comfortable around people.

I have the right to change and grow.

I have the right to have my needs and wants respected by others.

I have the right to be treated with love and respect.

I have the right to be happy.

I have the right to be uniquely myself.



Engender
Equality

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

ENGENDER EQUALITY

engenderequality.org.au
Ph 03 6278 9090

FAMILY VIOLENCE COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT SERVICE

Ph 1800 608 122

1800 RESPECT

Ph 1800 737 732
www.1800respect.org.au
Free online and telephone counselling

HEADSPACE

www.headspace.org.au
South 6231 2927 North 6335 3100
North West 6408 0251

RELATIONSHIPS TASMANIA

www.tas.relationships.org.au
Ph 1300 364 277

NO TO VIOLENCE

www.ntv.org.au
Ph 1300 766 491

KIDS HELPLINE

Ph 1800 551 800 (free call)

LIFELINE

Ph 13 11 14 (24 hours)

SASS

(Sexual Assault Support Service)

www.sass.org.au
Ph 1800 697 877

Laurel House

www.laurelhouse.org.au
North: 6334 2740
North West: 6431 9711
After Hours 24 hour crisis service
Ph 1800 697 877

REACHOUT.COM

www.reachout.com.au

FAMILY PLANNING TAS

www.fpt.asn.au
South: 6273 9117
North: 6343 4566
North West: 6431 7692

WORKING IT OUT

www.workingitout.org.au
Ph 6231 1200

**IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION,
ALWAYS CALL 000**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

www.dvrcv.org.au
www.reachout.com.au
www.police.nsw.gov.au
www.latrobe.edu.au