

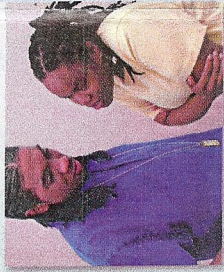
Dating violence can take many forms.

And in many cases, it's a crime.

Emotional and verbal abuse

may include:

- keeping a person away from family, friends or interests
- insults and threats
- controlling a person—how to dress, what to do, what to buy
- using technology (cell phones, e-mail, texting, online social networks) to control, monitor or harass a person.



Physical abuse

may include:

- punching, kicking, shaking, slapping or choking
- attacking with a weapon.

Sexual abuse

is rape or any other kind of unwanted sexual comment, advance or contact.



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More facts

Abuse is never the victim's fault.

Abusers often blame the other person for "causing" the abuse. But the only person responsible for the abuse is the abuser!

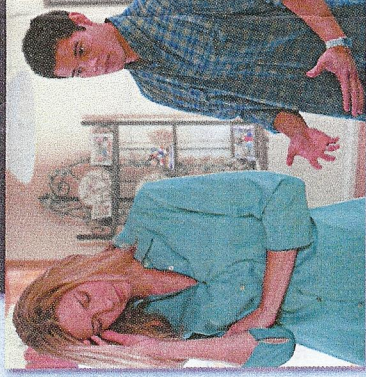
You always have the right to say no to sex.

This is true even if you've had sex before. And remember, you never "owe" anyone sex.



Abuse often follows a pattern.

After the abuse, the abuser may make excuses or apologize. He or she may promise to stop and be extra nice. But abuse usually happens again and gets worse over time.



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You can reduce the risk of dating violence.



Be direct.

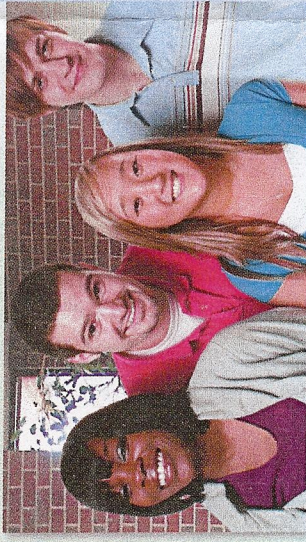
Let your partner know that you won't tolerate abuse. Share your sexual limits early and clearly.

Stay in control.

Don't use alcohol or other drugs. Have your own way home and a cell phone, just in case.

Trust your instincts.

Get to know someone before going out alone with him or her. Or, go out with a group.



Be careful of dating people who:

- put down others often
- are aggressive, physically or verbally
- abuse alcohol or use other drugs
- want to always be in control
- get very angry or jealous.

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