

RELATIONSHIPS

Most people look forward to developing a new relationship. It's exciting, fun, romantic, and wonderful! Everything is new and you want to learn more and more about your new friend.

Unfortunately, some relationships are unhealthy and you feel more hurt than happiness. Sure, all relationships will sometimes hurt as a result of misunderstandings or poor communications. These events should teach you both to change your behaviors, but should not continuously occur over and over.

How can you determine if you are involved in a healthy relationship? Here are some basic characteristics that should be present in relationships.

Signs of a Good Relationship:

RESPECT

TRUST

HONESTY

FAIRNESS

EQUALITY

GOOD COMMUNICATION

Without these basic characteristics, relationships can become dangerous and destructive.

A healthy relationship will help you feel better about yourself. It will not make you feel insecure or used. You will have fun with your partner and be able to be yourself.

If you feel uneasy, tense, and confused about a relationship, then something isn't right. **Your feelings are very important.** Listen to what your **feelings** are telling you when you are with a girlfriend or boyfriend.

*You have the right to be treated with respect
and you in turn should respect your friends.*

If you see patterns of uncontrolled rage, anger, jealousy, possessiveness, physical aggression (slapping, hitting, shoving), or forced sexual contact, your relationship is not healthy. Love should not hurt! If it does, you need to seek help and guidance from an adult you can trust, like a school counselor, teacher, parent or clergy.

For more information about feelings and friendships, see:

BULLYING, page 7

COUNSELING, page 9

PEER PRESSURE, page 34

SELF-ESTEEM, page 46

SEXUAL ABUSE, page 47

SEXUAL ACTIVITY, page 48

SOCIAL NETWORKING, page 56

VIOLENCE/ABUSE, page 66