

Dating Violence Action Planning Activity

Goal:

- To have youth brainstorm ways to help themselves and others.

Have Ready:

- Four flipcharts with headings: “What can you do if you are being abused?”, “How can you help a friend who is being abused?”, “How can you help a friend who is being abusive?”, “How can you stop being abusive?”
- Markers and tape.

Instructions:

- Divide the youth into 4 groups and give each group a flipchart and markers.
- Remind them that the key things to think about are: safety, changing behaviour, and how and where to get support.
- When they are done the flipcharts, post them and go through them as a large group so extra answers can be added from the other groups, and information can be shared.

Sample Flipcharts:

What Can You Do If You Are Being Abused?

- Remember that abuse is never your fault.
- Tell people you trust about what is going on.
- Think about ending the relationship.
- Make a safety plan for what you will do if you are in an emergency.
- Check in with your family and friends regularly.
- Think about how you will keep yourself as safe as possible if you decide to stay in the relationship.

- Consider changing passwords or increasing security for email, social media, or cell phone.
- Remember, you deserve to be safe in a relationship.
- Do what you need to in order to keep yourself safe and healthy.

How Can You Help A Friend Who Is Being Abused?

- Listen without blaming or judging.
- Let your friend know you are worried about them. They may not realize how alarming their situation is.
- Suggest that your friend get help from a trusted adult and go with them if they if they want you to.
- Tell an adult you trust, as this can be very emotionally overwhelming even for you as a friend.
- Remember that you can't force them to leave, they have to be ready.
- Be supportive, show your friend you how important they are.
- Help them create a safety plan.
- Check in with them as often as you can.
- Do fun things together.
- Talk to a counsellor.
- Call a crisis line.
- Ask for help.

How Can You Help A Friend Who Is Being Abusive?

- Find a way to do something or say something (e.g. saying "that's not cool").
- Let them know that abuse is not ok.
- Tell an adult you trust, ask for help.
- Check in with their partner.
- Be a positive example, role model respect and healthy communication.

How Can You Stop Behaving Abusively?

- Take responsibility for your behaviour/admit it.
- Get help from a trusted adult that will be respectful.
- End the relationship.
- Look for role models or couples that you see being respectful.
- Learn about yourself.
- Notice when you are getting angry and make a list of cool down activities (go for a walk, leave the house, talk to a support person, listen to a cool-down play-list, or do anything else that doesn't escalate you or harm your partner).
- Try to learn different ways of communicating and expressing your feelings.

Additional Activities:

Ideally, this activity can be followed by:

- Qualities of a Healthy Relationship Brainstorm
- Fun and Single Relay Race