

**Workbook
Assignment**

What Abuse Looks Like

Overview

Many teens today are unaware that they are in relationships that are abusive. Abuse takes many different forms but is about one person disrespecting another. Abusive relationships are unhealthy and unsafe. Young people should be aware of abusive dating behaviors in order to recognize them for what they are.

Objectives

- ◆ Participants will identify and discuss behaviors that demonstrate abuse.
- ◆ Participants will recognize that there are different types of abuse: emotional and physical.
- ◆ Participants will analyze media messages regarding abusive behaviors.

Vocabulary

stress
conflict

disrespect
injury

Key Concepts

- Adolescents are in relationships that are abusive.
- Adolescents may stay in abusive relationships because they don't know what else to do.
- When relationships are abusive, it is a form of disrespect.
- Abusive relationships must end.

**Preparation for
Lesson**

Instructor will need:

- A blackboard or other firm surface.
- **Emotional Abuse** and **Physical Abuse** game cards cut up and put into a container.
- Two fly swatters (an inexpensive purchase) or two rolled up newspapers.
- Workbook lesson *What Abuse Looks Like*.

television or in movies and are considered to be entertainment. Assign the second page of the workbook that looks at abusive behaviors as they are presented in the media. This can be given as an in-class assignment or as homework.

LECTURE NOTES:

Abusive behaviors are pervasive in American culture. All too often abusive behaviors are applauded and promoted by the media as desired and normal. Young people are exposed to individuals mistreating one another on a regular basis on television, in the movies, and in popular music. Film heroes who cannot control violent outbursts of temper or who purposely cause injury to others are held up as role models. The media often portrays females as alluring and vulnerable. They are most often the intended victims of violent crimes in the film industry.

Many adolescents today do not have to go to the movies or watch television to experience the affects of abuse and violence. They are exposed to it every day in their homes, neighborhoods, and dating relationships. For them, acts of abuse are not a random occurrence. Instead, abusive behaviors are a way of life. For individuals who are the target of abusive behaviors, it is both painful and confusing because the abuse often comes from the people who say they love them the most.

Abuse can be physical, emotional or both. Physical abuse is any act that puts one's health and personal safety in jeopardy. It may range from pushing and bruising to rape and life endangerment. Physical abuse is any act that results in violation or injury of another person. Most physical abuse is for the purpose of establishing power and control over another person.

Emotional abuse may be equally damaging. It may take the form of verbal attacks or emotional distancing intended to belittle or demoralize someone else. It is difficult to develop a positive self-image if one is constantly barraged with criticism and ridicule. Threats, shaming remarks, and distancing can leave deep scars on the lives of children of all ages.

Research has verified that those who are exposed to acts of aggression are more likely to repeat the behaviors throughout life. Children who live in an abusive home environment already begin to demonstrate aggressive acts as early as elementary school. Abusive behaviors will persist well into the secondary grades and beyond unless the cycle is broken.

By the adolescent years, many behavior patterns are set. There are those who abuse and those who endure abuse. Young people who want to connect with others will use

relationship patterns they have learned from the past, even if they are negative. If abusive patterns exist, they will appear in friendships and dating relationships. Teenagers who doubt their ability to resist these behaviors or who are in need of love and attention will put up with abusive behaviors in order to be close to someone, regardless of how that person treats them. Aggressive teens that feel the need to control will attempt to intimidate and dominate their partners.

Teens who are in an abusive situation must honestly consider why they are staying in the relationship. It is necessary to make other dating choices if these behaviors are present.

WHAT ABUSE LOOKS LIKE

This lesson is designed to help you determine whether you or someone else may be demonstrating abusive behaviors within a relationship. Abuse is a pattern of disrespect for and violation of another person. When individuals in a relationship are experiencing abuse, the relationship is damaging and should be ended.

Abusive behaviors may be subtle or obvious depending on the situation. Sometimes people are not aware that abuse is taking place and may continue the relationship out of habit or a lack of knowledge.

AFTER SPENDING TIME WITH SOMEONE HAVE YOU EVER FELT?

Pressured	Used	Disrespected	Lonely
Betrayed	Confused	Angry	Manipulated
Put down	Afraid	Devalued	Injured

ABUSE CAN BE:

◆ EMOTIONAL ◆

Unnecessary ridicule or criticism	Punishment by silence or distance between people
Threats against your safety within the relationship	Manipulation to do something you don't want to do
Shaming remarks or the use of guilt as a method of control	Over control of or by one of the partners in the relationship

◆ PHYSICAL ◆

Pushing	Hitting/slapping	Bruising
Purposeful injury	Endangerment	Rape
Denied food or shelter	Unwanted sexual advances or touching	

ACTIVITY: Select some television programs or movies that you have recently seen. Identify any abusive behaviors that were evident in the programs/movies.

	Program	Type of Abuse (Emotional/Physical)	Behavior
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			