

## For Practitioners

Healthy dating relationships are important for effective functioning in adolescence and adulthood. It is in adolescence that behavior patterns around relationships and sexuality begin to form. The following general principles may help to guide you when working with young people and their dating relationships:

- ◆ **Learn** the characteristics of healthy relationships.
- ◆ **Work** with the person to explore their current relationship.
- ◆ **Investigate** what they want in a relationship.
  - ◆ **Ask:**
    - What is important to you in a relationship?*
    - What might a healthy relationship be like?*
    - What might be getting in the way of having a healthy relationship?*
- ◆ **Examine** how a current relationship meets components of a healthy relationship.

## Other Questions to Ask:

1. How well does your boyfriend/girlfriend listen?
2. How do you have fun together?
3. How easy is it for you to spend time with other friends or by yourself?
4. How do you feel about yourself in this relationship?
5. How does it get decided when you will be sexual and when you won't?

## Web Resources on Healthy Adolescent Relationships

[www.ststephenshouse.com/littleblackbook](http://www.ststephenshouse.com/littleblackbook)

[www.girlsallowed.org](http://www.girlsallowed.org)

[www.kidshelpphone.ca/en/informed/dating.asp](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca/en/informed/dating.asp)

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## References

Healthy Relationships Wheel adapted from:  
[www.mwaves.org/frame.html](http://www.mwaves.org/frame.html)

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[www.teenrelationships.org/respect/respect.htm](http://www.teenrelationships.org/respect/respect.htm)

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# Understanding Healthy Dating Relationships

This is what girls tell us about  
healthy relationships...

*"Like, they really  
listen to you..."*

*"I can talk to my partner."*

*"Trusting people,  
feeling comfortable around them."*

## Feeling Good About Yourself First

Caring and loving yourself is the first step in building healthy relationships. When you can recognize the good things about being you, then it is easier to share this love with someone else. When a person feels good inside, he/she can accept, respect, encourage, trust and reward him/herself.

- ◆ **Recognize** your value as a person and treat yourself with respect.
- ◆ **Choose** a partner who feels good about him/herself.
- ◆ **Find** a person in your life to support you in developing healthy relationships.

## You Have The Right To:

- ◆ Be treated with respect
- ◆ Share your ideas and thoughts
- ◆ Live without fear
- ◆ Manage your own money
- ◆ Choose your friends
- ◆ Express your strengths, abilities and talents
- ◆ Be sexual by choice
- ◆ Make healthy decisions about alcohol or drugs

- ◆ **Look** at the sections in the healthy relationships wheel.
- ◆ **Think** about the relationships you have now and how they measure up.

*Aim high...*

*Be true to yourself...*



*Listen to your gut feelings...*

*Is it worth it...?*

*Think about it...*