

Dating Violence Warning Signs

Teenagers generally do not tell people when they are involved in a violent relationship, so it is important for adults to be alert for signs that a teen may be involved in relationship that is, or has the potential to become, abusive. Some of the following signs are just part of being a teenager. But, when these changes happen suddenly, or without an explanation, there may be cause for concern.

Does the individual have unexplained bruises, scratches, or injuries?

Do you see signs that the individual is afraid of his/her boyfriend or girlfriend?

Does the boyfriend or girlfriend seem to try to control the individual's behavior, making all of the decisions, checking up on his/her behavior, demanding to know who the individual has been with, and acting jealous and possessive?

Does the boyfriend or girlfriend lash out, criticize, or insult the individual?

Does the individual apologize for the boyfriend or girlfriend's behavior to you and others?
Has the individual casually mentioned the boyfriend or girlfriend's temper or violent behavior, but then laughed it off as a joke?

Have you seen the boyfriend or girlfriend be abusive towards other people or things?

Does the individual seem to have lost interest or to be giving up things that were once important? Has he/she lost interest in school or other activities?

Has the individual's appearance or behavior suddenly changed?

Has the individual stopped spending time with friends and family?

Have you seen sudden changes in the individual's mood or personality. Is the individual becoming anxious or depressed, acting out, or being secretive? Is the individual avoiding eye contact, having 'crying jags' or getting 'hysterical'?

Has the individual recently started using alcohol or drugs?