

# Identifying Unhealthy Relationships + the Normalization of Teen Dating Violence

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MassHousing Community Services Conference:  
Supporting Those Affected by Domestic Violence  
and Sexual Assault in Housing

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# About Casa Myrna

- Founded in 1977 in Boston's South End
- Providing free, comprehensive support in English and Spanish that includes:
  - Community-based advocacy
  - Legal advocacy and representation
  - Housing advocacy and stabilization
  - Economic stability planning, financial literacy and coaching
  - Children's services



- Counseling
- Three residential shelters
- SafeLink statewide DV hotline
- Youth peer leader program
- Education, outreach, and awareness

# The Relationship Spectrum

HEALTHY

UNHEALTHY

ABUSIVE



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# The Relationship Spectrum

**HEALTHY**

**UNHEALTHY**

**ABUSIVE**

**Your partner tells you how special you are  
and how much they care about you.**

# The Relationship Spectrum

**HEALTHY**

**UNHEALTHY**

**ABUSIVE**

**If you have a disagreement your partner uses the silent treatment and doesn't speak to you for days.**

# The Relationship Spectrum

**HEALTHY**

**UNHEALTHY**

**ABUSIVE**

**You and your partner agree to take the night off from texting or calling each other, but while you're out with your friends your partner calls and texts you multiple times to tell you they miss you.**



# The Relationship Spectrum

**HEALTHY**

**UNHEALTHY**

**ABUSIVE**

**When you go to your favorite restaurant and order something different, your partner acts disgusted and calls you stupid for ordering it.**



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# The Relationship Spectrum

**HEALTHY**

**UNHEALTHY**

**ABUSIVE**

**Your partner demands access to your bank account.**



# The Relationship Spectrum

**HEALTHY**

**UNHEALTHY**

**ABUSIVE**

**Your partner uses a name or pronoun that you don't like, but stops using it once you correct them or ask them to stop.**

# The Relationship Spectrum

**HEALTHY**

**UNHEALTHY**

**ABUSIVE**

**You and your partner feel like you can share things with each other, but you also feel like you can keep some things private.**

# The Relationship Spectrum

**HEALTHY**

**UNHEALTHY**

**ABUSIVE**

**Your partner threatens to tell other people about your sex life or share private photos or texts.**

# The Relationship Spectrum

HEALTHY

UNHEALTHY

ABUSIVE

**Your partner refuses to spend time with your family but still expects that you spend time with theirs.**

# The Relationship Spectrum

## HEALTHY

- Communicating
- Respectful
- Trusting
- Honest
- Enjoying personal time
- Equal

## UNHEALTHY

- Not communicating
- Disrespectful
- Not trusting
- Dishonest
- Trying to take control
- Only spending time with your partner

## ABUSIVE

- Communicates in a hurtful way
- Disrespects the feelings, thoughts and opinions
- Blames
- Controls and isolates
- Physically hurts
- Pressures or forces



# Domestic Violence vs. Teen Dating Violence

## Similarities

- Serious in both short and long term effects
- Both can be dangerous, lethal
- Can include physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional abuse

## Differences

- Issue harder to define because “relationships” are harder to define; friends with benefits, hook-ups, “one and done”
- Inexperience, lack of expectations, romanticize abusive behavior
- Shared schools, overlapping social circles, limited mobility can cause breaking up and staying away more difficult
- Peer pressure; importance of reputation
- Less economic dependence; some financial abuse
- Many youth disconnected from supportive adult relationships; go to friends first

# Let's Talk Teens + Social Media

**2/3** of teenagers have their own mobile device and internet connection



**More than 51%** of adolescents log on to a social media site at least once daily

According to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry...

**75%**

of teens have at least 1 active social media profile



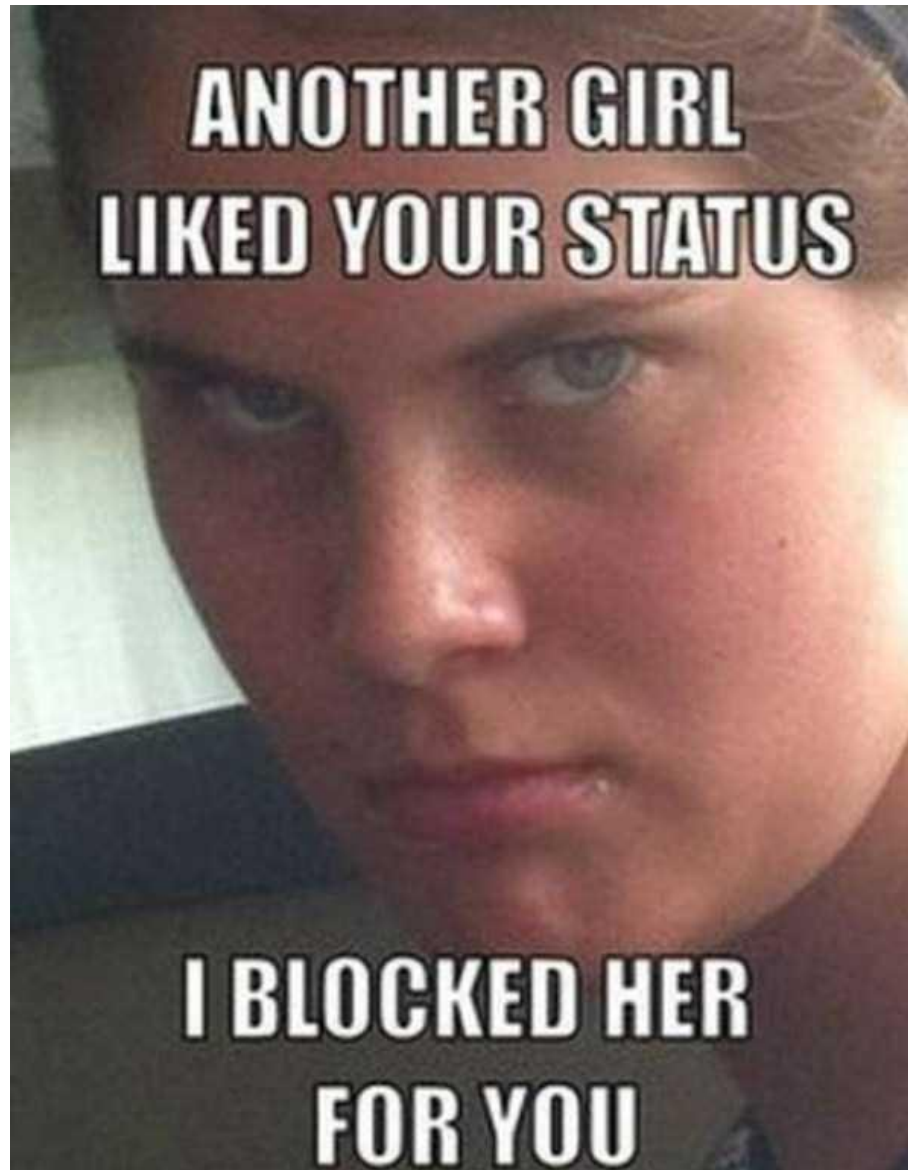




# Impact of Social Media on Normalizing DV & TDV



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**I PUSHED MY GIRL OFF THE BED  
WHILE SHE WAS ASLEEP**



**TO REMIND HER THAT THE MAN  
OF HER DREAMS CAN'T SAVE  
HER**

[makeameme.org](http://makeameme.org)



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# PIMP HAND

Gotta keep your pimp hand SUPER

metifala.com



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**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
BARBIE**

**BECAUSE KEN HAD  
TO TELL HER TWICE**

DIYLOL.COM



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# How Casa Myrna Helps Prevent Unhealthy Relationships

## Youth-led trainings that:

- Teach youth to identify and address red flags early in relationships
  - Red flags include name calling, jealousy, mistrust, attempt to isolate and control
- Help youth set healthy boundaries
  - Effective communication, respect of privacy
- Provide tools that identify types of abuse and abuse cycles
- Conflict resolution
- Instruct youth on how to support a friend experiencing TDV
- Host events in community to inform teens that Casa Myrna is a safe space to discuss TDV
- Addressing TDV with young men that have experienced community violence in an effort to stop the cycle (coming Fall 2019)

# SafeLink, 877-785-2020

Massachusetts' statewide 24/7 toll free domestic violence hotline

Call SafeLink for:

- Referrals to local domestic violence programs and other community resources
- Safety planning resources for survivors
- A safe and confidential space in which to talk about your relationship or someone else's
- Support and resources for anyone who is concerned about a victim of domestic violence
- Information about domestic and dating violence





# Resources

*The Relationship Spectrum*

Love is Respect

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

*Social Media and Teens*

American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, March 2018

[https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families and Youth/Facts for Families/FFF-Guide/Social-Media-and-Teens-100.aspx](https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Social-Media-and-Teens-100.aspx)



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# For More Information on Resources and Youth-Led Trainings

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SafeLink hotline: 1-877-785-2020

