




I AM PART OF THE PROBLEM

I AM PART OF THE SOLUTION

HOW TO BE A REAL FRIEND AND DEAL WITH

DATING VIOLENCE.



## WHAT IS DATING VIOLENCE?

Dating violence is when a person that you love (or had) a relationship with is abusive.

Abuse can be many things:

- verbal abuse is using name-calling or verbal threats to control your partner
- physical abuse is hitting and/or doing bodily harm to your partner
- emotional abuse involves playing mind games to make your partner feel crazy or worthless
- sexual abuse is unwanted sexual contact, either directly or through clothing, which is committed by threat, or by force, or without the consent of the other person
- and the list goes on...

But no matter what kind of abuse, it all boils down to one idea: POWER. Abusers abuse to feel power and control over something, in this case another person.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT?

When you see it happening to a friend the best thing, believe it or not, is just to SAY SOMETHING.

One of the reasons abusers continue to abuse is because they can get away with it – most of the time no one says anything to them! And one of the reasons victims stay in these relationships is because they think it's normal – no one has said anything to make them think otherwise.

The simple act of someone saying something and naming this behavior "abuse" is enough to get people thinking about how they treat the people around them.



## HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN TO SPEAK UP?

Relationships aren't perfect. Everyone has fights, miscommunications, and rough times, so how do you tell when a relationship is on the road to being abusive? The key is to know the warning signs, watch for a pattern, and then be willing to act if necessary.

Trust your instincts. If you see or hear something that makes you feel uncomfortable or that you think crosses the line, chances are it is a warning sign and should not be ignored.



There are tons of warning signs for relationships that might become abusive. We've listed the most common ones on the next page.

Keep two things in mind: Intent and Pattern.

Intent is the reason behind why the person is treating the other person this way. Think about the behavior like this – does one person call the other person 50 times a day to check in on them or to control their whereabouts?

Pattern is when this happens repeatedly. Yelling at someone during a fight may not be abusive. But yelling at the mow-er every morning, or every time they come home a little late, or to “keep them in line” can be abusive. You've got to keep in mind in which context the behavior fits.

For more information about dating violence go to [www.sositsandstopit.org](http://www.sositsandstopit.org).

## LITTLE THINGS THAT YOU CAN DO TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

### WARNING SIGNS

When one person:

- Monitors the other person
- Is extremely jealous
- Cannot control their anger
- Tells the other person how to dress, how to act and what to say
- Is controlling

And the other person:

- Goes through dramatic changes (in dress, personality, grades)
- Tries to cover up injuries
- Becomes isolated from friends and family
- Makes excuses for the other person

- **Speak up.** When you see something you think is wrong, speak up and say something, even if it's just to the people around you. Name it! If you feel that something is not quite right, chances are it probably isn't, so say something and talk about it. If it's bad, reject it!
- **Don't laugh** at sexist jokes.
- **Be mindful** of your own words – don't use language that degrades other people.
- **Learn the warning signs** of abuse and watch for them.
- **Be involved**, but be respectful. Don't get yourself in a dangerous situation and don't try to "fix" other people's relationships.
- **Be aware** of your surroundings. Pay attention to the people around you. Is there someone that is feeling uncomfortable? If so, act quickly to help them.
- If you see violence, try to interrupt it, safely. **Make a noise**, ask for the time, etc.
- **Don't make excuses** for abuse; even if someone



is having the worst day ever, that does not give them the right to abuse anyone, especially their partner.

- Don't be afraid to take a stand or "ruin your reputation."
- Just talk about it. Even bringing it up makes a difference.

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



## FIVE LAME EXCUSES FOR NOT GETTING INVOLVED

IT IS NOT MY  
BUSINESS.

SOMEONE ELSE WILL  
DO SOMETHING  
ABOUT IT.

I TRIED ONCE  
ALREADY.

I WON'T MAKE A  
DIFFERENCE.

BUT THEY'RE MY  
FRIENDS.

