

Warning Signs of Abuse

Name-calling and put-downs.

Does one of the teens in the relationship call the other names? Does he or she use insults to put the other person down?

Extreme jealousy.

Does one teen in the relationship act incredibly jealous when the other talks to peers? Does he or she accuse their girlfriend or boyfriend of flirting even when it's an innocent conversation?

"I was sure that he loved me. He often showed it through displays of extreme jealousy and possessiveness. I couldn't talk to another boy. In fact, David wanted me all to himself, to the point that he resented my girlfriends and family. All we needed was each other he said."-Jan

Making excuses.

Does one teen in the relationship make excuses for the other? Does she or he have to apologize for the other person's behavior?

Canceling or changing plans.

Does he or she cancel plans often, and at the last minute? Do the reasons make sense or do they sound untrue?

Monitoring.

Does one teen call, page or check up on the other constantly? Does he or she demand to know the other person's plans? Does he or she need to know who the other person was with?

Quick progression.

Did the relationship get serious quickly?

Uncontrolled anger.

Have you seen one person lose his or her temper? Does that person throw things-or break things-when he or she is angry? Does one teen worry a lot about upsetting the other?

Isolation.

Has one teen in the relationship given up spending time with friends? Has she or he stopped doing activities that used to be important?

"But things changed. I was changing. Instead of wearing baggy clothes, I wanted to dress different, like wear short skirts. She picked my clothes. She didn't like anyone to look at me. She would go off, get mad. She didn't want me to have any guys for friends. Before I knew her, I used to have a lot of male friends. She pushed me away from girls and guys, because she knew that I was gay, so she didn't like me to talk to anyone."-Meybel-19

Dramatic changes.

Has the teen's appearance changed? Has she or he lost or gained weight? Have her or his grades dropped? Does the teen seem depressed?

"After two years, I weighed over 250 pounds. I never left my house. My education had been suffering. I had one girlfriend with whom I spoke, and that was it."-Anon.

Injuries.

Does the teenager have unexplained injuries, or does she or he give explanations that don't make sense?

Quote source: Levy, Barrie. (1991). Dating Violence: Young Women in Danger. Seal Press.

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