

Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships

HiTOPS Educator

Designed for: Males and females, grades 6-9

“My friend has such a nice boyfriend – he’s so friendly to everyone and he’s really supportive. My boyfriend gets mad when I want to spend time with my friends and I don’t know how to talk to him about it.”

Young adolescents are learning to negotiate their own relationships for the first time. Whether it is with teachers or other adults, friends or a romantic partner, teens find it difficult to determine what they want and need in a relationship. Middle school and early high school is a good time to address this issue, as research shows that 1 in 8 high school students will be involved in one abusive relationship before graduation.

In this class, students will discuss the issue of power and control, explore several different types of relationships, and identify behaviors that are healthy or unhealthy for each. In small groups they will be given a scenario describing an unhealthy relationship and will problem-solve a solution. Students will also have an opportunity to create a list of positive qualities involved in healthy relationships.

Our goals are to help students:

- Identify types of relationships relevant to their lives
- Identify healthy and unhealthy behaviors common to relationships
- Name the power and control issues in unhealthy relationships
- Explore strategies teens can use to address an unhealthy relationship – for themselves or for a friend.

Average length of program: 45 minutes

Recommended number of participants: 10-30