

# Youth Dating and Relationship Violence



## Q What is Dating or Relationship Violence?

Dating or relationship violence is a rising public health issue that can affect the mental and physical health of youth and teens, and their ability to develop positive relationships. It is any act or pattern of controlling behaviour from one partner to another. Youth who are subject to dating violence have a greater risk of experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV) in adulthood.

**Parents and caregivers can help by talking to youth about the warning signs of dating violence, and how to build healthy relationships.**

## Types of Violence in Relationships:

### Cyber-Violence

When technology is used to cause fear, harm, or embarrassment. This includes spying on someone online or tracking their location without them knowing.

### Physical Violence

Any act of force or harm that causes pain or makes someone afraid.

### Sexual Violence

Any unwanted intimate or sexual activity, behaviour, or threatening actions done to a person without consent.

### Emotional Abuse

Causing mental or emotional harm by shaming, humiliating or controlling a person's emotions.

### Financial Abuse


Behaviour that is used to gain power and control over a person's money.


### Coercive Control

Controlling a person using fear and threats to make them act a certain way.

### Criminal Harassment or Stalking

Repeated communication or contact that makes someone feel unsafe. Examples: non-stop phone calls, texts or emails, or secretly tracking someone's location.

 45% of teens aged 15 to 17 have experienced dating violence.

Teen dating violence in Canada is on the rise. After a period of decline, teen dating violence has gone up by 33% since 2015. 

## ! Impacts and Risks of Youth Dating Violence:

- Mental health issues (depression, anxiety, thoughts of suicide)
- Low self-esteem
- Substance use
- Poor school performance
- Physical injuries
- Sexually transmitted infections (STI's)
- Unplanned pregnancy
- Future risk of being a victim or perpetrator of dating violence

## Red flags & Green flags in Relationships:

**Red flags** in a relationship are behaviours and feelings that make you feel unsafe and uncomfortable.

**Green flags** make you feel safe, valued, and comfortable.

Test your knowledge throughout the toolkit.




Your partner is overly controlling. They want you to spend all of your time with them.

 Red flag or green flag? 

## Consent:

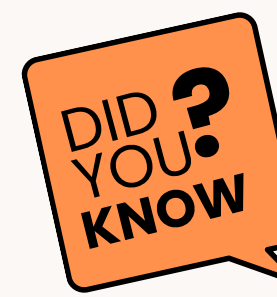
**IMPORTANT!**

Permission to engage in any physical touch or sexual activity. **All sexual activity without consent is a criminal offence.**

-  Consent is NOT given if someone is pressured to engage in a sexual activity through threats, force, or intimidation.
-  Consenting to one sexual activity does NOT mean a person consents to other sexual activities. Someone can stop consenting at any time, for any reason.
-  The person initiating sexual activity is responsible for ensuring consent is given every time.

# Understanding Power and Control

The **Power and Control Wheel** shows the effects of abusive relationships and how violence happens.



It only takes one unhealthy behaviour for a relationship to be considered abusive.

## OUTER RING

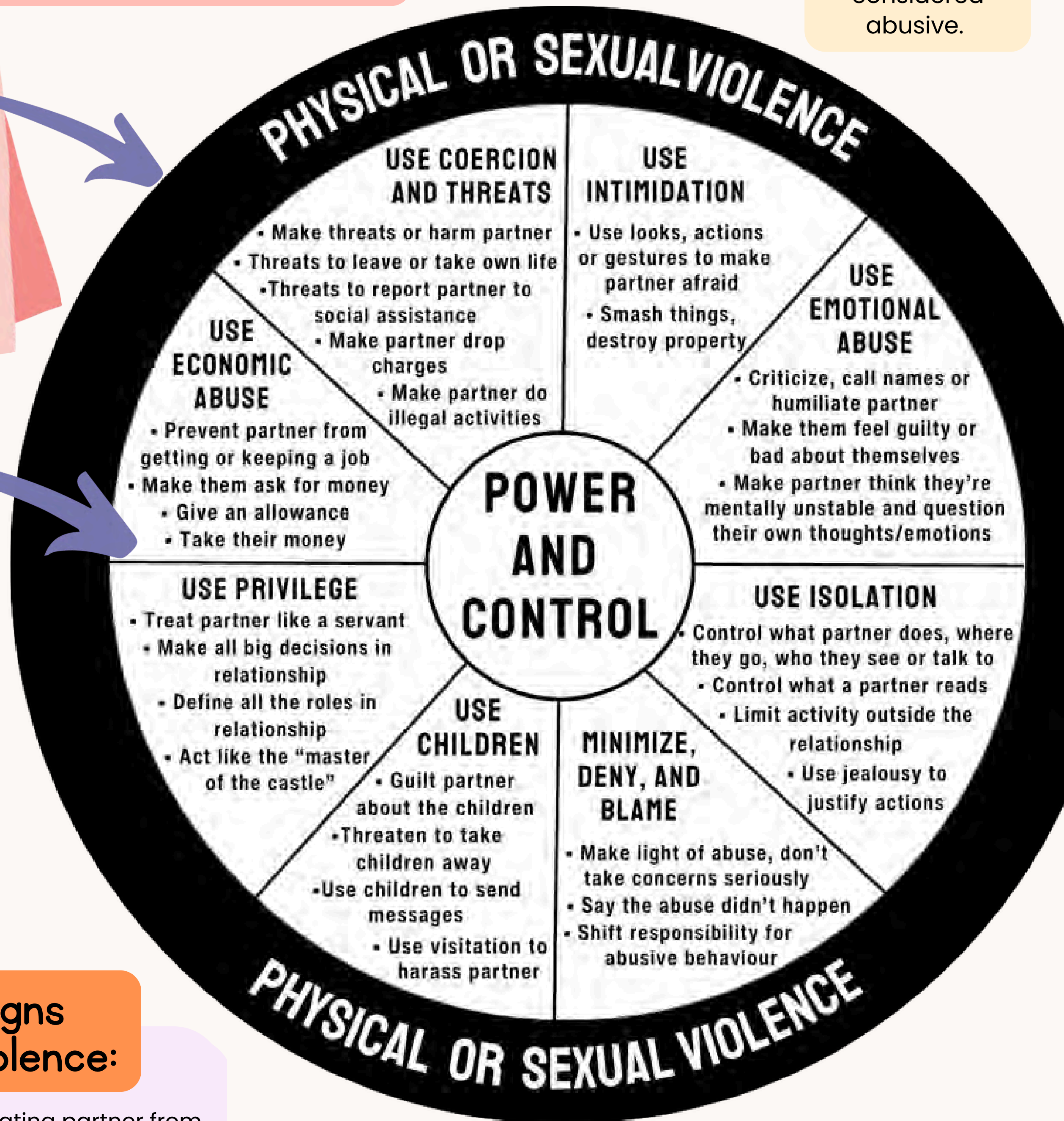
The thick black line shows **PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE** which reinforces unhealthy behaviours, creating a cycle of control.

## INNER RING

Ongoing and sometimes subtle **UNHEALTHY BEHAVIOURS** used throughout a relationship.

Your partner is supportive and shows appreciation.

Red flag or green flag?



## Warning Signs of Dating Violence:

Pressuring into unwanted sexual contact of any kind.

Threatening or causing physical harm including scratches or bruises.

Showing extreme jealousy, insecurity or controlling behaviour.

Showing explosive or unusual mood swings.

Insulting, humiliating or threatening partner in any way.

Isolating partner from friends and family.

Controlling how partner spends their time, what they can and can't do.

Controlling partner's behaviour or how they dress.

Constantly monitoring your social media or tracking your location.

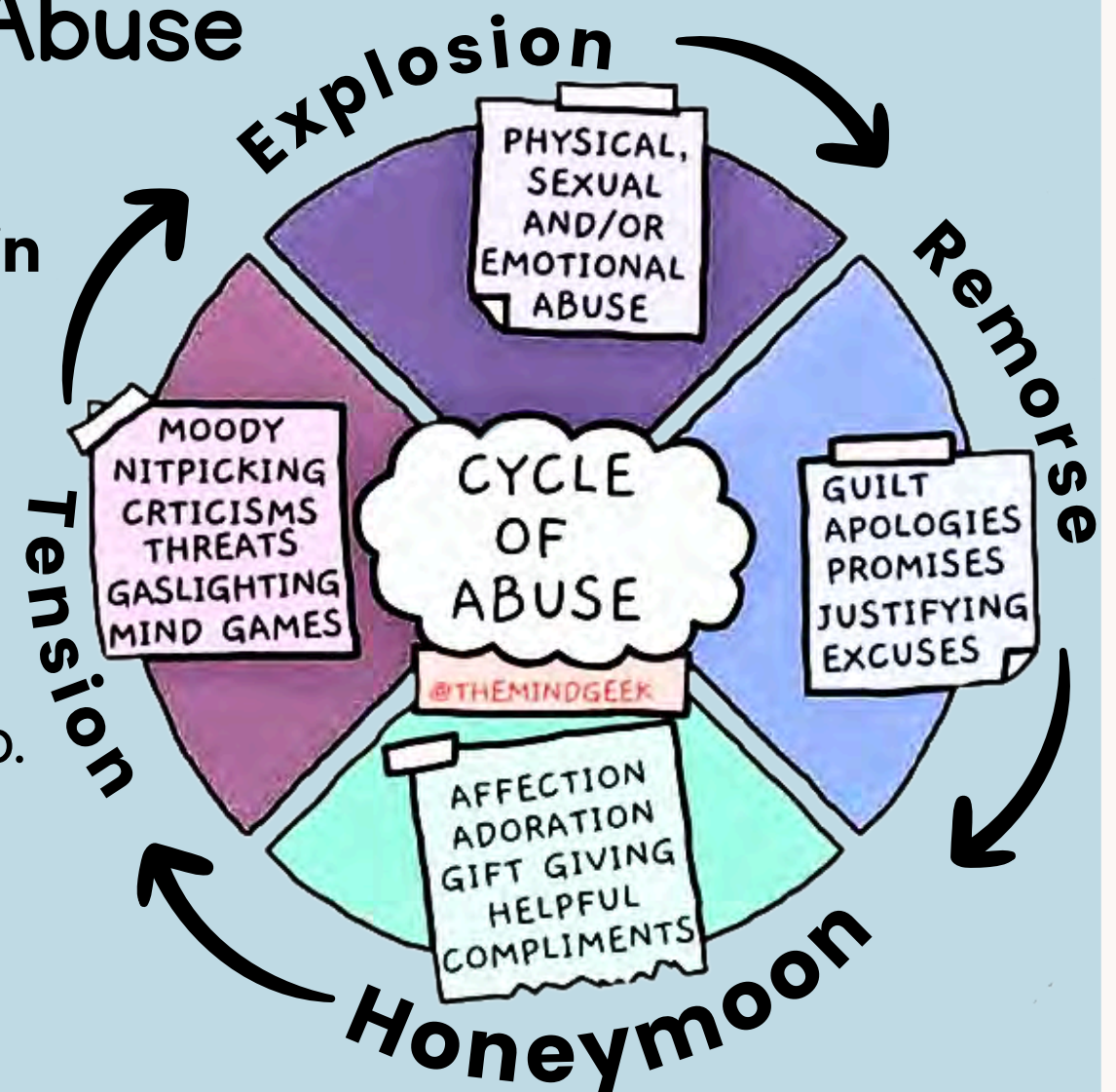
Invading privacy and personal boundaries, such as showing up without notice.

## The Cycle of Abuse

The common pattern of abusive behaviours in relationships.

Starting with the Honeymoon stage, this cycle makes it hard for someone to leave a bad relationship.

It can take up to eight times for a survivor to permanently leave an abusive partner.





## What is a Healthy Relationship?

**Healthy relationships** are defined by a sense of respect, trust, honesty, and open communication with peers, family members, partners, and caregivers. In healthy relationships, people feel safe and supported.

## How to Build Healthy Relationships

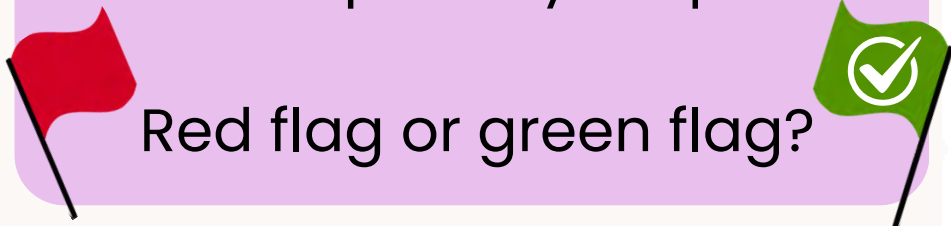
**The Equality Wheel** shows positive acts that people can do to build an equal, healthy partnership that is free of abuse or violence.

**Teen dating abuse can be prevented through better communication and equality in relationships.**



Studies also show that when couples communicate openly and respectfully, relationships are more likely to thrive!

You are able to have relationships with friends and family outside of the relationship with your partner.

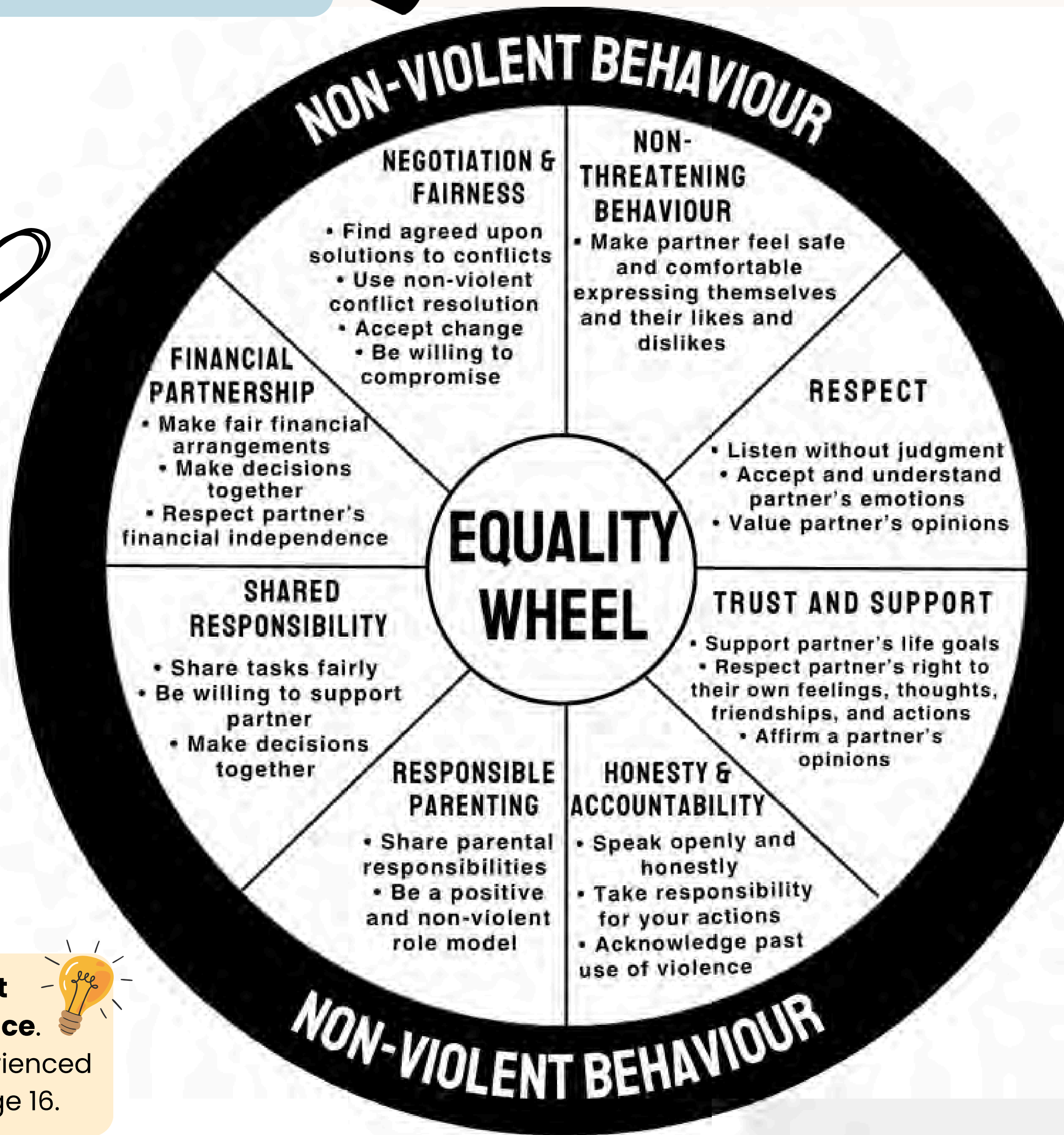


Red flag or green flag?

**2SLGBTQIA+ youth are at higher risk of dating violence.**



64% of trans women have experienced relationship violence since age 16.



## 2SLGBTQIA+ Communities



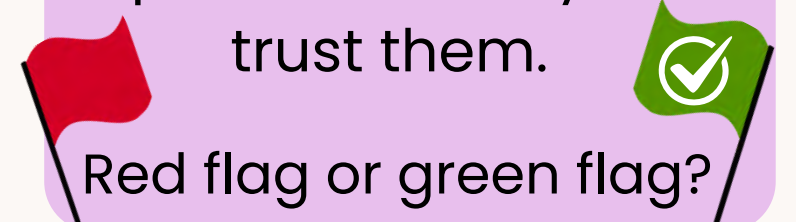
**2SLGBTQIA+ youth face unique forms of violence and control:**

- Threats to expose their sexuality.
- Homophobic or transphobic slurs, language, or behaviour.
- Refusal to recognize their gender or sexual identity.
- Forced gender stereotypes and norms.

**2SLGBTQIA+ youth face unique barriers to access services for help:**

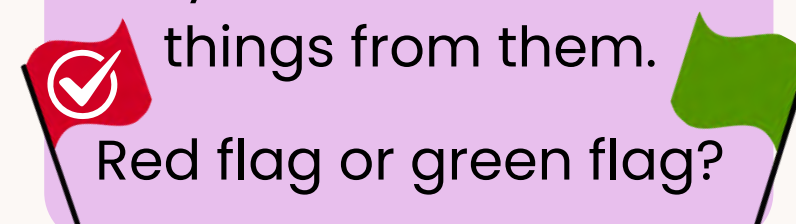
- Low 2SLGBTQIA+ knowledge and acceptance from service providers.
- Policies and spaces that don't recognize gender diversity.

You feel safe in their presence and you trust them.



Red flag or green flag?

You're afraid of your partner's reaction and you tend to hide things from them.



Red flag or green flag?

## How to Support Victims/Survivors of Youth Dating Violence



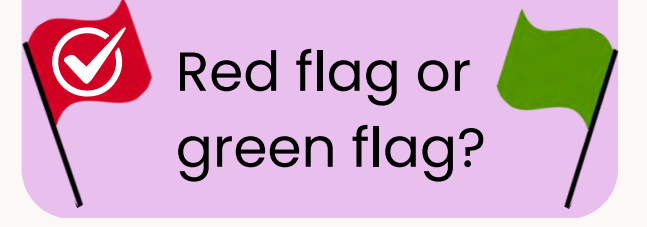
- Educate yourself on dating abuse and warning signs of unhealthy relationships.
- Start a conversation with your child about relationships. Be supportive and listen without judgment.
- Accept what a youth is telling you about their relationship.
- Make a safety plan for what to do after an incident.

Your partner respects your boundaries and has open and honest communication with you.



Red flag or green flag?

Your partner is belittling, criticizing or making fun of you.



Red flag or green flag?



**Female identifying teens aged 15 to 17** are nine times more likely to experience violence in a relationship than boys of the same age.

## Where to Get Help

Scan for Digital Version of this Resource or visit [wechu.org/YRV](http://wechu.org/YRV)



### LOCAL 24HR CRISIS LINES:

**Sexual Assault Crisis Line** [519-253-9667](tel:519-253-9667)  
**Hiatus House** [519-252-7781](tel:519-252-7781)



### IF YOU ARE IN DANGER:

**Call 911 or go to your closest hospital emergency department**

#### Sexual Assault Crisis Centre

519-253-3100  
[www.saccwindsor.net](http://www.saccwindsor.net)

#### Can-Am Indian Friendship Centre

519-253-3243  
[www.caifc.ca](http://www.caifc.ca)

#### Trans Wellness Ontario

226-674-4745  
[www.transwellness.ca](http://www.transwellness.ca)

#### Hiatus House

519-252-7781  
[www.hiatushouse.com](http://www.hiatushouse.com)

#### Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre

519-916-1755  
[www.soahac.on.ca](http://www.soahac.on.ca)

#### Amani - Mental Health Support for Black Youth

519-253-8481  
[www.amaniservices.ca](http://www.amaniservices.ca)

#### Victim Services of Windsor & Essex County

519-723-2711  
[www.vswec.ca](http://www.vswec.ca)

#### Multicultural Council of Windsor and Essex County

(519) 255-1127  
[www.themcc.com](http://www.themcc.com)

#### Youth Wellness Hub

519-800-8640  
[www.youthhubyqg.com](http://www.youthhubyqg.com)

#### Sexual Assault \ Domestic Violence Treatment Centre

519-253-2234  
[www.wrh.on.ca/SADVTC](http://www.wrh.on.ca/SADVTC)

#### Windsor Women Working with Immigrant Women (W5)

519-973-5588  
[www.wwwwiw.org](http://www.wwwwiw.org)

#### Windsor Essex Community Health Centre – Teen Health

519-253-8481  
[wechc.org/location/teen-health](http://wechc.org/location/teen-health)

#### Windsor Essex Child and Youth Advocacy Centre

519-995-3974  
[www.wecyac.ca](http://www.wecyac.ca)

#### Nisa Homes

1-888-315-6472  
[www.nisafoundation.ca](http://www.nisafoundation.ca)

#### The Bridge Youth Resource Centre

226-773-3454  
[www.thebridgeyouth.ca](http://www.thebridgeyouth.ca)

#### Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society

519-252-1171  
[www.wecas.on.ca](http://www.wecas.on.ca)

#### YMCA: Newcomer and Community Services Windsor

519-258-9622  
[www.ymcaswo.ca](http://www.ymcaswo.ca)

#### The House Youth Centre

519-736-6811  
[www.thehouseyouthcentre.com](http://www.thehouseyouthcentre.com)

#### Family Services Windsor-Essex

519-966-5010  
[www.fswe.ca](http://www.fswe.ca)

#### Réseau-femmes du sud-ouest de l'Ontario

1-888-946-3029  
[www.rfsoo.ca](http://www.rfsoo.ca)

#### New Beginnings Essex County

519-971-0973  
[www.newbeginningswindsor.com](http://www.newbeginningswindsor.com)

#### Legal Assistance of Windsor Supporting Survivors of Gender Based and Sexual Violence Program

519-256-7831  
[www.legalassistanceofwindsor.com/gbvsa](http://www.legalassistanceofwindsor.com/gbvsa)