

What is Peer Violence?

Healthy and Unhealthy Behaviours Between Young People

Peer 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 connections. It is any act or pattern of controlling behaviour from one peer to another. Youth who are subject to peer violence have a greater risk of experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV) as adults.

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

Types of Violence and Abuse

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.

Criminal Harassment or Stalking

Repeated communication or contact that reduces a person's sense of safety. Examples: non-stop phone calls, texts or emails, or secretly tracking someone's location.

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.

Emotional Abuse

Any act that harms the mental or emotional health of a person. Examples: manipulation, threats, or behaviour that aims to degrade, humiliate, or control a person's emotions.

Intimate Violence

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

Physical Violence

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



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



Peer violence in Canada is rising. After a period of decline, teen peer violence has gone up by 33% since 2015.



Warning Signs and Risks of Peer Violence

- Mental health issues (depression, anxiety, thoughts of suicide)
- Low self-esteem
- Substance misuse
- Poor school performance
- Increase social withdrawal or isolation
- Development of unusual, inappropriate, or uncharacteristic behaviours
- Physical injuries
- Transmitted Diseases
- Unplanned pregnancy
- Future risk of being a victim or perpetrator of dating violence
- Unexplained or significant change in weight (gain or loss)
- Noticeable shift/decline in interests and activities
- Changes in personal boundaries or boundary-setting behaviour

Understanding Power and Control

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

DID YOU KNOW?

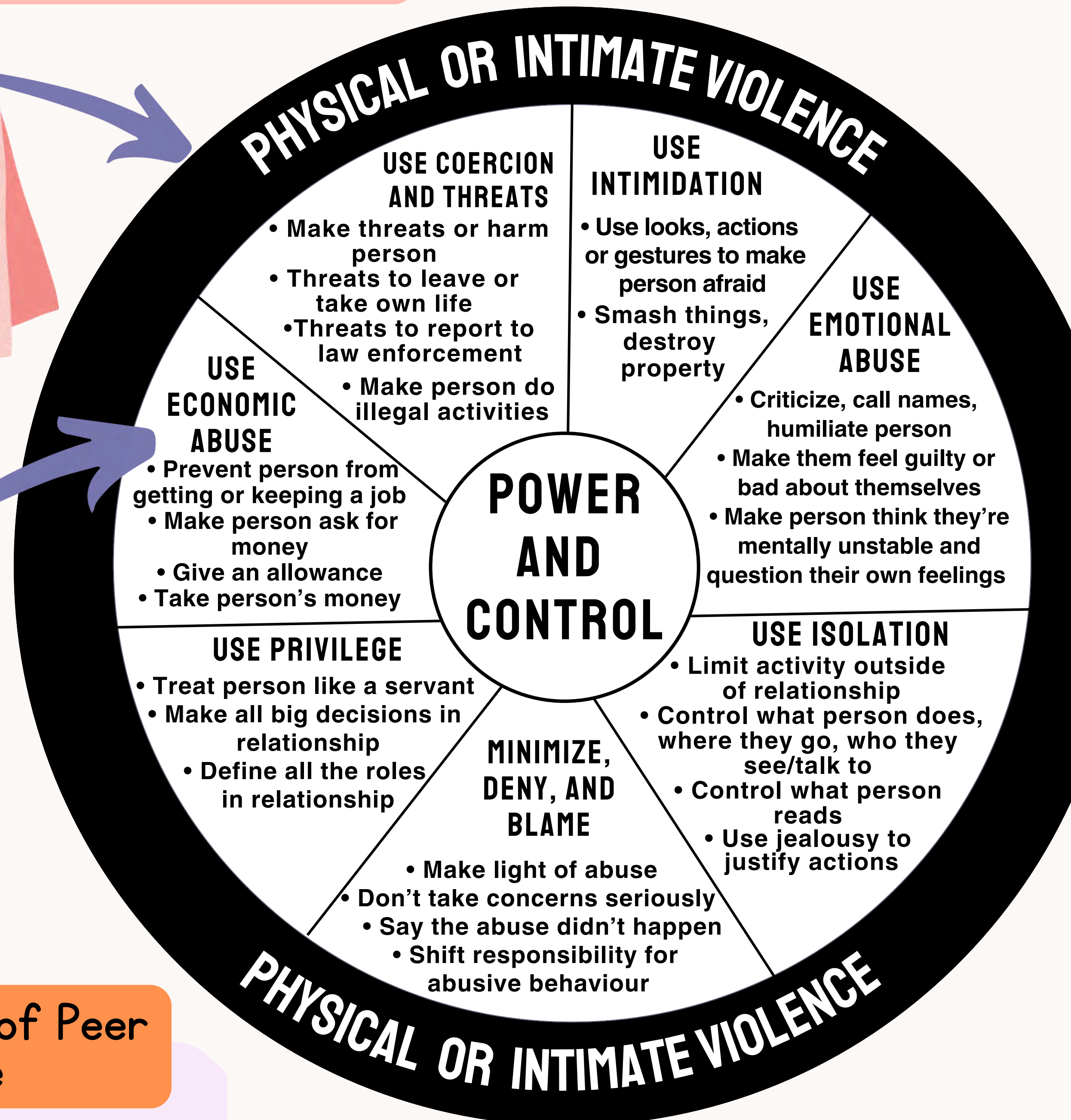
It only takes one unhealthy behaviour for a peer connection to be considered abusive.

OUTER RING

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

INNER RING

Ongoing and sometimes subtle **UNHEALTHY BEHAVIOURS** used throughout a peer connection.



Warning Signs of Peer Violence

Pressuring into unwanted physical 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 peer in any way.

Isolating peer from friends and family.

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

Controlling peer's behaviour or how they dress.

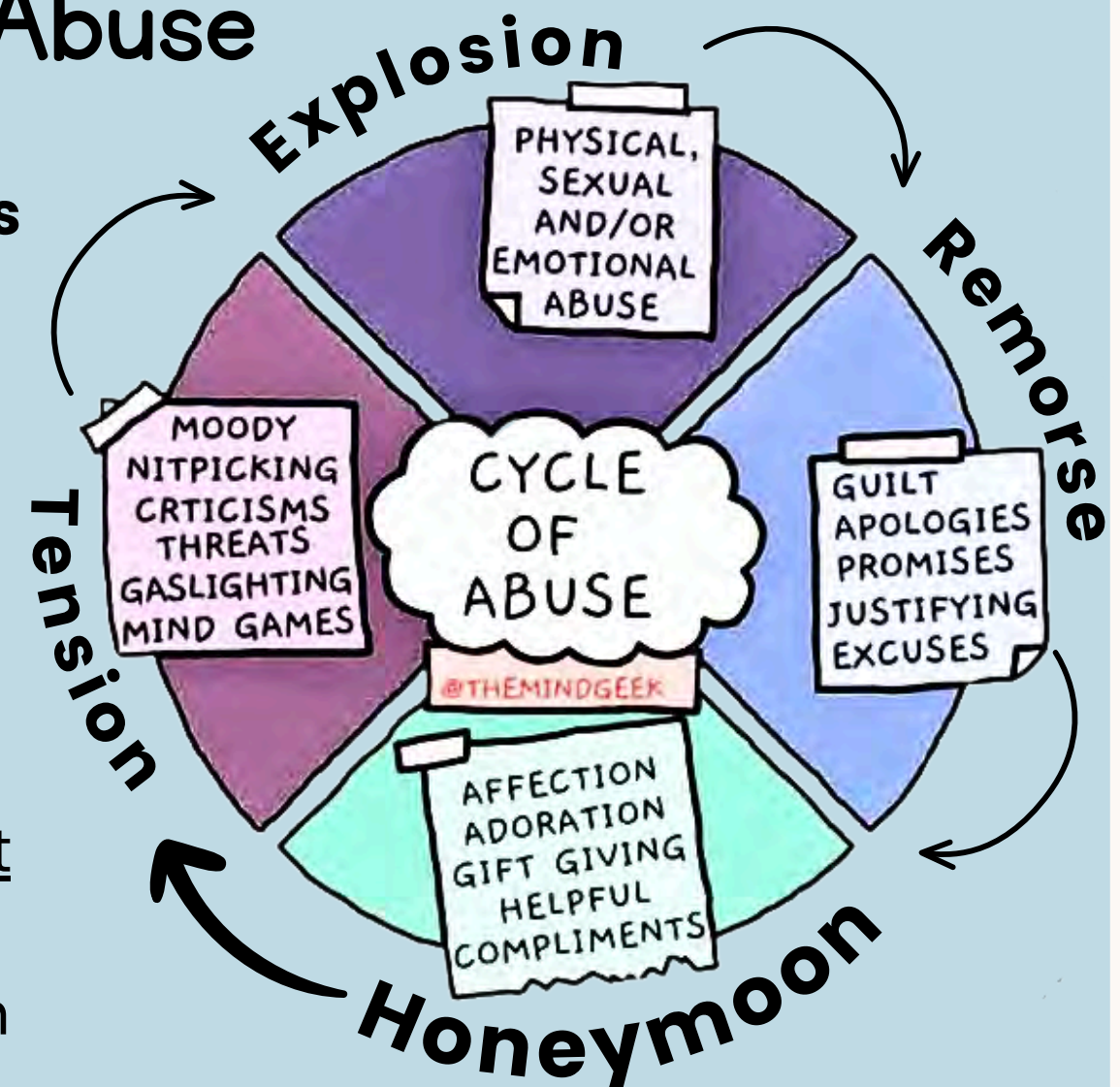
Constantly monitoring peer's social media or tracking their location.

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

The Cycle of Abuse

The common pattern of abusive behaviours between peers.

Starting with the Honeymoon stage, this cycle makes it hard for someone to leave a bad peer relationship. It can take up to eight times for a survivor to permanently leave an abusive peer.





What is a Healthy Connection?

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

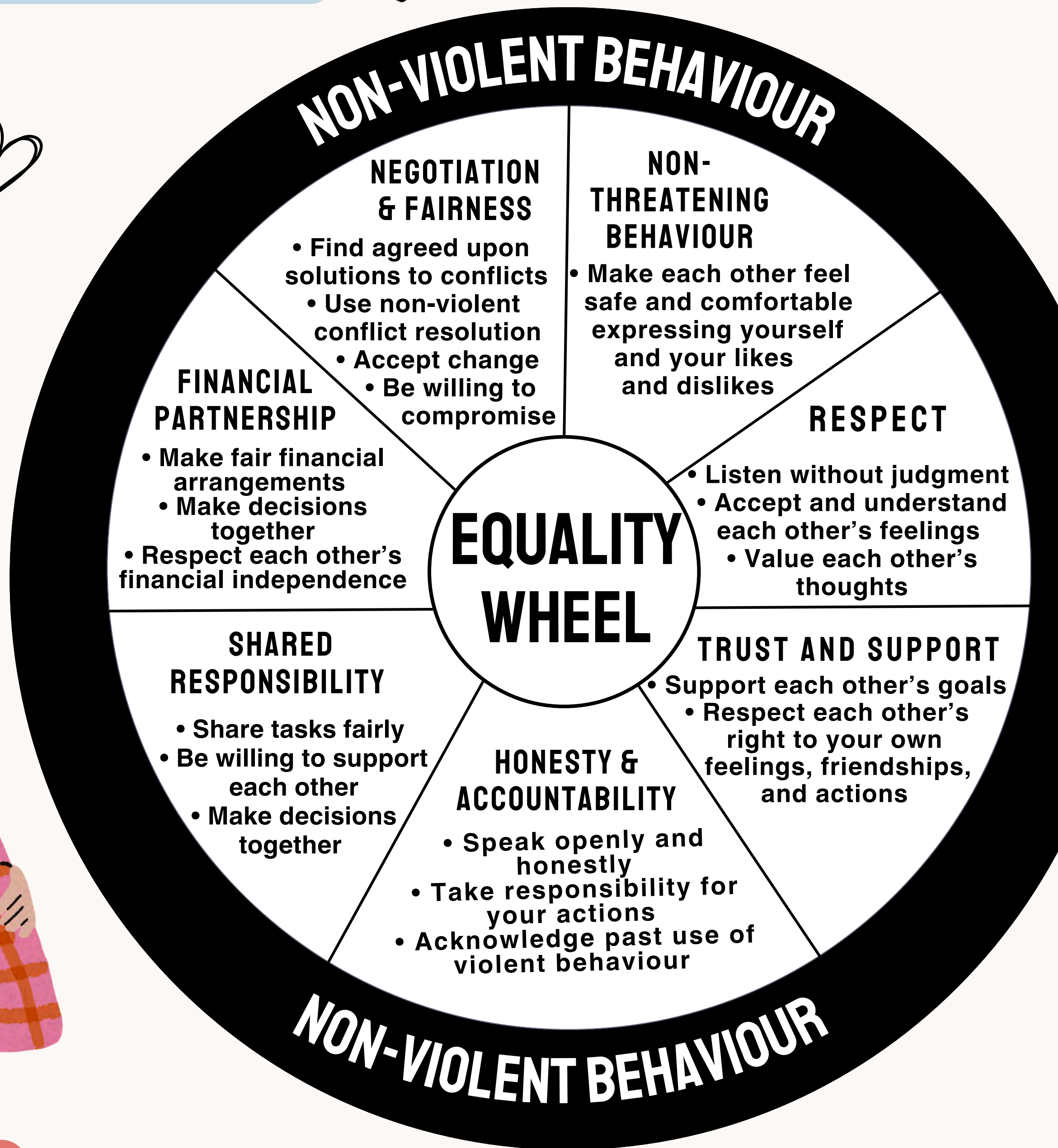
How to Build Healthy Connections

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

Peer violence and abuse can be prevented through better communication and equality in connections.



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



2SLGBTQIA+ Youth Facts & Supports



How to Support Victims/Survivors of Peer Violence

- Be supportive and listen without judgment.
- Make a safety plan for what to do after an incident.
- Accept what a youth is telling you about their peers.
- Educate yourself on peer violence and the warning signs of unhealthy connections.



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



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

Need Help OR a Referral?

Connect with a
HWOV Gender-Based Violence
Support Worker:

Multicultural Council of Windsor and Essex County

519-255-1127 EXT. 179
www.themcc.com

WEST

(519) 256-6621
www.westofwindsor.com

South Asian Centre of Windsor

519-252-7447
www.themcc.com

Windsor Women Working with Immigrant Women (W5)

519-973-5588
www.wwwwiw.org

YMCA: Newcomer and Community Services Windsor

519-258-9622
www.ymcaswo.ca

Other Supports in the Community

Victim Services of Windsor

Hiatus House

519-252-7781

www.hiatushouse.com

& Essex County

519-723-2711

www.vswec.ca

Nisa Homes

1-888-315-6472

www.nisafoundation.ca

Sexual Assault Crisis Centre

519-253-3100

www.saccwindsor.net

Windsor Essex Community Health Centre – Teen Health

519-253-8481

wechc.org/location/teen-health

New Beginnings Essex County

519-971-0973

www.newbeginningswindsor.com

Sexual Assault \ Domestic Violence Treatment Centre

519-253-2234

www.wrhone.ca/SADVTC

Family Services Windsor-Essex

519-966-5010

www.fswe.ca

Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society

519-252-1171

www.wecas.on.ca

Windsor Essex Child and Youth Advocacy Centre

519-995-3974

www.wecyac.ca

Amy Lo Faso, Principal of Safe Schools – WECDSB

519-253-2481 EXT. 1117

amy_lofaso@wecdsb.on.ca

Can-Am Indian Friendship Centre

519-253-3243

www.caifc.ca

Reseau-Femme Du Sud-Ouest de l'Ontario

1-888-946-3029

www.rfsoo.ca

Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre

519-916-1755

www.soahac.on.ca

Le Centre Communautaire francophone de Windsor-Essex-Kent

519-948-5545

Info@ccfwek.org

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

519-256-7831

www.legalassistanceofwindsor.com/gbvsa



Scan for
Youth-Specific
Supports and
a Digital Version
of this Resource

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR YOUTH

Sexual Assault Crisis Centre

519-253-3100

www.saccwindsor.net

Youth Wellness Hub

519-800-8640

www.youthhubbygg.com

Trans Wellness Ontario

226-674-4745

www.transwellness.ca

The House Youth Centre

519-736-6811

www.thehouseyouthcentre.com

The Bridge Youth Resource Centre

226-773-3454

www.thebridgeyouth.ca

Windsor Essex Community Health Centre – Teen Health

519-253-8481

wechc.org/location/teen-health

Amani – Mental Health Support for Black Youth

519-253-8481

www.amaniservices.ca

Can-Am Indian Friendship Centre

519-253-3243

www.caifc.ca

Amy Lo Faso, Principal of Safe Schools – WECDSB

519-253-2481 ext. 1117

amy_lofaso@wecdsb.on.ca

Nisa Homes

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www.hiatushouse.com

Windsor Essex Child and Youth Advocacy Centre

519-995-3974

www.wecyac.ca

Family Services Windsor-Essex

519-966-5010

www.fswe.ca

New Beginnings Essex County

519-971-0973

www.newbeginningswindsor.com

Youth Diversion Essex County

519-253-3340

www.ecyouthdiversion.ca

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

519-256-7831

www.legalassistanceofwindsor.com/gbvsa



For more information and support, visit wechu.org/YRV

