

# Tips for Boys ...

building healthy, equal relationships



Whether you're just hanging out with friends or wondering what it would be like to go out with someone, there's a lot to learn about relationships. When people are in healthy relationships, they feel valued, respected, and like equals. Here are some tips to help you have healthy, equal relationships:

### **What kind of person do you want to be?**

Sometimes family, friends, and the media give negative messages about boys and girls. You can choose to look for positive messages that show girls and boys as equal, and don't show stereotypes that say that boys and girls must act a particular way.

### **What kind of boyfriend do you want to be?**

Both girls and boys like to be treated with respect. Ask for her

opinion, listen to what she has to say, and take her seriously. This will show her respect.

### **Be friends**

Friendship is important. Treat people that you go out with, with respect. In a healthy relationship, everyone feels comfortable just being herself or himself.

### **Communicate**

In a healthy relationship, people should feel comfortable enough to share their thoughts, ideas, and feelings.

### **Ups and downs**

It's normal to feel hurt or angry sometimes, but in a healthy relationship, people don't yell or call each other names. Things can be worked out through talking and listening to each other.

### **Do your thing**

Being in a relationship doesn't

mean you have to be together all the time. It's important to have your own space and interests.

### **It's no joke!**

Listen to how people talk about girls. Speak up when you hear someone disrespecting girls. Tell them you don't think it's fair when they talk about girls like they're toys or like they are not as good as boys.

### **Be aware**

Recognize the warning signs of an unhealthy relationship. If a friend expects his girlfriend to agree with everything he says, talks bad about her, or keeps her away from friends, it's a warning sign. You can tell him that you don't think the way he treats his girlfriend is fair and that he can get help by calling the Kids Help Phone. You can tell her that she doesn't deserve to be treated that way and that she can talk to an adult she trusts.

## **Be a role model**

Younger boys, like your younger brother or kids at school, might look up to you. Show them what it means to be a boy who treats girls with respect, and as equals.

## **Be a leader**

Raise awareness in your school and in your community. Do a school project on violence.

Arrange for a guest speaker to talk about healthy relationships, or put up posters in your school. Your teacher can help you find the resources you need. Start an anti-violence club in your school - it's a great way to meet people who are looking to be in healthy, equal relationships.

To find out more about healthy, equal relationships and violence against women and girls, go to:

[equalityrules.ca](http://equalityrules.ca)

[ontariowomensdirectorates.gov.on.ca](http://ontariowomensdirectorates.gov.on.ca)

For more help and advice call the Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868 or visit [kidshelpphone.ca](http://kidshelpphone.ca)



**Metropolitan Action Committee on  
Violence Against Women and Children**

158 Spadina Road, Toronto, ON, M5R 2T8

1-877-558-5570 | 416-392-3031 (TTY)

[info@metrac.org](mailto:info@metrac.org)

More info and statistics:

[www.metrac.org](http://www.metrac.org) | [www.owjn.org](http://www.owjn.org)



Funding provided by the Government of Ontario,  
Ontario Women's Directorate.

Produced May 2007