

Families for **SAFE Dates**

*A Program for Parents and Other Caregivers
to Help Teens Date Safely*

BOOKLET 5

Planning for the Future





Planning for the Future

Booklet 5 contains information and activities to help teens plan for their dating futures.

Instructions

1. Do activity 1, Dating Goals, to give teens a chance to think about their goals for treating and being treated by dating partners.
2. Do activity 2, Having a Plan, to encourage teens to make a plan for what they'll do if they are being mistreated by a date, or if they find they are mistreating dates themselves.
3. Do activity 3, Developing Family Guidelines for Dating.
4. Do activity 4, Families for Safe Dates Completion Checklist, to review what you've accomplished in this program.
5. Read the Recap of booklet 5.
6. Do the Next Steps listed at the end of the booklet.

Remember the Tips
for Successful Activities
and Tips for Successful
Communication from
booklet 1.

Before you start each activity with your teen, read the introduction and instructions aloud, taking turns reading if you prefer.

You'll need a total of about 50 minutes to do these activities, in one or more sittings.
They should be done in the order they appear.



ACTIVITY 1

Dating Goals

Purpose: To encourage teens to set goals for how they want to treat their dating partners, and be treated by them.

What you'll need: The Dating Goals lists on pages 3–4 and 5–6 of this booklet.

Time needed: 15 minutes

Introduction: Teens are rarely asked to think carefully about how they want to treat their dating partners, and how they want their dating partners to treat them. This activity gives them that chance.

Instructions: Teens, follow the instructions on pages 3–4. Caregivers, follow the instructions on pages 5–6.

Compare teens' and caregivers' lists when they are completed. Discuss the similarities and differences between your answers. Caregivers, what did your teen mark that surprised you, and why? Teens, what did your caregiver mark that surprised you, and why?

Save the lists and look back at them from time to time.

Dating Goals for Teens

HOW I WANT TO TREAT MY DATING PARTNERS

Directions: Think about how you would like to treat the people you date. Read the list of traits and circle the five most important ways you want to treat the people you date. Write the two most important ways on the starred lines at the bottom of the page. Save the list and look back at it from time to time.

I want to _____ my dating partners.

YOU CAN PICK FROM THIS LIST OR THINK OF OTHER TRAITS.

- be respectful to
- be honest with
- dominate
- insult
- treat as an equal
- control
- be understanding of
- be in charge of
- be supportive of
- be encouraging to
- romance
- own
- be nice to
- be considerate of
- take advantage of
- commit to
- be thoughtful of
- be kind to
- take care of
- be able to frighten

★ _____

★ _____

Dating Goals for Teens (continued)

HOW I WANT TO BE TREATED BY MY DATING PARTNERS

Directions: Think about how you would like to be treated by the people you date. Read the list of traits and circle the five most important ways you want to be treated by the people you date. Write the two most important ways on the starred lines at the bottom of the page. Save the list and look back at it from time to time.

I want my dating partners to _____ .

YOU CAN PICK FROM THIS LIST OR THINK OF OTHER TRAITS.

- respect me
- trust me
- treat me as an equal
- control me
- love me
- treat me honestly
- need me
- be committed to me
- nurture me
- be supportive of me
- understand me and who I am
- encourage me
- romance me
- challenge me
- appreciate me
- protect me
- value me
- treat me like a king/queen
- pamper me
- listen to me
- take care of me

★ _____

★ _____

Dating Goals for Caregivers

HOW I WANT MY TEEN TO TREAT HIS OR HER DATING PARTNERS

Directions: Read the list of traits and circle the five most important ways you want your teen to treat his or her dating partners. Write the two most important ways on the starred lines at the bottom of the page.

I want my teen to _____ dating partners.

YOU CAN PICK FROM THIS LIST OR THINK OF OTHER TRAITS.

- be respectful to
- be honest with
- dominate
- insult
- treat as an equal
- control
- be understanding of
- be in charge of
- be supportive of
- be encouraging to
- romance
- own
- be nice to
- be considerate of
- take advantage of
- commit to
- be thoughtful of
- be kind to
- take care of
- be able to frighten

★ _____

★ _____

Dating Goals for Caregivers (continued)

HOW I WANT MY TEEN TO BE TREATED BY HIS OR HER DATING PARTNERS

Directions: Read the list of traits and circle the five most important ways you want your teen to be treated by his or her dating partners. Write the two most important ways on the starred lines at the bottom of the page.

I want dating partners to _____ my teen.

YOU CAN PICK FROM THIS LIST OR THINK OF OTHER TRAITS.

- respect
- trust
- treat as an equal
- control
- love
- treat honestly
- need
- commit to
- nurture
- support
- understand him or her for who he or she is
- encourage
- romance
- challenge
- appreciate
- protect
- value
- treat like a king or queen
- pamper
- listen to
- take care of







ACTIVITY 2

Having a Plan

Purpose: To develop a plan for what to do if dating abuse happens.

Time needed: 15 minutes

Introduction: This activity gives teens a chance to plan what to do if they are being mistreated or abused by a date—or if they realize they are doing that themselves. Teens develop a plan for two specific situations, but this activity can help them plan for other dating abuse situations as well.

Instructions: Read the following two stories that describe abusive dating situations. Then work together to answer the questions at the end to come up with a plan for responding to the abuse.

Situation A

You've been dating (make up a name for the date) for two months. You have had a lot of fun together, but there's something about _____ that bothers you. _____ gets angry very easily and sometimes insults you. One night you went to a party together. The party started out well, but then _____ got very jealous because you were talking to some friends of the opposite sex. _____ asked you to come outside. When you got outside, _____ started yelling at you and pushing and shoving you and accusing you of flirting. What should you do?

1. How could you use the calming strategies and the SAFE skills (from booklet 2 in the Families for Safe Dates program) for settling disagreements?
2. What could you do if (name of date) continued to yell at you and shove you?
3. What could you do immediately to get out of danger?
4. Who could you call for help?
5. How could your parents or caregivers help?
6. Who could you talk to about problems in your relationship?
7. What would you do about the relationship and how would you go about doing it?

Situation B

You have been dating (make up a name for the date) for about four months. _____ is fun to be with, but when you're together you find that you sometimes get really mad about minor things. The other day _____ was thirty minutes late when meeting you at the mall. You could feel yourself getting angrier and angrier with every minute. When _____ got there, you yelled and screamed at _____ and insulted _____. You don't want to treat the people you date this way. What can you do?

1. How could you use the calming strategies and the SAFE skills (from booklet 2 in the Families for Safe Dates program) to keep you from yelling at and insulting (name of date)?
2. Who could you talk to about this problem?
3. How could your parents or caregivers help?
4. What would you do about the relationship, and how would you go about doing it?



ACTIVITY 3

Developing Family Guidelines for Dating

Purpose: To help families set guidelines for teen dating.

Time needed: 15 minutes

Introduction: All caregivers have expectations for what is and is not okay for their teens to do. Teenagers need and want boundaries. They need to know their caregivers' expectations, see those expectations as fair, and understand the reasons for them. Many teens don't know and understand their caregivers' expectations related to dating because the family hasn't talked about them enough. For this activity, caregivers and teens together will develop teen dating guidelines.

Instructions: Hold a family meeting to discuss and agree on your Family Guidelines for Dating. Use the examples on page 11, or develop your own, making sure they match the teen's age. To get the conversation started, look at the example guidelines and try one or more of these methods:

- Separately, caregivers and teens could rate each sample guideline on a 1 to 5 scale: 5 for extremely important, 4 for very important, 3 for important, 2 for somewhat important, or 1 for not very important. Then compare and discuss your scores and your reasons for those scores.
- Teens could decide what guidelines they would set for a teen if they were caregivers, and why. Then caregivers could decide on their guidelines and explain their own choices. Discuss those choices together and the reasons behind them.
- Caregivers could say which guidelines they believe are most important and why, and then listen to the teen's questions and concerns about those guidelines.

Examples of Dating Guidelines

- Caregiver tells teen the age at which he or she is allowed to date.
- Caregiver tells teen the age range for his or her possible dating partners.
- Teen needs to group-date for the first several dates with a new person.
- Caregiver must meet the dating partner prior to the first date.
- Caregiver must meet the dating partner's parents.
- Caregiver needs to know the dating partner's telephone numbers (including cell) and address.
- Teen must let caregiver know where he or she is going on the date. Identify which places are off limits for dates.
- Teen must tell caregiver who is providing transportation for the date.
- Teen may not accept a ride from a dating partner or other driver who has been drinking alcohol.
- Caregiver must have a way to reach the teen during the date.
- Teen's cell phone needs to be turned on during the date, and teen must answer the caregiver's call.
- Teen must be home by the time specified by the caregiver, and must check in when returning.
- Teen should never mistreat a dating partner, physically or otherwise.
- Teen should tell caregiver if he or she is abused by a dating partner.
- Teen cannot go to a dating partner's home unless a caregiver is there.
- Teen cannot invite a dating partner home unless a caregiver is there.
- Teen needs to call caregiver if he or she feels nervous or scared during a date. (Agree on a code word or phrase that means the teen wants or needs a ride home.)
- Teen cannot give phone numbers, addresses, or any personal contact information to people met online.

USING THE GUIDELINES

- When you've agreed on a set of Family Guidelines for Dating, write them on the next page. (You don't need to fill in every space.)
- Post the Family Guidelines for Dating where it will be easily seen, such as on the refrigerator.
- Every few months, revisit the guidelines and talk about them to be sure they're still appropriate.
- As the teen gets older, do the process again so that the guidelines match the teen's age and experience.

Family Guidelines for Dating

1. **Guideline:** _____

Reason: _____

2. **Guideline:** _____

Reason: _____

3. **Guideline:** _____

Reason: _____

4. **Guideline:** _____

Reason: _____

5. **Guideline:** _____

Reason: _____

6. **Guideline:** _____

Reason: _____

**REMEMBER TO REVISE THESE GUIDELINES APPROPRIATELY
AS YOUR TEEN GETS OLDER.**



ACTIVITY 4

Families for Safe Dates Completion Checklist

Purpose: To review what you've learned during the Families for Safe Dates program.

Time needed: 5 minutes

Introduction: You've almost finished the Families for Safe Dates program. The five booklets of the program included many activities and other things your family did to help prevent dating abuse.

Instructions: Caregivers and teens, please look at the lists that follow and put a check next to each step you took while completing the Families for Safe Dates program. Take this chance to think back over the program and to congratulate yourself for all you've done to prevent dating abuse.

Completion Checklist for Caregivers

- I involved other family members in the program when appropriate.
- I learned more about what dating is like today.
- I learned better ways to communicate with my teen.
- I helped my teen become more aware of his or her hot buttons and signs of anger, and I helped my teen think about how to calm down when angry.
- I helped my teen practice the SAFE skills for settling disagreements.
- I helped my teen learn what makes a healthy dating relationship.
- I learned how to recognize dating abuse, including sexual abuse and rape, and considered the harmful consequences.
- I helped my teen learn how to recognize dating abuse, including sexual abuse and rape, and to consider the harmful consequences.
- I helped my teen learn more about what abusers do to control their partners.
- I learned about the warning signs of dating abuse.
- I helped my teen learn about some beliefs that can lead to dating sexual abuse and rape.
- I reviewed with my teen some strategies for preventing dating sexual abuse and rape.
- I helped my teen think through how he or she wants to treat dating partners, and be treated by them.
- I helped my teen think of plans for dealing with abusive dating situations.
- I set dating guidelines for my teen and explained to my teen the dating guidelines and the reasons for having them.

Completion Checklist for Teens

- I thought about the qualities and traits I like in dating partners, and what activities I'd like to do on a date.
- I learned better ways to communicate with my caregiver.
- I became more aware of my hot buttons and signs of anger, and I thought of ways to calm down when angry.
- I practiced the SAFE skills for settling disagreements.
- I learned what makes a healthy dating relationship.
- I learned how to recognize dating abuse, including dating sexual abuse and rape, and considered the harmful consequences.
- I learned about what abusers do to try to control dating partners.
- I learned some warning signs of dating abuse.
- I learned about some beliefs that can lead to dating sexual abuse and rape.
- I learned some strategies for preventing dating sexual abuse and rape.
- I learned the importance of respecting my dating partner's wishes to not be sexual.
- I thought about how I want to treat, and be treated by, my dating partners.
- I made plans for dealing with abusive dating situations.
- I had a discussion about my family's guidelines for dating.



Recap

- If teens think carefully about how they'd like to treat and be treated by dating partners, they'll more easily recognize dating abuse if it starts to happen.
- If teens make a plan ahead of time for what to do if abuse happens, they can respond better in that situation.
- By setting dating guidelines, caregivers establish some sensible limits. They'll know more about their teen's dating and dating partners, and therefore will be in a better position to recognize the warning signs of abuse, should it occur.
- Caregivers, in your discussions with your teen, you may have discovered that he or she is in an abusive relationship. If so, please refer to the resources listed at the end of booklet 1. Remember, the National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline is 1-866-331-9474, and the National Domestic Violence Hotline is 1-800-799-SAFE (7233).

Next Steps

If you have received all five Families for Safe Dates activity booklets at once, these are your next steps:

1. Caregivers, take the time to get to know the people your teen is dating, and monitor for warning signs of abuse.
2. Remember your Family Guidelines for Dating and revise them when necessary.
3. Teens, get help if you are abusing a dating partner or being abused yourself.
4. Caregivers and teens, keep talking with each other about dating abuse, dating sexual abuse, and date rape issues, and keep practicing your communication skills.

If your family is participating in Families for Safe Dates through an organization that will be calling you after you complete each booklet, these are your next steps:

1. Write down any questions you have about dating abuse or this booklet's activities to ask the health educator who will be calling you soon.
2. Continue to do what is suggested in numbers 1 through 4 above.

**Congratulations! You've completed all five booklets
of the Families for Safe Dates program.**