

Good health and healthy relationships.

Do your patient's have healthy relationships based on trust and respect or are they caught in abusive relationships? It is important to talk to your patient's about their relationships because living in a stressful environment can have a direct impact on their health. They may feel nervous and scared, like they're not good enough. They may be confused and do things they don't want to do. Someone who abuses them may also make them feel like they are to blame for his or her behavior.

Let them know that sometimes, abusive relationships can start just like healthy ones – full of love, excitement and romance. That abusive relationships have good times and bad times and it can be very confusing and painful when there is love mixed with abuse.

Talk to your patient's about what a good relationship looks like. Let them know that in a healthy relationship, you have fun together, you feel like you can be yourself, you can have different opinions and interests, you listen to each other, you trust each other, you can both compromise - say you're sorry, talk arguments out and you can spend time on your own.

Give them warning signs of an abusive relationship including, extreme jealousy, not wanting someone to be with friends, threats, name-calling, possessiveness and shouting. It is important that they know that most often it can escalate to hurting someone physically and forced sex.

Remind your patient's that if they are in a relationship and when someone loves them, they must be treated with respect and feel valued and free to be themselves. They shouldn't be made to feel intimidated or controlled. Someone who loves them should help them feel good about themselves. No one has the right to abuse and make someone feel bad or confused. Let them know their feelings and safety are important.

Help them get help if their love hurts.

You can refer your patients for help or ask for assistance in helping your patients by calling:

National Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)
1-800-787-3224 (TTY for the Deaf)

www.ndvh.org

Help is available in English and Spanish and many other languages.

All contact with the hotline is free and confidential.