

# COUPLETS BOOSTER LESSON

## DATING VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY 5010 TRAINING MODULE

### GRADE LEVEL

For students in grades 6 through 8.

### LESSON PURPOSE

This lesson reinforces the annual Policy 5010 dating violence prevention training module. It re-teaches the signs of a healthy versus unhealthy relationships.

### LENGTH OF LESSON

This lesson can be taught in one, 30-45-minute class period.

### STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Know the 8 signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships.

### INTRODUCTION & DISCUSSION

Tell students during this lesson we will review what qualifies as healthy versus unhealthy behaviors. We will also explore each of our personal feelings and limits in terms of relationship behaviors.

Remind students that:

- Although all of us aren't dating and that's normal, we all have relationships – whether it's with our friends or family. The type of relationships we have today are strong indicators of the type of dating relationships we will have in the future. So, no matter what relationships we have, we want them to be healthy and make us happy.
- Because we might talk about some personal topics, we will follow our classroom rules and guidelines by treating each other with respect. We will also not use any names, so everyone's privacy is maintained. Instead we will say, "I know someone who..."
- Every person deserves a healthy relationship. But unfortunately, unhealthy relationships can happen to anyone. They can happen to boys and girls; they can happen to people your age or much older. They can happen whether you like people of your gender or the opposite gender. You can be someone who uses a wheelchair for mobility or not. You can be of any religion or have any color skin. You can come from a family who has a lot or who has very little. Relationship abuse is a learned behavior and a process, not a person.



- Source of content courtesy of  
One Love Foundation,  
[joinonelove.org](http://joinonelove.org).



Write on the board and then review with the class, each of the 8 warning signs of unhealthy relationships, seen in the Couplets videos. Give students 1 minute to define each sign and give examples. This can be done as a class, or in small groups that then share with the larger group. Keep in mind young people tend to describe the behaviors in terms of feelings or scenarios – so help them differentiate feelings from actions. If you wish to play the Couplets videos again, they and the Couplets Guide can be found at [www.joinonelove.org/couplets](http://www.joinonelove.org/couplets).

1. **Intensity:** Intensity is having or showing really strong feelings or opinions. Taking things to an extreme. Rushed, too fast, or out of control (feeling). This person can't live without you or wants to spend every moment with you (action).
    - a. Healthy: What is the healthy opposite feeling/behavior of intensity?  
COMFORTABLE PACE or going slow, taking time, and setting boundaries.
  2. **Guilt, Emotional Abuse:** Guilt is when someone makes another person feel bad in order to get them to do something or have the upper hand over them. When guilt is used in this manipulative way, it is a form of emotional abuse.
    - a. Healthy: What would be the opposite healthy behavior? The healthy alternative behavior is TAKING RESPONSIBILITY. Another way a partner in a healthy relationship would choose to treat the other person to avoid making them feel guilty is with compassion.
  3. **Verbal Abuse, Put-Downs:** A put-down is when someone calls you a name, belittles, embarrasses, bullies or makes you feel anything less than awesome (which you SO are). Put-downs are a form of emotional abuse.
    - a. What would be the opposite healthy behavior to put-downs? The healthy alternative behavior is RESPECT, building you up, or supporting you.
  4. **Disrespect, Sexual Abuse:** Disrespect is treating another person badly. This could come in the form of mind games, put-downs, making fun of someone or sharing something private with other people. That specific kind of disrespect seen in the Couplets video can be sexual abuse.
    - a. Healthy: The healthy alternative behavior is LOYALTY.
  5. **Anger, Physical Abuse, Threat of Abuse:** Anger or volatility is a scary, extreme, out of control (feeling). Someone from going 0 to 100 for no reason or out of the blue (action) so you end up feeling like you have to walk on eggshells around them. This kind of extreme anger can include physical abuse or threat of abuse. Anger is an emotion we all experience, but how we handle it can mean the difference between a healthy and unhealthy friendship or relationship.
    - a. Healthy: The healthy alternative behavior is COMMUNICATION. What would that look like? Having a good grasp on your emotions, expressing them with respect, and taking responsibility for your own feelings.
  6. **Power and Control:** Control is having power or influence over someone or something. Controlling behavior can appear in any type of relationship. If you're in a controlling dating relationship or friendship, you will feel like your freedom is gone. It can involve a manipulated or controlled feeling or the act of forcing you to do or not do something.
    - a. Healthy: The healthy alternative behavior is EQUALITY, when someone respects your decision to want or not want to do something (honesty).
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7. **Obsession, Stalking and Electronic Abuse:** Obsession is when someone is constantly thinking or worrying about something or someone. Usually this feeling will take over a person and get in the way of them thinking about or doing other things. It can also involve feelings of jealousy, insecurity, or that one is not good enough. For example, my partner gets mad if someone is texting with me (feeling) or my partner is constantly calling me (action). After the group discussion and/or before the small group share, ask: “Quick, raise your hand if you’ve ever felt jealous?” Raise your hand along with everyone and say “see, jealousy is normal and felt by everyone, it’s how we ACT in regard to our feelings of jealousy that can make it unhealthy”.
  - a. Healthy: The healthy alternative behavior is INDEPENDENCE. What would that look like? Talking about your feelings of jealousy and how to work on it as a couple/friends moving forward. Trust and believing your partner won’t hurt you when there are no real indicators that they have or will.
8. **Isolation:** Isolation is when someone is being separated or kept away from other people. Isolation happens when someone wants you all to themselves and doesn’t like to share your time or attention. It is an alone, pulled away (feeling). It is when you have no one else to rely on or are not allowed to be friends with other people (action). Being isolated isn’t just about being “alone”; it’s about a person making you feel they are the only one you can rely on and trust, “it’s me and you against the world babe”.
  - b. Healthy: The healthy alternative behavior is TRUST and when someone encourages you to have friends and multiple support systems (independence).

## ACTIVITY

Explain to the students they are going to do an activity called, “The Gut Check”.

It will get the students moving around and defining if situations are unhealthy, healthy, or somewhere in between.

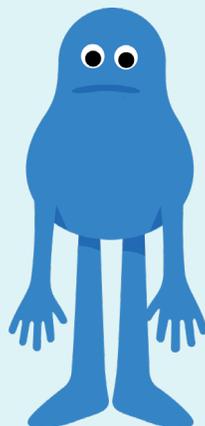
Start with the class as a group, standing in the middle of the classroom.

Instruct them you will present a scenario. Then based on their opinions, each student will go to the left of the room for unhealthy, right of the room for healthy, or stay in the middle if they are unsure.

You will then offer the opportunity for one or more of the students in each of the three groups to share their thoughts as to why they made the selection they did. Then repeat the process with the next scenario.

### Scenarios:

1. When your girlfriend/boyfriend is Snapchatting with your friends (that might be of the opposite gender), you feel happy she/he has relationships outside of just you. Do you think that is a healthy, unhealthy, or “depends on the situation” way to feel about the situation?
  - a. **Healthy:** Trust and/or independence (opposite = isolation, obsession/jealousy).



2. Your two best friends get in a fight in a group text, and one of them deletes the other one. Do you think that is a healthy, unhealthy, or “depends” way to handle the situation?
  - a. **Unhealthy:** Anger (opposite = communication).
3. You start dating someone new and want to spend all of your time together, so you ditch your friends to hang out with the person every weekend. Do you think that is a healthy, unhealthy, or “depends” way to handle the situation?
  - a. **Unhealthy:** Intensity (opposite = comfortable pace).
4. Your friend is constantly texting you late into the night, even though you said you had to study. Then the rest of the week, the friend snaps at you. Do you think that is a healthy, unhealthy, or “depends” way to behave in this situation?
  - a. **Unhealthy:** Guilt/emotional abuse and/or anger/volatility (opposite = taking responsibility and/or communication), it could also feel like power/control and manipulation (opposite = equality/honesty).
5. Your friend shows you an explicit photo of their partner, you know it’s wrong but laugh it off anyway. Do you think that is a healthy, unhealthy, or “depends” way to handle the situation?
  - a. **Unhealthy:** Disrespect, sexual abuse (opposite = loyalty).
6. You break something in your house and can easily blame it on the dog, but own up to your mistake and tell your parents what happened. Do you think that is a healthy, unhealthy, or “depends” way to handle the situation?
  - a. **Healthy:** Taking responsibility (opposite deflecting responsibility or guilt/blaming/emotional abuse).
7. You’re playing ball and your friend misses a shot. You give him or her a high-five and encouragement to keep playing hard. Do you think that is a healthy, unhealthy, or “depends” way to handle the situation?
  - a. **Healthy:** Respect (opposite = verbal abuse, put-downs).

## CONCLUSION

Compliment the class on handling the activity well and have them return to their seats. State now that they’ve explored both healthy and unhealthy scenarios, hopefully they feel better able to spot unhealthy behaviors. The next step once these behaviors are spotted, is to get help – either for themselves or a friend.

If they suspect or know of abuse, they can tell any trusted adult or anonymously report it by:

- Downloading the SaferWatch App.
- Contacting Broward Schools’ Silence Hurts Tipline.
- Downloading the FortifyFL App.

To learn more about dating violence or access help they can:

- Dial 211, First Call for Help Broward.
- Call the National Teen Dating Abuse Hotline at 866-331-9474.
- Go to [JoinOneLove.org](http://JoinOneLove.org), [LovelsRespect.org](http://LovelsRespect.org), or [BrowardPreventoin.org](http://BrowardPreventoin.org).

Conclude by thanking them for their participation, because EVERYONE deserves healthy relationships that make them feel good!

