



Broward County Public Schools Policy 5010 Dating Violence Training Teacher Script

for
Students Grades
6-8

This lesson was created with the support of One Love Foundation's [Couplets That's Not Love Discussion Guide](#) and adapted from [What Does Respect Mean to You?](#) and the [Respect - It's Up to All of Us Activity Guide](#).

MATERIALS NEEDED

- The Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) [Student Grades 6-8 Dating Violence Training](#).
- A board to write or project upon the Discussion/Activity items listed on the last page of this script.
- Optional: The "I-Message" Worksheet for each student or have students recreate it.

INTRODUCTION TO INSTRUCTOR

This Teacher Script is to be used by the instructor who is providing the BCPS Policy 5010 mandatory annual dating violence prevention training to students in grades 6 through 8. This video lesson is designed to be one, 30-45-minute projected classroom lesson taught in the classroom, not taken individually by students. After the video, the teacher will facilitate the discussion and activity included in this script.

Prior to Teaching: Ensure you have completed your mandatory annual Dating Violence Policy 5010 Staff Training Module. That course contains much of the knowledge you will need to teach this lesson and effectively prevent and intervene with teen dating violence.

Optional Booster Expansion Lesson: It is recommended you enhance your school's dating violence prevention efforts by teaching the optional [Booster Expansion Lesson](#) in 1-2 weeks.

THE LESSON

STATE: Today we are going to talk about relationships and the differences between healthy and unhealthy ones. Although all of us aren't dating and that's normal, we all have relationships. Think about your friends, family, classmates, and teammates.

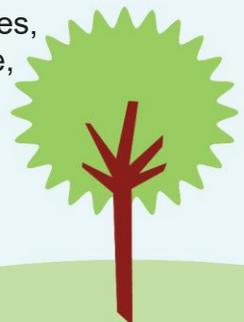
ASK: How do they treat you? How do you treat them? On a scale of 1 to 10, could you comfortably rate how each relationship is in terms of being healthy as opposed to unhealthy?

STATE: By the end of this lesson, hopefully you will feel better able to do so. Research tells us the type of relationships we have today, indicates the type of dating relationships we may have tomorrow. So no matter what type of relationship we have, we want it to be healthy and make us happy. We are going to begin today's lesson by watching a video on this topic. Afterwards we'll have a discussion and learn a healthy communication strategy.

Because we might talk about some personal topics, I want to make sure this is a safe place to do so. Let's make sure we follow our classroom rules and guidelines by treating each other with respect. I want to add one more rule for this discussion. Let's not use any names, so everyone's privacy is maintained. Instead say, "I know someone who...". For example, instead of saying, "Sue calls Joe names", you would say, "I know someone who is in a relationship and they get called names."

Any questions? Let's get started.

DO: Play the [video](#).



POST VIDEO DISCUSSION

TRAINER NOTE: Ask these questions in the format which is most appropriate to your setting and the students' developmental level. Options include:

- Raise your hand to share...
- Find a classmate to ask...
- Write down your thoughts about...
- Quick! Turn to a partner...

STATE: Now we are going to focus on the eight unhealthy relationship behaviors seen in the video (read them and/or write them on the board):

Stalking & Electronic Abuse/Obsession	Isolation	Physical Abuse/Threat of Abuse
Verbal Abuse/Put-Downs	Emotional Abuse/Guilt	
Sexual Abuse/Disrespect	Power & Control	



These are important to recognize, because they're warning signs. Warning signs enable us to get help before the behaviors escalate and become even more abusive. One thing all of these behaviors have in common is a lack of respect and unhealthy communication.

ASK/STATE:

- What does disrespect mean to you?
- What can you do if you experience disrespect?
Lashing out at someone verbally or physically is abuse. While it's natural to sometimes get angry, upset or frustrated with a friend or partner, no matter what the cause or excuse is, yelling and hurting another person is never okay. It's each of our responsibilities to handle our own emotions.
- What are the best ways to handle conflict or a disagreement?
While all relationships and friendships have fights, there is a difference between healthy disagreements and unhealthy arguments. With a healthy disagreement, you're able to talk about what upset you and your friend or partner listens. With unhealthy fights, the person will not hear your side of the argument and will get angry or emotional when you try to explain your perspective. If you feel like you can't talk to your friend or partner, that is a sign that your relationship is unhealthy.
- What happens in relationships (either with family, friends, or dating partners) when disagreements or problems are ignored?
Ignoring a problem in a relationship does not make it go away, and it may make things worse by creating distance and resentment. People can't read our minds, and if we act like a volcano, slowly building resentment and unspoken grievances, we are much more likely to blow our top when the pressure has built too much. This can result in saying or doing something we regret.

So we want to make sure we handle our conflicts well. This will create opportunities to become closer and learn more about each other. To ensure we can do that, we will now learn and practice a healthy communication a strategy.

GROUP ACTIVITY

TRAINER NOTE: The Group Activity is appropriate for individuals, small groups, or large groups. It presents students with statements that illustrate disrespectful ways of speaking or behaving, then provides an opportunity to correct the disrespectful language or behavior. Students are asked to consider how particular language or behavior would make someone feel, and to think of respectful alternatives using “I-Messages”. It can be conducted with each student having a copy of the I-Message Worksheet, with them using their own paper to recreate the Worksheet, or solely as projected instruction and class discussion.

It can be also conducted as:

- *A writing assignment: students describe a potentially unhealthy situation and how they would respond using the I-Message healthy communication strategies on the I-Message Worksheet.*
- *Acted out scenarios: groups of students can write and act out original scenarios to perform for the class demonstrating how I-Message healthy communication can be employed to resolve or avoid unhealthy situations.*
- *A public service announcement (PSA) writing activity: students, individually or in groups, write or design PSAs that draw the connection between respect for oneself and others in healthy relationships.*

During this section you will reference the written or projected items from the Discussion/Activity page of this script:

- 1) *The definitions of respect and healthy communication.*
- 2) *The 5 Tips for Healthy Communication.*
- 3) *The 3 I-Message scenarios.*

STATE: Respect is... *(read the displayed definition)*. Healthy communication is... *(read the displayed definition)*. One of the best ways to be respectful to yourself and others AND to feel heard is to use “I-Messages”.

I-Messages are a technique you can use to express yourself when you are upset or angry to help ensure it leads to an open discussion, not escalated conflict. When you use an I-Message, people are more willing to listen to you and respond to your requests positively. It works because it tells others how their behavior affects you, without starting the sentence with “you” – almost always guaranteed to make a person feel defensive. Finally, when you use it, you are much more likely to get your needs met, since no one is a mind reader, and this formula helps to ensure they know what you do and don’t want.

As you can see on the board, the I-Message has 4 elements.

- 1) A statement of feelings. Keep in mind that although you may feel mad or angry, be careful to not use aggressive or accusatory language.
- 2) A statement of what the problem is. This should be a description of the exact behavior the other person committed that is upsetting.
- 3) The reasons for feeling the way you do. This should explain in detail the importance of the action or behavior to the other person.
- 4) The behavior you DO want, so the person is better able to provide it. If the person chooses not to respect your request, it might be another sign that this relationship is unhealthy.

Let’s look at **Example #1**: Your closest friend called you “stupid” and laughed at you when you got a bad test grade.

How might a friend doing this make you feel?

Using the I-Message formula, how could you respond in a way that was healthy and ensured your friend knew what you wanted and why?

An example could include, “I feel embarrassed when you call me stupid and laugh at my bad grade, because I studied hard and really hoped I would pass. What I need is for you to support or encourage

me when I struggle with school. Maybe offer to help me study or just say, I know you're smart and you'll do better next time or even "that stinks!"."

Handling this tough conversation the way you suggested would help ensure you and your friend were even closer once the conversation was done.

Let's look at **Example #2**: The person you're dating hasn't replied to any of your texts in two days. How might that make you feel?

Using the I-Message formula, how could you respond in a way that was healthy?

An example could include, "I feel hurt when you don't answer my text messages, because I feel like you're avoiding me or I have done something to make you upset. What I need is for you to please respond to my texts the same day."

Let's look at **Example #3**: Someone you're dating is pressuring you to do something you don't want to do.

This is something that can occur between family or friends too. How might that make you feel?

Using the I-Message formula, how could you respond in a way that was healthy?

An example could include, "I feel stressed when you pressure me to do something I've already told you I don't want to, because I want to make you happy, but if I do what you want, it means I have to be unhappy and go against my own beliefs. What I need is for you to respect my wishes when I tell you "no" by not asking again."

TRAINER NOTE: Depending on time and the developmental level of the class, an option to consider is allowing students to bring up challenging scenarios (while maintaining confidentiality, "I know someone who") for which the class can create I-messages. Alternatively, the I-Message Worksheet can be worked on individually or assigned as homework.

CONCLUSION

You all have done an excellent job trying out this new healthy way of communicating. Like anything new, it can feel uncomfortable at first, but as you practice it will become more natural.

Keep in mind even when we do everything correctly, we still have no control over the other person and can't MAKE them behave in a healthy loving way.

Although people can change, it's entirely up to them whether they choose to change or not. If a person is awesome 95% of the time and angry, controlling or unkind 5% of the time, that's not good enough. Do not stay in a relationship or friendship where you are waiting on someone to change their behavior. If they want to get help or change, they need to do it for themselves.

If you need help with an unhealthy relationship, please make sure you reach out to one of your trusted adults or to our school counselor. Because EVERYONE deserves healthy relationships that make us feel good.

OPTIONAL EXPANSION LESSONS/ACTIVITIES

Optional expansion lessons to further reinforce this training:

- The [Booster Expansion Lesson](#) ideally provided within the next two weeks.
- The [What Does Respect Mean to You?](#) poster with lessons on all aspects of respect for self and others.
- The [Couplets That's Not Love Discussion Guide](#) with additional lessons on the Couplets short videos.
- The [Respect - It's Up to All of Us Activity Guide](#) with lessons.
- Lessons from the [BCPS List of Dating Violence Prevention Curriculum and Programs](#).
- BCPS staff can access additional lessons and resources in the [SC&D SharePoint](#) and Charter school staff or community members at [BrowardPrevention.org](#).

If you have questions on this lesson or how to create safer and more respectful schools, contact the Diversity & School Climate Department at 754-321-1655.



I-Message Worksheet

I feel

When you

Because

What I need is



Discussion/Activity

Stalking & Electronic Abuse/Obsession	Isolation	Physical Abuse/Threat of Abuse
Verbal Abuse/Put-Downs	Emotional Abuse/Guilt	
Sexual Abuse/Disrespect	Power & Control	



- **Respect:** Treating all people (including yourself as well as people with whom you disagree) in a way that demonstrates that all people are important and that their feelings and thoughts are valuable.
- **Healthy communication:** When communicating with another person, feeling heard, understood, and respected by the other person, as well as being able to listen, understand, and respect what the other person is saying.

5 TIPS FOR HEALTHY COMMUNICATION

1. Stay in control of your feelings.
2. Make eye contact.
3. Pay attention to your gestures, facial expressions, and tone of voice (and other people's).
4. Listen actively: Take turns talking, ask questions, and don't jump to conclusions.
5. Use "I-messages" to express your feelings.

"I-MESSAGES"

1. Your closest friend called you "stupid" and laughed when you got a bad test grade.
I feel _____ when you _____
because _____. What I need is _____.
2. The person you're dating hasn't replied to any of your texts in two days.
I feel _____ when you _____
because _____. What I need is _____.
3. Someone you're dating is pressuring you to do something you don't want to do.
I feel _____ when you _____
because _____. What I need is _____.

