

## Module 1

# Healthy Relationships

### Background

Healthy relationships are a crucial part of adolescent development and individual growth. Through friendships, teens are able to empathize with others, experience both feelings of independence and dependence within a relationship, trust others, and communicate more easily in times of conflict. Major elements of healthy teenage relationships emphasized in the module are: respect, trust, mutual intimacy, caring and empathy, communication, and self-awareness/self-worth. The group leader should read the Facilitator's Guide and the Healthy Relationships Guide in preparation for this module. Setting ground rules and creating an atmosphere of communication, trust, and respect are essential for these activities.



### Goals

Participants will:

- Learn to define aspects of healthy relationships
- Learn skills that promote healthy relationships
- Develop enhanced self-awareness and self-worth

## Pre-session Activities

### 1. *Get Real*



**Objective:** This activity increases awareness of images that the media and other sources send about relationships and enhances participant's self-awareness.

**Estimated time:** 5-20+ minutes

**Materials needed:** None

**Ages:** 12-15

**Preparation:** None

*Directions for Facilitator:*

1. Ask participants to observe relationships on television, in movies, and in books and give examples of each.
2. Ask participants to think about whether these relationships are realistic or could be real and how they are similar and/or different from their own relationships.

*Discussion:*

Have the group brainstorm about how the media accurately or inaccurately depicts real life relationships.

## 2. Scrapbook of Relationships



**Objective:** This activity encourages participants to think about the people in their lives and the qualities they value in these relationships.

**Estimated time:** 20-60+ minutes

**Materials needed:** paper, art materials, photos

**Ages:** 12-15

**Preparation:** None

**Variation:** In ongoing groups, the pages can be shared as an ice breaker or the scrapbook can be an ongoing activity.

*Directions for Facilitator:*

1. Have participants create a page or scrapbook of the people they are close to and communities they are a part of.
2. Explain that participants may draw, cut, and paste photos, or make a collage out of magazine pictures, photos, and words.

*Discussion:*

Encourage participants to share their page or scrapbook with others and talk about what they value in relationships.

# Ice Breakers

## 1. Telephone



**Objective:** “Telephone” is a game that can be used to teach participants about trust and responsible communication. This game demonstrates how communication breaks down and rumors are spread.

**Estimated time:** 5-10 minutes (can be repeated)

**Materials needed:** index cards, pen or pencil

**Ages:** 12-15

**Preparation (10 minutes):** Select a phrase and write it out on an index card. Possible phrases include: 1) “I heard that Jamie danced with Alex at the party Friday night but she’s not really interested in dating”; 2) “Jesse’s heart was crushed when Sam went to the movies with Chris”; 3) “When Sara heard that Jen was having a sleepover on Saturday night and had not invited her, she decided to ask Maria what to do because Sara felt hurt.”

### *Directions for Facilitator:*

1. Have participants sit in a circle.
2. Ask for a volunteer to begin the game.
3. Give the volunteer the card with the phrase written on it so that she is the only person to see the phrase.
4. The volunteer whispers the phrase to her neighbor.
5. The phrase is then whispered around the circle in a similar fashion.
6. The final participant to hear the phrase says what she heard out loud to the group.
7. Read the index card with the sentence written on it to the group.

### *Discussion:*

Encourage participants to discuss the differences between the original phrase and the final one. Ask participants to examine how misunderstandings occur through gossip and the spreading of rumors. Suggest a positive behavior or action in order to deal with rumors (i.e. try to talk with the person who is spreading the rumor; talk to friend about how you are feeling; if the rumor involves someone else, discuss it with that person; keep yourself grounded by remembering it is just a rumor and will probably fade from people’s memory and become less important to people).

## 2. Snowball



**Objective:** This ice-breaker demonstrates how we participate in relationships that have mutual intimacy and sharing.

**Estimated time:** 10 minutes

**Materials needed:** 8 1/2 x 11 paper, pencils or pens

**Ages:** 12-15

**Preparation:** None

**Variation:** Ask participants to write down five qualities they value in relationships including relationships with their parents, siblings, teachers, etc.

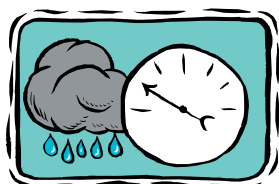
### *Directions for Facilitator:*

1. Have participants sit in a circle.
2. Distribute paper and pencils/pens to everyone.
3. Ask participants not to put their names on the paper.
4. Ask participants to write down five things they do in their friendship(s) to show that they value or like their friend.
5. Instruct participants to crumple the paper up into a ball.
6. Everyone then throws “snowballs” around the circle for a few seconds, imitating a snowball fight.
7. When the “snowballs” have been tossed around the room for awhile, ask the participants to stop and pick one up that is not their own.
8. Go around the circle and have the participants read the list on the “snowball” they picked up.

### *Discussion:*

Encourage participants to briefly discuss the similarities and differences between how people express respect and show they care in friendships. For example, how was what they wrote on their snowball different or similar to what others wrote?

## 3. Emotional Barometer



**Objective:** This activity can be used with established groups or older participants as it helps to build trust within the group, mutual sharing, and communication skills

**Estimated time:** 5-10 minutes

**Materials needed:** None

**Ages:** 12-15

**Preparation:** None

**Variation:** Post a list of adjectives that participants can refer to or use a chart with different smiley face expressions (see Appendix 1-1). Pass around chart of faces and give each participant the opportunity to choose a face talk about why they chose that face.

### *Directions for Facilitator:*

1. Select one of the following questions or present all of the questions and let the participants choose one question to answer: What one adjective best describes how you are feeling today? Is there something that happened to you this week that you would like to share with the group? Is there anything you would like us to know about you today?
2. Encourage participants to answer the question in their own words and to be brief in their responses.
3. Give participants the option of “passing” if they do not feel comfortable sharing their feelings with others.
4. Be available after the program in the event that a participant needs support.

## Group Activities

### 1. *Role Plays*



**Objective:** Role plays can be used as a skill-building and fun tool. Situation based role plays can demonstrate any of the five qualities highlighted in the Background section (respect and trust, mutual intimacy, caring and empathy, communication, and self-awareness/self-worth), and illustrate communication skills and pitfalls.

**Estimated time:** 10-15 minutes for each role play and discussion

**Materials needed:** None

**Ages:** 12-15

**Preparation:** None

**Variation:** Use a real or toy remote control to assist in discussion. A participant or the facilitator can “pause,” “rewind,” or “fast-forward” during the role-play to encourage discussion at specific points.

### *Directions for Facilitator:*

1. Select a role play from examples below.
2. Ask for volunteers to act out the scenario.
3. Actors create their own dialogue for the scenario.
4. Tell actors that they may choose one of the possible endings or they may create their own ending.
5. Group discussion follows.

## Role Play #1: THE DILEMMA

*This role play can be used to demonstrate the qualities of mutual intimacy, caring, empathy, and communication.*

### Scenario:

Maria agrees to go out with her friend Kim for pizza and to the movies on Friday. A few hours later, Maria's friend Jen asks her if she wants to go to a popular concert that same Friday night. What should Maria do?

### Options for response:

- a. Maria talks to Kim to see if they can have pizza and go to the movies another night and then goes with Jen to the concert.
- b. Maria thanks Jen for the invitation but says that she already has plans for that night.
- c. Maria agrees to go with Jen to the concert and doesn't tell Kim.
- d. Choose your own ending.

### Questions for Discussion:

1. What do you think Maria is feeling? How do you think Jen and Kim will feel depending on what Maria decides to do?  
*The aim of this question is to get participants to empathize with different positions or points of view.*
2. Does everyone agree with the ending? Why or why not?
3. What are other possible endings and how do you think they would work out?  
*Challenge participants to consider not only what they think would be the "right" thing to do, but also what they would want to do and how they could try to work out different outcomes. Have participants think about how they would word responses.*

## Role Play #2: THE OUTFIT

*This role play illustrates communication, caring and empathy.*

### Scenario:

Abby tries on an outfit that is very ugly and looks terrible on her. Her two friends, Chantel and Katrina, don't want to hurt her feelings, but they feel they should say something as Abby thinks about buying the outfit. What should Chantel and Katrina do?

### Options for response:

- a. Chantel and Katrina suggest to Abby that they look around the Mall a little bit more before she buys the outfit in case she sees something she likes even better.
- b. Chantel and Katrina tell Abby that they think the outfit looks horrible on her and that she should not buy it.
- c. Chantel and Katrina decide not to say anything to Abby.
- d. Choose your own ending.

### Questions for Discussion:

1. How do you think Chantel and Katrina are feeling? How do you think Abby is feeling? How would a different approach change the way Abby feels?  
*Help the participants build empathy and consider Abby's feelings as they think of strategies.*
2. What are other possible endings and how do you think they would work out?
3. What would you have done differently?  
*Have the participants think about how the way they say something can change its meaning. In a healthy relationship, the characters are empathic and sensitive towards each other and respect each other's views.*

### Role Play #3: THE BAD DAY

*This role play can be used to display respect, self-awareness and self-worth.*

#### Scenario:

Dina walks home with her friend Kayla and tells her about how her math teacher embarrassed her in front of the class. When she walks into her house, Dina's mother asks her how her day was. Instead of answering, Dina makes a face at her mother, goes to her room, and slams the door. What should Dina do?

#### Options for response:

- a. Dina blasts her music and ignores what happened between her and her mother.
- b. Dina takes some time in her room to cool off and then goes and talks to her mother about her day and apologizes for being rude.
- c. Dina calls her friend to talk about how she is feeling.
- d. Choose your own ending.

#### Questions for Discussion:

1. How do you think Dina might be feeling? How do you think her mother is feeling?  
*Encourage participants to connect how feelings can influence behaviors.*
2. What are other possible endings and how do you think they would work out?
3. What would you have done differently?  
*In a healthy relationship, Dina is able to express her feelings and take responsibility for her actions.*



## 2. Relationship Recipe



**Objective:** This activity encourages participants to think about what they value in relationships and how much of each quality they look for within their relationships.

**Estimated time:** 20 minutes

**Materials needed:** Recipe cards or paper that can be decorated for each participant; pens or pencils

**Ages:** 12-14

**Preparation:** None

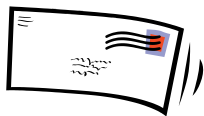
### *Directions for Facilitator:*

1. Hand out materials to participants.
2. Have participants think about their own personal recipe for the ideal relationship.
3. Participants should consider the “ingredients” they need for the relationship and how much of each they want to include (i.e., a cup, tablespoon, pinch, etc.).
4. Allow participants 10 minutes to think about their “ingredients,” write down a recipe, and then decorate their card.

### *Discussion:*

Have participants take turns sharing their recipes with each other. Discuss the similarities and differences among the recipes. How did participants decide how much of each ingredient they needed? Are there any ingredients that would change the flavor or consistency of the recipe?

## 3. “Dear Abby” Letter



**Objective:** This situation-based activity can help participants build skills in empathy, communication, and self-worth.

**Estimated time:** 15 minutes

**Materials needed:** made-up “Dear Abby” letter (see Page 10 and Appendix 1-2); pens or pencils; poster board

**Ages:** 12-15

**Preparation:** None

### *Directions for Facilitator:*

1. Tell participants that their role is that of an advice columnist.
2. Ask for a volunteer to read the letter aloud.

### *Discussion:*

Encourage participants to discuss what advice they would suggest to the author of the letter. Ask a volunteer to write suggestions on the board. Prompt a discussion around ideas and misconceptions people have about communication in relationships. Possible discussion questions:

- What are some misconceptions people have about friends and love?
- How can we be realistic in what we expect from relationships?
- How can we be considerate of our own feelings and the feelings of others?

### Example 1

Dear Abby:  
Lately, my best friend has been bossing me around and doesn't let me decide on the things that we are going to do together. She also doesn't like it when I hang out with my other friends. Can you please give me some advice on how to deal with my situation?  
Sincerely,  
Stuck-in-a-hard-place

### Questions for discussion:

Should the author try to talk to her friend about the parts of the friendship she finds difficult? Does the author have an obligation to continue this friendship? Does either the author or the friend need help from an adult?

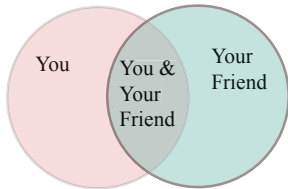
### Example 2

Dear Abby,  
I have been going out with my boyfriend for a month now and I thought that everything was fine, but I heard some rumors that he's been messing around with other girls. I know he has friends who are girls, but now I am worried that he is taking advantage of me. What should I do?  
Sincerely,  
Needs-advice

### Questions for discussion:

How can the author tell if she can trust another person? How are people's opinions influenced by rumors?

## 4. Relational Venn Diagram



**Objective:** This use of a Venn diagram is to display shared and different qualities between a young person and her friend. It can be used to increase self-awareness.

**Estimated time:** 25-30 minutes

**Materials needed:** pens or color pencils

**Ages:** 13-15

**Preparation (5 minutes):** Make copies of the Relational Venn Diagram (see Appendix 1-3) for all participants.

### *Directions for Facilitator:*

1. Distribute paper and writing materials to participants.
2. Ask participants to write or draw qualities they admire about themselves or activities they enjoy doing in the “You” circle.
3. In the “Your Friend” circle, have participants write or draw qualities about a specific close friend they admire or activities this friend enjoys doing.
4. After participants have filled out both parts of the non-overlapping circles, ask participants to write or draw qualities and/or activities that are shared between themselves and their friend in the middle or overlapping section, “You and your friend.”

### *Discussion:*

Prompt a discussion about the mutuality and differences within a relationship.

Possible discussion questions include:

- Are there qualities that were similar between yourself and your friend?  
Are there differences?
- Are you surprised by any of the similarities or differences you wrote down?
- Do you think friends need to share characteristics or activities?
- Have there been times when you had more or less in common with a friend? What happened in that relationship?

## 5. *Red Light/ Green Light*



**Objective:** This exercise serves to promote a discussion regarding the qualities of healthy and unhealthy relationships. As a team exercise, it encourages respect, sharing, communication and self-awareness.

**Estimated time:** 25 minutes

**Materials needed:** Index cards, posterboard/chalkboard, pen  
**Ages:** 12-15

**Preparation (15 minutes):** Cut out phrases of qualities or behaviors and paste each one on to its own index card. See below for samples phrases (Appendix 1-4 is the reproducible version). Qualities should be identified as “Green” (healthy relationship qualities), “Yellow” (worrisome relationship qualities), and “Red” (unhealthy relationship behaviors). “Yellow” or worrisome qualities are those that could be healthy or unhealthy depending on the context of the relationships or the situation. Shuffle cards so that “Green,” “Yellow,” and “Red” are mixed up. Draw lines to make three vertical columns on the posterboard or chalkboard, then label them as “Green Light,” “Yellow Light,” and “Red Light.”

### *Directions for Facilitator:*

1. Explain to the group that they will be looking at qualities and behaviors in relationships and deciding if they are good/healthy (Green Light), worrisome (Yellow Light) or unhealthy (Red Light).
2. Have participants break into two groups by counting off “1, 2” around the room.
3. Ask participants join their team.
4. Give each team an identical stack of index cards.
5. Teams then decide what qualities they would put under “Green Light,” “Yellow Light,” and “Red Light” categories.
6. Have each team take turns taping each quality or behavior under the category they feel it fits best in.

### *Discussion:*

Prompt a discussion about the criteria the participants used to categorize the qualities or behaviors. Talk about the qualities that participants feel fall into definite categories as well as behaviors that are worrisome. Why do some behaviors depend on the situation? Did all group members agree about the “Yellow Light” qualities?

Green Light	Yellow Light	Red Light
Talk to each other	Embarrasses you	Is clingy
Trust each other	Is annoying at times	Is jealous
Support each other	Shows off	Feel unsafe
Feel happy around the person	Calls you on the phone often	Feel like they are a pain or nuisance
Share feelings	Is competitive	Have limited trust
Have freedom within the relationship	Makes plans and then breaks them	Tries to control and manipulate
Have more good times than bad	Tries to make you more like them	Makes you feel bad about yourself
Have fun together	Uses sarcasm	Does not make time for you
Do things together	Disagrees from time to time	Discourages you from being close to anyone else
Encourage other friendships	Have unequal power	Criticizes you

# Closing Activity

## 1. *Sentence Completion*



**Objective:** This closing activity allows for reflection and gives the participants an opportunity to share something they learned about healthy relationships.

**Estimated time:** 5 minutes

**Materials needed:** box or hat

**Ages:** 12-15

**Preparation (5 minutes):** Cut out sample phrases (see Appendix 1-5). Fold paper strips in half and place into a box or hat.

### *Directions for Facilitator:*

1. Have participants sit in a circle.
2. Each participant selects a piece of paper out of the hat.
3. Go around the circle and have participants read phrase aloud and fill in the blank.
4. Remind participants that they have the option of “passing” if they do not want to respond.
5. If there are more than nine participants, questions can be duplicated and answered twice or additional phrases can be added. If there are less than nine participants, each participant can complete more than one sentence.

### *Discussion:*

Prompt discussion around the qualities that make us feel good in relationships. What qualities do you think are important in relationships after this session? What are the aspects you value most in your relationships?

### Sample Sentences:

Today I learned \_\_\_\_\_.

I value \_\_\_\_\_ most in a friendship.

I am really close to \_\_\_\_\_ because she/he is \_\_\_\_\_.

One of the things I do for fun with my friends is \_\_\_\_\_.

I really like doing \_\_\_\_\_ with my family.

I know I can trust my friend because \_\_\_\_\_.

Over the weekend I plan to hang out with \_\_\_\_\_.

I know that I can talk to \_\_\_\_\_ if I'm having a problem or need help.

I know my friends respect me when they \_\_\_\_\_.

## Follow-up Activity

### 1. *Letter Writing*



A letter to a friend can be written to address communication, sharing and self-awareness. This letter would ideally include qualities the author likes or admires about their friend and could be given to their friend. This can be a great follow-up activity when used with the ice-breaker “Snowball” by encouraging the participants to think about the qualities they wrote down for that activity.

Appendix 1-1

# Chart of Faces for “Emotional Barometer”



## Letters for “Dear Abby”



Dear Abby:

Lately, my best friend has been bossing me around and doesn't let me decide on the things that we are going to do together. She also doesn't like it when I hang out with my other friends. Can you please give me some advice on how to deal with my situation?

Sincerely,  
Stuck-in-a-hard-place



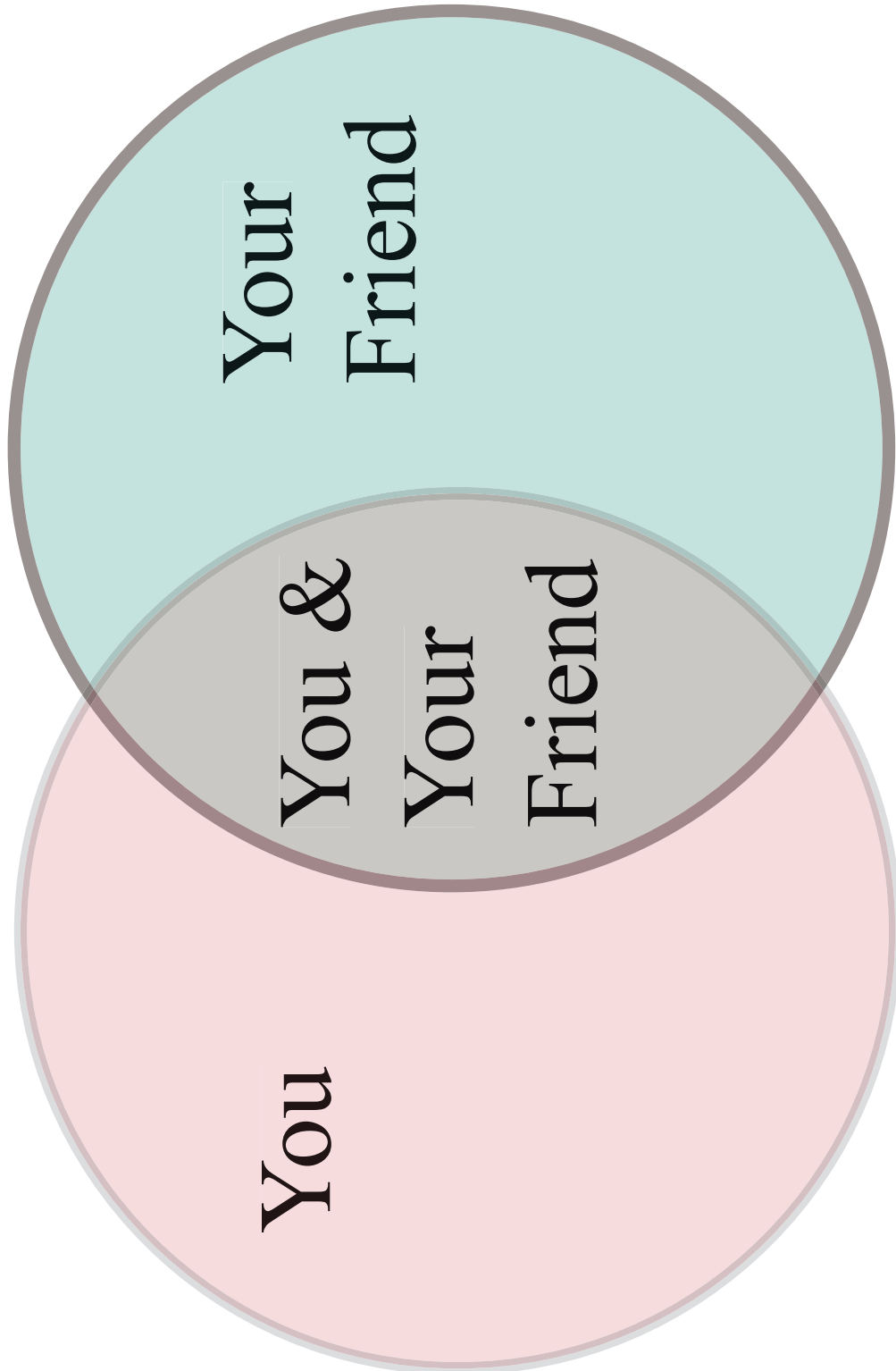
Dear Abby,

I have been going out with my boyfriend for a month now and I thought that everything was fine, but I heard some rumors that he's been messing around with other girls. I know he has friends who are girls, but now I am worried that he is taking advantage of me. What should I do?

Sincerely,  
Needs-advice



## Relational Venn Diagram



Appendix 1-4

## Phrases for “Red Light/Green Light”

<b>Green Light</b>	<b>Yellow Light</b>	<b>Red Light</b>
Talk to each other	Embarrasses you	Is clingy
Trust each other	Is annoying at times	Is jealous
Support each other	Shows off	Feel unsafe
Feel happy around the person	Calls you on the phone often	Feel like they are a pain or nuisance
Share feelings	Is competitive	Have limited trust
Have freedom within the relationship	Makes plans and then breaks them	Tries to control and manipulate
Have more good times than bad	Tries to make you more like them	Makes you feel bad about yourself
Have fun together	Uses sarcasm	Does not make time for you
Do things together	Disagrees from time to time	Discourages you from being close to anyone else
Encourage other friendships	Have unequal power	Criticizes you
		Criticizes your friends

## Sentences for “Sentence Completion”



Today I learned \_\_\_\_\_.

I value \_\_\_\_\_ most in a friendship.

I am really close to \_\_\_\_\_ because she/he \_\_\_\_\_.

One of the things I do for fun with my friends is \_\_\_\_\_.

I really like doing \_\_\_\_\_ with my family.

I know I can trust my friend because \_\_\_\_\_.

Over the weekend I plan to hang out with \_\_\_\_\_.

I know that I can talk to \_\_\_\_\_ if I’m having a problem or need help.

I know my friends respect me when they \_\_\_\_\_.