



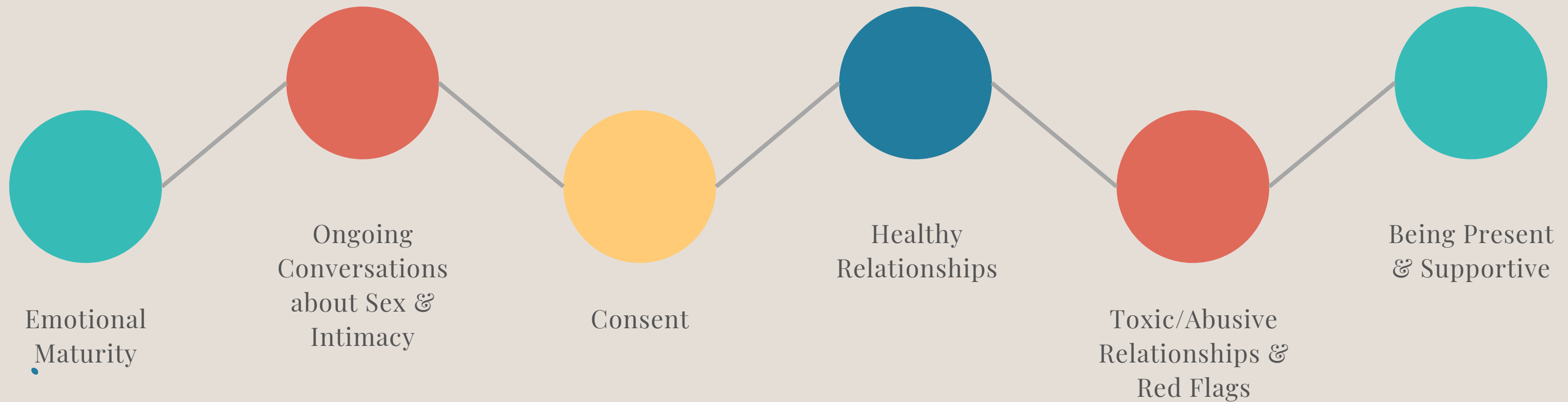
TEEN DATING

Presented by **little.**
warriors



- Almost 75% of Canadian youth report being in a romantic relationship by age 15.
- Kids will reach maturity level for dating at different ages.
 - Some start out of own interest, others out of peer pressure.
- Most tweens (ages 12, 13) start by engaging in **group dating**.
 - Reduces pressure of 1:1 dating.

TEEN DATING: When are they ready?





EMOTIONAL MATURITY

Delayed gratification

Accountability

Empathy

Honouring your own Feelings

Coping Strategies

Conflict Resolution

Knowing When to Ask for Help





EMOTIONAL MATURITY

1. *Delayed gratification*

- **Definition:** Ability to delay an impulse for an instant reward, to get a 'better' reward at a later time.
 - E.g. a child is told they can either have one cupcake now, or two cupcakes if they wait 15 mins...
- How does this relate to relationships?
 - Helps us steadily work toward long-term, healthy, & meaningful relationships.
 - Helps us control impulses.
 - E.g. Yelling at a partner and "saying things we don't mean" when frustrated versus
 - Hearing our partner out for the long-term benefit of gaining greater understanding, etc.
- Ultimately, allows us to be mindful, intentional, and reflective when navigating relationships.





EMOTIONAL MATURITY

2. Accountability

- *Definition:* Taking responsibility for one's actions.
- Understanding that decisions we make have consequences, and affect both ourselves and others.

AND

- Understanding that others' decisions affect us, and knowing when others need to be held accountable if they've wronged us, or crossed a boundary.
- In healthy relationships, we take responsibility for our mistakes, AND we are able to hold our partner accountable for their mistakes.



EMOTIONAL MATURITY

3. Empathy

- **Definition:** Putting yourself in someone else's shoes.

Fostering empathy:

1. Discuss emotions openly and without judgment.
2. Practice active listening.
3. Paying attention to non-verbal communication.
4. Working to understand others (though you may not always agree).
5. Imagining oneself in the other's position.

Supports positive relationships by:

- Better understanding others' perspectives and responding appropriately.
- Better able to regulate one's own emotions.
- Promote pro-social behaviour.





EMOTIONAL MATURITY

4. *Honouring Yourself/Your Own Feelings*

- Self-reflection...
 - Why do you like this person?
 - How do they make you feel? etc...
- Understanding fear-based decisions vs. love-based decisions...
 - Are you with this person because you want to be? Or...
 - Did you agree to it out as a result of peer pressure, or another 'fear-based' reason?





EMOTIONAL MATURITY

5. *Coping Strategies*

- *With relationships, come inevitable ups & downs...*
- *Do you have well-established coping strategies?*

E.g.

- *Journaling*
- *Listening to music*
- *Support networks outside of relationship*
- *Mindful movement*

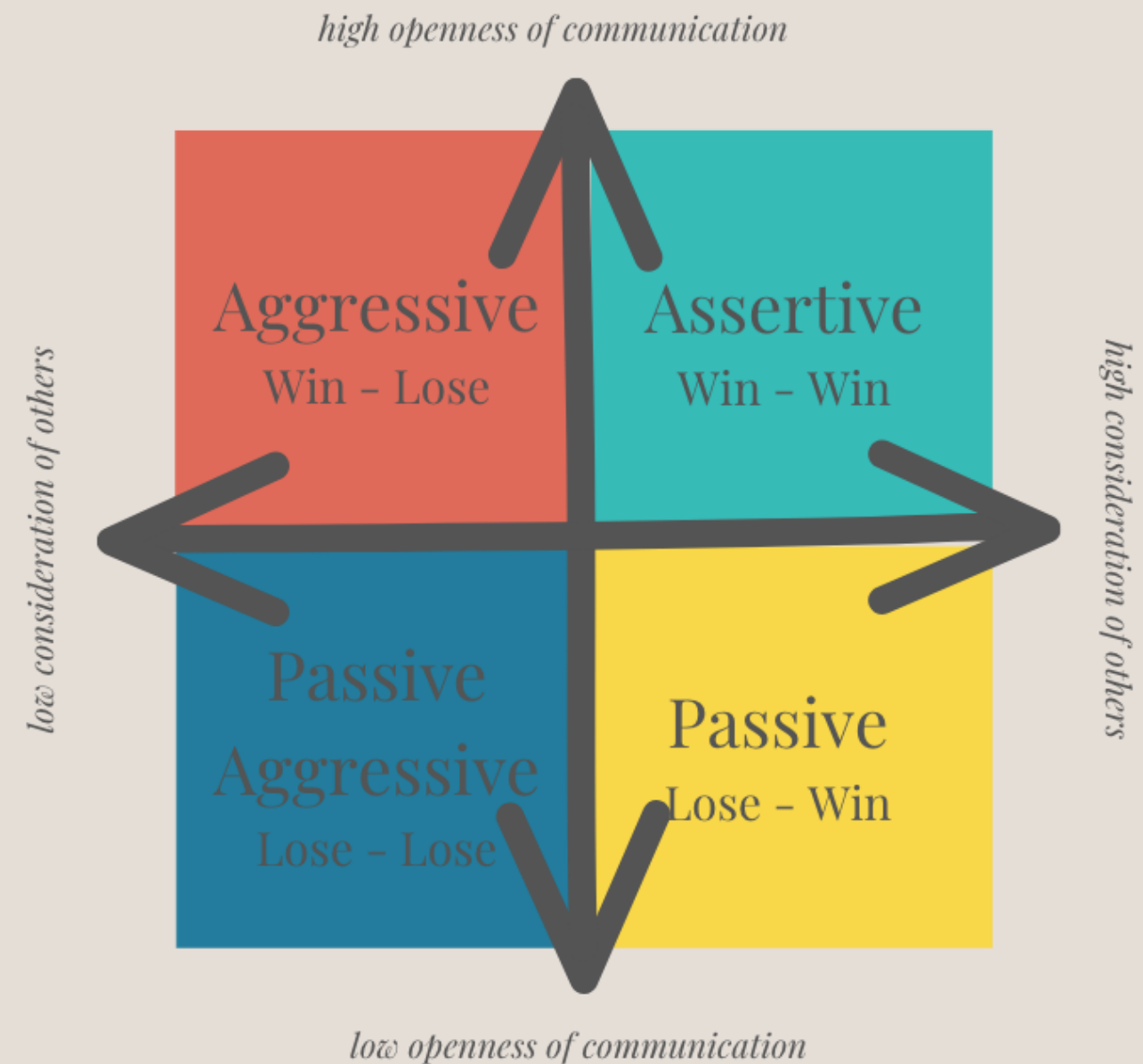




EMOTIONAL MATURITY

6. *Conflict Resolution skills*

- Assertive Communication
- Active Listening
 - & nonverbal communication skills
- Self-regulation skills
 - Remaining calm and respectful...
- Knowing what battles to 'choose', what we should 'let go', and what we shouldn't...
 - Clarification around values...





EMOTIONAL MATURITY



7. Knowing When to Ask for Help

- Clear understanding of what positive supports to reach out to.
- Making ourselves available (as much as possible)
 - Nonjudgmental conversations
 - Putting ourselves in the teen's shoes
 - Open-ended questions
 - Questions that cannot be answered with just a "yes" or a "no".



UNDERSTANDING OF SEX & INTIMACY

Sexual health knowledge

- Communication with youth
- Sex
- Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)
- Birth Control
- Pregnancy
- Pornography



UNDERSTANDING OF SEX & INTIMACY

Communication with Youth

- 'The Talk' is not a one-time event!
- Focus on values.
- Be open and honest – *if you don't know an answer to a question, that's O.K.!*
 - There's nothing wrong with not knowing, and re-directing them to a professional (e.g. nurse).
- Open-ended questions foster better connection.
- Don't assume the child/youth's sexual identity.

UNDERSTANDING OF SEX & INTIMACY

Sex - STIs - Birth Control - Pregnancy - Pornography

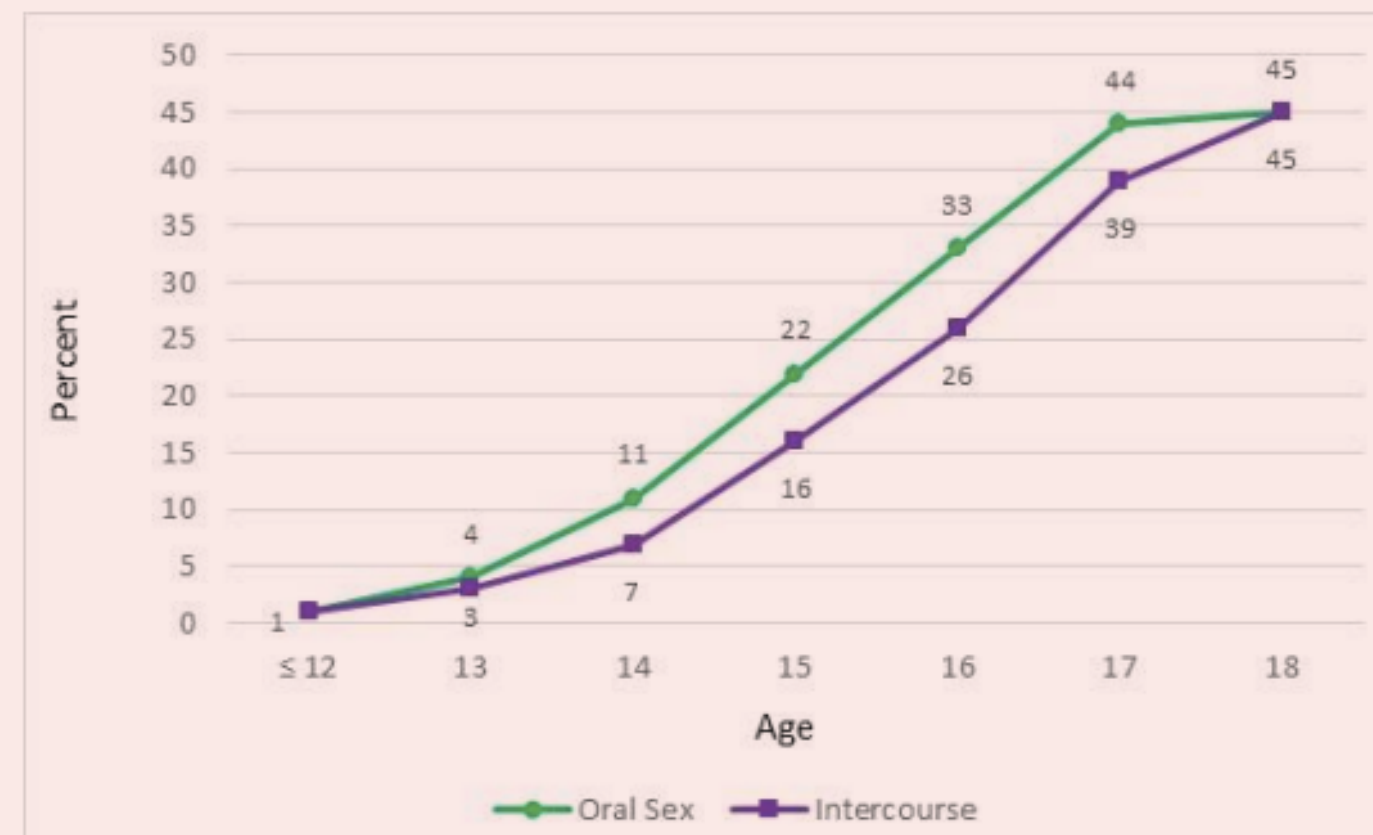
- Know and share the basics:
 - Different definitions of sex...
 - What can lead to pregnancy and STIs...
 - Discuss condoms and birth control...
 - Discuss different ways one can get STIs...
 - Discuss pornography and misconceptions it can generate...



UNDERSTANDING OF SEX & INTIMACY

Statistics - Alberta Health Services

Figure 1. Percent of 12 to 18 Year-Olds Ever Having Oral Sex or Intercourse



Source: McCreary Centre Society, 2015, p. 11

UNDERSTANDING OF SEX & INTIMACY

Statistics - Alberta Health Services

**Table 1. Contraceptive Method Used During Last Intercourse:
2006, 2010, 2014 Comparisons**

Contraceptive Method	Grade 9 2006 data		Grade 10 2006 data		Grades 9 &10 2010 data		Grades 9 & 10 2014 data	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Condoms	58%	52%	47%	40%	71%	70%	65%	60%
Birth Control Pills	26%	36%	25%	33%	39%	48%	44%	57%
Withdrawal	7%	9%	8%	14%	19%	21%	Not available	Not available
Some Other method	3%	2%	2%	4%	6%	3%	23%	21%
No Method/Unsure	39%	39%	47%	43%	20%	10%	18%	14%

Health Behaviour in School Aged Children Study (2008, 2011, 2015)
Sources: Boyce, King, & Roche, 2008; Freeman et al., 2011; Freeman et al., 2015

UNDERSTANDING CONSENT



Legal Definitions

Age of Consent

Teaching Youth about Consent

Digital Consent



UNDERSTANDING CONSENT

Consent - Legal Definitions...

- Consent is defined in Canada's Criminal Code in s. 273.1(1), as **the voluntary agreement to engage in the sexual activity in question.**





UNDERSTANDING CONSENT

The Criminal Code also says there is no consent when:

- Someone says or does something that shows they are not consenting to an activity.
- Someone says or does something to show they are not agreeing to continue an activity that has already started
- someone is incapable of consenting to the activity, because, for example, they are unconscious
- the consent is a result of a someone abusing a position of trust, power or authority
- someone consents on someone else's behalf.





UNDERSTANDING CONSENT

+ A person cannot say they mistakenly believed a person was consenting if:

- that belief is based on their own intoxication; or
- they were reckless about whether the person was consenting or;
- they chose to ignore things that would tell them there was a lack of consent; or
- they didn't take proper steps to check if there was consent.





UNDERSTANDING CONSENT

Age of sexual consent in Canada is **16 years old** so long as there is no:

- Power differential (e.g. with a teacher or coach)
- Pornography involvement
- Prostitution

Close-in-Age Exemption #1:

People aged 14-15 can consent with others <5 years older than them.

Close-in-Age Exemption #2:

People aged 12-13 can consent with others <2 years old than them.

**** Anyone <12 years old cannot give consent.*

**** It is ALWAYS illegal to engage in sexual activity without someone's consent (or with someone who cannot consent).*





UNDERSTANDING CONSENT

- Teach your child/youth about FRIES →
- Consent is ALWAYS required – especially in romantic relationships!





UNDERSTANDING CONSENT

How to ask for consent:

- “Would it be okay with you if... ?”
- “I’ve always wanted to try ___ what do you think?”
- “This feels good for me, does it feel good for you?”
- “Are you comfortable with this?”

UNDERSTANDING CONSENT

Digital consent: a way to refer to sexual consent that happens through screens.

- Consent should be an ongoing process when communicating digitally.

How do we practice it?

- By asking permission before sending explicit messages.
- By respecting others' decisions once you ask.
- Practicing more generally.../outside of sexual context.



UNDERSTANDING CONSENT

Statistics Canada (2022):

- From 2014 to 2020, almost half (48%) of all youth victims of non-consensual distribution of intimate images were victimized by an
 - intimate partner (28%)
 - friend (21%),
 - casual acquaintance (36%)
- Most victims of this crime (86%) were girls aged 12 to 17.

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

The Basics...



TALKING OPENLY AND
HONESTLY WITH EACH
OTHER.

VALUING EACH OTHER'S
FEELINGS AND NEEDS.



SUPPORTING EACH OTHER'S HOBBIES,
CAREERS, AND INTERESTS.



HONORING EACH OTHER'S
BOUNDARIES, NO MATTER WHAT.



BUILDING EACH OTHER UP.

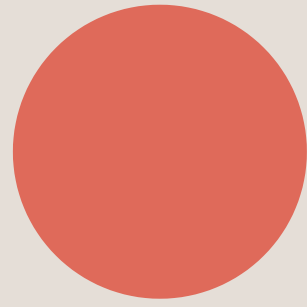
LISTENING TO EACH OTHER.



COMPROMISING.

GIVING EACH OTHER
SPACE.





TOXIC/ABUSIVE PARTNERSHIPS

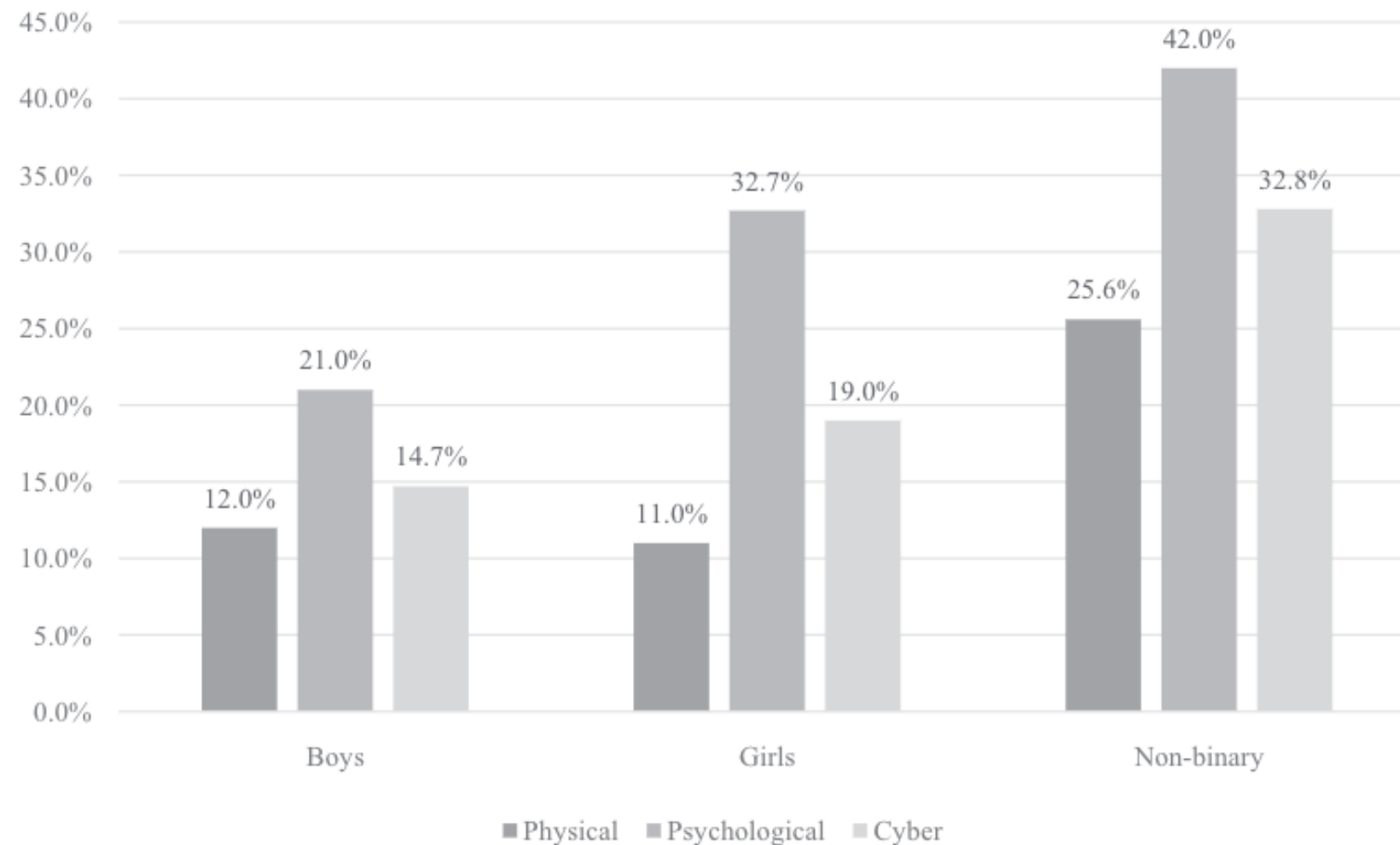
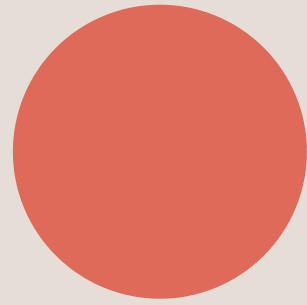


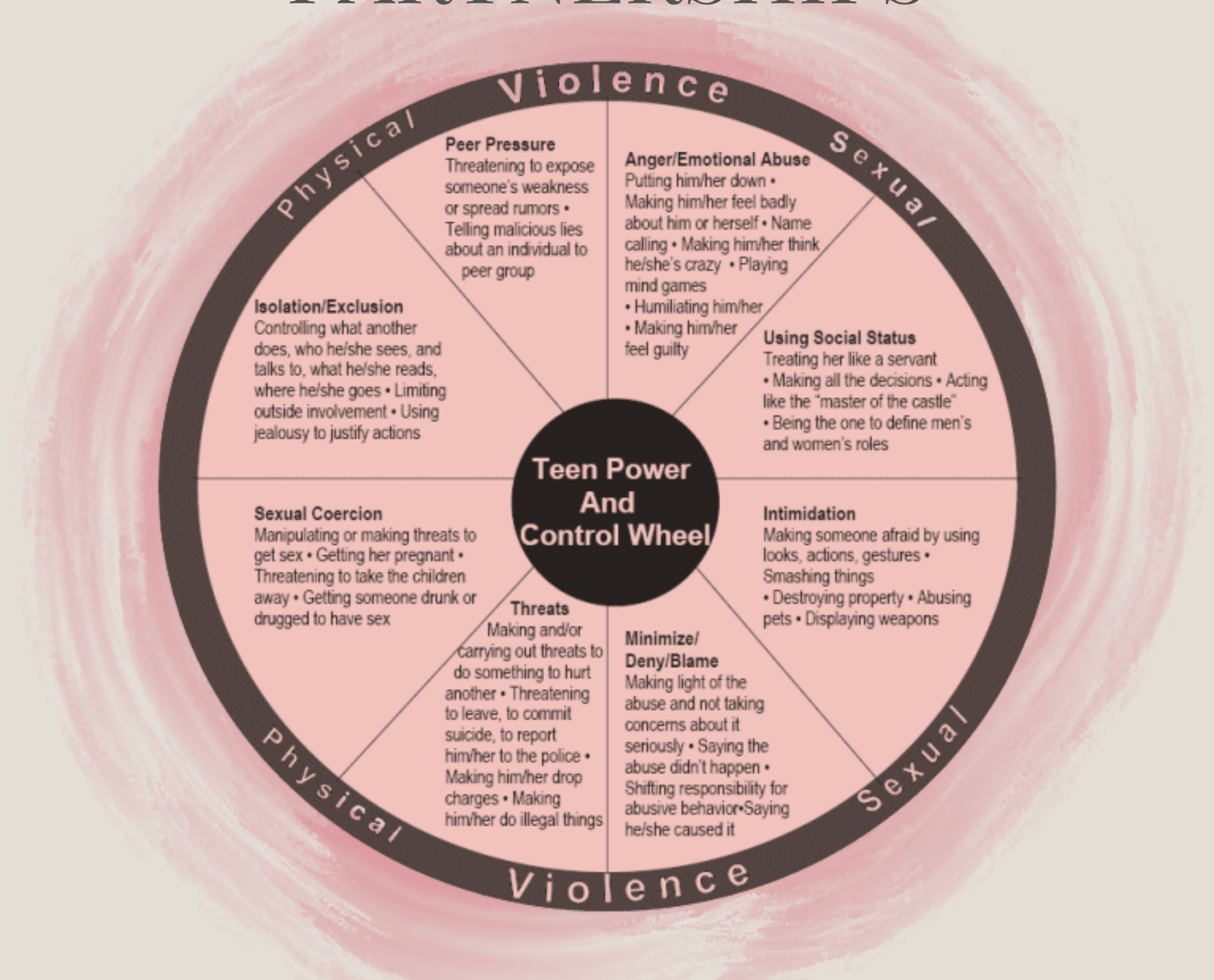
Figure 1. Victimization by Gender, Among Those with Dating Experience.

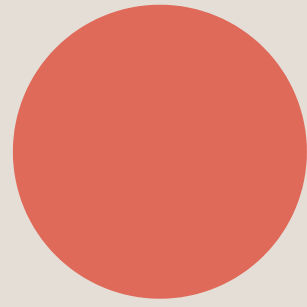
Exner-Cortens, Baker, & Craig (2021)

- Canadian youth in grade 9/10; average age 15
- 1 in 3 youth reported physical, psychological, and/or cyber dating violence
- Most common forms of violence experienced:
 - Psychological (27.8%)
 - Cyber (17.5%)
 - Physical (11.8%)
- Gender differences



TOXIC/ABUSIVE PARTNERSHIPS





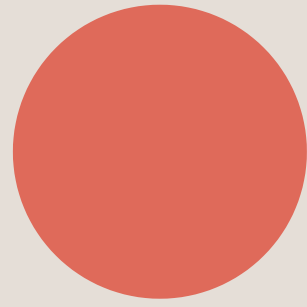
TOXIC/ABUSIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Types of abuse:

- Physical
- Emotional & Verbal
- Sexual
- Financial
- Digital
- Stalking

+ Apps to know about





TOXIC/ABUSIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Physical abuse:

- More complex than battering. Other types:
 - Shoving
 - Grabbing
 - Driving recklessly...
- Rarely occurs on its own.
- Often develops gradually.
- Challenge gender stereotypes.

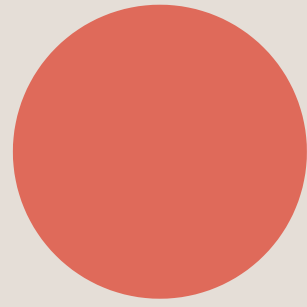


TOXIC/ABUSIVE PARTNERSHIPS



Emotional and Verbal Abuse

- Emotional abuse involves controlling another person by using emotions to criticize, embarrass, shame, blame, or otherwise manipulate them.
- Can take several different forms:
 - Accusations of cheating.
 - Constant 'check-ins' or 'proof' of location.



TOXIC/ABUSIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Sexual abuse:

- Any time consent is not given...
 - Remind youth that sexual abuse can absolutely happen in relationships!
 - Remember **FRIES**
- Takes many forms in relationships:
 - Partner sharing intimate images without consent.
 - Coercion (e.g. threatening to expose intimate images).
 - Not being informed of unsafe sex.
 - Not being informed of known STIs.
 - Forced to watch sexual material.

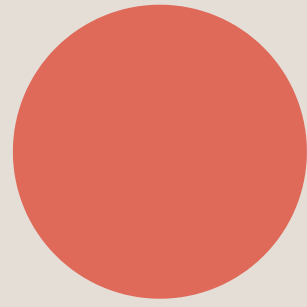




TOXIC/ABUSIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Financial abuse:

- Forbidding one's partner to work, or sabotaging work opportunities.
- Controlling how money is spent or not spent.
- Withholding money or giving an 'allowance'.
- Using or manipulating partner's resources.



TOXIC/ABUSIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Digital abuse:

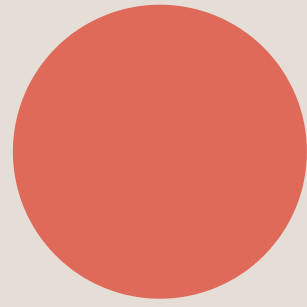
- The use of technologies such as texting and social networking to bully, harass, stalk or intimidate a partner.
- Forms:
 - Partner determining who one can/cannot be friends with on social media.
 - Sending negative, insulting, or threatening messages through various platforms.
 - Uses Apps with 'location sharing' features to always 'keep tabs'.
 - Steals or insists one gets account passwords, log-in info, etc.
 - Constantly looks through one's phone.



TOXIC/ABUSIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Stalking:

- "A pattern of behavior directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for the person's safety or the safety of others; or suffer substantial emotional distress" (stalkingawareness.org)
- Forms:
 - Physically following someone wherever they go.
 - Sending persistent texts, gifts, messages on social media, etc.
 - Damaging personal property.
 - Using technology (e.g. Snap Chat) to monitor whereabouts.
 - Showing up at one's workplace, school, etc.
 - Spreads rumours or false information.



TOXIC/ABUSIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Apps to know about...

- Yubo (formerly "Yellow")
- Wink
- Spotafriend
- Chat & Date (formerly "Hot or Not")
- MeetMe





BEING PRESENT

Mindful parenting:

- Self-reflection, self-care & self-regulation.
- Fostering *our* emotional maturity, too!
- Recognizing red flags.
- Additional support/resources.



BEING PRESENT

Self-reflection, self-care, & self-regulation...

- Self-care is the practice of deliberately taking care of one's own mental, emotional, and physical health.
- Self-care helps us:
 - Re-focus on what's important
 - Manage stress better
 - Increase self-awareness
 - Self-regulate





BEING PRESENT

Foster our own emotional maturity...

- Delayed gratification
- Accountability
- Empathy
- Honouring your own feelings (and trusting your gut!)
- Coping strategies
- Conflict resolution skills
- Knowing when to ask for help

○



BEING PRESENT

Recognizing red flags...

- Unexplained changes in behaviour.
 - Changes in grades, attendance, interests, etc.
- Isolation from former friends.
- Name-calling or belittling from a dating partner.
- Unexplained bruises or injuries.
- Showing signs of anxiety or depression.
- In constant contact with a dating partner.



Additional supports & resources...

- <https://thatsnotcool.com/>
- <https://www.loveisrespect.org/>
- <https://www.breakthecycle.org/>
- <https://www.joinonelove.org/>
- <https://www.alberta.ca/family-violence-find-supports>

○



Be Brave Bridge Supporting children and families waiting for help.

The Be Brave Bridge is a comprehensive online program that connects specialized counsellors and coaches with children, teens and parents impacted by child sexual abuse who might not otherwise receive timely mental health support.

Every year Little Warriors' Be Brave Ranch welcomes nearly 100 sexually abused children and teens from across Canada to receive intensive, specialized treatment for child sexual abuse. But with the increasing number of kids waiting to receive support services, the need for additional support became very apparent. That is why we have developed the Be Brave Bridge.

Designed with significant input from past parents/caregivers and many leading academic and clinical experts who specialize in child sexual abuse, the Be Brave Bridge Online Program helps children overcome the devastating effects of child sexual abuse and change the trajectory of their lives.

The Be Brave Bridge Online Programs teach and support participants through reading, exercises to complete, interactive reflection, video education and ongoing video and phone coaching.

Online Parent/Caregiver Interactive Program for parents/caregivers of children or adolescents who have been sexually abused.

Online Adolescent Interactive Program for teens ages 13-16 who have been sexually abused.

Online Child and Supportive Caregiver Program for children ages 8-12 who have been sexually abused to take with their parent or supportive caregiver.

"It is hard to put in words how isolated and alone I started to feel as a mom. The Bridge program provided connection with a coach who validated my feelings while teaching me about trauma, parenting strategies, coping skills and self-care. I had so many questions, and even though I was trying to be brave for my daughter, I was scared too. Little Warriors and the Bridge Program has helped my family heal and find peace." - Be Brave Bridge Participant

Please consider a donation to help us offer the Be Brave Bridge Online Program.

For more information visit:
littlewarriors.ca/be-brave-bridge/

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Be Brave
Bridge

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- <https://terracentre.ca/>
- <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/teen-dating-violence/resources>
- <https://littlewarriors.ca/bridge-online-programs/>