

Talk to Your Teen about Dating

It is likely that your teen will have a dating relationship while in school. It can be a fun part of your teen's life. However, the American Academy of Pediatrics reports that 1 in 10 teens faces physical violence while on a date.

What is the best age for teens to begin dating? As a parent, *you* set the age and the rules. Rules should concern when, who and how your teen dates. Before your teen starts to date, discuss what makes dating relationships healthy and safe.

You are the best person to teach your teen to make wise decisions. In a healthy relationship, two people should be able to:

- Talk and listen to one another.
- Share decisions.
- Respect one another.
- Feel safe when they are together.
- Share thoughts and keep them private.
- Enjoy being together.
- Disagree without getting angry.
- Have other friendships without jealousy.

Dating may involve physical affection - hugs, kisses and holding hands. No one should never feel pressure to do anything they do not want to do.

Teens who date often want to spend all of their time together. However, you should encourage your teen to spend time with friends and family. These relationships are also very important.



When your teen shows an interest in dating:

- Ask her what she expects in the relationship.
- Invite his date to your home for a visit.
- Encourage her to get to know her date before going out alone. Talk on the phone. Talk at school or in a group.
- Suggest he double date or go with a group of friends.
- Give her skills to remove herself from a bad situation. Teach her how to say “no.”

Before your teen leaves on a date:

- Always know who is going and where he is going.
- Find out how she can be reached. Let her know how she can reach you.
- Remind him – no drugs or alcohol. Drugs and alcohol interfere with making good decisions.

Brought to you by Parent Help Line at HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital to help keep kids safe, healthy and happy.



Call the Parent Help Line. Help is just a phone call away.

1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889
10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week
www.parenthelpline.org

Revised 2017

