

BUILDING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships are never perfect; maintaining a strong one takes some work—by both people. It's not always easy, but it shouldn't feel like a chore. It's a good idea to keep some relationship basics in mind to keep things moving forward on a healthy track. Following these basics will help you and your boyfriend or girlfriend create a safe and happy relationship.

What do I need to know?

Everyone has a right to a safe and healthy relationship—one that is based on mutual honesty, trust, respect and open communication. Remember that a relationship consists of two people; both should always feel like an equal in the relationship and feel free to speak their mind. And it's not just about making sure you get your say; it's also about letting your partner know you're listening.

It's likely that arguments will happen from time to time and that you will disagree – this is normal. But how you choose to deal with your disagreements is what really counts. At the end of the day, you should feel happy not only in your relationship, but also with what you're getting out of and putting into it. Being aware of your own feelings and those of your partner's is a big part of making any relationship work.

What should I do?

The first step to creating a healthy relationship is making sure you both want and expect the same things—being on the same page is very important. The following tips will help you create and maintain a healthy relationship:

- Speak up when something's bothering you. It's always best to talk about it instead of holding it in.
- Respect your partner's wishes and feelings. Also, let them know you are making an effort.
- Find a way to compromise if you disagree on something.
- Conflicts should be solved together in a fair and rational way.
- Give your partner support and let them know when you need extra support yourself.
- Respect each other's privacy and space. Just because you're in a relationship doesn't mean you have to share everything and constantly be together.
- Be thoughtful. It can be easy to forget to say or do something nice. Even something small can make a big difference.

Remember that you have a right to a safe and healthy relationship, free from violence and free from fear.

If you want more information, you can contact us anonymously through the "Ask Anything" section of thesafespace.org.

