

Risk Factors & Warning Signs to Consider

Many of these factors increase the risk of violence in a relationship. It is helpful to consider all of these behaviors and experiences when beginning a relationship or if behaviors change in an established relationship.

If a partner...

Gets very serious with boyfriend/girlfriend very quickly in relationships

Was abused by parent or grew up in home where parent was abused by other parent or parental figure

Comes on strong, is extremely charming and shows excessive affection as if he/she is the answer to all problems

Is extremely jealous, demands attention, or always accuses partner of infidelity

Isolates partner from support systems; won't let partner see friends, family or have activities outside the relationship; makes partner feel guilty or inattentive to the relationship if partner has different interests

Blames others for one's own misbehavior; conflict is always someone else's fault: "If you hadn't...then I wouldn't have..."

Abuses drugs or alcohol

Has unrealistic expectations, like expecting partner to meet all of one's needs, to provide constant support

Is overly sensitive—acts "hurt" when not getting one's way; takes offense when others disagree with an opinion; constantly feels persecuted

Has ever been cruel to animals; has ever been abusive to children or other family members

Has ever hit a boyfriend/girlfriend or spouse

Has ever threatened violence, even if the threat didn't seem serious; has ever used weapons to intimidate

Calls partner names, puts him/her down or curses and yells at him/her; makes fun of him/her in public

Is extremely moody, switching quickly from being nice to angry; quickly apologizes for abusive behavior

If male, believes women are inferior and should obey men; assumes primary role in all decisions affecting both

Is intimidating—exhibits threatening body language, punches walls, slams doors, breaks objects, or drives recklessly

Holds partner against his/her will to keep partner from walking away, or locks partner out of house or car

Makes all financial decisions; insists on paying or demands money from partner; doesn't consider partner's input in decision-making; makes partner accountable for all money spent

Makes unflattering statements about the physical appearance of partner or constantly sexualizes partner's appearance; tells partner what to wear or not to wear or determines how "attractive" a partner can present

Pressures partner for sexual attention regardless of partner's mood or preference; makes partner feel guilty or insufficient for not meeting sexual expectations