

PEERS AGAINST VIOLENCE

PAVE

TIPS FOR TALKING TO YOUR

11-14
YEAR OLDS

ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

REFLECT ON YOUR OWN VALUES BEFORE YOU TALK

Checking in about your own values before you begin this conversation can help you engage with your child. Thinking about this can help you explain your reasoning and give you examples to back it up.

TALK ABOUT THE BIG PICTURE

Dating can be viewed as the ultimate romantic experience. You don't have to squash that notion, but it is important to be realistic that relationships can be imperfect. Let them know that, while all couples may disagree at times, violence is never acceptable.

ENCOURAGE ASSERTIVENESS

Help your child learn how to communicate their feelings and opinions by stating them clearly. This skill can help them express themselves in situations where they feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

PROMOTE OPENNESS

The exchanging and keeping of secrets can feel like a sign of trust in an adolescent relationship. Remind them that strength does not mean dealing with everything on their own, and they can rely on the adults in their lives if they need to.

BE WILLING TO LISTEN

Let them take the lead in the conversation and if they raise ideas that you don't agree with, practice your poker face. Larger conversations can start as an offhand remark.

**Learn more about
creating healthy
relationships:**

**www.reachma.org
info@reachma.org
781.891.0724**

**HOTLINE
800.899.4000**



Developed by REACH
Beyond Domestic Violence

DON'T MULTITASK

When they talk, give them all your attention. If you really can't talk at that moment let them know that you want to talk at a later time and schedule that time right then. Be sure to keep that time to talk, even if they forget about it.

START THE CONVERSATION

If you feel awkward bringing it up, they definitely will. Don't let that awkwardness stop you from talking.

DON'T HAVE "THE TALK"

Instead, have lots of little conversations. Chatting often both reinforces your family's values and shows them that you have an interest in their world.

WHERE'S THE DIGITAL LINE?

Many young people are engaging in relationships through the use of technology. Help your child think about what digital boundaries they want to set in relationships by modeling your own digital use and ask them questions to help them think critically about what they are comfortable with when it comes to communicating with technology. Consider establishing time when everyone in the family is not using digital devices to encourage them to take breaks from being in contact with their partner or friends.

MAKE SURE YOU KNOW WHAT THEY ARE TALKING ABOUT

If you're not sure, ask. When you understand what they are asking, give an honest answer and seek solutions together. "I don't know" is an acceptable answer when it's followed by "let's find out."