

Dating Violence: Early Warning Signs

EXTREME JEALOUSY

Everyone gets jealous sometimes; the key word is "extreme." Both boys and girls can become extremely jealous. Signs of extreme jealousy are when your partner gets mad if you talk to other people, have good friends, or express warm feelings for anyone else. The jealous person may withdraw, sulk, or become angry and abusive.

POSSESSIVENESS

This becomes a danger sign when someone treats you as if you are a belonging. The possessive person will not want you to share your time or give your attention to anyone else.

CONTROLLING ATTITUDE

This happens when one partner completely rules the relationship and makes all the decisions. Your point of view is not important. Often the controlling partner tries to tell the other how to dress, who to talk to, and where to go.

LOW SELF-ESTEEM

People with low self-esteem don't like themselves very much. In a dating relationship a person with low self-esteem may say, "I'm nothing without you," or "You are my world." These are great lines for songs but not for real life.

UNPREDICTABLE MOOD SWINGS

Nobody stays in the same mood all the time, but a dramatic shift from being jealous, controlling, or angry to being sweet, charming, and loving is another danger sign.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE

Many of the reported violent episodes in dating relationships are carried out when one or both partners have been drinking or doing drugs. Alcohol and drug use lower a person's self control but are not the direct cause of violence.

EXPLOSIVE ANGER

Even if you have never seen someone being aggressive toward another person, watch out for people who seem to get too angry. These people may hit walls or lockers, yell loudly, call names, or actually threaten others with violence.

Does Your Partner...

- Threaten to hurt/hit you?
- Call you names and put you down?
- Say things to frighten you?
- Control what you do?
- Threaten to take your children away?
- Destroy your property?
- Get angry when you talk or visit your friends or relatives?
- Take your money?
- Slap you, punch you or push?
- Force you into sexual activity against your will?