



GCAPP PARENT TOOLKIT:

Talking to Kids about Healthy Relationships

Children experience many types of relationships throughout their lives from those with family members and teachers to friendships and, eventually, romantic relationships.

Helping kids build strong, healthy friendships early on lays the foundation for respectful and supportive romantic relationships in the future.

What Does A Healthy Relationship Look Like

Here are some key messages you can share to help your child understand what a healthy relationship looks like whether it's a friendship or something more:

Disagreements are normal.

It's okay to disagree with someone, but how you handle it matters. It's never acceptable to call names, bully, or be disrespectful. Kindness and listening go a long way.

Relationships should be equal.

No one person should be making all the decisions or choosing every activity. Both people should have a say, and both should feel heard and valued.

Bullying and harassment are never okay.

If you see someone being treated poorly, it's important to speak up. If it feels unsafe to confront the person directly, tell a trusted adult right away.

There's no rush to be in a relationship.

There can be a lot of pressure to start dating, but it's better to wait than to be with someone who doesn't treat you well or makes you feel bad about yourself. You deserve to feel happy, respected, and excited to be around the people you're close to.

Consent is essential.

You should never feel pressured to do anything sexual that you're uncomfortable with, even if you've done it before or are in a relationship. Likewise, never pressure someone else. If someone seems unsure or hesitant, respect their boundaries and stop. Remember, true consent can only happen when someone is sober and free to make their own choice.

TIP

The best way to teach kids about healthy relationships is to model them yourself. Show what respect, communication, compromise, and healthy boundaries look like in your own relationships. If you have strong friendships, share what makes them meaningful and positive.

SOURCE:

• Talkingtokids.org

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