

## Healthy Relationships – Factsheet for Young people

When we talk about relationships we don't just speak about the romantic kind but actually all the different types of relationships we encounter every day like friendships, family, community and school. Healthy Relationships take time to get right! The most important qualities that show us a relationship is healthy are that both parties feel they can **trust** each other and they are **respected by each other**. You should **feel loved, safe** and **free** to be yourself.

### What makes a healthy relationship?

**Communication** is a key part to building a healthy relationship. You should be able to **express your thoughts** or feelings and feel listened to. You should not feel afraid or unable to speak up for fear of being put down or feeling like your opinion doesn't matter, because it does. Likewise you should be able to **listen and respect others** views and opinions. Often when communication stops this is when relationships can break down and arguments can arise.

**Compromise:** Disagreements are a natural part of healthy relationships, but it's important that you find a way to compromise if you disagree on something. Try to solve conflicts in a fair and rational way. Even when things are difficult a healthy relationship is being able to talk things through and come to a compromise or agreement to move forward.

**Trust** is something that two people build together that becomes stronger over time. Trust is very important in healthy relationships because when it is lost being in that relationship can cause paranoia, anxiety and feeling on edge. It is important that when we feel our trust may have been tested or broken that we are able to talk our feelings through with the individual and decide whether we can move forward or whether it is better to go separate ways.

**Build Each Other Up.** Be encouraging and supportive. Life can be full of bumps when the people around us build us up, encourage us and offer us support it makes it easier to deal with these bumps. The words we use have an impact on the people around us. Think about how you've felt when someone has put you down and how you've felt when you've been encouraged. Spread positivity, the littlest comment can have the biggest impact on others.

Spend **quality time** together and take **responsibility** for your own actions

**Respect Each Other's Privacy.** Just because you're in a relationship whether it be romantic or a friendship that doesn't mean you have to share everything and constantly be together. Healthy relationships also mean being allowed the space to be by yourself, hang out with different people or explore different interests.

**Respect** everyone equally and for who they are - respect and value them. Let them know you are making an effort to keep their ideas in mind. Mutual respect is essential in maintaining healthy relationships.

The more **open** and **honest** and connected the communication is, the healthier the relationship tends to be.





**The skills to build healthy relationships!** - Use these skills in your own relationships:

**Positive Communication** – is about **listening** when someone is talking to you and let them finish before responding. Start discussions with a **positive** statement and always **make time** to talk with those who are important in your life!

**Know your emotional triggers** – when a situation makes you angry, **talk** about your anger find other ways to vent **i.e.** exercise, music, art etc. Always **Calm Down** before reacting in anger - count to 10, take 3 deep breaths, or go outside. Sometimes the best and healthiest thing we can do is walk away allowing ourselves to calm down before responding.

**Problem Solving** is about **talking** about issues openly - compromise will be an important piece of solving many problems involving others.

**Self-Respect** is about believing in yourself that **you are valuable and you matter**. As you deal with peer pressure, relationship issues and more, self-respect will help you **set firm boundaries**. It involves a level of **assertiveness** (not aggression) as well, which helps you to **learn** how to ask for what you want **clearly** and **respectfully**. Having value in yourself and believing you matter will also help you to develop an emotional resilience and an ability to know when it is healthier to end a relationship rather than continuing. Be aware of your own emotional **well-being**, if the relationship is causing you stress, anxiety or you can't trust them what benefit is it adding to you? If the time you spend together is more of a negative experience than a positive one, it is maybe time to evaluate the relationship.

**If you want to talk about anything in this factsheet or any issues you may be having whether it be with family, friends or in a relationship the organisations below are FREE and confidential:**



**Kooth:** Online counselling and emotional well-being platform for children and young people.

[www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)



**Childline:** Get support. You can contact Childline about anything.

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)