

# Tips for Breaking Up Safely

It is always difficult-and can be dangerous-to break up with a person who is abusing you. The following are some suggestions about ways to keep safe.

## Take a risk assessment.

A risk assessment prepares you for the possible outcomes of breaking up, and it helps you to stay safe. To assess your risks, answer the following questions:

- What was the first incident of abuse?
- What was the worst incident of abuse?
- What might happen if I break up?
- Do I need to change my daily schedule or routine so I won't run into this person?
- Who are the people who can help me through this?
- What can I do to stay safe?

## Break up in a public place.

Being in a public place - like school, in a restaurant, or at the mall-may keep the abuser from hurting you. Or, if an abusive incident should arise, others may intervene or simply serve as witnesses. Finally, don't rely on the abuser to drive you home afterwards. Make sure to have alternative transportation.

## Don't have contact after the relationship has ended.

You will probably have mixed feelings about the breakup. But it is very important to end all contact to help you heal from the relationship and to keep you safe. Reach out to friends and family for support.

## Inform an adult if you are concerned about your safety.

Sometimes an adult is needed—a counselor, mentor, teacher, parent, coach, security guard or police officer—to help to keep you safe.

## Take all threats seriously.

Abusers often follow through on their threats. It is especially important to pay attention to threats of suicide or homicide (Has the abuser threatened to kill you? Has s/he threatened to kill his/herself if you leave?) Tell a trusted adult-like a parent or a teacher immediately.

## Reach out to community resources.

A counselor is available 24-hours a day to listen to your concerns and answer questions.

## Dating Abuse Prevention Program

DAPP is based in Morris County, NJ and provides help for teens, young adults, family and friends. A counselor is available 24 hours a day to listen to concerns and answer questions. The caller can remain anonymous. Services for teens are free and confidential. DAPP is a program of JBWS. For more information please:

Call 973-267-7520 Ext 136 or visit [www.jbws.org](http://www.jbws.org).

**24-hour helpline 973-267-4763**

## Helpful National Resources

- ▶ Liz Claiborne  
[www.loveisnotabuse.com](http://www.loveisnotabuse.com)
- ▶ Choose Respect  
[www.chooserespect.org](http://www.chooserespect.org)
- ▶ See It and Stop It  
[www.seeitandstopit.org](http://www.seeitandstopit.org)
- ▶ Family Violence Prevention Fund  
[www.endabuse.org](http://www.endabuse.org)  
English and Spanish
- ▶ Teen Relationships Website  
[www.teenrelationships.org](http://www.teenrelationships.org)
- ▶ Equality Rules - Kids/Teens  
[www.equalityrules.ca](http://www.equalityrules.ca)
- ▶ National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline  
1-866-331-9474 or  
[www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org)

## CHOICES

is a counseling group for male teens, ages 12–17, who have begun using abuse in relationships and want to learn skills for maintaining healthy relationships. It is sponsored by the JBWS and based in Morris County, NJ.

Call: 973-539-7801