

# THE RESPECT CHALLENGE

## Talking to Your Young Teen About Friendship and Bullying

*Does your young teen know how to be a good friend? If not, you can help. By helping your young teen learn to be a good friend you'll be helping him or her develop healthy relationships now and in the future. Here are some key points to cover with your teen:*

**Helping a Friend:** *What can you do if you hear a friend being disrespectful towards a friend or someone they're dating?*

Talking Points:

- If you witness one of your friends being disrespectful, don't join in on it. Instead, call your friend out.
- If you witness a situation that makes you feel unsafe, don't intervene directly. Ask someone you trust, such as me, a coach, teacher, or school counselor, for help.
- If you think someone you know might be in an abusive relationship, let them know there are people they can talk to and resources that can help, like a trusted adult or the Teen Dating Abuse Helpline [loveisrespect.org](http://loveisrespect.org) / 1-866-331-9474 / 1-866-331-8453 TTY

**Bullying:** *What can you do if you see someone being bullied? Who should you inform when you see bullying?*

Talking Points:

- If you witness bullying, remember you can be an upstander and speak up and/or reach out to the target of the bullying.
- You can sit or walk with the person being targeted and help him or her connect with others.
- Tell a parent, teacher or trusted adult if you witness bullying.
- Visit [SchoolClimate.org](http://SchoolClimate.org) to learn more about bullying.

**Positive Problem Solving:** *How do you feel when you become more aggressive during a game, or an argument? When does aggression cross the line? How can you communicate respectfully during a disagreement?*

Talking Points:

- There is an important difference between asserting an opinion and becoming overly aggressive and potentially threatening.
- Use language and actions that do not cause or have the intent to cause harm.
- When problems come up in relationships, it is NEVER okay to use violence or threats to control someone.
- Everyone has different personal boundaries. It's important to respect boundaries and to treat a person how they want to be treated.

**Alternatives to Peer Pressure:** *Are your friends dating? How can you respond to pressure from a friend? How can you respond to pressure from someone you're dating?*

Talking Points:

- You have the power to choose the type of friendships and relationships you want.
- Even though a friend, boyfriend, or girlfriend may be comfortable with certain experiences and certain choices, it doesn't mean you need to be.
- It's important to be yourself. If you don't feel comfortable, let your friend, boyfriend or girlfriend know. Real friends will like the real you.
- It is never okay to pressure, intimidate, control or threaten someone.
- Trust yourself to make sure you feel respected, safe and comfortable.