

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS STALL SEAT JOURNAL VOLUME 16, ISSUE 14

OFFICE OF HEALTH PROMOTION
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Hoos in the House?

The people you spend time with impact your well-being. They can bring out your best, make you feel good about yourself, and support you in becoming the person you want to be. You also have an opportunity to make the UVa community the safest, most supportive environment possible by checking in to make sure others are okay.

What can healthy friendships and romantic relationships look like?

- Feeling good about oneself with the other person
- Respecting each other's feelings, opinions, and interests
- Mutual understanding, encouragement, and appreciation
- Celebrating each other's strengths and accepting weaknesses
- Dealing with change and conflict in constructive ways
- Apologizing when wrong
- Maintaining relationships with other friends and family too

Healthy relationships vary depending on culture and other factors. This isn't a checklist - just some suggestions.

Conflict is a normal part of relationships, and even healthy relationships take work.

HOO KNEW?

95.7% of UVa students like when friends come to them to talk about their problems or concerns.*

HOO KNEW?

92.5% of UVa students intervene when they notice a problem situation.*

When You're Worried About a Friend

If you feel concerned about a friend's relationship, be an active bystander and check in:

- Focus on supporting your friend (make them feel safe and comfortable) and avoid arguing about their choices or behavior.
- Say things like, "I've noticed ___ and am concerned for your safety" and "I am here to support you now or in the future."
- Avoid judgmental statements, like, "You should dump them!" or "Can't you see they don't treat you well enough?", which might make your friend feel unheard or defensive.

If you think a friend may have experienced violence, try this:

- Ask what's wrong (even if they don't share, they know you care).
- Listen, believe them, and assure them they are not alone.
- Avoid minimizing their feelings or downplaying the seriousness of a situation.
- Encourage them to get professional support (see below).
- If you think someone is in immediate danger, call 911 (even if you aren't 100% sure).

Causes for concern: (even just one of these)

- Feeling less confident or liking oneself less with the other person
- When someone is controlling, puts their friend or partner down in front of others, or limits their friend's or partner's relationships with family and friends
- When someone makes threats, uses force or violence, or breaks things
- When someone makes repeated, unwanted attempts to contact someone else

If a friendship or romantic relationship feels unhealthy, you are free to end it or to get support for deciding what to do. You do not need to feel guilty for taking care of yourself.

Your role is to be a supportive friend, not a counselor. If a friend needs more than you are able to provide, that's okay - help connect them to other sources of care and continue to offer whatever support you are able. Take care of yourself, too. If feeling down about a friend, get the support you need.

Help establish positive culture norms at UVa! Together we can prevent violence. Sign up to attend Green Dot Bystander Training at notonourgrounds.virginia.edu/.

Resources for You and Friends

Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS): Support with relationships, concern for friends, or help resolving potentially unsafe situations. Afterhours support available.

Sexual Violence Education & Resources: virginia.edu/sexualviolence/ - Guidance for addressing relationship violence, including emergency resources.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): Call to see how CAPS can best support you. Afterhours support available.

Maxine Platzer Lynn Women's Center: Counseling plus gender violence and social change programming.

Madison House HELP Line: (434) 295-TALK - No issue is too big or too small. They're here to listen.

Community Resources:

Sexual Assault Advocacy Fund: (434) 327-1447 - Legal advocacy for survivors of sexual assault.

Sexual Assault Resource Agency (SARA): (434) 977-7273 - Free 24-hour support for survivors.

* From the Spring 2015 Health Survey with responses from 931 UVa students