

Professionals working with children and young people



As someone who works with young people, you are in a unique position to help them understand what a healthy relationship is.

You will also know the young people you work with and may often be the first person to spot the signs if something is wrong.

♥ Let's talk!

Relationships matter – young people need to be comfortable with the person they are speaking to and feel as though they can trust them.

Create an atmosphere and ethos to encourage young people to speak to someone they trust whenever they need to.

Conversations should take place somewhere that a young person has the confidence to speak freely without being overheard.

These conversation starters were designed with a group of young women and girls and are intended to provide a guide in having these conversations.

Help the young person feel comfortable – be friendly, approachable and let them know that they are not in any trouble.

Use positive language to help them feel at ease and be positive about themselves e.g. you deserve to be happy/safe.

Ensure that the young person knows reputable and safe resources and agencies that they can turn to for additional support.

Talk to the young person about confidentiality and let them know that you will only tell others about this if you are concerned about their safety or wellbeing.





♥ Conversation Starters

Everyone is different and how you approach these conversations will depend on you and the young person you are working with. Below are some conversation starters which you might find helpful.

Ask how they are feeling.

Ask what a healthy relationship means to them.

Ask about their friendships and relationships with others, and how they make them feel.

Talk about examples in films or TV of healthy and unhealthy relationships.

Let them know that you are there if they ever need to talk about something.

If you are worried about them, you might want to:

Ask if they feel happy and safe.

Let them know that they should feel respected and safe in their relationships – including friendships.

Reassure them that they have not done anything wrong.

Let them know where they can get help/what you will do next.

You should avoid simply telling them to end a relationship or giving ultimatums as this may mean that they shut off.

