



Elephant in The Room Q & A

Metro Tech High School
Fall 2022

****This document can also be accessed at www.bloom365.org/faqs**

Resources:

For additional resources, please visit bloom365.org/resources

<p>BLOOM365 HelpLine</p>	<p>For free, confidential support: Text/Call: 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) Monday-Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST)</p> <p>To reach a specific advocate directly, please feel free to contact our HelpLine and tell us who you would like to speak to.</p>
<p>Teen Lifeline</p>	<p>Text or call 602-248-TEEN (8336) for free, confidential support 24/7 relating to suicide, depression, bullying, or relationships.</p>
<p>National Teen Dating Violence Hotline</p>	<p>Text "LOVEIS" to 22522 24/7</p>
<p>National Domestic Violence Hotline</p>	<p>1-800-799-SAFE (7233)</p>
<p>National Sexual Assault Hotline</p>	<p>1-800.656.HOPE (4673)</p>
<p>Suicide Prevention Lifeline</p>	<p>1-800-273-TALK (8255)</p>

***Content Warning:** For some, Elephant in the Room Cards are places where they might disclose trauma, violence, or harm. We encourage you to proceed with caution if you have experienced power-based violence or abuse of any kind. If you need support, you can reach out to the Hotlines listed above.

Q: Student

A: BLOOM365 Advocate

Q: At what point is it considered abuse?

A: Thank you for reaching out to ask this important question! If you're unsure if a relationship is abusive, it can be helpful to look over the red flags checklist found [HERE](#) or in your workbook. It can also be helpful to look over the [Blooming and Wilting flowers](#) to help determine if someone is acting out of power and control. If you have additional questions or would like to talk about a specific situation, we encourage you to reach out to our HelpLine for free, anonymous, confidential support. We are here for you!

Q: Can anger lead to abuse?

A: Yes, although anger is a natural human emotion, sometimes anger can lead to abuse if someone directs their anger at someone else in an attempt to gain power and control over the other person. If you'd like to talk more about this, feel free to reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate in your classroom or at our HelpLine number listed above!

Q: Can a blooming flower lead to a wilting flower?

A: Sometimes healthy relationships can become unhealthy or abusive over time. It's common for healthy relationships to have some ups and downs, but not all relationships turn abusive or end because it is unhealthy. For more signs a relationship might be unhealthy or abusive, we encourage you to check out the red flags checklist found [HERE](#) and also the [Blooming and Wilting flowers](#). To talk more about this, feel free to reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate.

Q: Hope you have a great day, remember your worth should always be first

A: Thank you for this Blooming message! We hope you have a great day also!

Q: I had my ex-friend and never leaves me alone and tells me to "die"

A: We are so sorry to hear that you've had this experience with an ex friend. You deserve to be treated with kindness and respect in all relationships, including friendships. If you'd like to talk more about this situation, or if you still are experiencing this, we encourage you to reach out to a bloom365 advocate or a trusted adult for additional support. We are here for you!

Q: POV: your friends think you're joking when you vent

A: We are sorry you're going through this with your friends. We understand that it can feel lonely and dismissive when we share our feelings or experiences and our friends think it's a joke. If you're comfortable doing so, sometimes it can be helpful to start the conversation by asking, "Is it okay if I vent about some things to you?" so that our friends know we're serious, and what exactly we're expecting

from them as a response. It can also be helpful to specify, “I could really use advice,” or “I could really use someone to just listen to me.” If you’d like to talk more about this situation, or if you’d like an anonymous + confidential space to vent, feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at the number listed above. We are here for you!

Q: How do I get rid of my jealousy problems?

A: Jealousy is a natural, human emotion. Most humans have felt or experienced jealousy. It is not necessarily a bad thing, unless we act out based on our jealousy. Jealousy can become unhealthy or abusive when it is possessive, obsessive or controlling to the people in our lives. The first step is recognizing our jealous tendencies and addressing them with our partner or friends so that they know how we feel. You can communicate your feelings and concerns with your loved ones by using “I” statements. “I feel jealous when (situation), could you/we please (solution/compromise).” If you find that your feelings of jealousy are still hard to control despite open communication, it might be helpful to reach out for additional support from a trusted adult, an advocate, or mental health professional to identify additional coping skills. You can also reach out to our advocates at the HelpLine information above, we are here to support you!

Q: When I’m going through a tough time I need to be alone, how do I let the people around me know that I need me-time and I’m not just ignoring them? How can I learn to be more trusting and how to open up?

A: Opening up and trusting others can be a difficult thing to do, especially when you are not used to it. Being vulnerable with those close to us can take time and some practice. One way to become more comfortable with vulnerability is to share how you feel with others. Letting others know when you’re needing alone time can be a great way to share how you’re feeling and practicing vulnerability. This can look like saying, “hey, I’m going through a tough time right now and need some time to myself. I value our relationship and I’ll reach out once I’ve had some time to process.” Communicating openly about how we’re feeling and what we need allows for others to understand and respect our needs which can build trust and vulnerability. You are not alone in having these feelings! If you would like to talk more about this, our advocates are here to listen and support. Feel free to reach out to us at our HelpLine information above.

Q: I didn’t know coercion was a form of sexual violence. It’s happened to me many times

A: Thank you for trusting us with such a deeply personal experience. We are so sorry to hear that you have experienced this as often as you have. What you have experienced is not your fault. Acknowledging that you have gone through sexual violence can be a hard and traumatizing realization to come to. We encourage you to reach out to advocates at RAINN or bloom365 who can provide you with free, non-judgemental support and resources as you process this. You can find contact information in the resources table listed above. We are here for you!

Q: What can you do about toxic parents?

A: Being at home with parents who engage in toxic or other harmful behaviors can be a very stressful and sometimes isolating experience. We encourage anyone in this type of situation to reach out for

support and to take some time to find healthy coping skills or strategies that work for you. Spending time with those you love and trust and sharing what you're going through with them can make you feel more supported and less alone. Other coping skills like writing in a journal, yoga, joining a new sports team or club, or simply spending time outside can also be helpful. Our advocates are also here to offer support and additional resources. Please feel free to reach out to us at the information above.

Q: How do you become better for yourself & move on from a relationship? How can I become happy again w/ myself?

A: Losing someone you had a good connection with can be very painful. While ending a close relationship can be tough, it can be a great time for self-evaluation and growth. Giving yourself time to process feelings and emotions is important. It's also important to be kind to yourself and to be patient and give yourself time for your heart to heal. We all cope with things in different ways and at different speeds. Moving on and healing from a relationship is a personal journey that can look different for each person. Find what works for you, and always know BLOOM365 is here to support you if needed!

Q: Is the orange called orange because of the color orange or is the color orange called orange because of the fruit called orange?

A: Maybe it's both! 😊

Q: Staying quiet about what bothers me or my thoughts about things because its considered as "arguing" or "being annoying." How do you talk to someone without actually feeling like a burden?

A: Sharing how we're feeling with others can be a tough thing to do, particularly when our feelings have been dismissed in the past. Being vulnerable about our feelings with others can be a hard thing to do, and your feelings are important and valuable. Sometimes it can be helpful to talk about your feelings with someone you feel comfortable with but isn't too close to a situation, such as a trusted adult like a school counselor or advocate. You are not alone. There are people who are here to listen and support how you're feeling. If you would like to talk more about this with one of our bloom365 advocates, please feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673).

Q: How to start talking with your crush

A: This is a bit outside of our area of expertise, but we will try our best to answer! It can feel intimidating to talk to a crush. One of the best and easiest ways to start a conversation is with a hello! :) We encourage you to move at a pace that feels comfortable and safe for you, and also to respect the boundaries of your crush at the same time. If you'd like to talk more about a specific situation, feel free to reach out to our HelpLine for additional support.

Q: Why did the chicken cross the road?

A: To get the other side? 🐔

Q: How do you stop having trust issues in your relationship

A: It could be helpful to have an open and honest conversation with your partner about the trust issues that you are experiencing. This could look like using "I" statements to share how you both are feeling,

using active listening skills to better understand each other's perspective, and talking about ways you may be able to build up trust within your relationship. If you would like to talk more about this, please feel free to reach out to our advocates at the HelpLine information above.

Q: How to end a long abusive friendship?

A: Ending an abusive friendship can be a hard thing to do. You can end a friend in a way that makes you feel comfortable. "I statements" are an awesome tool for ending friendships or relationships, because they help you explain why you are choosing to end the relationship without placing blame on the other person. For example, you could say "I feel that our friendship isn't compatible anymore and I think we should go our separate ways." If you feel like the situation could become dangerous or even just too uncomfortable for you, you can do a couple of things-- you can make a safety plan to start with or you can have that conversation in a relatively public space like a park. Ultimately, your safety and comfort is the most important. If you would like to explore other options of ending a friendship or any other aspects of this, our bloom365 advocates are here to help. You can reach out to us at our HelpLine at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673).

Q: At home I'm having issues with arguing. My friendship of 6 years is fading away same way as my 1 year relationship. How can I cope without me having too suffering, having low energy, being too sensitive etc.

A: We are so sorry to hear that you are going through a tough time. Sharing about what we're going through with others and asking for support can be a vulnerable thing to do, we're glad that you reached out. Taking some time to explore coping strategies that work for you could be valuable. These could include activities such as writing in a journal, yoga, joining a new sports team or club, or simply spending time outside. If these feelings persist or if you find that you need additional support and/or guidance on coping, please reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate at the number listed above. We're here for you!

Q: What do I do if my partner is being sexually assaulted and I can't do anything to stop it?

A: We're so sorry to hear that your partner is experiencing sexual violence. We want to affirm that what your partner is going through is not their fault and they have done nothing to deserve that. We encourage your partner to reach out to a trusted adult or RAINN advocate to receive free, non-judgemental support and resources for navigating such a traumatic experience. Don't be discouraged if your partner is not ready to make the call. Remember the importance of not blaming the victim and understand there are a lot of barriers to receiving support. You can continue to let them know you are there for them, and that the RAINN hotline is available whenever they are ready to make the call. Our advocates are also here to offer support to you and your partner, please feel free to reach out to our advocates at the HelpLine information above. You both are not alone and we are here for you both!

Q: How do I fix the risk factors I'm experiencing

A: Thank you for reaching out and asking for support. Reaching out for support can be a scary thing to do and we're glad that you did. While there are things we can do for ourselves to lessen the impact of the risk factors we're experiencing like coping strategies, it can be helpful to reach out for additional support from others. This could be a trusted adult like a family member or counselor, an advocate, or mental

health professional. If you would like to talk more about receiving additional support or anything else regarding the risk factors you're going through, our advocates are here to listen and support you. You can reach out to us at our HelpLine information located in the chart above.

Q: What should I do if my best friend won't stop going back to a toxic friend, which has a negative impact on our friendship? It hurts having to deal with that every few months, he just keeps the cycle going, keeps hurting me, and he knows it. Now he keeps asking if we're still friends. I'm not sure what to do and I'm scared

A: It sounds like you really care about your best friend and his safety. It can be difficult to watch our friend go through a relationship of any kind that is abusive or toxic. We should first understand the barriers to leaving an abusive relationship (fear, love, dependency, and insecurity). Think of these barriers as hooks. It's not easy to unhook them all at once and we understand that it can be difficult to leave an abusive relationship, especially when we have hope that the abuser will change or eventually stop. It's important that we don't blame the victim. We cannot make people get help if they do not want to, but we can do everything in our power to help our friends feel supported. Sometimes our friends are not ready to accept the help we would like to offer them. The most important thing we can do is let our friends know that we are there for them when they are ready, make sure they are safe, and let them know that they are not alone.

Q: I'm talking to this guy and I want to take things further but I'm not sure how to communicate how I feel. What should I do? (can we be exclusive?)

A: This question is a bit outside of our wheelhouse but we will try our best to answer! It can feel awkward or confusing to communicate our feelings openly with others. It may be hard to know what to say or how to say it. Using tools that support open and honest communication like "I" statements can be a helpful place to start. This can look like saying something as simple as, "I like you and would like to be in an exclusive relationship with you. I'm wondering if you feel the same?" This allows us to share how we feel while also giving the other person space to share their honest feelings as well. The best way to know how another person feels is to ask!

Q: My friend just got out of an emotionally draining relationship and I'm not sure how to help her. What do I do to make her know that I am there for her?

A: Leaving a relationship that is toxic or draining can be a difficult thing to do. It's awesome that you want to be here for your friend as she processes the relationship and it is apparent that you really care about her. Providing continual support, checking in, and making sure your friends know that you are there for them can be helpful. This could look like verbally reminding your friend they have your support, writing a letter or card that expresses your care, or spending time doing activities they love. The most important thing we can do is to let our friends know that they are not alone. We encourage you and your friend to reach out to our advocates if you'd like to talk more about moving through the healing process.

Q: I'm scared that when I talk to people I may accidentally make it about myself. What can I do?

A: It is normal to want to talk about yourself and your experiences when speaking with others. It can be a way to show others that you have similar experiences and interests to them. Sometimes talking too

much about yourself can make others feel as though they're not included in the conversations. However, there are things we can do to invite others into a conversation. Using active listening skills, asking others questions about their experiences or thoughts, and finding common interests can be helpful ways for including others in a mutual conversation.

Q: If I told a boy to stop touching me multiple times & i don't want to touch them in those ways multiple times, but they continue to try & touch me & grab my hand to put it in their pants; is that considered sexual assault? Am I wrong for potentially considering it was sexual assault even if he was my boyfriend at the time? When I confronted him about it after we broke up he said "I didn't force you to do anything, I insisted you did but I never made you" even if he "wasn't aware" is it still sexual assault?

A: We are so sorry that you experienced this with someone that you trusted. What happened is not your fault and you did nothing wrong. No one else gets to decide or define your experience even if those involved have a different view. You are not alone and we're glad that you reached out to us. If you feel comfortable or safe enough to do so, we encourage you to reach out to RAINN and/or bloom365 advocates for free, non-judgemental support as you process this traumatic experience. Finding healing through traumatic experiences like sexual assault or harassment can be difficult but with support and care, you can find skills and tools to support you through the healing journey. Please feel free to reach out to RAINN or bloom365 advocates at the HelpLine information above. We are here for you!

Q: What do I do if I feel like I'm the problem to my partner?

A: Having worries or concerns within a relationship can be a common experience for some. One of the best ways to address and understand these concerns is to initiate open and honest conversations with your partner using healthy communication skills. This can be as simple as asking a partner how they feel about the relationship using "I" statements. This can look like saying, "I have been having some concerns about my role in the relationship, would you be open to talking more about this and sharing your thoughts with me?" Using "I" statements and giving options allows for you to take ownership of your own feelings without putting blame on the other person. Having open and honest communication regarding conflict can be a hard thing to do within a relationship but with practice and time, it can become easier to do and an integral part of a relationship.

Q: How to fix a old relationship you're no more contact with?

A: Moving on and finding closure from a past relationship can be both a tough and important part of healing. People can have different wants from the end of a relationship - some may want to have a final conversation about the relationship, some may want to repair the relationships, and others may want to move on and not revisit the past. It can be helpful to ask what the other person wants before making a decision on how to address a past relationship. It is important to respect the other person's wants and boundaries even when it comes into conflict with our own wants.

Q: How long does the video have to be?

A: We recommend checking with your teacher for specific guidelines on your creative projects :)

Q: When a report is written how does it work, as in the steps to taking action

A: What happens when a report is made depends on the kind of report and which department or agency the report is filed with. Domestic violence and sexual assault reports made to local police agencies or the Department of Child Safety may or may not result in an investigation. The course of action after a report is filed depends on the nature of the report, the details around the situation, and where the report is filed (DCS, with a school social worker, with a police officer, etc.). We encourage you to reach out to our HelpLine if you have additional questions or would like support on a specific situation.

Q: How do you put up with a family member trying to blame you?

A: Being in a family environment with someone who blames you or makes you feel uncomfortable can be a very stressful and sometimes isolating experience. We encourage anyone in this type of situation to reach out for support and to take some time to find healthy coping skills or strategies that work for you. Spending time with those you love and trust and sharing what you're going through with them can make you feel more supported and less alone. Other coping skills like writing in a journal, yoga, joining a new sports team or club, or simply spending time outside can also be helpful. Our advocates are also here to offer support. Please feel free to reach out to us at the information above.

Q: How do you say no to sending inappropriate pictures to someone without feeling guilty

A: While saying no should be as simple as saying no, in reality you might feel pressured, guilty, manipulated, or coerced when you say no. You deserve to have your boundaries respected. "No" is a full sentence. You don't owe anyone, even someone you love, an explanation for why you don't want to do what they want you to do. You can explain if you want, but you don't have to. If the other person is not respecting your boundaries, it may be helpful to consider if interacting with this person is something you would like to continue doing. If you'd like to talk more about this, feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at the number listed above for free, confidential, non-judgmental support.

Q: What do I do if my boyfriend disrespects my boundaries and doesn't respect me?

A: We are sorry that you are going through this and we're glad you reached out. If you are not receiving the type of love you would like or changes are unable to be made by communicating in a healthy way with our partner using "I statements," we may consider whether this relationship is one that we want to continue. It can also be helpful to take some time to consider if that person is being caring or controlling. Do you feel free and equal in this relationship or your partner holding the power? Another helpful tool to determine if a relationship is abusive is the [red flags checklist](#). Be sure to pay extra attention to the bottom 5 red flags-- if one or more of these is occurring, the situation has a greater chance of becoming dangerous and we strongly encourage you to reach out for support.

Q: What's the best way to get out of a toxic relationship without harm or feeling guilt?

A: You can end a relationship in a way that makes you feel comfortable. If you feel like the situation could become dangerous or even just too uncomfortable for you, you can do a couple of things-- you can make a safety plan to start with, you can have that conversation in a relatively public space like a park, and you could always have someone you trust nearby for emotional and safety support for during and after. These types of situations can be difficult for a lot of people. We encourage you to explore the coping

strategies we discussed during the 7 Doses and find one that best suits you. This could be spending more time with friends or dedicating time to a new hobby or skill. If your partner is unwilling to let you leave and/or continues to not take you seriously, we encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult or BLOOM365 advocate for assistance in safely exiting the relationship.