



Elephant in The Room Q & A

Mountain Ridge High School Spring 2021

**This document can also be accessed at <https://www.bloom365.org/faqs>

Resources:

For additional resources, please visit [bloom365.com/resources](https://www.bloom365.com/resources)

<p>BLOOM365 Peer Support Helpline and Support Groups</p>	<p>Text/Call: 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) DM @8886064673</p> <p>Peer Support Helpline Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday from 3-9PM (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>Join us on Monday and/or Thursday evenings for one of our drop-in support groups (Holidays excluded)! Visit bloom365.org/peersupport for specific dates and times.</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>

Q: Student
A: BLOOM365 Advocate

Q: Sex ed

A: Thank you for sharing your ideas with us! Unfortunately, sex education is a bit outside of our area of expertise. While we do cover consent and some other related topics, your health teacher or your parents might have more helpful information regarding sex ed.

Q: What do abusive people think abuse does for them, do they know they're abusive?

A: Sometimes people witness abuse growing up and start to believe this is what is normal (taught abusive behavior). Other potential root causes for why someone may abuse another person are those other "root causes" we explored in doses 3 and 4: Rigid beliefs in unhealthy gender norms, social acceptance, oppression, etc. While these root causes increase one's risk for perpetuating abuse in their own relationships, it's important to recognize that everyone still has a choice in whether they are going to treat someone with equity and agency or power and control. If you'd like to talk more about this or anything else, feel free to reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate at the number listed above.

Q: How do you know your in a safe good new relationship after being in a toxic relationship; Similar Q: How do you know the difference between a healthy relationship and a toxic one?

A: The Blooming and Wilting flowers are a great tool that we can use if we are ever concerned that a relationship might be unhealthy. It can be helpful to look at the blooming and wilting flowers to see which one looks like a better representation of the relationship. Does the relationship look more like power and control or agency and equity? Healthy relationships are stemmed in agency and equity and exhibit the words seen in the center of the blooming flower. It's also important to remember the rights and responsibilities we have within relationships. In a relationship, you have the right to: Make decisions together (equality), have opinions, express your feelings, and choose activities (freedom), be yourself (individuality), and safety. We also have the responsibility of respecting these rights of our partner and our partner's boundaries. The red flags checklist in your workbook or on our [website](#) is another great tool to identify potential red flags that a relationship might be unhealthy. If you'd like to discuss this further, we encourage you to reach out to an Advocate at the number listed above.

Q: Are the different type of abuse and what are their type of abuse if there are

A: Yes, there are many different types of abuse. Sexual abuse is any unwanted/forced sexual activity. Verbal abuse can take many forms such as put downs, humiliation and threats. Both verbal and physical abuse are tactics a perpetrator may use to gain or maintain power and control over their partner. The two may occur simultaneously at times, but they are different. Verbal abuse typically involves yelling, screaming, rampaging, or refusing to talk. On the other hand, physical abuse can involve: Hitting, kicking, biting, shaking, pinching, pushing, pulling hair, choking, hitting with an object, threatening with a weapon, and/or threatening physical assault. Both have the same root causes, however, physical abuse includes all physical actions that hurt/violate the person; while verbal abuse consists of only abusive language. If you or someone you know is experiencing any type of abuse, we encourage you to reach out for support. You are not alone!

Q: Just wanted to appreciate this curriculum. Thank you for this knowledgeable informational site

A: Thank you for sharing your feedback with us! And thank YOU so much for being open to our facilitators and for allowing us to talk to you about these important topics. If you would like to stay involved, we encourage you to sign up for our Peer Advocate Crew (PAC!) You can read more about PAC and the opportunities available at www.bloom365.org. To get involved or for more information, please contact us on Instagram @bloom365 or email Alyson at bhag2030@bloom365.org!

Q: What does the she/her mean next to your name, idk if it's your pronouns or just to show what your like. I never really understood what those were as I have seen them in many profiles but never understood it.

A: "Non-binary" is a term for people whose gender identity is not necessarily 'woman' or 'man.' Using they/them pronouns reflects where someone identifies on the gender spectrum. When using pronouns next to our names, it signals to others that we will not assume their gender and there's no need for them to assume ours, because it's right there! 😊 If you'd like to talk more about this, feel free to reach out to our helpline at the number listed above!

Q: Do physical kinks go under the wilting flower

A: Kinks are not necessarily wilting, as long as everyone involved is consenting and no one is harmed or involved involuntarily. To discuss this more in depth or any other questions you have, feel free to reach out to our helpline for free, confidential, non-judgmental support.

Q: What do I do if my partner wants to have sex, how do I say no without making it bad?

A: Communication and keeping boundaries is key in every blooming relationship. Saying no should be as simple as just, well, saying no. In reality, someone might feel pressured, guilty, manipulated, or coerced when they say no. Everyone deserves to have their boundaries respected. While we recommend using I-statements ("I feel ___ (emotion) when ____ (situation), can you/we please _____ (solution)?), it may not always be easy to use this technique.

Although "No" is such a simple word, saying no can be hard when you're saying it to someone you care about. Here are some tips on turning down sex/consent:

- Be confident and know what you want and what you do not want. Maybe you just want to kiss, maybe you just want to sit next to each other. Once you've thought about what you want, try to clearly state that.
- Say "no." 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.
- Tell them what you do want to do: kissing, touching, watching a movie together, etc.
- Be clear and direct. Look them in the eyes and use a serious tone of voice.
- You can also let them know that you really do like or love them, but you're just not ready for sex.

If your partner pressures you or threatens to break up with you because you don't consent, this is a sign that the relationship is unhealthy. If you would like to talk with a BLOOM365 advocate further, feel free to reach out to our number listed above!

Q: Can I ever just call you guys and vent to you or no?

A: Yes! You can definitely call us to vent. Although we don't give advice, we can offer resources or helpful information and support. We are here for you!

Q: I've seen a friend go through an abusive relationship before

A: Thank you for sharing this with us. It can be very difficult to watch someone you know as a victim or perpetrator in an abusive relationship, and we understand wanting to help them. Please know that it is not your responsibility to "rescue" your family members, but there are some ways you can help if you so choose. For one, you can serve as a supportive person in their life. Let them know that you are there for them. You can also find ways to spend time alone with them doing activities you both enjoy. If you feel comfortable, you can give them the number to the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-SAFE (7233)). Don't be discouraged if they are not ready to make the call. Remember the importance of not blaming the victim and understand there are a lot of barriers to leaving an abusive relationship. You can continue to let them know you are there for them, and that the hotline is available whenever they are ready to make the call.

Q: I have been in a mutually controlling friendship that ended with both of us being so hurt. I think a lot of times I assume it wasn't real abuse since we didn't intend to do that but it is.

A: Thank you for sharing your experience with us. We want you to know that you are not alone, and support is available if you need it. Someone trying to take power and control over their friend or family member can be just as dangerous and hurtful as dating abuse. Even if you didn't intend to abuse each other, if you were hurt that is still valid.

The red flag checklist in your workbook or on [our website](#) can apply to any type of relationship including friendships, sibling, parent, and romantic relationships. If some or all of the red flags on the checklist are present, it's a good idea to talk to your parents or another trusted adult about what you're experiencing. If you feel that you are in immediate danger, we encourage you to talk to a trusted adult or contact 911. For free, confidential, non-judgmental support, feel free to reach out to our helpline at the number listed above.