



Elephant in The Room Q & A

Central High School
Fall 2019

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

Resources:

For additional resources, please visit bloom365.com/resources

<p>BLOOM365 Advocacy Line and Support Groups</p>	<p>Text or call a BLOOM365 advocate for free, confidential support. Text/Call: 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) Advocacy Line Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST)</p> <p>To reach a specific advocate directly, please feel free to contact our advocacy line and tell us who you would like to speak to.</p> <p>Join us on Monday, Tuesday, 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: Can teens get rid of these things?

A: BLOOM365 absolutely believes that teens have the power to end abuse and power-based violence! We hope that a society free of abuse will become the norm by 2030, with your generation paving the way for healthy and safe relationships for all. In order to see a lasting change, we must hit the “Tipping Point,” meaning 10% of youth across the United States stand up against bullying/teen dating abuse/domestic violence/sexual assault while promoting blooming, healthy behaviors, in order to fully uproot abuse in one generation. We believe in the power of your generation to help us reach the Tipping Point moment. You all have the ability to change the culture around you by giving power to the exceptions: cultivating kindness, respect, consent, peace, equality, and empathy! We believe that outreach, education and awareness are vital for reducing future victimization (secondary prevention) and supporting survivors after victimization (tertiary prevention). It is through peer to peer advocacy that we will prevent the root causes of dating abuse/sexual violence BEFORE it begins (primary prevention). If you want to get involved, don’t be afraid to contact us at the number listed above or email teens@bloom365.org.

Q: I’ve never been in a relationship before. So what is it like to be in a relationship?

A: Dating relationships look different for everyone. Although we cannot tell you exactly what it is like to be in a dating relationship, we do believe that all healthy relationships include some or all of these elements: empathy, respect, equality, freedom, kindness, consent, safety and peace. Depending on our personality types, we may want to receive and/or express love in different ways, typically referred to as the “5 Love Languages.” We encourage you to learn more about your own preferences for expressing love so you’re informed before entering into any future relationships. If you have more questions or would like to discuss this further, feel free to reach out to our advocacy line at the number above!

Q: What do we do if we see someone abusing someone else?

A: If we witness someone abusing someone else or any of the wilting characteristics- We encourage you to utilize one of the Upstander Intervention methods we talked about in Dose 7 (Direct, Delegate, Delay, or Distract.) What you choose to do will depend on the situation, your comfort level, and safety. If it is not safe to intervene directly, we encourage you to utilize the delay or delegate methods by finding a trusted adult who can help and/or checking in with the victim after the incident. If you feel safe and comfortable, you might choose to directly intervene or distract the perpetrator and/or victim while the situation is occurring. The most important thing is that we do SOMETHING, even if that means finding a trusted adult who can step in to ensure everyone is safe.

We should also understand the barriers to leaving an abusive relationship (fear, love, dependency, and insecurity). It’s also 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 them feel supported. Sometimes, others are not ready to accept the help we would like to offer them. The most important thing we can do is let them 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. If you recognize any of the **top 5 risk factors on the red flags list**, it's important to talk to a trusted adult because this means that the victim could be at risk of getting injured or even killed.

Q: Is it okay if we talk about our problems?

A: Thank you for reaching out to us. If you're comfortable doing so, we do encourage you to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate or another trusted person in your life if you're going through a hard time or experiencing problems. If you have any questions, need support, or just need someone to talk too, feel free to text or call a BLOOM365 Advocate at 1.888.606.4673 for free, non-judgmental support.

Q: When guys make girls call them daddy, what does that mean to you guys?

A: While there isn't anything inherently wrong with this if there is consent from everyone involved, it's important to realize that certain labels can normalize abuse and/or control in relationships. Strong, healthy relationships involve a balance of power in the relationship, along with freedom, individuality, safety, and boundaries. It can be useful to look at the blooming and wilting flowers to help you to determine whether this or anything else in a relationship is healthy or unhealthy. For additional information or resources, feel free to reach out to us at the number above!

Q: Why do girls get more jealous than boys?

A: Jealousy is a natural, human emotion that can affect anyone. Most humans have felt or experienced jealousy. It is not necessarily a bad thing, unless we act out based on our jealousy. Jealousy becomes unhealthy or abusive when it is possessive, obsessive or controlling. We should consider whether the relationships we have currently are built on trust and respect. If we don't have a trustworthy partner or friend, that could lead us to be jealous. We encourage you to reach out to our Advocacy Line at the number above if you'd like to talk more about this.

Q: If the relationship goes to extreme do the authorities need to be involved?

A: It is difficult to give a definite answer to this question without context. It is ultimately up to the victim how they would like to proceed based on the situation. If you or someone else's life has been threatened, or if you feel you are unsafe or in immediate danger, it might be best to contact a trusted adult or 911 to ensure your safety. The Red Flags Checklist on [our website](#) and in your workbook is a great resource for determining if a relationship is abusive and when we should seek help. If you recognize the top 5 risk factors on the Red Flags Checklist, it's important to tell an adult you trust because this means that this person could be at risk of getting injured or even killed. For free, non-judgmental, confidential support, you can reach out to our Advocacy Line at the number above.

Q: I need help with my relationship

A: On [our website](#), you can find several resources that might be helpful depending on your individual situation. We also encourage you to reach out to an Advocate at the number above for free, confidential, non-judgmental support. We are here to help you!

Q: I feel like whenever we feel like we need to like communicate with the other person about what ever is the problem. I say that there's people who don't like to speak up about the situation and stay quiet

A: We recognize that it can be difficult and even scary to face challenges with others. However, communicating with our partners, friends, and family about what you're feeling or experiencing is an effective tool in allowing others to see our perspective and gain insight into our side of the situation without them feeling directly attacked. Using "I" statements can be helpful in communicating our feelings and allowing the other person to empathize with us. We recommend using the format: I feel ____ (emotion) when _____, can we please _____ (resolution)? Ultimately talking about things can help you both get on the same page about your relationship.

Q: What happens when nobody says anything about their toxic relationship for years?

A: It can be difficult to end our relationships with toxic people or to stop them from entering our social circles or other areas of our lives. It is not always easy to identify toxic people, but using the wilting flower could be helpful in recognizing these behaviors. Experiencing abuse can emotionally and physically impact a person, and it's important that this is dealt with properly to help the survivor move forward. According to the Joyful Heart Foundation, some physiological effects of abuse include: Anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, withdrawal, dissociation, difficulty making and maintaining relationships, flashbacks,, and persistent fear. Some behavioral effects may include self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and drug use, trouble sleeping, uncomfortable with physical contact with others, repeating school grades, absent from school often, and criminal activity.

If you have experienced abuse, we encourage you to text or call our Advocacy Line to talk with an advocate who can help you take the steps to healing. Finding ways to cope can be really helpful. For example: Spending time with the people you love, writing in a journal, practicing yoga, joining a new sports team or club, or simply going for a walk. 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. Find what works for you, and always know BLOOM365 is here to support you if needed!

Q: I want to get out of my relationship what should I do to get out of it?

A: We understand that it is hard to leave any type of relationship. "I statements" are awesome for break-ups 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 don't feel like I have enough time to commit to our relationship, so I think it would be best for both of us if we are just friends." Or "I feel like I am not able to give you what you want in a relationship. I think we should go our separate ways." This can also apply to friendships! Remember, BLOOM365 Advocates are here to support you. For free, confidential support, feel free to reach out to us at the number above.

Q: What would you do if you have a fight with your friends?; Related Submission: Q: What should I do if I want to communicate with my friend?

A: Unfortunately, it is difficult to answer these questions without context. We encourage you to reach out to our Advocacy Line at the number above to discuss your individual situation. We also encourage you to utilize the communication technique we learned about in Dose 6 called “I-statements.”

I-statements allow us to take ownership of our own emotions and help to prevent others from feeling blamed. For example, you could tell your friend, “I feel (emotion), when (situation), can you/we please (resolution).” We encourage you to consider your own situation and come up with an I-statement that best suits your specific situation and feelings. If you’d like assistance in formulating an I-statement, an advocate can help you with that, as well.

Q: I like this class because I get to let my stuff out that I’ve been holding in

A: We are so happy to hear that! We hope that everything you learn through the Bloom It Up program is beneficial to you both now and in the future! If you would like to talk with a BLOOM365 advocate, our information is listed above.

Q: I wish we talked more about race and people getting discriminated about their religion because people get discriminated about religion all the time and no one talks about it

A: We do realize that discrimination, among other forms of unjust treatment of others, is real. We encourage you to start/join the conversation about ending discrimination on race and religion to raise your voice as well as the voices of others. If you would like to talk with us, our information is listed above.

Q: Be yourself and never change for others

A: Thank you for the motivational tip! Keep blooming :)

Q: Why do men need to be strong and women need to look good?

A: This is known as an example of an unhealthy gender norm. An unhealthy gender norm is a rule or belief about how certain genders should behave or look. Some examples are the idea that women should stay home and raise kids or have long hair and that men should be the “breadwinners” and be the “tough” ones in relationships. These are unhealthy because people who do not follow norms may be ridiculed or made fun of. The important thing to know is that these norms and stereotypes are not facts but rather some people’s opinions. We can engage in productive conversations that break down some of these unhealthy gender stereotypes. Once we know what the issue is we can work together for justice and equality.

Q: Can people only follow the norms?

A: We believe that everyone has the right and ability to be who they would like to be as long as they are #BLOOMING! Within our definition of “norm,” only 50% of people have to do or follow something for it to be a norm. This means that people are able to follow the exception and/or the norm. For example, someone can be BLOOMING (the norm) and have a flip-phone (the exception), and that is fine. Keep in mind that norms and exceptions can also change throughout time.

Q: What if one of the partners cheats, never told the other person, but feels awful about it?

A: Sometimes it is the most helpful to be honest, although you are the expert in your life, so only you can make that decision. Communication and honesty are two words included in the center of the Blooming Flower. It's also important to remember that strong, healthy relationships involve a balance of power in the relationship, as well as freedom, individuality, safety, and boundaries. If you'd like to talk more about your individual situation, we encourage you to reach out to our advocacy line at the number above.

Q: What is a good way to reduce anger?

A: The first important step is to recognize when you're angry. Then, if you can, take a deep breath and count to 10. If you need to, you can take a break from talking about it and come back when you feel more calm. It may be useful to communicate this strategy with your friends, family, or partner before an argument arises so they know to give you some space when you may need to take a step back.

It can be difficult at times to express our emotions. However, communication is an important component of healthy relationships. It may be helpful to utilize the communication technique we learned in Dose 6 to talk to the person. I statements allow us to take ownership of our own emotions and can help avoid defensive responses. For example, "I feel ____ (emotion) when you _____ (situation), can you/we please ____ (desired outcome/solution.) We encourage you to evaluate your own situation and come up with an I-statement that best suits your situation and what you envision as a solution. It's important to remember that anger is a natural emotion, and something we all feel at times. However, anger is never an excuse to treat people poorly. If you look at the roots of the two flowers, you'll see that "choice" is in both. This is because we ALL have a choice in how we are going to treat people- With equality and freedom or power and control. Anger is a warning bell that tells us that something is wrong and can motivate us to correct injustices or prompt us to make positive changes. We all feel anger, and have the ability to make positive choices and manage our anger in healthy ways without taking it out on other people. Anger is not the cause of abuse or violence, abuse and violence are a choice.

Q: Can you talk more about the importance of female empowerment (girls supporting girls)

A: Although this is a bit outside of our area of expertise, we do encourage the empowerment of all womxn and femmes and we do recognize the importance of girls supporting other girls. If you'd like to discuss anything more in-depth, we encourage you to reach out to our advocacy line at the number above.

Q: My boyfriend is cheating on me. What should I do?

A: We want you to know that you are not alone, and you are brave for reaching out for support. We encourage you to reach out to our advocacy line for free, confidential, non-judgmental, individual support. We are here for you!

Q: How do you get rid of a rumor about your body?

A: There are a few things you could try, depending on what you're comfortable with. You could address the rumor head-on and ask people to stop talking about you if you hear/see them doing it, or you could ask a friend, a trusted adult, or a teacher at school to talk to the people who are spreading the rumor for you. It really depends on the situation and your comfortability level. Rumors are difficult, and we encourage you to reach out to an Advocate to discuss this further. We are here to support you, you are not alone!

Q: Can a 15 year old boy get pregnant? When is the time to have sex?

A: Typically only people with 'female' sex organs (ovaries, uterus, etc.) can get pregnant. There is no one correct time to have sex, and the timing might be different for each person. We encourage you to make these types of decisions at a pace that feels comfortable and safe for you. If you'd like to discuss this further, we encourage you to reach out to our advocacy line at the number above for free confidential support. We are here for you!

Q: What if you think you have someone to talk to but you go ahead and talk to them and they judge you or tell everyone?

A: It can be difficult to trust someone, especially if we want to share something with them that we don't want others to know. It might be helpful to let them know before you share with them that it's really important to you that they don't share the information with anyone else. If they still tell others your information from there, you might consider setting a boundary, maybe by letting this person know you are not okay with what they did, and you might consider if this is someone you want to continue to trust in the future. When it comes to being judged--there's never any guarantee other's won't judge us, so it's important to share with those we are comfortable with and that we truly feel have our best interest in mind if we are concerned they might look at us differently after. If you'd like to talk more about this, we encourage you to reach out to our advocacy line at the number above for free, confidential, non-judgmental support.

Q: If one fits the norms is it considered weak because you fit the normal expectations of society

A: If you fit within the norms of society, it does not mean you are weak. All it means is that you happen to think/act in a way that is consistent with what has been widely accepted as "normal" in society for some time. The main idea is to recognize that what is "normal" might look different to different people.

Q: Do you think television also plays a role in gender norms

A: There are definitely a lot of TV shows and movies that perpetuate gender stereotypes and thus play a role in gender norms, but there are also a few shows out there that challenge those norms and stereotypes and that have become conversation-starters. If you'd like to talk more about this, we encourage you to reach out to our Advocacy Line at the number above!

Q: What are your thoughts on suicide?

A: We know that when someone is in a mental health crisis, it often means that they may no longer feel like they are able to cope or be in control of a situation. Although we do not specifically work with teens with depression or experiencing suicidal ideation, we are always here to listen! We do work alongside a few organizations that specifically help youth experiencing depression and suicide, including Suicide

Prevention Lifeline. You can contact them at 1-800-273-TALK (8255). You can always reach a BLOOM365 advocate by texting or calling the number above for a listening ear or if you would like additional resources. Again, you matter and you are not alone. You are important. It's OK to ask for help. We are here for you!

Q: What if someone wants you to keep a secret but they could be harmed?

A: If you are concerned for your own or someone else's safety, it might be best to talk to a trusted adult or contact 911 about the situation. While it's important to respect the person's boundaries, it's also important to make sure they are safe. We encourage you to talk to someone you trust about what's going on, and you can also reach out to our Advocacy Line at the number above for free, confidential support.