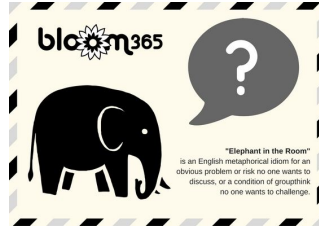


# Elephant in The Room Q & A

Cactus High School Fall 2018



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

## Resources:

*\*For additional resources, please visit [bloom365.com/resources](http://bloom365.com/resources)\**

<b>BLOOM365 Advocacy Line and Support Groups</b>	<p>Text or call a BLOOM365 advocate for free, confidential support. Beginning January 7th, our advocacy line will be open for texts and calls Monday-Thursday from 3PM-9PM! To reach a specific advocate directly, visit <a href="http://www.bloom365.org/contact">www.bloom365.org/contact</a>.</p> <p>Text/Call: 1-888-606-HOPE (4673)</p> <p>Join us every Monday, Wednesday, and/or Thursday evening for one of our drop-in support groups (Holidays excluded)!</p>
<b>Teen Lifeline</b>	<p>Text or call 602-248-TEEN (8336) for free, confidential support 24/7 relating to suicide, depression, bullying, or relationships. Peer/Teen Counselors answer the hotline from 3pm-9pm every day, including weekends and holidays.</p>
<b>National Teen Dating Violence Hotline</b>	<p>Text "LOVEIS" to 22522 24/7</p>
<b>National Domestic Violence Hotline</b>	<p>1-800-799-SAFE (7233)</p>
<b>National Sexual Assault Hotline</b>	<p>1-800.656.HOPE (4673)</p>
<b>National Human Trafficking Hotline</b>	<p>1-888-373-7888</p>
<b>Crisis and Suicide Prevention</b>	<p>Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)</p> <p>Crisis Text Line: Text TALK to 741741</p>

Q: Student

A: BLOOM365 Advocate

## **DOSES 1 & 2**

**1) Q: The person who sexually assaulted and abused me is here at school & he's still harassing me, what do I do?**

**A:** If you feel that you are in any danger, we encourage you to share this situation with a trusted adult in your life or your school social worker. You can reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate for additional support at the number above, or for help in creating a safety plan. If it is happening on campus or 24/7 via texts or social media, it is important for you to share this situation with your school social worker or another adult on campus that you can trust.

**2) Q: What couples do alone?**

**A:** Unfortunately that is a bit outside of our speciality. Our work is focused on preventing teen dating and help teens create and build healthy relationships. As much as we address dating, we also address friendships and family relationships as well. Our sole focus is not on teaching you how to get into a relationship, but rather how to grow healthy and safe relationships with your friends, family, and dating partners.

**3) Q: What if you like it?**

**A:** Consent is so important because no one should ever be forced to do anything that they do not want to do. Consent is a huge part of freedom and all the rights that we have as individuals. If you have been forced to do something you do not want to do, then that is a red flag of power and control. You can reference the "Red Flags Checklist" on page 17 of your workbook. If you recognize the top 5 risk factors on the red flags list, it's important to tell an adult you trust because this means that you could be at risk of getting injured or even killed. If you have any concerns about this matter or would like additional support please reach out to a trusted adult, school social worker, or a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above.

**4) Q: Don't you think some of the people that abuse others got abused?**

**A:** Yes, some people who cause harm have been abused. Violence can become intergenerational, meaning it can be transferred from generation to generation. During Dose 4, we talked about "Taught Abusive Behavior" as a risk factor for exerting power and control over someone else. Some people may be abusive to their partners because they were exposed to violence in their homes as a child and taught that this behavior was normal or okay. However, while they may be at a higher risk, they still have a choice in how they are going to treat others; with power and control, or with equality and freedom.

## **DOSE 3 & 4**

**5) Q: I'm non-binary and I feel really uncomfortable when people use she pronouns. I do use she/her/hers but this school is super conservative and I don't feel safe to be out. What do I do?**

**A:** BLOOM365 believes that every person deserves to have healthy and safe relationships. We believe in equality for all people regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or anything else. We encourage you to educate the supportive people in your life on what it means to be apart of the LGBTQ community and the barriers that are faced by people in this community. Coming out

may be a process and take time. You can always reach out to our LGBTQ advocate at the number above to discuss this situation or chat online at [bloom365.org](https://bloom365.org) for more support.

**6) Q: Can you be in an abusive friendship?**

**A:** Everything that we discussed during the Bloom It Up program can be applied to friendships and relationships alike. Someone trying to take power and control over you can be just as dangerous and hurtful as dating abuse. The red flag checklist in your workbook and on [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. You can also reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate by phone at the number above.

**7) Q: If you are dating a person and think "I have no feelings for you anymore" but the person still wants to be with you.**

**A:** Leaving an unhealthy or abusive relationship is never easy. While ending a close friendship and or break up is tough it can be a great time for self evaluation and growth. Communication is an important tool that can help you to end a relationship. We recommend communicating with your partner honestly using "I" statements about how you feel and why you want to end the relationship. In your packet, you can reference the "6 Tips for Coping After a Break-Up" to find more BLOOM365 suggested tips. We also highly encourage you to get involved in our free support group! Our support group provides teens with the opportunity to walk through the healing process alongside others. Finding ways to cope can be really helpful. For example: spending time with the people you love, yoga, joining a new sports team or club, or simply going for a walk. Giving yourself time to process feelings and emotions is important. 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! If you're still struggling with coping, please reach out to a Bloom Advocate at the number listed above.

**8) Q: There's only 2 genders. This is stupid and pointless, patriarchy doesn't exist. Racism is not real, plus I don't like liberals.**

**A:** While patriarchy is a system designed to benefit men, it is something that is supported by people of all genders. Our goal with Dose 3 is to shed light on unhealthy gender norms and how rigid beliefs in these norms is something that puts someone at a higher risk for having power and control in their relationship. It's important to note that unhealthy gender norms do a disservice to everyone! Unhealthy gender norms limit the ways that masculine-identified folks can express their emotions. The definition of hyper-masculinity is, "The exaggeration of stereotypical male behavior with an emphasis on strength, sexuality, and aggression." While there is nothing wrong with being masculine, hypermasculinity becomes an issue when it causes the hyper-masculine partner to hold an unequal amount of power in the relationship, which can lead to unhealthy relationship stemmed in power and control. As long as one person does not hold more power than the other because of their gender and both people feel free to be themselves, then that relationship can Bloom.

**9) Q: I feel like I can't take this topic seriously because our school's staff think it's okay to tell someone I know who is male and likes to wear hair accessories that are "normally" for girls, to take them off in the boys bathroom because he's confusing other boys.**

**A:** Sometimes people, even your school staff do not recognize or understand the severity of these situations. Thank you for being brave in speaking up about this situation, and we apologize that student was not taken seriously. If you'd like to reach out for a free, listening ear you can call or text an advocate at the number above.

### **DOSE 5 & 6**

**10) Q: Sometimes I feel really down and I don't know how to boost my positivity.**

**A:** Focusing on the things we love about ourselves can be one helpful way to lift your self-esteem and positivity. A lot of times our society focuses on the things we are insecure about and things we wish we could change about ourselves. I encourage you to take a moment to remember the things you love about yourself (your strengths, aspirations, personality/physical characteristics, etc.). Writing these things down and having them easily accessible can help build your confidence. I recommend watching the following video on daily affirmations:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cgw8OFVHzd4>. Doing your own daily affirmation and spending time doing the things that make you happy can be helpful tools in building up our self esteem. Building good self-esteem can take a long time and is not always easy because it takes time to become confident. You can always contact BLOOM365 by texting or calling the number above for more tips on boosting self-esteem.

**11) Q: If you and another person both have feelings for each other but if the other person don't want to date you, what should you do?**

**A:** Communication is very important part of healthy relationships. Using "I" statements can be helpful in communicating our feelings and allowing the other person to empathize with us. This also can help prevent them from feeling like they are being attacked, which often results in a negative reaction. We recommend using the format: I feel \_\_\_\_ (emotion) when \_\_\_\_\_, can we please \_\_\_\_\_ (resolution)? Offering a resolution to the situation can be beneficial in helping you to come to a compromise and a solution to the issue. Ultimately talking about how you feel and helping them get an understanding can help you both get on the same page about your relationship. If you'd like further support, please text/call the number above.

**12) Q: I am halfway to being in a relationship with this guy and he doesn't really talk to people and he's kind, physical in a creepy way and I like him. How do I talk to him about his creepy behavior?**

**A:** Communication can be a super beneficial tool. The first step is recognizing when you feel uncomfortable and addressing them with our partner or friend right away so that they know how we feel. You can communicate your feelings and concerns with your partner by using "I" statements. "I feel \_\_\_\_\_ (emotion) when you touch me, could you please \_\_\_\_\_ (solution)." If communicating your feelings does not change your partner's behavior, and you are experiencing persistent physical aggression, it is a warning sign of power and control and could lead to an abusive relationship. It can be difficult for someone to change unhealthy behaviors they have developed, but they certainly can change if they want to! The first step is recognizing the problematic behavior and deciding they want to change!