

Elephant in The Room Q & A

Chandler Teen Town Hall 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. 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 www.bloom365.org/contact.</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>
<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. Peer/Teen Counselors answer the hotline from 3pm-9pm every day, including weekends and holidays.</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>National Human Trafficking Hotline</p>	<p>1-888-373-7888</p>
<p>Crisis and Suicide Prevention</p>	<p>Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)</p> <p>Crisis Text Line: Text TALK to 741741</p>

Wondering how to reach out for help/support?

Check out page 22 in your workbook or visit www.bloom365.org/resources

Q: Student

A: BLOOM365 Advocate

1. Q: Why is social acceptance under the wilting flower in the roots?

A: The roots in our wilting flower diagrams are the root causes of wilting, unhealthy relationships. Social acceptance involves violent and abusive behavior that is often normalized and accepted in our society through the media, such as video games, music, and movies. Because of the normalization of violent behaviors, often we don't recognize how integrated these wilting characteristics are into our everyday lives and may see them as normal. Just because someone is exposed to one of the root causes, does not mean that they are guaranteed to become a perpetrator or be involved in an unhealthy relationship. We view root causes as risk factors- or things that put someone at a higher probability, or higher risk, for being exposed to teen dating violence.

2. Q: What should I do when my friend is cutting after a bad relationship?

A: First of all, we are sorry your friend is experiencing this and you are a good friend for reaching out and trying to get them help. Leaving a relationship is never easy. You can find our "Top 5 Ways to Help A Friend" document on our [website](#). In this document, you will be able to see some helpful tips on what you can say to your friend in order to let them know that you are there for them and want to help. Self-harm is sometimes used as a coping skill. It might be helpful to help your friend to identify healthy coping mechanisms and forms of self-care that they can do instead when they have those thoughts or urges. Some examples might include: Spending time with the people they love, yoga, taking a bath, joining a new sports team or club, or simply going for a walk. If your friend is struggling with finding effective coping tools or would like to talk more about this, we encourage you to share our Advocacy Line number with them. They can text or call an advocate for free, confidential support. You can also encourage them to get involved in our Peer Connections group to walk alongside others in their healing journey. Teen Lifeline is another great local organization that they can contact for free support. You can reach them at the number above.

3. Q: How do you protect yourself after an abusive relationship ends?

A: It's important to remember that the most dangerous time in an abusive relationship is when the survivor tries to leave. If you are concerned about your safety, we encourage you to contact a BLOOM365 advocate so that you can create a safety plan. The MyPlan app is also a great resource to create a safety plan. An advocate would be happy to assist you in creating a safety plan using MyPlan as well. Otherwise, talking to your friends to make sure someone can walk with you to and from class can be helpful if this person goes to school with you. If you continue to have issues at school, you may want to reach out to a trusted school staff member about additional steps you can take. If you are experiencing issues online, you may choose to block their number and social media accounts to keep them from contacting you online. Please feel free to reach out to our Advocacy Line to discuss further or for additional support.

4. Q: Is Bloom only for teen dating relationships, or is it for family and abusive friendships? I have gone through abuse with my family, I still struggle with understanding how to get over it. Some of my family members are verbally abusive.

A: While our mission is to prevent teen dating abuse before it starts, all of the information discussed through our programs is applicable to all types of relationships and forms of abuse. Our advocacy services are also open to teens who've experienced child abuse, domestic violence, bullying, sexual violence, etc. We are so sorry to hear that you have experienced verbal abuse, and we are thankful that you reached out for support. We encourage you to reach out to our Advocacy Line for free, confidential support. We also encourage you to get involved in our Peer Connections group to walk alongside others in your healing journey.

Additionally, it might be helpful to identify healthy coping mechanisms and forms of self-care that you enjoy. Some examples might include: Spending time with the people they love, yoga, taking a bath, joining a new sports team or club, or simply going for a walk. If you are struggling to identify healthy coping tools, we encourage you to reach out for additional support.

5. Q: How do you tell someone to stop dating abuse when they might get mad at you?

A: On our [website](#), you can find a list of the "Top 5 Ways to Help a Friend" experiencing or perpetrating dating abuse. These "Top 5 Ways to Help a Friend" can be a helpful way to start the conversation with your friend. We cannot make people get help if they do not want to or to stop their behavior, but we can do everything in our power to help our friends feel supported. We encourage you give your friend the number to our Advocacy Line for free, confidential support and a listening ear. Sometimes people 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 everyone is safe, and let them know that they are not alone. 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 the victim could be at risk of getting injured or even killed. If you need additional support or resources, please don't hesitate to reach out to our Advocacy Line!

6. Q: If you get pressured into saying yes, could it get held against you in any way? Or if you are pressured into doing something (sex or something else) but you still held back while doing it would it be held against you? Thank you!

A: If you are being pressured into having sex, realized that that is a really big red flag. Being pressured to have sex or do something that you are uncomfortable with is never okay. If you need to talk to someone we recommend that you reach out to a trusting adult or text or call our free advocacy line (1-888-606-4673) or attend our free support groups Monday through Thursday at our main location.

7. Q: What is the best way to get out of a relationship without hurting the other person's feelings too much?

A: Using "I statements" is a great way to end a relationship without hurting the other person's feelings. 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 not only applies to romantic relationships but can also apply to friendships as well!

8. Q: I am very insecure about how I look and I am not happy about my body. The only thing that makes me happy is being on the court playing volleyball, and my friends (of course).

A: We know that feeling self-conscious is a hard thing to deal with, and we want you to know that you are not alone. We’re glad that you have volleyball and your friends as a place where you feel happy and safe. Focusing on the things we love about ourselves can be one helpful way to lift your self-esteem. A lot of times our society focuses on the things we are insecure about and things we wish we could change about ourselves. We 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. Additionally, you can talk to a trusted adult about what you are experiencing and/or you can reach out to us by calling or texting our Advocacy Line.

9. What causes people to be abusive, controlling, etc. ?

A: There are a number of root causes for why someone might choose to use 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. Rigid belief in gender norms can also play a role. Insecurity is another root cause. If someone lacks confidence, they may try to gain power or control over their partner in an attempt to feel better. Additional root causes can be found in the roots of the wilting flower or on our [website](#). Remember, though, that even though these root causes may increase one's risk of becoming a perpetrator, they still can make the deliberate choice to have relationships based in equality and freedom. BLOOM365 and the Bloom It Up program exists so that everyone has the skills and knowledge to build and grow healthy relationship.

10. Q: What if your friend is emotionally attached to their significant other, they don't listen to you and they deny that they are in an abusive relationship?

A: It's important that we first understand the barriers to leaving an abusive relationship (fear, love, dependency, and insecurity). It's also important that we don't blame the victim. Think of these barriers as “roadblocks.” Even if we get to the other side of the road block, the victim is left feeling alone (isolated from their friends), often feels insecure, still fearful (ending the relationship doesn't always make the abuse and threats stop), shame, etc. Addressing the road block for the victim still leaves the perpetrator to go on and treat someone else with power and control. Nobody deserves to be abused, and it is never the victim's fault.

On our [website](#), you can find a list of the “Top 5 Ways to Help a Friend” experiencing dating abuse. These “Top 5 Ways to Help a Friend” can be a helpful way to start the conversation with your friend. 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. We encourage you give your friend the number to our Advocacy Line for free, confidential support and a listening ear. Sometimes people 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 the top 5 risk factors on the red flags list, it's important to tell an adult you trust because this means that your family member could be at risk of getting injured or even killed. If you need additional support or resources, please don't hesitate to reach out to our Advocacy Line!

11. Q: Does this make anyone scared to date because it makes me scared.

A: We definitely do not want you to feel scared to date! BLOOM365 and the Bloom It Up program exists so that teens like yourself have to the skills and knowledge to build and grow healthy relationships!

12. Q: Is it ok for a “friend” (they’ve bullied me and I don’t trust them) steals your phone while you’re on it and goes through your photos and messages people.

A: People bully for many reasons, but it all boils down to trying to gain or maintain power and control over someone else. Nobody deserves to be bullied, and you have the right to privacy. If you feel safe, we encourage you to use “I-statements” to communicate how this makes you feel and the changes you would like to see. Effective communication is a key component of healthy relationships! I-statements allow us to take ownership of your own emotions and help to avoid defensive responses. We recommend the format, I feel ____ (emotion) when ____ (situation), can you/we please ____.” It may be helpful to talk to your friend about the importance of privacy and how you don’t appreciate them going through your phone and messaging people. Healthy friendships exhibit love, trust, respect, and all of the other words you see in the center of the blooming flower. Healthy relationships also involve our friends respecting our boundaries. Communicating your boundaries with your friend might be helpful. However, if your friend is not willing to respect these boundaries, it is up to you to decide what you would do. We want you to know that you deserve to have supportive, honest friendships! Please feel free to reach out to an advocate to discuss further if needed!

13. Q: How long can dating abuse last?

A: There is no time frame for dating abuse. If we are aware of the red flags of unhealthy relationships and our right to healthy, blooming relationships, this can help us to recognize these things early on and may help to prevent it before it starts. BLOOM365 and the Bloom It Up program exists so that teens like you have the skills and knowledge to build and grow healthy relationships, and the confidence and knowledge of how to get help of you or someone you know is experiencing abuse.