



Elephant in The Room Q & A

Hermosa Vista Elementary School
Spring 2023

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

Resources:

For additional resources, please visit bloom365.org/resources

<p>BLOOM365 LEVEL Line</p>	<p>For free, confidential support: Text/Call: 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) Monday-Friday from 5PM-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: How can you stand up for yourself without being rude?

A: It can feel scary to speak up for yourself especially when it's something really big or personal. It is normal to feel scared or anxious when you feel like you have to speak up about something. Learning how to speak up can be a skill that takes time and practice to feel more comfortable doing. Using communications tools such as "I" statements can be helpful in clearly stating your boundaries to others. Saying something like, "I feel betrayed when you talk about me behind my back, can you please come to me with that information next time?" rather than saying something like, "Why are you always spreading rumors about me?" This style of conflict resolution allows for you to take ownership of your own feelings, allowing the other person to understand your perspective of the situation without feeling directly attacked. This prevents them from feeling like they need to defend themselves and allows for more effective communication. With more practice, it might still feel hard to speak up and stand up, but it will also start to feel easier and more second nature to do so!

Q: Thank you

A: It's our pleasure! 😊

Q: I feel that my friend does not know what the line is; I mean that he brags but does not know it, he does not know what is not okay to do and he does annoying and hurtful things without knowing. I can't help but do some things back. What should i do?

A: If you feel comfortable doing so, you could use "I" statements to let your friend know how his behavior makes you feel. Your friend may now know that his behavior is harmful or wilting and he may change how he behaves after he knows how it makes you feel. However, if your friend's behavior doesn't change despite you telling him how you feel, you may want to take some time to think about whether this is a friendship that you'd like to continue. You cannot control how your friend reacts but engaging in open and honest communication is a blooming characteristic to have!

Q: How long does bullying last?

A: Unfortunately that is something that is hard to determine when it comes to bullying. People bully for many reasons but it all boils down to trying to gain or maintain power and control over someone else. Some people may bully others because they were exposed to unhealthy or abusive behaviors in their homes as a child and taught that this behavior was normal or okay. Insecurity is another root cause. If someone lacks confidence, they may try to gain power or control over someone else in an attempt to feel better. Remember, though, that even though these root causes may increase one's risk of becoming a bully, they still can make the deliberate choice to treat people in a caring way instead of in a controlling

way. If you are being bullied, we strongly encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult such as a family member, school counselor, or teacher for support. You are not alone!

If someone is being bullied and we are witnesses to that, the best thing we can do is speak up and speak out. This can look like confronting the bully directly (if it is safe to do so) or telling a teacher or trusted adult. The most important thing to understand is that we must do something! By working together, we can end bullying!

Q: What do you do if you feel left out from your friends?

A: If you feel comfortable doing so, reaching out to your friends about how you're feeling could be a helpful thing to do. You can use "I" statements and other healthy communication skills to let your friends know how you've been feeling. Your friends may now know that their behavior is harmful or wilting and they may change how they behave after they know how it makes you feel. If your friends' behavior doesn't change after an open and honest conversation, it could be helpful to take some time to consider whether or not these are friendships you'd like to continue.

Q: I've sorta been bullied because of what I believe

A: We are so sorry to hear that you have been bullied. You deserve to feel safe and welcomed at school. We appreciate you being able to talk about this and reaching out to us. We always encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult at school or at home about what you're experiencing. They'll be able to offer you additional support in navigating this touch experience. You can always reach out to a bloom365 advocate at the number above if you'd like additional support. You are not alone!

Q: My parents hate eachother yet they still live together. Whenever they talk they are fighting or talking about their work schedule. They always tell me to tell your mom this or tell your dad this. They are both never home my dad works at night and my mom works during the day. That's what they argue about most.

A: We want you to know that you are not alone, and we are glad that you reached out to share what you are going through. We understand if you're feeling a variety of emotions and aren't exactly sure what to do. It can be really challenging to navigate family conflict, and unfortunately we can't control what our parents do. When things feel overwhelming, it can be helpful to consider what we do have control over—which is how we react to things, how we show up in our relationships, and how we care for ourselves. It can also be helpful to spend time engaging in self-care. This could look like spending time with friends or other family members that make us feel safe and happy, or spending time outside, taking a walk, listening to music, writing in a journal, or talking with a close friend. Self-care can be anything that helps you to feel mentally and physically refreshed and fulfilled. We encourage you to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate or other trusted adult in your life for additional support.

Q: I'm so drained I don't like my friend anymore and I can't trust them...

A: We are sorry to hear that you are feeling this way about your friend. Trust is an important aspect of a blooming friendship. If you are not receiving the type of friendship that you would like, you can think about whether or not this is a friendship you want to be in. It can be useful to look at the [Blooming and Wilting Flowers](#) to help you determine whether this friendship is healthy or unhealthy. If the friendship is

built off of power & control and we are not able to make changes by communicating in a healthy way with our friend using “I statements,” we may consider whether this friendship is one that we want to continue. Navigating conflict with our friends can be hard; it is important to remember that how your friend reacts is the conversation is their choice, and we cannot control that. You making the effort to have these healthy conversations with friends show great blooming characteristics!

Q: My friend is being controlled by their friends

A: It can be difficult to watch a friend experience toxic or controlling friendships. Bringing your concerns to your friend and reminding them that you care for them can be a helpful way to initiate a conversation about their other friendships. Checking in and making sure they know you are there for them even after the initial conversation is a great option. Sometimes it takes more than one conversation to really get through to a friend who is experiencing controlling friendships. Tools like the [Blooming and Wilting Flowers](#) can be supportive in identifying what healthy and unhealthy friendships can look like. We cannot make people end a harmful friendship or make a different choice if they do not want to, but we can do everything in our power to help our friends feel supported. 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: How can I tell if my friends actually like me or not?

A: Sometimes addressing a concern directly using healthy communication skills can be a great way to find clarity or answers you may have regarding a situation. Your friends may not know how you’ve been feeling about your friendship with them and open and honest communication may help them to understand how you’re feeling. Tools such as “I” statements and using the format of “I feel (emotion) when (situation), can you/we (solution or compromise)?” can be helpful in sharing how you’re feeling without directly putting any blame on your friends while also asking directly for the clarity or outcome that you’d like to see. You cannot control how your friends may react or say but engaging in open and honest communication is a blooming characteristic to have!

Q: How can I tell who the people are that I can talk to about things.

A: Identifying who those trusted people are in your life is a process that can feel difficult to start. A tool that can be helpful in figuring out who those people are for you is to make a list of individuals in different aspects of your life who you feel safe and comfortable with. This can be a close friend, a family member like a sibling or aunt or uncle, a community member such as a coach or faith leader, or a school counselor or social worker at school. Having a list of these people written down and in an accessible place can be useful for those moments where you may feel overwhelmed or needing support. Sometimes it can feel less intimidating to reach out to a person anonymously or who is not super connected to you or the situation and this is where advocates from organizations like bloom365 or Teen LifeLine can be a great support. We encourage you to connect with those people who make you feel safe and remember that you are not alone!

Q: If everyone likes me or not

A: It can be hard to feel misunderstood by your peers or to wonder how your peers feel about you. Feeling unsure if others like you or not can impact your self-esteem and how you see yourself. It might be a good idea to take some time to nurture your self-confidence. This could look like taking the time to remember the things you love about yourself and write them down so that you always have those reminders. Doing your own daily affirmations and spending time doing the things that make you happy can be helpful tools in building up our self-esteem. Please remember that you are not less than or inferior and you are deserving of feeling safe and welcomed at school or any other place you may find yourself!

Q: If my friends like me and if I should continue being their friend because I feel like they don't like me.

A: Friendships, like a lot of relationships in our lives, can have their ups and downs. Open communication can be a helpful tool in navigating the different relationships in our lives. Talking with your friend about how you feel and asking them how they feel could be a helpful way for you and your friends to have a better understanding of each other. "I" statements can be a helpful tool in building this understanding. If your friends' behavior doesn't change after an open and honest conversation, it could be helpful to take some time to consider whether or not these are friendships you'd like to continue.

Q: I have a friend who is a little toxic and inconsiderate about my feelings.

A: This sounds like a tough situation, and we are glad that you reached out for support. If you are not receiving the type of friendship that you would like, you can think about whether or not this is a friendship you want to be in. It can be useful to look at the blooming and wilting flowers to help you determine whether this friendship is healthy or unhealthy. If the friendship is built off of power & control and we are not able to make changes by communicating in a healthy way with our friend using "I statements," we may consider whether this friendship is one that we want to continue.

It could be helpful to reach out to your friend and ask if they are open to talking to you about how their behavior has been making you feel. If they are open to talking with you, using "I" statements is a good tool for addressing conflict in a healthy and productive way. This can look like saying something like using the format, "I feel (emotion) when (situation), can you/we (solution or compromise)?" This style of conflict resolution allows for you to take ownership of your own feelings, allowing the other person to understand your perspective of the situation without feeling directly attacked.