My Declaration of Rights

- I have the right to be treated with respect
- I have the right to have and express my own feelings
- I have the right to say "no" and not feel guilty
- I have the right to change my mind
- I have the right to say "I don't know"
- I have the right to express anger in a healthy way
- I have the right to be treated as a capable human being
- I have the right to have my needs be as important as others needs
- I have the right to make mistakes
- I have the right to ask "why?"
- I have the right to have and express my own opinions
- I have the right to set limits on relationships
- I have the right to take time to respond to someone
- I have the right to take time to think before I communicate
- I have the right to take time to meet my own needs
- I have the right to take time to be alone
- I have the right to change my goals whenever I want
- I have the right to change a relationship when my feelings change
- I have the right to be myself without changing to suit others
- I have the right to start a relationship slowly and say "I want to know you better"
- I have the right to say no if I don't want physical closeness
- I have the right to stand up for my beliefs and values
- I have the right to share my true feelings with others
- I have the right to feel good about myself without a guy's or girl's attention
- I have the right to be judged only by my actions, and not my appearance
- I have the right to handle opinions different from my own
- I have the right to be satisfied with my achievements
- I have the right to tell someone I don't like the way they are treating me
- I have the right to have an equal relationship with a partner
- I have the right to feel good about myself

Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Action Alliance (www.vsdvalliance.org)
Red Lights/Green Lights

Red Lights

- Blows up at little things.
- Wants to isolate you from friends and family.
- Blames others for their own faults.
- Uses or abuses drugs/alcohol.
- Is cruel to animals.
- Has a fascination with weapons.
- Thinks it is acceptable to solve conflicts with violence.
- Has strong gender stereotypes (men have to act..., women have to act...)
- Treats partners like property.
- Cannot express emotions verbally. Acts out instead.
- Threatens to "out" you if you are LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgendered, questioning)
- Pressures you for sex.

Green Lights

- Expresses anger appropriately.
- Encourages you to do things together and with others.
- Feels good about self and others.
- Accepts responsibility for their own actions.
- Does not use drugs or alcohol.
- Maintains positive relationships with family members.
- Encourages you and your goals.
- Respects personal boundaries and sexual limits.
- Handles conflicts without using violence.
- Is open-minded to non-traditional gender roles.
- Respects and values others.
- Effectively communicates verbally.
- Respects parental/authority boundaries.
- Accepts your sexual boundaries.
Healthy Relationships

Healthy Relationships have five key parts:

1) Self-esteem

Self-esteem is how I feel about myself. When I have positive self-esteem, I can accept feedback and positive statements from others. When I respect my own thoughts, feelings, and needs, I can balance them with the feelings and needs of my friends and partners.

2) Communication

Communication is how I express myself with others. In relationships, good communication involves the ability to share feelings and ideas. It also involves being a good listener. It is important to be aware of our words, thoughts, and gestures - even when we disagree with others.

3) Agreements

All relationships have rules that help us connect with each other. Agreeing to be respectful, honest, and accountable as friends or as partners helps build and maintain trust in relationships.

4) Connections

We each have many relationships or links with others. Examples include links in our community, our school, and with our family. No single relationship should isolate us from other relationships.

5) Balance

Relationships involve "give and take" on both sides. When one person is always giving and the other is always receiving, it is likely that one person will develop more power or control in the relationship. Healthy relationships work towards a balance.
Signs of Abusive Relationships

The following is a list of warning signs for potentially abusive relationships. They are presented as guidelines and cues to pay attention to, not as judgments on the worth of the other person.

**Question relationships with partners who:**
- Abuse alcohol or other drugs.
- Have a history of trouble with the law, get into fights, or break and destroy property.
- Don't work or go to school.
- Blame you for how they treat you, or for anything bad that happens.
- Abuse siblings, other family members, children or pets.
- Put down people, including your family and friends, or call them names.
- Are always angry at someone or something.
- Try to isolate you and control whom you see or where you go.
- Nag you or force you to be sexual when you don't want to be.
- Cheat on you or have lots of partners.
- Are physically rough with you (push, shove, pull, yank, squeeze, restrain).
- Take your money or take advantage of you in other ways.
- Accuse you of flirting or "coming on" to others or accuse you of cheating on them.
- Don't listen to you or show interest in your opinions or feelings.
- Things always have to be done their way.
- Ignore you, give you the silent treatment, or hang up on you.
- Lie to you, don't show up for dates, maybe even disappear for days.
- Make vulgar comments about others in your presence
- Blame all arguments and problems on you.
- Tell you how to dress or act.
- Threaten to kill themselves if you break up with them, or tell you that they cannot live without you.
- Experience extreme mood swings. . .tell you you're the greatest one minute and rip you apart the next minute.
- Tell you to shut up or tell you you're dumb, stupid, fat, or call you some other name (directly or indirectly).
- Compare you to former partners.

**Some other cues that might indicate an abusive relationship might include:**
- You feel afraid to break up with them.
- You feel tied down, feel like you have to check-in.
- You feel afraid to make decisions or bring up certain subjects so that the other person won't get mad.
- You tell yourself that if you just try harder and love your partner enough that everything will be just fine.
- You find yourself crying a lot, being depressed or unhappy.
- You find yourself worrying and obsessing about how to please your partner and keep them happy.
- You find the physical or emotional abuse getting worse over time.
Your Relationship is Healthy If...

- You trust your partner.
- You treat each other the way you want to be treated, and accept each other's opinions and interests.
- You each feel physically safe in the relationship.
- Your partner likes your friends and encourages you to spend time with them and wants to include them in his/her life as well as yours.
- You make important decisions together.
- Your partner understands when you spend time away from him or her.
- You don't feel responsible for protecting your partner's reputation or for covering for his/her mistakes.
- Your partner encourages you to enjoy different activities (like joining the volleyball team or football team, running for student government, or being in a play) and helps you reach your goals.
- Your partner likes you for who you are - not just for what you look like.
- You are not afraid to say what you think and why you think that way.
- You like to hear how your partner thinks, and don't always have to agree.
- You have both a friendship and a physical attraction.
- You don't have to be with your partner 24/7.
- Your partner cares about your sexual desires and takes time to communicate with you about what the two of you are comfortable with.
- Your partner doesn't force sexual activity or insist that you do something that makes you uncomfortable.