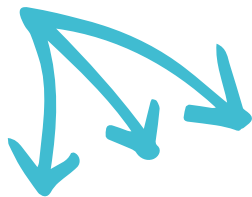


# TALK ABOUT IT

Think talking with teens about sexual violence is just for health teachers, parents, or . . . someone else?

How about you? Yep you, the mentor. It's no secret teens often turn to mentors like you for advice. So even if you have just a few moments with teens, start conversations with them. Moments like these add up to prevent sexual violence. Remember—formal lectures not required.

**USE THESE TIPS TO GET STARTED.**




Mentors: Tips to Prevent Sexual Violence

**BE WHAT THEY NEED**

**GET DIALOGUE GOING**

**ASK THINGS LIKE**

- 
- ✓ Be a good listener.
  - ✓ Be supportive and non-accusatory.
  - ✓ Show them you're open to talking.
  - ✓ Avoid making assumptions about:
    - Their identities, bodies, or behaviors
    - How they want to handle the situation
  - ✓ Be careful not to judge their choices or show disapproval.
  - ✓ Recognize and reject stereotypes you may have about individuals, cultures, and issues.
  - ✓ Allow them to make their own decisions about the situation (step in when required by law).
  - ✓ Be a resource. Give them tools and show them where to go for more information.
  - ✓ Admit when you don't know something.
  - ✓ Educate yourself on rape culture. Seek out current, evidence-based resources.

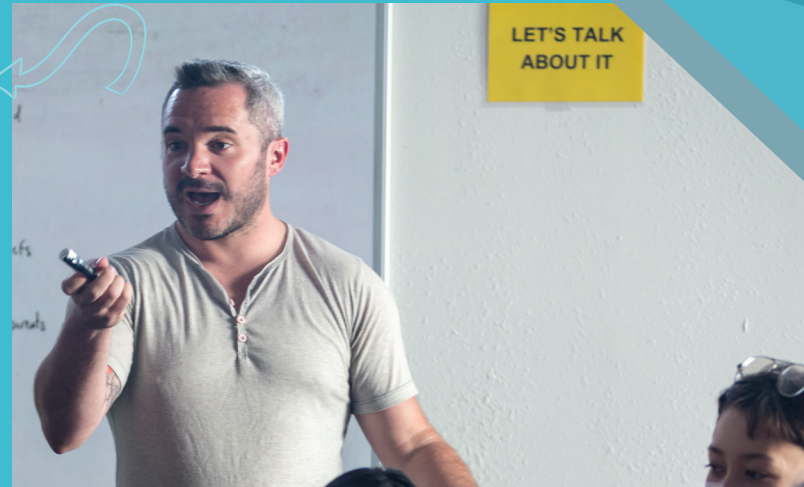


**BE WHAT THEY NEED**

**GET DIALOGUE GOING**

**ASK THINGS LIKE**

- ✓ Keep it low key. Don't push if they aren't ready to talk.
- ✓ Use day-to-day language, not medical terms.
- ✓ When they come to you first, start by listening.
- ✓ Keep the conversation going by asking open-ended questions.
- ✓ When talking about real scenarios:
  - Focus on behaviors, not specific people.
  - Challenge them to notice red flags.
  - Ask them what next steps they want to take.
  - Be ready to share resources.
- ✓ Use what's going on in current events and in media as a way to start a conversation or to illustrate a point.
- ✓ Bring up a topic related to sexual violence:
  - Ask them to share what they know about it.
  - Share scenarios and examples that include a wide variety of people, relationships, and identities.
  - Discuss practical ways to prevent sexual violence.
- ✓ Validate what they know and have shared.



**BE WHAT THEY NEED**

**GET DIALOGUE GOING**

**ASK THINGS LIKE**

- ✓ “Everyone deserves to be treated with respect in relationships. What does ‘respect’ mean to you?”
- ✓ “What are signs of healthy relationships?”
- ✓ “Have you witnessed unhealthy relationships? How does it make you feel?”
- ✓ “How do you give or ask for consent?”
- ✓ “What options do you have if you witness or experience sexual violence?”
- ✓ “What kind of social media boundaries do you think couples and friends should have?”
- ✓ “What are signs that someone is being treated like they don’t matter, like they’re someone else’s property, or like they’re objects?”
- ✓ “How would you help a friend who had bad things posted about them online?”
- ✓ “Would it be weird if someone you were dating got bugged when you hang out with your friends?”
- ✓ “What would you say to a friend who tells a rape joke?”



**BE WHAT THEY NEED**

**GET DIALOGUE GOING**

**ASK THINGS LIKE**

*Sexual violence is a broad term and includes rape, incest, child sexual abuse, intimate partner violence, sexual exploitation, human trafficking, unwanted sexual contact, sexual harassment, exposure, and voyeurism.  
(National Sexual Violence Resource Center)*

**LEARN MORE - LOTS MORE -  
AND GET THE SUPPORT YOU NEED TO HELP TEENS:  
[itstartswithusNM.org](http://itstartswithusNM.org)**

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