

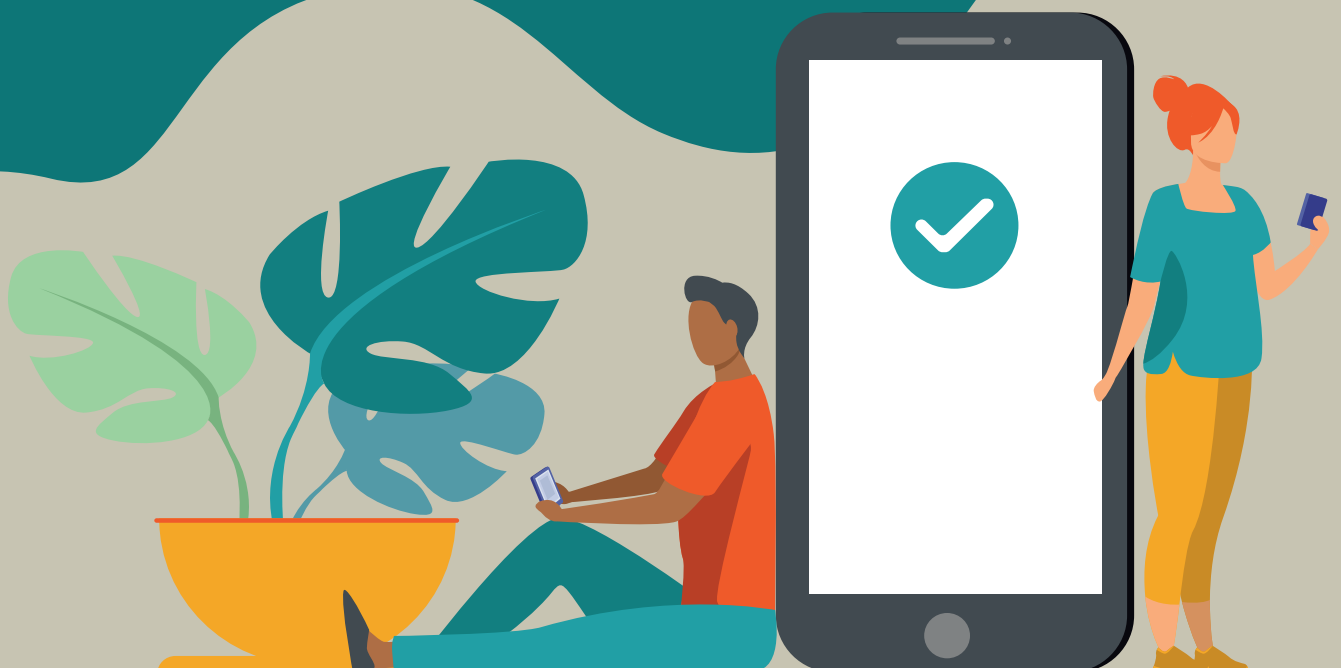
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# RELATION TIPS

## A GUIDE FOR SENTIMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS

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This guide is designed to be a tool for adults (parents, educators) who deal with teenagers, but it is also for all people who want to learn more about the matter.



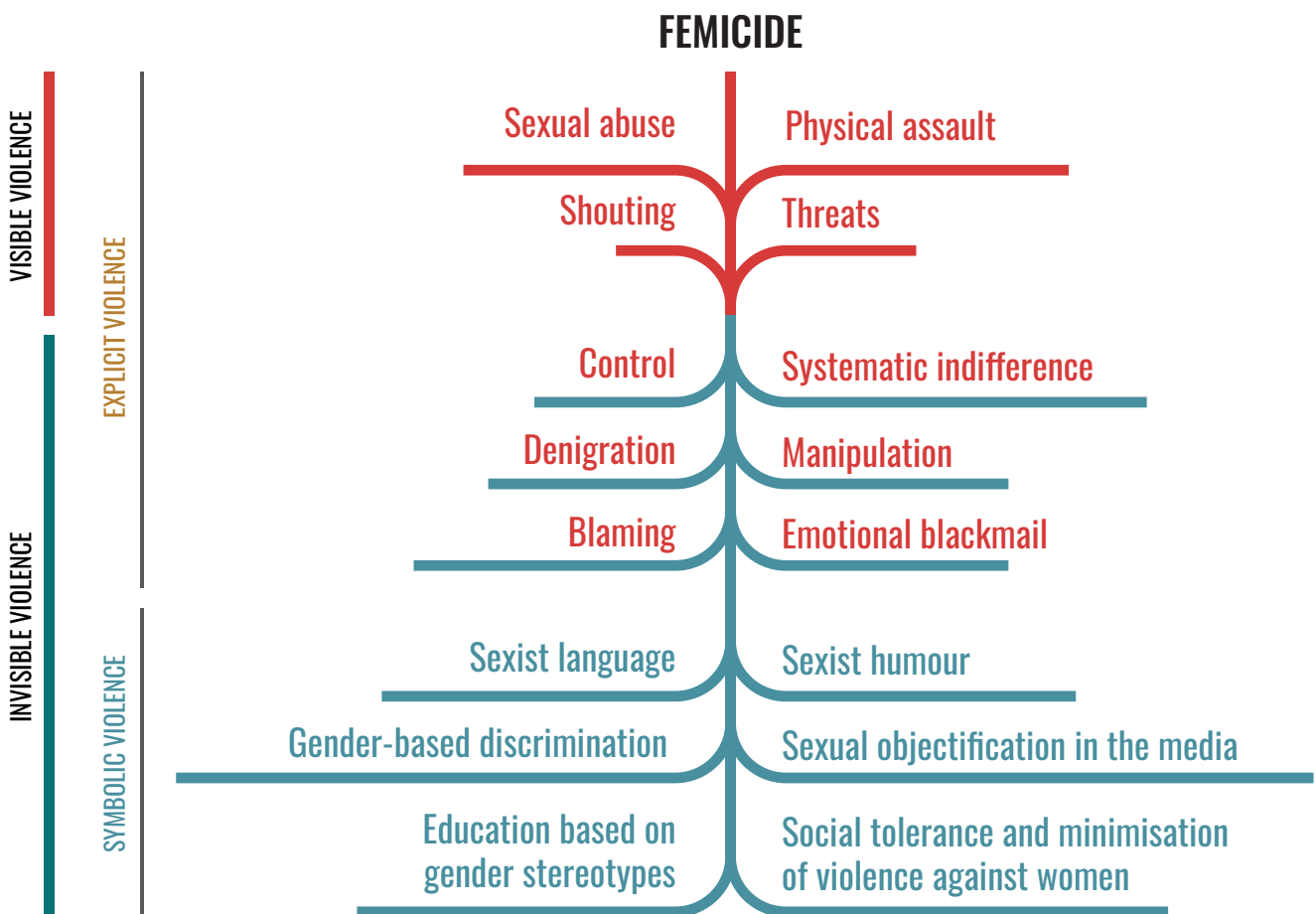
## What do we mean by gender violence?

"Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life" (Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, General Assembly of the United Nations, 1993).

## What is online dating violence?

Online Teen Dating Violence (OTDV), which we comes under the context of online gender violence among teenagers in this campaign, indicates the set of behaviours directed at damaging a partner using technologies to control them, pressurise them, or threaten them.

Sometimes violent behaviours experienced in sentimental relationships are mistaken for forms of love or interest from the partner, but this is not the reality. Violence is not only physical (where femicides are the tip of the iceberg). Psychological violence exists too and can be difficult to recognise, also when it unfolds online.



# RECOGNISING RELATIONSHIPS

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<b>Nourishing relationships</b>	<b>Unhealthy relationships</b>	<b>Violent relationships</b>
I know I can speak openly about my problems	If there is a problem, it's difficult to speak about it, and we fight	I'm afraid
I listen to the other person and I know that they listen to me	If there is a problem, sometimes I avoid speaking about it so we don't fight	They often tell me that I'm worthless
I respect their opinions and I know they respect mine	They don't always respect my opinions	They insult me. They denigrate me
They recognize my worth, who I am and I recognise theirs	I feel that I don't completely trust them	They hit me with their hands or with objects, they throw and/or break things
I trust them	I feel that they don't trust me completely	They always accuse me of betraying them and, for that reason, they attack me, verbally and/or physically
They trust me	Sometimes they tell me lies	Often they don't realise that their behaviour hurts me
I believe what my partner tells me	Sometimes I tell them lies	They often blame me for what they do
I'm honest with them I know that it's mutual	When we have to make a decision, I don't always feel free to express myself	They decide who I can spend time with or not spend time with, when I can go out, where I can go
I like when we spend time together but I also have my own space	Their behaviour sometimes upsets or hurts me	I'm afraid to say no to their requests because I'm scared they'll make a scene
When we have to make a decision, we do it together	Sometimes I don't feel free to be able to choose what to do or say	They call me in the middle of the night and I have to answer otherwise they'll be angry the next day
I don't judge and I don't feel judged	I don't always feel free to spend time with other people apart from them	Their jealousy limits my every move

They respect my spaces, including the digital ones (my posts, images, videos that I post)	We have to share everything otherwise they get upset and we fight	They write to me constantly to know where I am, with who, and what I'm wearing. If I don't respond straight away they become aggressive
If they don't agree with something I've posted, we speak about it	I feel manipulated	They often raise their voice
I know their social media profile but I don't check it all the time	Sometimes I feel like they don't respect my spaces including the digital ones (my posts, images, videos that I post)	They want to know my passwords and they check my phone and every message I get
They know my social media profile but they don't check it all the time	They know my social media profile and they look at it often	When we are out I'm scared that they might behave badly and embarrass me
We write to each other often. If one of us isn't able to answer straight away nothing happens	They often control my social media profiles	They always know where I am through my telephone's geolocation
We speak about our fantasies and fears and feel free to create together how we experience sexuali	We write to each other often. If one of us isn't able to answer we often fight	When it comes to sex, they make me do things I don't want to
We speak about and agree on contraceptive choices	When we get intimate, sometimes they try to make me do things that I don't want to	When it comes to sex, they make me have sex even when I don't want to, often with emotional blackmail ('if you love me...')
When it comes to sex, we speak about what we like and what we don't like	We often fight about sex	We don't agree on contraceptive choices

The table was adapted from "Non è amore se... Piccola guida per adolescenti su come dare vita a una relazione d'amore senza abusi e prevaricazioni" (Giovannini A., 2017, <https://www.alessiagiovannini.com/non-e-amore-se>, p. 6) and [www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org).

# RELATION TIPS

The emotions we experience in relationships can be very complex and require attention so that we can guarantee our well-being and that of others. It's important to feel safe and comfortable in a relationship, also online.

## It's important:

- 1 To respect your wishes and those of others.
- 2 To feel free to express yourself and maintain open dialogue.
- 3 To be aware of your desires and communicate them to the other
- 4 To recognise and respect your emotional and physical boundaries and those of others, also when online
- 5 To consider that behaviours realised online can be just as harmful
- 6 To ask ourselves what makes us feel comfortable and share it with our partner
- 7 To respect the privacy of the other person and expect them to respect yours: everyone has this right and no one should renounce it to have a relationship.

**Remember that you always have the right to say no to anything that doesn't seem right for you and to be in control of your decisions.**

### What can happen online

Consider that online feelings and behaviours can be more difficult to understand and it's important to talk about them.

They are conditioned by our cultural models and gender role stereotypes that form the foundations of violence, also online.

Digital environments make certain specific violent actions possible, for example:

- checking movements with geolocation
- checking their activity on social networks and who they're interacting with
- creating a fake social media profile to spy on your partner
- not allowing your partner to have social media contacts
- spreading intimate photos of someone without their consent
- getting or insistently asking for unwanted sexual photos or content

It's important not to minimise or make excuses for these behaviours or misunderstand them for forms of love.

**And remember:**

**IT'S NOT COOL, IT'S NOT OK, IT'S NOT RIGHT!**

# PARENTS

It's also important that adults, just like teenagers, become fully aware of the seriousness of these behaviours and can be supportive of young people experiencing these situations.



# SOME ADVICE FOR SPEAKING TO THOSE WHO ASK YOU FOR HELP



Show that you are open to dialogue



Stay calm and be reassuring



Take it seriously and believe without judging



Do not minimise, underestimate, or reject what you are being told



Be present and support the person as they tell their story, respecting their timing



Don't pressure them into taking "your" solution. Respect their wishes



Don't make promises that can't be kept

# WHO TO SPEAK TO

When you feel the need to speak to experts that can help you understand what to do, you can contact the services in the territory.

For example:

- The anti-violence centre (in the case of girls aged 18+)
- Family counselling unit
- The hospital's A&E
- Social services for children
- Social services for adults
- Healthcare services for children
- Police forces
- Private professionals who are experts in gender violence (for example, psychologists, lawyers)

Si tratta di servizi che possono essere soggetti a differenze regionali in termini di denominazione, compiti e organizzazione.

These services may have different names, duties, and organization,

Link:

<https://www.savethechildren.it/cosa-facciamo/progetti/date-develop-approaches-and-tools-end-online-teen-dating-violence>



**Save the Children**



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