

A photograph of two women with long hair, smiling and laughing together in an outdoor setting with trees in the background. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

Good or bad love? *How can you tell?*

Be wise to these 5 early warning signs of an unhealthy relationship.



**Jenny's
Place**

**Newcastle Domestic
Violence Resource Centre
4927 8529**

jennysplace.org

Are you wise to the 5 early warning signs of a bad relationship?

1. Pushing or Shoving

This behaviour may later turn into hitting or kicking.

2. Intimidating behaviour

e.g. Frequent shouting ('in your face' attitude), serious threats, constant put-downs, smashing furniture or throwing objects.

3. Controlling behaviour

For example, wanting to control who you can see, where you can go, or how you can spend your money.

If it's bad when you first start dating, it may get much worse over time. You need to talk about what is happening with someone you can trust.

4. A cycle of good times followed by bad times

If your relationship frequently fits the pattern of cycling between 'good' periods (the honeymoon) followed by a build up of tensions and verbal abuse, psychological abuse or physical violence.

This is likely to get worse over time.


5. Your own feelings

If your relationship is not healthy, you may feel:

- anxious
- nervous
- fearful
- ashamed to tell your friends what's going on
- isolated
- lonely

If you are in a healthy relationship, you are likely to feel:

- Happy about the relationship.
- Confident about discussing problems and working through issues together (of course every couple have arguments now and then).
- Free to keep doing things that are important to you, such as going out with your girlfriends, keeping in contact with your family, studying or going to work.
- Safe and RESPECTED.



Healthy relationships are strong and equal relationships

What you can do

If things don't seem right to you...

- **Talk to someone**
someone you can trust, like a friend, school teacher, a counsellor at a women's centre, or ask your doctor to refer you to a counsellor, or
- **Call a help line**
to talk to someone privately who can help with strategies to improve the situation, and
- **Keep your job**
to help avoid over reliance on someone else. (For example, take maternity leave rather than quitting your work to have a child.)

Domestic Violence can be any one of the following:

- Threats or intimidation
- Constant criticism or put-downs
- Physical assault
- Sexual assault
- Control of money or social contacts
- Use of mobile phones or electronic media to harass, humiliate or intimidate

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I thought I really loved my first boyfriend and at the time I believed we would stay together forever. He seemed really protective of me and didn't want me to go anywhere without him. But after a while he started to make really serious threats when he was upset with me. I stopped going out with most of my friends. But my best friend noticed how much I had changed and persuaded me to talk about it – that's when I realised I had to leave him.

Oh – and by the way – my new boyfriend is a really great person – he respects me and is happy for me to see my own friends. I feel like “me” again!

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This example is based on a compilation of experiences reported by women who have left abusive relationships.

Helpful numbers

Link2home 24 hour crisis accommodation assistance	1800 152 152
Domestic Violence Helpline 24 hour assistance and referral	1800 656 463
Jenny's Place Domestic Violence Resource Centre	02 4929 6289
1800Respect	1800 737 732
Newcastle Legal Aid	02 4929 5482
Hunter Community Legal Centre	02 4040 9120
Newcastle Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service	02 4940 8766
Staying Home Leaving Violence	02 4926 3577
Lifeline	13 11 14