

# Dating Safety

## Keeping yourself safe in a dating situation ...

Here are some things you can do to help keep yourself safe when you are dating someone:

1. Correction, appropriately expressed, is not destructive, hurtful or shame inducing. Pay attention to your feelings and trust your instinct: If a situation feels wrong or scary, it probably is and you may be in danger. Listen to your feelings and try to get out of that situation.
2. Let the person you are with know what you want: You have the right to set limits about what is welcome in your relationship. Let the person you are with know what your expectations are. Even though it can feel embarrassing, talking things out can help to avoid dangerous or hurtful situations.
3. Notice changes in your relationship: If someone stops respecting your wishes or listening to you, then it is a warning sign of an abusive relationship. Be assertive about what you need in the relationship, and get clear with yourself and your boyfriend/girlfriend about what behaviour you will not put up with.
4. Have a Safety Plan: Plan ahead for a situation that is unsafe. Think about where you could go or who you could call if you were in danger or things didn't feel right. Always let someone else know where you are going and what your plans are. You could arrange with a friend or family member to call you at a certain time to check you are OK. Think about carrying a personal safety alarm, and always make sure you have a mobile phone with credit with you, if you can afford it. Carry a phone card and spare cash. Use your own transport. Planning ahead can help you to get out of a dangerous situation and to stay safe.
5. Remember you have the right to make decisions for yourself: You have the right to be in control of yourself, so if something doesn't feel right for you, say "NO!"

