

# SAFETY SKILLS

## SKILL ASSESSMENT

The following questions will help you identify safety skills in which you excel and target those which you need to develop. By yourself or with your team try to answer each of the questions as honestly as possible. After completing this independent living skills assessment, review it with your team and identify those skills you would like to strengthen.

	<i>I do not know how to do this</i>	<i>I need to know more about this</i>	<i>I can do/ have done this</i>
1. Know what telephone numbers to call for medical emergencies, fire, and/or for police assistance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Know what to do/whom to call if I think someone (child or adult) has ingested a poisonous substance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Know what to do or whom to call if I think someone is following me or trying to hurt me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Know what gas smells like, what to do, and the telephone number to call if I suspect a gas leak.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Know the importance of learning the best fire escape routes in the house/apartment in case of fire.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Use preventive safety measures to keep myself safe at home, i.e. lock doors and windows when appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Know and follow the basic rules for preventing fires at home: no smoking in bed, frayed electrical cords should not be used, gas stove should not be used for heat, extension cords should be used properly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Understand the importance of having a smoke detector in my home, how to check it and replace the battery when necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Use caution when throwing away matches, smoking materials, or any hot substance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<i>I do not know how to do this</i>	<i>I need to know more about this</i>	<i>I can do/ have done this</i>
<b>10.</b> Understand the importance of safely storing cleaning, painting, and other toxic materials away from children and pets.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>11.</b> Know what to do if caught in a fire.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>12.</b> Know which type of fire not to use water to extinguish.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>13.</b> Know how to use a fire extinguisher.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>14.</b> Have successfully completed a First Aid course and/or CPR training.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# SAFETY TIPS FOR YOUNG PARENTS

## How to Prevent Scalds and Other Burns



Hot liquid, both water and foods, can hurt you and your child as severely as fire, causing painful and serious burns. Here are some points to keep in mind, particularly if your child is a toddler (1-3 years old) who is learning to walk, climb, and explore the house. *(And these tips apply to you, too!)*

Always check the water before you place your baby in the tub. Remember, a baby's skin is more tender and sensitive than an adult's and can be easily burned.

Don't leave your child alone in the bathtub, even for a minute to answer the telephone or door. Children like to play with faucets and can easily burn themselves by turning on the hot water. They could also slip in the tub and drown.

Keep hot drinks and foods away from the edges of the tables and counters where they can be grabbed and spilled.

Don't let the cord on appliances dangle where a child can reach it and pull the appliance (like a hot toaster, iron, or coffee pot) down on top of him or her. Use a shorter cord or roll it up and tie it with an elastic band.

Keep your child away from the stove while you are cooking. Turn the pot handles toward the back of the stove so that they cannot be reached by a child or accidentally spilled.

Always test your child's heated food - especially baby bottles -before you feed him or her. Don't use a microwave oven to heat baby bottles! Even if the first drop of milk seems okay, the center could be very hot!

What would you do if a child or a friend got burned/scalded by hot water?

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## Falls

Did you know that falls are the leading cause of injury to children under age five? It's true. Not every fall can be prevented, but some can.

Few children, if any, will pass through childhood without the occasional bump or minor bruise. Falls from stairs or heights, however, can be very serious. Here are a few suggestions for prevention:

- Never leave a baby or toddler alone on a high surface, such as a changing table or bed. Not even for a moment!
- Open windows from the top rather than the bottom. If you have to open the bottom part of the window, use a window guard. It is much stronger than a screen and will prevent a child from falling out of the window, while screens will not.
- Keep all unopened windows locked.
- Place safety gates at the top and bottom of stairs. Use the gates that have a flat bar across the top. Do not use accordion-style gates. Young children have been strangled by these.
- Use a door latch or hook & eye latch on doors which lead to unsafe areas, such as the basement, storage areas, or closets where dangerous tools or poisonous cleaners are kept.

What would you do if a child or a friend took a bad fall and possibly injured his/her head?

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## Drowning

Never leave children alone in or near a bathtub, wading pool, or even a pail of water. Babies and toddlers can drown in as little as *two inches* of water! Even if a child knows how to swim, he or she should not be left unattended near water.

Pools should be enclosed by four-sided walls or fences which are at least four feet high. Chain-link and other types of fences that children can climb should not be used around pools. All gates should have working locks that children cannot open.

Pool alarms should be utilized when the pool is not being used.

Every pool owner should know how to perform CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation).

Coast Guard approved life preservers or personal flotation devices (PFD) should be used by children as well as adults who cannot swim.

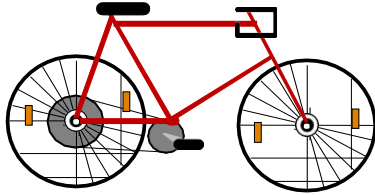
Two  
Inches  
(2")

## Car & Bicycle Safety

More children are killed each year in traffic and bicycle accidents than by any other injury.

All children riding in cars or trucks must be placed or seated in an approved\* car seat, according to federal and state laws.

New parents must have a car seat for their infants when they take them home from the hospital.



All children who ride bicycles should know the rules of safe bicycling.

Children should wear bicycle helmets that meet the safety standards to the Snell Memorial Foundation or the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

Bicycle riders should also wear reflective clothing or tape at night so that they can be seen by drivers. (Bicycles should also have reflectors.)

## Hints For Safe Home Heating

Keep children away from all heating devices!

If you have a wood stove or fireplace, be sure you use a specially designed screen or guard to help prevent children and adults from being burned.

Do not use your gas oven or charcoal for heat. The gas fumes can seriously hurt or even kill you, particularly when you're sleeping.

Make sure that space heaters are stable. Place them on flat surfaces only and ensure that they won't tip over. Keep heaters at least three feet away from anything that can catch fire: furniture, curtains, newspapers and magazines. Unvented kerosene heaters are illegal in Massachusetts. Do not use them! They are very dangerous.

If you need help paying your heating bills, call your city or town hall for the fuel assistance program that serves your community. You may be eligible for some financial support. Don't risk your life or the lives of your family by using unsafe heating devices.

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\* An approved car seat must have been manufactured after January 1981, or it must have a label that says "Meets Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 213."

## Poisoning



### A Quiz:

Which of the substances listed below could be poisonous to a child? Place a checkmark in the box beside each of your choices:

- paint thinner
- paint
- bleach
- dishwashing liquid
- alcohol
- vitamins
- aspirin
- cleaning fluids
- some plants
- drain cleaner
- cigarettes
- prescription medication

If you checked all the substances, you are correct. Children can be poisoned by a lot of substances that most of us might not consider dangerous or harmful, such as mouthwash.

Poisoning occurs most often when an unattended child finds cleaning products, medicine, alcohol, etc., in an unlocked cabinet. Children under age seven are at the greatest risk of poisoning.

Here are some suggestions to make your home or child safe from accidental poisoning:

- Be sure that all the medicine you buy (aspirin, prescription medication) is packaged in child-proof containers.
- Keep all medicine, even vitamins, in a medicine cabinet that is locked or latched and above a child's reach.
- Store all cleaners and other potentially poisonous substances in their original containers in a locked cabinet or closet. If you don't have a locking cabinet, keep these substances away from food on a high shelf far above a child's reach.

What would you do if you suspected that a child or a friend had ingested some poisonous substance?



**EMERGENCY CARE:**

Keep the telephone numbers of emergency medical services (hospital, clinic, etc.) and Poison Information Center taped to your phone.

Keep a bottle of Ipecac syrup in your medicine cabinet. The Poison Center may advise you to give syrup of Ipecac to a poisoned child. This causes the child to vomit, emitting much of the poison. Do not give syrup of Ipecac to a child unless the poison center or doctor tells you to do so; it can react dangerously with some poisons.

You can buy syrup of Ipecac without a prescription for about \$2.00 at most drug stores.

**WHAT TO DO IF YOU THINK A CHILD MAY HAVE BEEN POISONED:**

- (1) Open the child's mouth and remove any remaining pills, pieces of plant, etc.
- (2) Take the child and the poison or container to the telephone. Do not give your child anything (not even water, milk, or syrup of Ipecac) until call your doctor or the Poison Center.
- (3) Call the Poison Center. Trained medical staff are available 24 hours a day to give you free treatment advice. You will be asked the following information
  - Age of child
  - Weight
  - Name of the substance swallowed
  - Amount swallowed, if known

Remember, call for medical advice **before** you give the child anything to drink.



Every home should have a First-Aid Emergency Kit. Do you? \_\_\_\_\_

What items do you think should be included in a first-aid kit?

In addition to the first-aid kit, what are some other items you should have in your home to care for minor medical problems or to provide emergency treatment until professional care can be obtained?

Did you think of these items for your first-aid kit:

- antiseptic cream or ointment
- Band-Aids (different sizes)
- gauze pads
- rubbing alcohol
- roll of gauze bandages
- scissors
- white tape
- cotton balls

Other important household medical care items include:

- aspirin
- Ipecac Syrup
- non-aspirin pain reliever
- tweezers
- oral thermometer





# FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION

Did you know that most fatal fires occur when people are sleeping, usually between Midnight and 6 a.m.?

It's true! This is one reason why it's so important to have smoke detectors/alarms in your home or apartment. They will wake you when there is a fire, giving you time to escape. People who don't have smoke detectors may not wake up in time to escape the killing heat, smoke, and flames of a house fire.

## **More Fire Safety Information Follows:**

- Most fire deaths occur from smoke rather than burns. As a house fire burns, it gives off toxic gases, often carbon monoxide, which can kill.
- Smoke detectors are, therefore, one of the most important life saving devices you can own. Every home/apartment should have at least one smoke detector. Under Massachusetts law, landlords must provide smoke detectors in a building with three or more apartments. In some cities, such as Boston, all homes and apartments **must** have smoke detectors.
- Fire extinguishers can be used to put out small fires and can help clear an escape route. Don't waste time trying to put out a house fire, however; that's the fireman's job. Your job is to escape.
- Multi-purpose fire extinguishers are important household safety devices. The extinguishers labeled "ABC" are the best ones to buy; they can put out most fire -- wood, paper, cloth, flammable liquids, and electrical wires/appliances.
- Don't use water on a grease fire. Instead use baking soda, a fire extinguisher, sand, etc.
- If your bedroom is above the first floor and you don't have a fire escape stairway outside one of your bedroom windows, you should have a fire escape ladder. Should the stairway ever be blocked by fire, you'll have an escape route from the window. Fire escape ladders are collapsible and can be stored in a closet or under the bed.
- You should always sleep with your bedroom door closed. Should a fire occur, the closed door will temporarily hold back the heat and the smoke.
- Plan your fire escape route and have practice fire drills regularly.

What would you do first if you woke up at night and discovered there was a fire in your home and the smoke alarms were blaring?



## **Fire Escape Tips:**

Roll from the bed. Do not sit up and jump out of bed. The air temperature at the level of the bed will be cooler (although it will be probably warmer than 100 degrees) than the air a few feet above the bed (probably 200 degrees or more).

Fire officials recommend that you roll from the bed to the floor. Temperatures will be lowest there. Then crawl along the floor where the air will be less smoky and the heat less intense. Cover your nose and mouth with a cloth (if possible, a wet cloth).

Touch the door before you open it. If it is hot to the touch, do not open it. Use another escape route. If it's cool, brace your shoulder against the door and open it slowly. Be ready to slam it if smoke or heat rush in.

## **Get out quickly!**

Do not waste time trying to put out the fire.

Call the fire department from a neighbor's house.

Every second counts!

If you cannot escape through the door, use the window. If you're on the first floor, you're in luck. If not, choose a window that overlooks a ledge or roof that you can climb onto and wait for help to arrive.

Remember, if you sleep above the first floor and do not have a fire escape stairway outside one of your bedroom windows, you should have a fire escape ladder. If no ladder is available, straddle the window sill by putting one leg out the window and keeping the other inside.

Keep your head outside and wait for help.

Three very important words to remember **if your clothes ever catch fire** are:

STOP -- Stop where you are. Do not run.

DROP -- Drop to the ground or floor and cover your face with your hands.

ROLL -- Roll across the ground to smother the flames.

Treatment: Cool the burn immediately with cool water only.

## **PREVENTING CRIME AT HOME**

Did you know that approximately 50% of burglars get into homes through unlocked doors and windows? It may seem hard to believe, but it's true.



### ACTIVITY

How well do you protect yourself from crime in your home? Answer the questions below to find out.

1. When someone rings your doorbell or knocks on the door, do you ever open the door without knowing who is out there?

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2. Do you ever hide your house keys under the doormat? In the mailbox? On top of the door frame?

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3. Have you ever given your key ring with all your keys to a mechanic or parking lot attendant?

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4. Have you ever received a “wrong number” telephone call and told the caller your telephone number?

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5. Have you ever left your door unlocked while you made a quick trip to the store or to a neighbor’s house?

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If you answered “Yes” to any of these questions, you’re putting yourself at risk. Don’t make it easy for a burglar to get into your home. Follow the safety tips on the next page.

## CRIME PREVENTION TIPS FOR HOME SAFETY

- Don't open the door to anyone you do not know without first finding out who the person is and what he/she wants.
- Install a peephole or wide-angle viewer in your door so you can see who is outside without opening the door. A short chain between the door and its frame is not a good substitute, as it can be easily broken.
- Ask to see an identification badge or card for any repairman, meter reader, policeman, etc., before you allow him or her into your home.
- Put deadbolt locks on your doors, not the spring latch type with the key hole in the knob.
- Be sure to keep your entry way, porch, and yard well lighted.
- Do not put any personal identification on your key ring.



- Give only your ignition key to the car mechanic or parking lot attendant.
- Don't give any information to "wrong number" callers. Ask what number the person was trying to reach.
- Hang up immediately on any threatening or harassing telephone calls. If the caller persists, call the police and the telephone company.
- Check references of any person calling about a survey or credit check before volunteering information. Offer to call the person back instead of responding immediately.
- If you'll be away from home for a few days or so, ask someone to pick up your mail or have the post office hold your mail until you return.
- You can also buy inexpensive timing devices to turn on and off inside lights, a radio, or a television set at different times during the evening or night.
- Burglars hope to avoid confrontations, so make your home look occupied.

# Violence in Relationships

## **Did you know this information about violence in relationships?**

1. Every 18 seconds, a woman is beaten in the United States.  
Source: F.B.I.
2. Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women between the ages 15 - 44 in the United States -- more than car accidents, muggings, and rapes combined.  
Source: Surgeon General,, United States, 1992.
3. Sixty-three percent of the young men between the ages of 11 and 20 who are serving time for homicide have killed their mother's abuser.  
Source: Uniform Crime Reports, F.B.I., 1990.
4. Women of all cultures, races, occupations, income levels, and ages are battered by husbands, boyfriends, lovers, and partners.  
Source: For Shelter and Beyond, Massachusetts Coalition of Battered Woman Service Groups, Boston, MA, 1990.
5. One out of three girls and one out of seven boys will be sexually assaulted before reaching their 18th birthday.  
Source: Mass Capp.
6. In a study of 256 high school students, 35% reported experiencing violence in dating.  
Source: Brockopp, et al, 1983.
7. Two-thirds of all reported rapes are acquaintance rapes.  
Source: Planned Parenthood Association of Miami Vallye, Inc., 1989..
8. "Approximately one-third of the men counseled [for battering] at Emerge are professional men who are well respected in their jobs and their communities. These have included doctors, psychologists, lawyers, ministers, and business executives."  
Source: David Adams, "Identifying the Assaultive Husband in Court: You Be the Judge." Boston Bar Journal, 33 (4). July/August, 1989.
9. Nationally, 50 percent of all homeless women and children are on the street because of violence in the home.  
Source: Senator Joeseph Biden, *U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Violence Against Women: Victims of the System* , 1991.
10. Battered women are often severely injured -- 22 to 35 percent of women who visit medical emergency rooms are there for injuries related to on-going partner abuse.  
Source: Journal of the American Medical Association, 1992.

**The first step in stopping abuse is being able to identify it!**

Would you know it if you were being abused by someone? Here are some questions to help you find out. Please answer “Yes” or “No”.

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
Do you feel confused about your relationship with your boyfriend or girlfriend?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does he or she pressure you to do things that don't feel comfortable to you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is your boyfriend or girlfriend extremely jealous or possessive?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does he or she try to run your life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does he or she threaten you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your boyfriend or girlfriend assume he or she knows what's best for you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does he or she make decisions that affect you without talking to you first?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have your friends advised you to drop him or her?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you afraid of your boyfriend or girlfriend?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you lost your temper with your boyfriend or girlfriend?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you threatened to hit him or her?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does your boyfriend or girlfriend seem afraid of you sometimes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you been jealous or possessive of your boyfriend or girlfriend?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you criticize him or her or call him or her names when s/he disagrees with you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can your boyfriend or girlfriend get angry with you without your becoming more angry?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you sometimes yell or swear when you are upset at your boyfriend or girlfriend?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
Have you put your boyfriend or girlfriend down in front of your other friends?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has your boyfriend or girlfriend said that you're trying to control him or her?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you afraid you might be violent toward your boyfriend or girlfriend someday?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you driven your boyfriend or girlfriend away with your anger?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you've answered "Yes" to any of these questions, you've either been abused or have abused. Don't let it happen again! There are many people who can help you. Instead of feeling helpless or taking out your anger on others, **do something about your problem.** Ask your social worker/foster parents/staff to help you get in touch with someone who can help you change this!

## Respect

How can a guy respect a girl's wish? All he has to do is listen to what she has to say. It's easiest when she clearly states how she feels, but it might be difficult for a girl to say no sometimes. She'll use other words or actions which mean the same thing. Here are some examples of "No" words:

**I don't feel like it.**

**I'm not ready.**

**Let's take our time.**

**I don't want to get pregnant.**

**I'm scared.**

**I don't know if I like you that much.**

**I don't want to do more than petting.**

**I don't like this.**

**I know we've done this before, but I don't want to go all the way.**

**Please!**

**I don't know...**

**Enough!**



**I don't feel good about this.**

**I'm confused.**

**I don't want to get AIDS.**





There may be times when someone can't say "no," but her actions will mean "no." Here are some behaviors that mean "no."

**Looking down.**

**Avoiding being alone.**

**Crying.**

**Moving away.**

**Cringing.**

Remember to take "no" for an answer when somebody gives it to you. Nobody would be giving you that message unless that person meant it. Never force sex; to do so is a violent crime. You'll be hurting yourself and the other person. It won't be what it should be. Here are some tips to help keep dates safe.

- Choose a place for your date that feels comfortable and safe.
- Have a conversation discussing what you both feel comfortable with.
- Respect each other's bodies. Your body is yours, and no one has the right to touch it if you don't want him/her to.
- Don't be caught off guard. Just because you agree to a date doesn't mean you owe your date your body.
- Stay straight - you have less control when you are high and/or drunk.
- Pay attention to "red flags." Don't ignore another person's language or behaviors that make you feel uncomfortable about your safety.
- Be prepared to take drastic action, if necessary. Break a window, turn the music way up, make a scene, do anything you can to draw attention and get help.

Source: Planned Parenthood Association of Miami Valley, Inc., 1989

Love is something everybody wants. Sometimes you can get confused with what love means. Don't let that confusion put you in a bad situation. Here are a list of words to help you think about what love is and isn't. Which of these words describe what you would like to get from a loving relationship? Which describe what you would be willing to give?

responsibility	jealousy	hard work	possessiveness
pleasure	pain	commitment	marriage
caring	honesty	obsession	sex
selfishness	trust	cruelty	communication
pregnancy	sharing	compromise	dependency
closeness	intimidation	helplessness	envy
openness	fear	respect	proving yourself
friendship	manipulation	strong feelings	total fulfillment

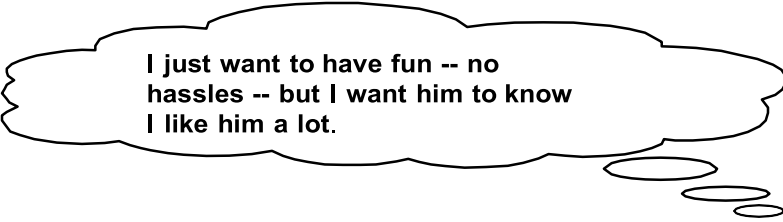
**Put yourself first! Don't let someone else take control. Take care of yourself.**

Have you found yourself in a situation like one of the following?

## Relationship A

*Peter and Lea had been dating for several weeks. It seemed like things had been going pretty well. They enjoyed being together. Both of them had privately thought that they had wanted to get a little more serious.*

*Lea thought:*



**I just want to have fun -- no hassles -- but I want him to know I like him a lot.**

*Peter was thinking:*



**I want to have fun and think I want to go a little further with her, but I'm not ready to make love with her.**

*Even though it made him nervous, Peter decided to take a chance and talk about what he was feeling. He told Lea he really liked her a lot and that it was very important to him to talk about what he was hoping their relationship could become. He was surprised when Lea seemed relieved to be able to tell him what she was hoping too.*

## Relationship B

*My name is Kay. Dave and I have been dating for three months and we're both juniors in high school. My mother thinks Dave and I are spending too much time together and is urging me to spend more time with other friends. Well, last night at a party I danced with one of the seniors. Dave cut in and said it was time to leave. He was angry so I wasn't sure what to do, but I thought we should leave, and we did. Dave was very quiet. Then, on the way home he exploded and began shaking and slapping me. He called me names and threatened to beat me up if I ever talked to another guy again. I ran home crying. I care about Dave a lot and didn't know how strongly he felt about me. I can't think about what life would be like without him. But I'm scared. Why did he do this? What should I do?*

How would you describe Lea and Peter's relationship?



What do you think about Kay and Dave's relationship?



What are some things that make these two relationships so different?



What advice would you give to each couple?

**LEA & PETER**



**KAY & DAVE**



What makes one situation so good and the other so bad?



Remember, your hopes, beliefs, and expectations have a lot to do with how successful dating is for both of you. Make it a good experience. Respect your date and yourself!

### **When You're In Danger**

If all your efforts to control the situation fail and you feel you're in danger, here are some suggestions from police and medical experts. Whether you're threatened by a stranger or a person you know, you should do the following:

- Fight back - hitting, biting, poking eyes, or kicking may give you a chance to getaway. However, if the assailant has a gun or a knife, use caution.
- Yell -- shout out, "Help!" "Police!" or "Fire!" People are alarmed by these words and are likely to respond readily.
- Passively resist -- vomit, urinate, tell the attacker you have a disease or you are menstruating. This may stop him or give you a chance to escape.

In dangerous situations, forget modesty and consideration. Think escape and survive! Protect yourself as best you can.