

# HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS INITIATIVE

## Teens Are Checking Out MaineTeenTalk.org

The new **MaineTeenTalk.org** website was launched in September 2007 with a celebratory event at the Maine Mall with WCYY and Q97.9.

Teens are excited about the new site and have been visiting in record numbers. They spend time viewing pages and responding to “question of the month”, “ask the relationship coach”, “relationship quiz” and “your stories”.

Over the next few months, the MaineTeenTalk.org website will expand to include an online Healthy Relationships Series,



more interactive quizzes, and helpful resources.

This is good news for Maine Teens. The teenage years are a particularly important time for imparting relationship education as a preventative measure to poverty, mental health problems, depression, suicide, poor performance in school and work, and relationship problems in all aspects of life.

MaineTeenTalk.org provides research-based education that was developed to address teen relationship concerns by increasing their knowledge and building skills that will create positive behavior change leading to respectful, healthy relationships.

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### Why is Relationship Education Important?

**72.4%** of Maine teens report that teens in their communities have their first boyfriend-girlfriend relationship at age 13 or younger.

**50.7%** of Maine teens report that they have been in a serious dating relationship.

## Stress and Relationships

We all know that stress can have profound affects on our lives, and often it can affect our relationships. Communication and relationship expert John Gray, Ph.D. describes the importance of recognizing the different physiological stress symptoms in men and women.

Men tend to react to stress by withdrawing, grumbling, and shutting down. When this happens, women will often feel unloved and that the relationship is not good. The key is for the man to say, “I need some time to think, then we can talk”. When a woman gives him some space and time he can process his stress and recover. Once he feels better, she can ask for any help she needs.

In women, the symptoms of stress are often a sense of being overwhelmed, overreaction, and exhaustion. When she is upset, a guy can become upset. He may feel resentful and that he has failed. If the guy can ask her what’s the matter and really listen, not say much, just validate her without trying to fix things, she will be able to process her stress and feel better. Asking her if there’s anything he can do to help and giving her a hug will help her recover.

When we understand our stress reactions, we can develop an effective approach to healing ourselves and supporting each other.

*You did the best that you knew how. Now that you know better, you'll do better.*

*Maya Angelou*

## “Healthy Relationships” Resource

Healthy Relationships is a **FREE**, research-based resource that includes student workbook, teacher guide, collateral pieces, and support for those who want to bring relationship education to teens.

For more information, visit [www.best4teens.org](http://www.best4teens.org).



**Healthy Relationships Initiative**

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