

DO YOU FEEL CONFIDENT RECOGNISING UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS?



A 2024 Youth Endowment Fund survey returned some alarming findings: 27% of 13-17-year olds say they've been in a relationship in the past 12 months and half (49%) report experiencing violent or controlling behaviours from their partners. This translates to 13% of all children. The increasingly digital world that young people inhabit also presents new ways that unhealthy or coercive behaviour can present itself in their relationships. Partnering with The Children's Society, we wanted to know how confident young people are when it comes to spotting the signs of an unhealthy relationship. The Children's Society is researching ways to further help young people experiencing abuse within their relationships. These findings will be used to assist and inform their work.

Alex
Data Coordinator



58,263

TOTAL VOTES

12,276

VOTES AGE 5-11

45,987

VOTES AGE 11-16+

The VoteTopic questions, discussed amongst the different age groups, were:

Primary 5-11: "Do you know what a healthy relationship feels like?"

Secondary 11-16, 16+ & College: "Do you feel confident recognising unhealthy relationships?"



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The majority of voters across all ages felt confident in recognising healthy and unhealthy relationships.

Primary pupils gave lots of examples of healthy relationships from their own lives. Many also discussed how conflict and disagreement can be present even in healthy relationships. They shared how they resolve these differences, some naming adults they go to for support.

Generally, Secondary students spoke confidently that they could recognise the signs of an unhealthy relationship with some mentioning specific signs they would look for. Despite this confidence, a common theme was the potential difficulty of spotting these signs when they were in an unhealthy relationship themselves. Many discussed how manipulative or “gaslighting” behaviour could be much harder to spot from within a relationship. It is clear that this is a topic many students have already spent time discussing in PSHE lessons as many said such discussions made them feel confident in knowing the signs and voting Yes.

16+ & College voters shared many of the opinions of their Secondary peers. However, they did add some nuance, commenting that some elements of unhealthy relationships could be becoming normalised in their generation.

I think yes because sometimes I have fights with my mum but we always find a way to stop being mad with each other.

Primary ‘Yes’ Voter

No because it’s complicated, there are so many relationships that it can be a bit confusing.

Primary ‘No’ Voter

They identified the signs of unhealthy relationships and stated that PSHE in school and social media has helped them [...]

Secondary ‘Yes’ Voter

Everyone thinks they can recognise a bad relationship... but your own judgement is easily clouded.

Secondary ‘No’ Voter