



BRAVE BELFAST CAILÍNÍ IS A YOUTH-LED CAMPAIGN AIMING TO EMPOWER YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS TO SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER IN UNDERSTANDING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS, CONSENT, AND HOW TO ENGAGE IN CONVERSATIONS ABOUT HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AND BOUNDARIES.

The campaign is a partnership between NSPCC Northern Ireland and Footprints Women's Centre. It was created by girls and young women aged 12-16 to help young women understand what a healthy relationship is; and encourages cailíní to support each other and encourage their peers to seek help when needed.

TIPS FOR TALKING ABOUT HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

All young people should have the opportunity to learn about healthy relationships and understand their right to be safe, heard, and respected. All young people should know where they can access support and how to get help from a trusted adult if they need it. Here are some tips from Brave Belfast Cailíní on how they would like to see healthy relationships discussed in schools.

Engagement: Groupwork and interactive discussions can better engage young people than all-school assemblies. The opportunity to ask questions and speak in discussions helps young people develop their understanding of healthy relationships.

Normalise the topic: Teachers may feel uncomfortable talking about healthy relationships, and this can make young people feel awkward, too. Being able to discuss healthy relationships confidently and provide real-life examples can help put young people at ease.

Be open and inclusive: Try not to make assumptions about the knowledge or behaviours of young people by keeping an open mind and being inclusive of different types of relationships, such as familial relationships, friendships, and LGBTQIA+ relationships.

Navigating relationships: Young people often find that discussions on healthy relationships often focus on negative behaviours and would like conversations to have more balance.

For further guidance and resources available to professionals, please visit learning.nspcc.org.uk

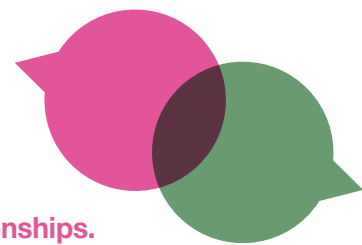
“HOW ARE YOU?”

“HAS SOMETHING HAPPENED?”

“ARE YOU OK?”

“I’VE NOTICED... IS EVERYTHING OK?”

“I’M HERE FOR YOU”



HOW TO TALK ABOUT HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AT HOME

You might feel anxious or worried about your child as they develop new relationships. It's natural for children and young people to be curious about relationships and sex.

Here are some tips from young people on what would make them more comfortable discussing healthy relationships at home:

Environment: Have the conversation in a relaxed private environment, such as at home or in the car. Some young people prefer talking whilst doing an activity such as a house chore or eating dinner, as they might feel less pressure.

Non-verbal communication: Be aware of your body language and tone of voice when having a conversation with a young person. Showing that you are relaxed can help put a young person at ease and encourage them to open up to you.

Be relatable: Make the conversation relevant to a young person by using their experience of learning in school or talking about examples from the media. Let them guide the conversation when possible and show that you are listening, use open-ended questions, and ask for their perspective.

Non-judgemental and reassurance: If your child is worried about something, they may want to discuss this with you but are worried about how you will react. Try not to make assumptions, reassure them that you are available to talk, and ask them what they would find helpful from you.

Small conversations: A few short conversations can be more helpful than trying to cover everything at once. If the young person feels uncomfortable, let them know that you are there whenever you want to talk. Try not to rush conversations as this might shut down the discussion entirely.

More information and guidance for parents can be found at www.nspcc.org.uk/support-for-parents.

If you are ever worried about your child's relationship or that they be experiencing grooming, sexual, emotional or physical abuse, it's important to get help right away.

The NSPCC helpline is available on **0808 800 5000** or help@nspcc.org.uk for advice and support.

WHAT MAKES A TRUSTED ADULT?

It is important that young women and girls know who they can speak to if they need advice or support. Aside from peers and support services like Childline, young people will often reach out to a trusted adult in their life for help.

Trusted adults can be anyone in a young person's life that they feel safe with, such as a family member, teacher, or neighbour. What characteristics make someone a trusted adult? This is what our young people had to say:

Positive body language: Maintaining positive body language can show the young person that you are listening and care about what they have to say. Things like maintaining eye contact, sitting down instead of standing, and angling your body towards them can help feel more open to conversation.

Good listener: Allow the young person space to open and guide the conversation and give them time to express their thoughts and feeling. Show that you are actively listening by using verbal or nonverbal cues that doesn't interrupt the flow of conversation and ask open-ended questions when prompted.

Open conversation: Young people can fear not being taken seriously or having their concerns dismissed, so it's important that you keep an open mind for important conversations. Treat the young person as an individual and help them work through issues in their own way and try not to make assumptions.

Confidentiality: Whilst there are limits to confidentiality, young people might prefer keeping certain conversations private from their peers. Honesty helps build trust between a young person and adult, so maintain sensitivity around important conversations and inform the young person on confidentiality and instances where it may have to be broken.