

# Safe kids Healthy kids Happy kids

## Breaking Up is Hard

Ending a relationship is never easy. However, just about everyone has had to deal with the heartache of break-up. Regardless of how a relationship ends, one or both people often feel hurt, sad, angry or embarrassed. Some teens feel confused, not knowing why the relationship ended. Others take the rejection personally and suffer a blow to their self-esteem.

If your teen suffers from a break-up, you can help lessen the pain.

- Encourage her to share her feelings with someone she trusts. It could be you, a sibling or a close friend. Talking often helps people feel better.
- Encourage your teen to hang out with his friends. Go to a game. See a movie. Attend a party. Do something fun. Keeping busy can help him keep his mind off the hurt.
- Tell her it is OK to cry and feel sad. These feelings are normal.
- Do not let your teen act out in anger. It is not OK to feel outrage. He should not take out angry feelings on his ex-girlfriend.
- Tell her not to take the break-up personally. Breaking up does not mean there is something wrong with her. It means something was wrong with the relationship.

Teens often fail to see that breaking up may not be anyone's fault. Sometimes relationships are just not meant to be.



- Remind your teen of his good qualities. People with broken hearts often blame themselves.
- Make sure your teen takes good care of herself. She should eat healthy foods, get plenty of sleep and exercise regularly. This will help her to manage the stress she may be feeling.
- Hang in there with your teen. Healing takes time. Your teen will have good days and bad days. Be supportive and empathetic.
- Watch your teen for alcohol or drug use. Teens often use alcohol and drugs to take away the pain and sadness. Some teens resort to cutting themselves. Teens unable to cope with a break-up may need professional help.

Parents should never take the break-up of a teen's relationship lightly. Teens are not emotionally mature. They often have trouble coping with emotional pain and stress.

A loving and supportive parent can help a teen who is sad and disappointed. You can teach positive coping skills that make your teen stronger. Then, he will be better equipped to handle all of life's ups and downs.

*Brought to you by Parent Help Line and St. John's Children's Hospital*



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1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week  
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