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Madison Newton

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Improving Healthy Relationship Skills in College Students

Madison Newton

Capstone project for the Bachelor of Sciences in Human Development and Family Studies

Improving Healthy Relationship Skills in College Students

Introduction

Many college students, because of their inexperience, may lack skills to develop healthy relationship behaviors and may not recognize signs of unhealthy or violent relationships. College students may personally face intimate partner violence or may know someone that has, and they may not have the proper skills to help themselves or their friends. Given the lack of healthy relationship skills, I created a one-day lesson for college students at Palomar College in San Diego, California on identifying signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships behaviors and resources to help someone in need.

Needs Statement

Many college students, because of their inexperience, may lack skills to develop healthy relationship behaviors and may not recognize signs of unhealthy or violent relationships. When college students lack these relationship skills, they may become vulnerable to poor relationships and, in particular, to intimate partner violence. Intimate partner violence (IPV) is when current or past partners participate in abuse, aggression, or violent behaviors. According to the CDC, 1 in 5 women and 1 in 7 men experience severe intimate partner violence in their life. IPV may also result in psychological issues like post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD), anxiety, depression, substance abuse issues and many more. Some physical issues that can arise are unwanted pregnancies, STD's and injuries to the body like broken bones or head trauma. If more young adults were aware of the signs of violent relationships then rates of IPV could decrease, and there would be fewer people who fall victim. Developing healthy relationship skills and being attuned to signs of unhealthy relationships may help prevent IPV and lessen its effects. Cooper, Seibert, May, Fitzgerald & Fincham (2017) shed light to the correlation between school

burnout, emotional dysregulation and intimate partner violence(IPV). Producing more research on what it is like for college students when there is a huge demand for education for establishing good careers. The effects of school burnout are that it can inhibit a young adults self-control and emotional regulation abilities and put them at a higher risk in the perpetration or victimization of IPV. In the article they state that it would be very helpful for interventions to be put in place for students to combat the leading issues and lasting effects to school burnout. Many students don't understand the tools we already have to facilitate self control and regulating our emotions can be stunted by stress and school burnout. The limitations of having decreased functioning in these crucial areas are that it puts young adults in risk of lower decision making skills and can put them in environments with violence. These skills are something that can be gained back and worked on throughout life and there is a need to have more intervention programs to help students deal with emotional regulation and school burn out.

In college young adults are more likely to experience sexual assault or participate in risky romantic behaviors. Gower and Baldwin-White (2020) share that sexual assault is very prominent in college students due to lack of experience but being able to conceptualize what a healthy relationship looks like can benefit them. In the study they state that the college students who are able to identify the healthy relationship patterns can more easily point out the problematic or unhealthy relationships behaviors. Meaning these skills need to be developed for college students to fight against to the statistics of sexual assault among college students. Now that we've talked about addressing prevalence of sexual assault, stress of school and identifying relationship behaviors. Next is the need to pay attention to one's mental health and how that can affect a relationship.

The last area that I think is crucial for college students to become more aware of is focusing on one's self and mental health is also a huge part of getting into healthy relationships in the first place. Being able to love and know yourself is an important part of being in a happy relationship and having the resources to take care of yourself can prevent risky behaviors that can lead to IPV. Braithwaite and Holt-Lunstad (2017) share that mental health and relationships definitely have a causal relationship and they affect one another but their main point is that healthy relationships can improve one's mental health. But they also stress that improving one's mental health does not directly improve the relationship. With the programs and tools college students could have the best chance at having healthy relationships and avoiding intimate partner violence.

Given that school burnout, development of skills, and mental health are of concern about my topic, I have created a one-day lesson workshop on healthy relationships and IPV for the freshman community college students at Palomar College in San Marcos, California.

Theory

The theory I am using is Bandura's Social Learning Theory because this theory focuses on learning from imitation and observation of other people's behaviors. Bandura focuses on individuals socially learning from observation and learning from emotional responses. He stated that cognitive, environmental, and behavioral factors contribute to human behavior and learning. Meaning personal knowledge, social norms or community, and skills are all from different contexts but they all come together to develop human behavior and learning. Edinyang (2016) states how social learning can help improve learning across subjects such as social studies. He states how having positive role models and seeing visuals of people doing these behaviors and getting a positive response has had a positive effect on learning. In contrast, On the opposite side, Akers and Jennings (2016) noted in a criminology journal

that criminal behaviors are learned, which may mean that people who have experienced violence in their life are more likely to perpetrate it. My workshop is going to be focusing on positive relationships behaviors and tools to assist others in dangerous situations. Social learning from observation can be beneficial in both a negative and positive manner. With my workshops I will provide healthy and unhealthy relationships qualities and then compare and explain in detail to well known television shows. That way the students will be able to see these human behaviors happening and be able to point out what behaviors are good and bad then develop the skills to apply them to their life. In addition I will also be using more media and testimonials to provide the students learning by observation and imitation.

Consideration of Diversity

I will be conducting my workshop with on entry-level students at Palomar College in an introductory history class. According to Data USA (<https://datausa.io/profile/university/palomar-college>), Palomar College consists primarily of hispanic or latino students, adding up to 45% of the student population. Then the following are the white students ,which contribute to 35% of the students then 6% Asian, and 3% African Americans. I feel that my project will not accurately represent the population because the school is dominated by only two races. To tackle another issue I will be giving examples in my workshop of both heterosexual and same-sex couples so combat other sides of diversity. So each student will be able to relate and take this information and use it in their day to day life.

Learning Outcomes

I intend to provide a one day workshop at Palomar Community College students.

At the end of my workshops, participants will be able to:

1. Identity two signs of a healthy relationship
2. Indicate two strategies on how to intervene when partner violence is suspected in others.

3. Identify two signs when relationships are becoming violent

Methods

To begin my workshop, I developed a powerpoint presentation and recorded my narrated presentation then uploaded in a video format. The workshop was accessible by a link that was given to the students by the professor for a full 5 days. In the announcement there were links to the presentation and the google form, in addition there was also a link to the google form in the bio of the presentation as well. In developing my presentation I went into depth on each slide and gave real life examples and evidence-based skills and behaviors that related to my topic. In addition I included some media such as a TedTalk video where Hood (2019) talks about the consequences when young adults do not have healthy relationships skills. The presentation finished off with another video from Psych2go (2018) where they state multiple ways to help a friend in need of intervening for safety. And then links and phone numbers to helplines in San Diego county and located at Palomar College as well. I was able to develop my presentation into a 41 minute presentation and then put together a google form where I asked some demographic questions such as gender and sexual orientation. Then continuing into the questions that would determine if my learning outcomes were met, like asking to name two signs of a healthy/unhealthy relationship and how to intervene for a friend in need. I left my email on the google survey just in case there were any questions or concerns. On both platforms I thanked them for participating in my project and left mental health resources. The students had the opportunity from Wednesday at noon to Sunday at midnight to complete the survey.

Results

Learning outcome #1 was to have the participants identify two signs of a healthy relationship. After doing the workshop, 86% of the college students were able to correctly name

two different signs, and the most common answers being “trust” and “communication” having over 40% of the responses. Some of the other common answers were “alone time,” “active listening,” and “alone time.” I would say this learning outcome was met because almost all of the participants were able to identify two different signs.

The second learning outcome was for the participants to be able to identify two signs that relationships could be getting violent. 79% of the participants were able to name two indicators of the relationships going violent that were discussed in my presentation. The most common answers were jealousy” and “aggression” with over 28% of the participants writing in this response. Some of the other common answers were “isolation”and “controlling,” all concepts discussed in my presentation. This learning outcome was also met because the majority of the participants were able to respond with concepts discussed in the presentation.

Lastly, learning outcome #3 was for participants to name two strategies on how to intervene if intimate partner violence is suspected in others. After completing the workshop, 77% of the participants were able to name two strategies that would help someone in danger. The most common responses were “share concerns” and “contact family or professionals” with over 19% of the students writing this combination as their answer. Some other common strategies noted by the participants were “approach gently and nonjudgmentally” and “providing referrals,” which were reflective of the content I discussed. This learning outcome was met. I also feel the workshop was successful because most of the participants understood the severity of a potentially abusive situation like this and being able to provide help behaviors or resources.

Overall, I would say that the project was successful because each learning outcome was met and the majority of the answers that the participants submitted were from the presentation I

created. The participants were able to retain the information and apply it to other situations like helping a friend in need.

Discussion

In conclusion, 80% of the participants were able to complete all of the learning outcomes, which I would consider a success. The students were able to take the knowledge, skills, and resources from the workshop and apply them to real life scenarios. Also everyone of the 56 respondents answered each one of the questions and were able to provide a response consistent with the content I discussed, but, in the end, I was looking for more specific answers, which most students provided. Overall, the project was a success, and I am glad to have helped 56 college students have better skills to assist them in having more healthy relationships. Also being able to have the resources and ability to know about to intervene when a person is in a dangerous situation and know how to assist them in the best possible way.

Although the project was successful and my participants were able to learn healthy relationship skills and resources to help a friend in a dangerous situation, there are some things I would have done differently. This semester has been drastically affected by COVID-19, and, in a life before the pandemic, I would have loved to perform my workshop in person to be able to ask the students for responses and be able to answer any questions in person. I think that could have been more beneficial because during the workshop, as a group, we could have brainstormed together what a healthy relationship looks like. Another addition that I would have added would have been to add more demographic questions on the Google form, so I would have been able to see if it was an accurate representation of the general population.

College students are more at risk of being involved in an unhealthy relationship. With media and exposure, there are not a lot of great examples of role models for healthy

relationships. While conducting this project, I saw a large gap of research on this topic, and college students could really benefit from having formal training on what a healthy relationship looks and feels like. From what my project has taught me is that even if it seems redundant and common knowledge to one person, that does not apply to everyone. If this information can help just a handful of people and also add to others' knowledge in defense against intimate partner violence then the work should be done. Educating college students about what healthy relationships should look like should be a topic more widely discussed. In addition talking about being an ally to survivors or victims in dangerous relationships could save a lot of young adults from consequences of intimate partner violence.

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kY2hErhaiUQ>

Vaterlaus, J. M., Tulane, S., Porter, B. D., & Beckert, T. E. (2018). The perceived

influence of media and technology on adolescent romantic relationships. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 33(6), 651–671.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558417712611>

Appendix A

Powerpoint Presentation

<https://vimeo.com/533831852>



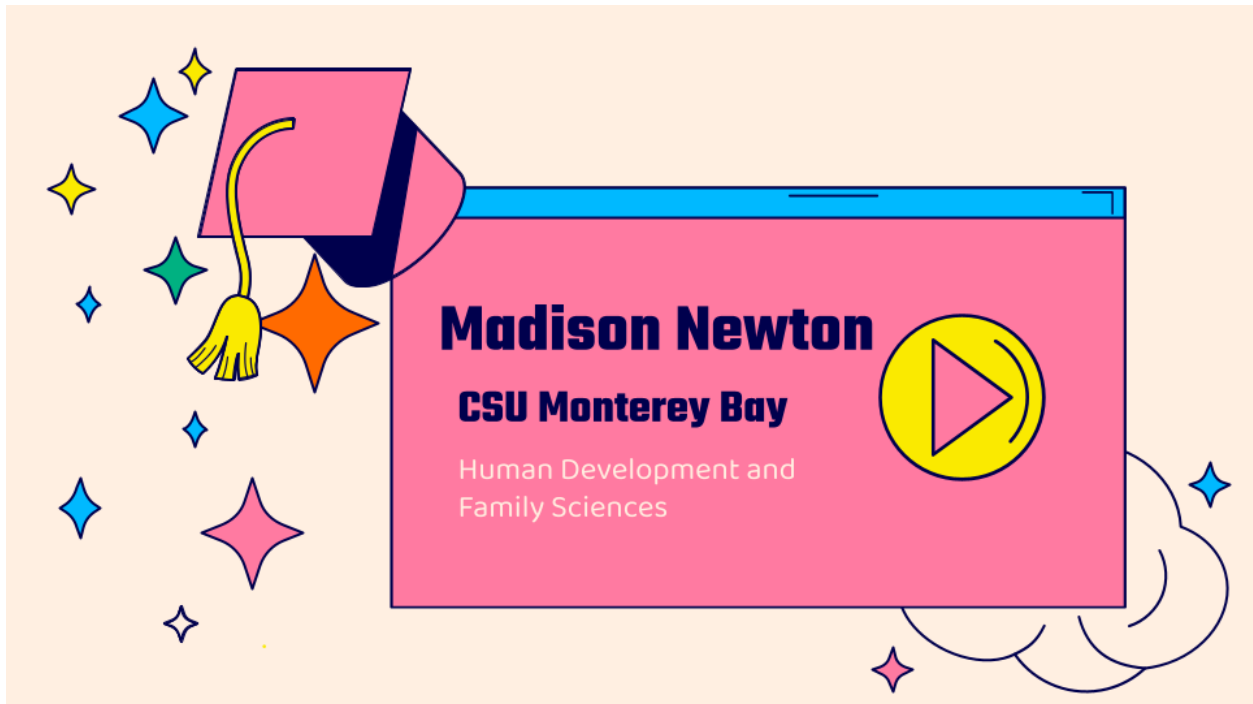

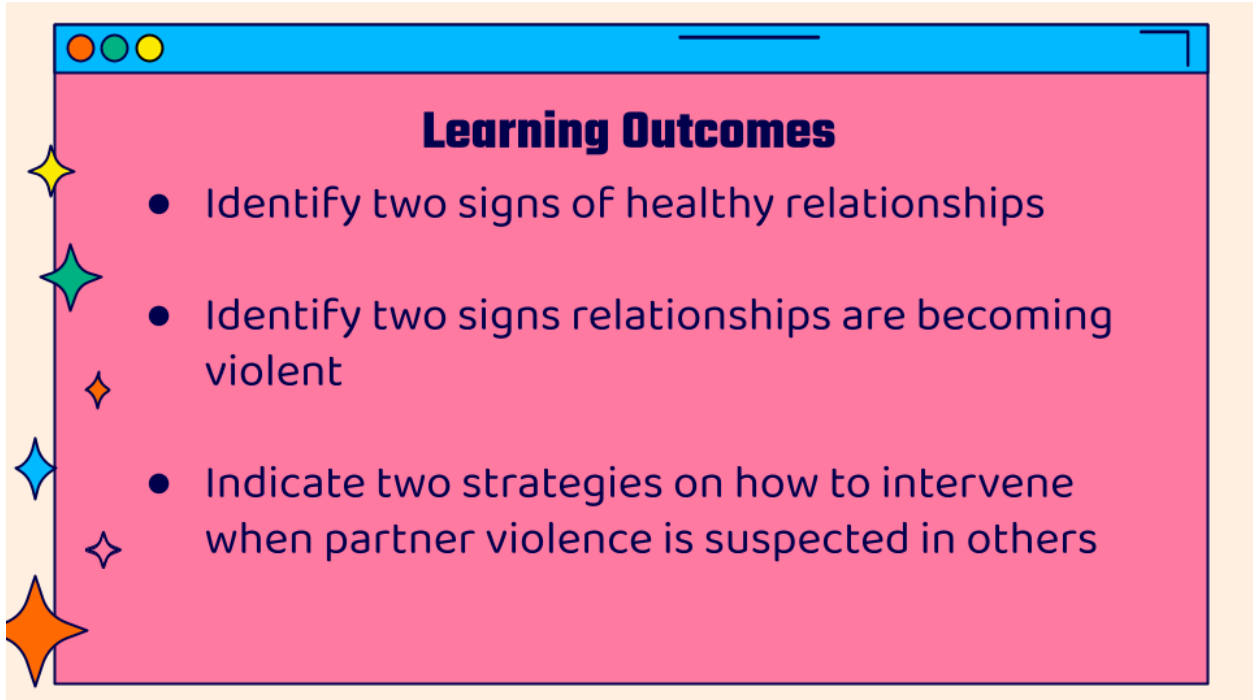


Table of Contents

- Healthy Relationships
 - Why they matter?
 - What do they look like?
- Different Types of Love
 - Signs that it is not love
- Unhealthy Relationships
 - Signs it has become toxic
- Intimate Partner Violence
 - Statistics
- Interventions and Resources
 - How to help





Learning Outcomes

- Identify two signs of healthy relationships
- Identify two signs relationships are becoming violent
- Indicate two strategies on how to intervene when partner violence is suspected in others

01 COMMUNICATION
Technology has changed how couples communicate

02 EXPOSURE/EXPERIENCE
Not everyone has seen a healthy relationship

03 PREDISPOSITION
Violence is more common in people already exposed

04 COVID-19
Home is not safe for all people

05 COLLEGE STUDENTS
Risky behaviors are more prevalent in this population


06 SA AWARENESS MONTH
Spreading awareness is important!

Why are healthy relationships important?

A photograph of a young woman with long dark hair wearing a yellow beanie and a young man with dark curly hair wearing a yellow jacket, kissing each other on the lips. The image is framed by a pink border with decorative star and arrow shapes.

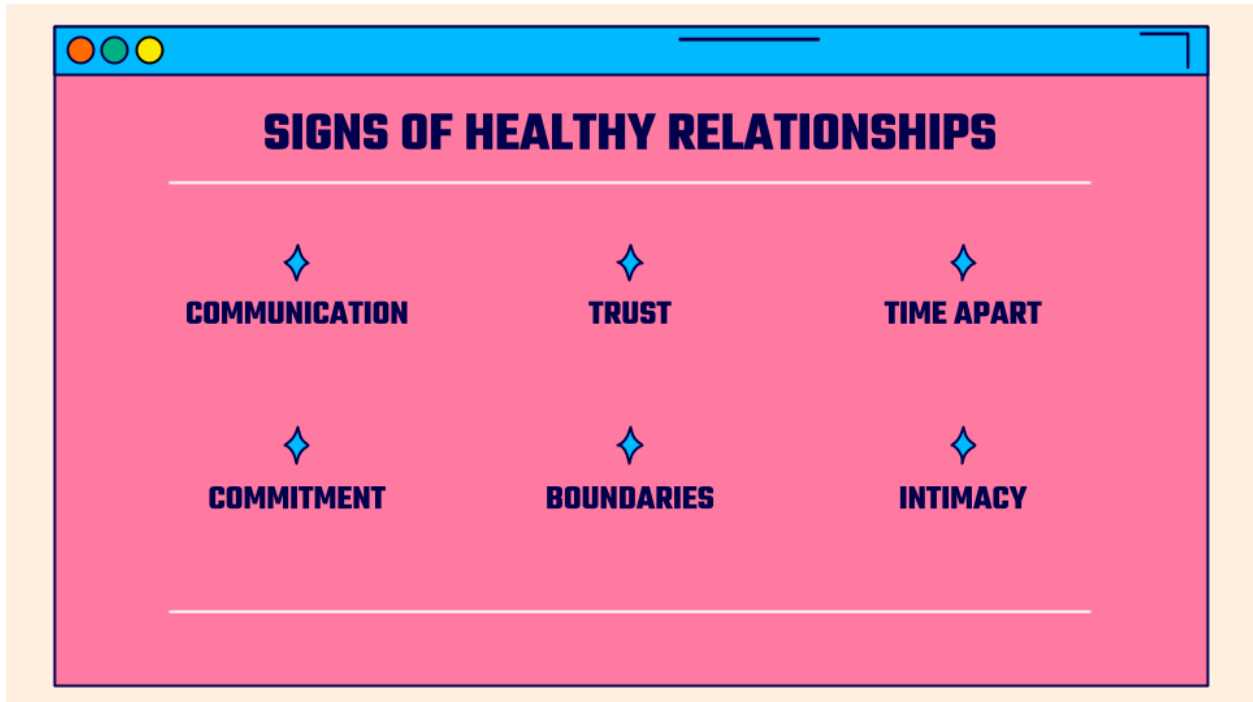
- Know ourselves better
- Have fun
- Be able to connect
- Evolve emotionally
- Have support

COMMUNICATION

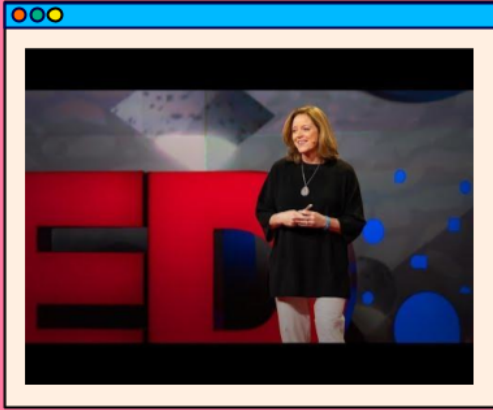


- ◆ Looks different with social media
- ◆ Should be respectful and have healthy boundaries
- ◆ One of the most important keys to a good relationship

The image shows two young women with long hair, wearing denim jackets, standing outdoors and looking at their smartphones. They appear to be in a friendly conversation. The image is framed by a blue border with a yellow starburst in the top-left corner and a blue starburst in the bottom-left corner. The entire graphic is set against a pink background with a blue header bar at the top containing three colored circles (red, green, yellow).



HEALTHY AND UNHEALTHY LOVE



In this video Katie Hood shares the signs that a relationship could be evolving into something negative

The infographic is presented as a window with a blue title bar and a pink border. The title "HEALTHY VS. UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS" is in bold black text. The content is split into two columns by a vertical pink line. The left column, titled "HEALTHY" with a blue star icon, lists "Understanding", "Encourage outside relationships", and "Active Listening & Cooperation". The right column, titled "UNHEALTHY" with a yellow star icon, lists "Dismissive", "Possessive", and "Reciprocation". A test tube with orange liquid and bubbles is on the right side of the window.

HEALTHY	UNHEALTHY
Understanding	Dismissive
Encourage outside relationships	Possessive
Active Listening & Cooperation	Reciprocation

Toxic Relationships in Media

Ryan & Kelly- The Office



Joker & Harley Quinn



The image is a presentation slide with a pink background and a blue header bar containing three colored circles (red, green, yellow). The title "Toxic Relationships in Media" is centered at the top in bold blue text. Below the title, there are two columns. The left column is titled "Ryan & Kelly- The Office" in bold blue text, with a photograph of Ryan and Kelly from the TV show "The Office" below it. The right column is titled "Joker & Harley Quinn" in bold blue text, with a photograph of the Joker and Harley Quinn from the movie "Suicide Squad" below it.

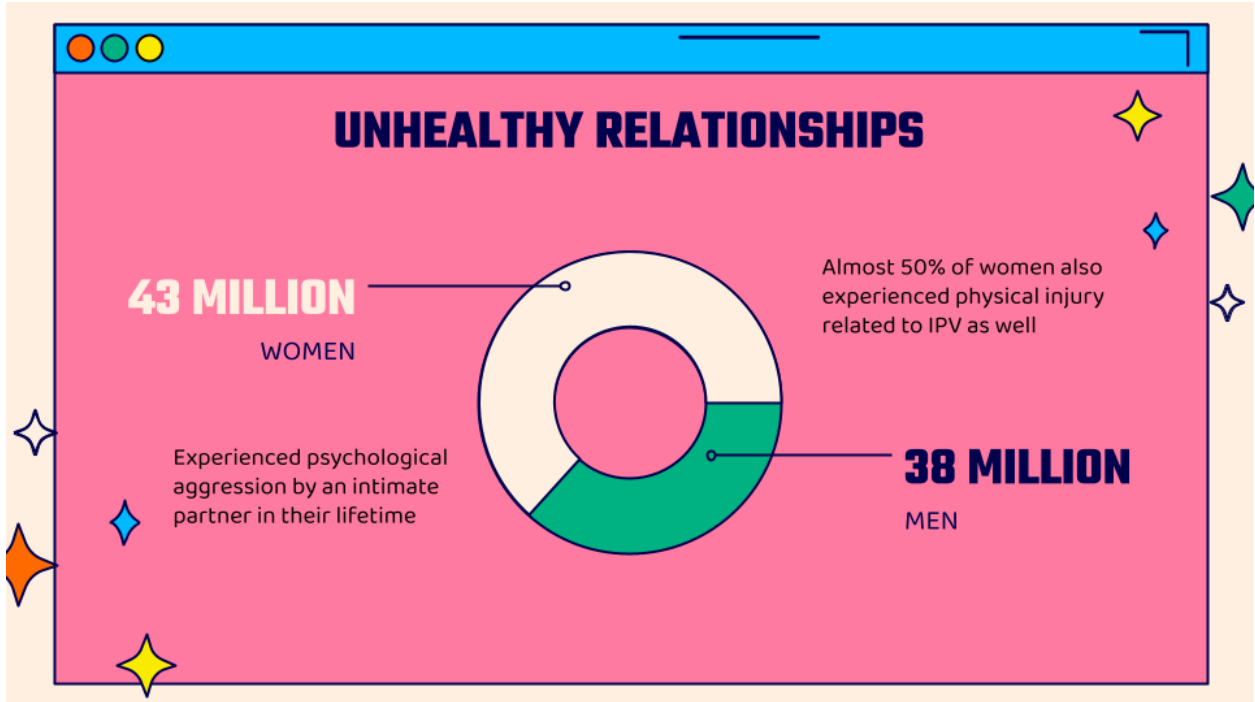
Toxic Relationships in Media

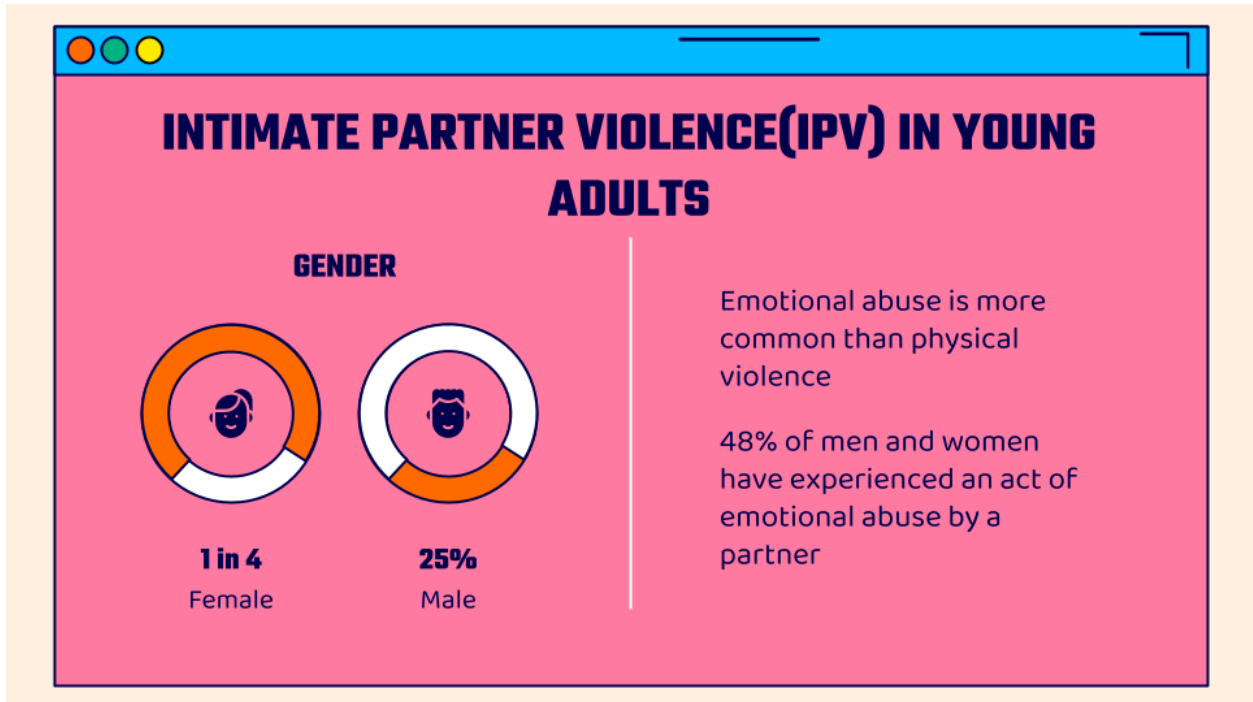
Ross & Rachel- Friends

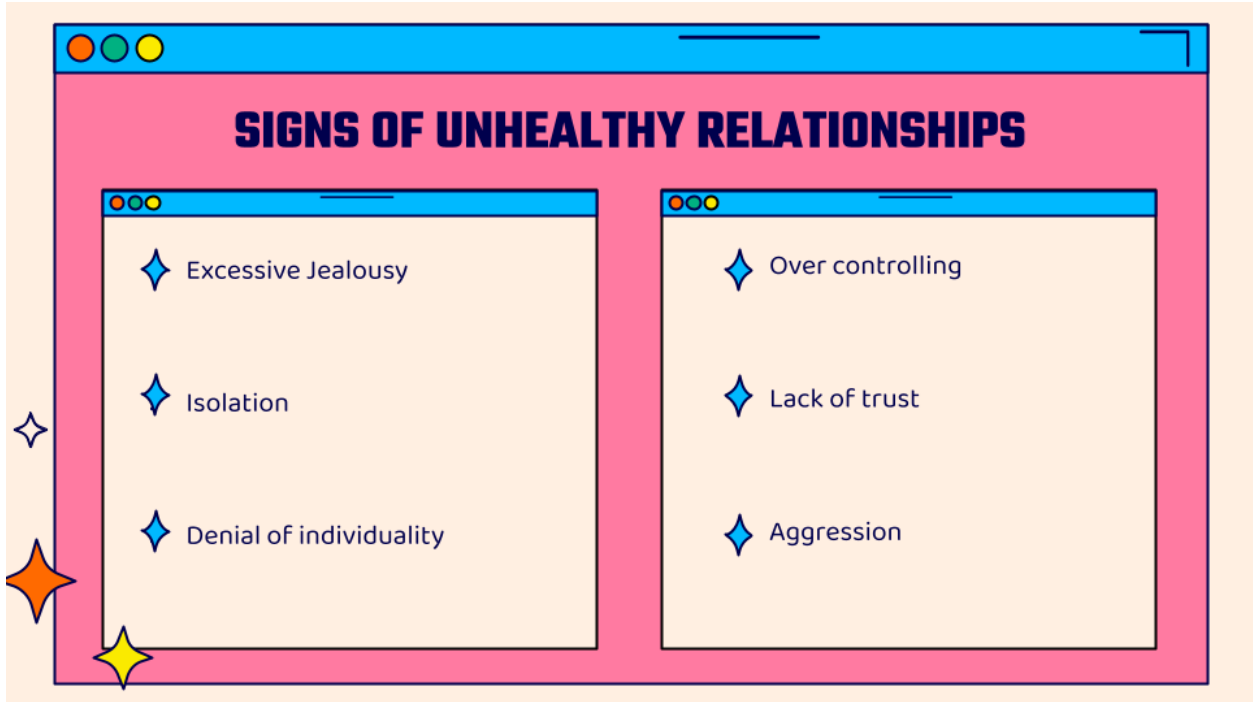


Alex & Piper- OITNB

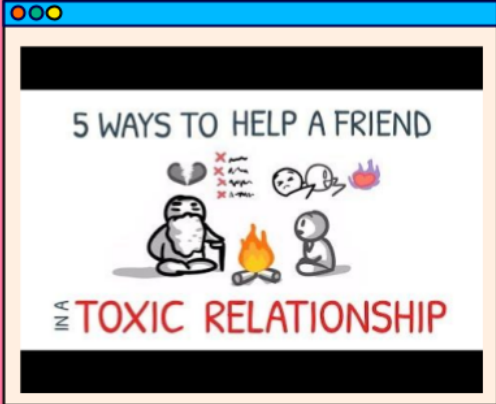








INTERVENTION



Ways to help someone in need and keeping a fresh perspective on what our words and actions could mean.

The graphic contains the following text and icons:

- Title: 5 WAYS TO HELP A FRIEND
- Subtitle: IN A TOXIC RELATIONSHIP
- Icons: A broken heart, a list of toxic behaviors (e.g., 'I'm not your friend', 'I'm not your enemy', 'I'm not your enemy'), a sad face, a hand holding a flame, and a campfire.

RESOURCES

loveisrespect.org

TEXT: LOVEIS to 22522

love is respect is the national resource to disrupt and prevent unhealthy relationships and intimate partner violence by empowering young people through inclusive and equitable education, support, and resources.

HOTLINES

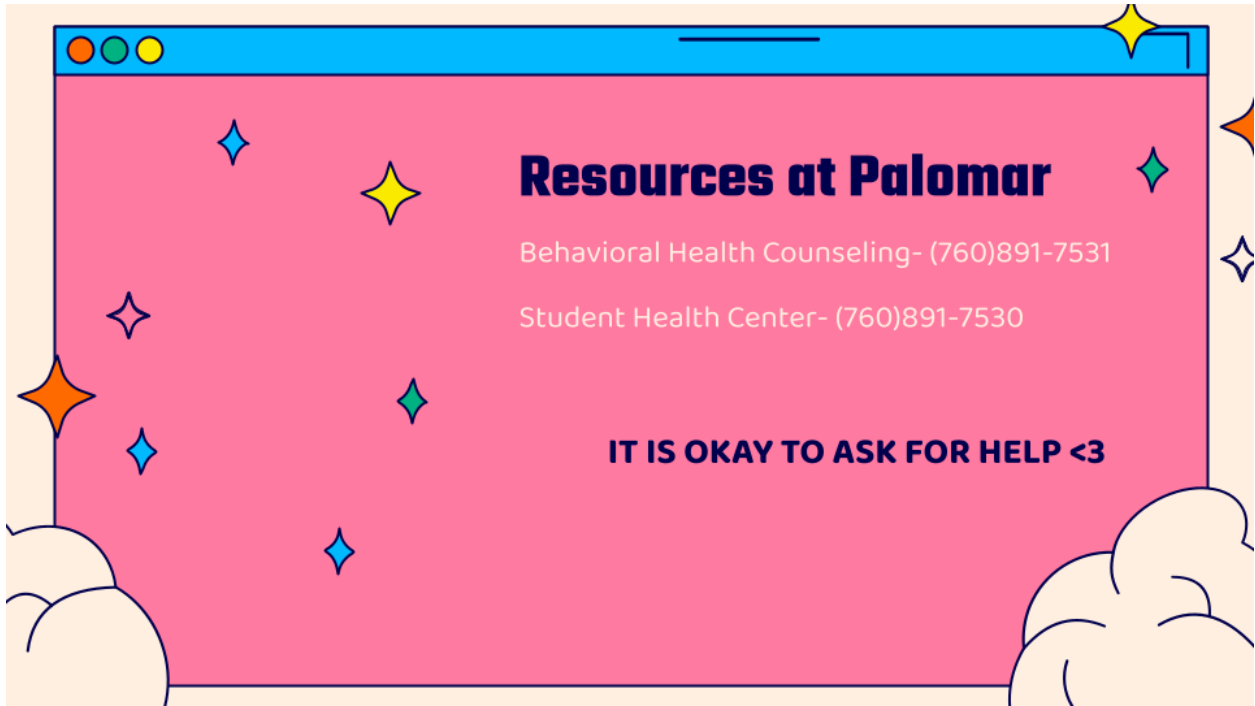
National Domestic Violence HL#-1(800)799-SAFE(7233)

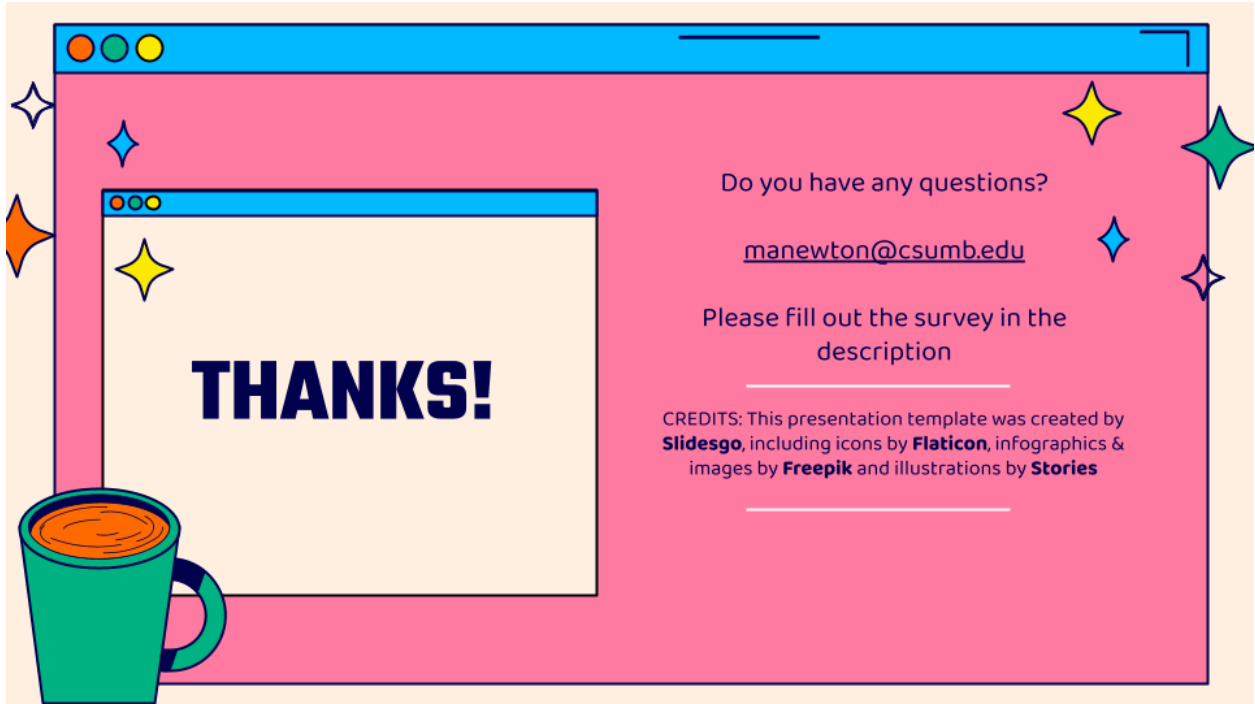
National Sexual Assault HL#-1(800)656-HOPE(4673)

San Diego County Crisis HL#-(888)724-7240

TEXT: HOME to 741741 for crisis counseling







Appendix B

Google Form

The image shows a Google Form titled "Healthy Relationships Survey". At the top, there is a header image with the text "Healthy Relationships" in a white box. Below the header, the form title "Healthy Relationships Survey" is displayed. A thank-you message follows: "Thank you again for your time and also being apart of my capstone project. I hope you learned some new ideas and skills to help you in your everyday life and will be able to share with the people in your life as well. This survey is used to check the effectiveness of the teaching style I used so just try your best and your answers will remain anonymous. If you have any questions please email me at manewton@csumb.edu! :)"

The form contains several questions:

- Gender**: A multiple-choice question with options: Female, Male, Prefer not to say, and Other...
- Sexual Orientation ***: A multiple-choice question with options: Gay, Straight, Bisexual, Prefer not to say, and Other...
- What are two signs of a healthy relationship? ***: A short answer text question.
- What are two strategies on how to intervene when partner violence is suspected in others? ***: A short answer text question.
- What are two signs the relationship is becoming violent? ***: A short answer text question.
- Palomar Student ID; so you can get extra credit (Professor Turner will not have access to any of the other answers) ***: A short answer text question.

On the right side of the form, there is a vertical toolbar with icons for adding, deleting, and editing elements.

Appendix C

Presentation for Capstone Festival



Increasing Healthy Relationship
Skills in College Students

.....

Madison Newton

Table of Contents

- Needs Statement
- Theory
- Learning Outcomes
- Method
- Results
- Discussion



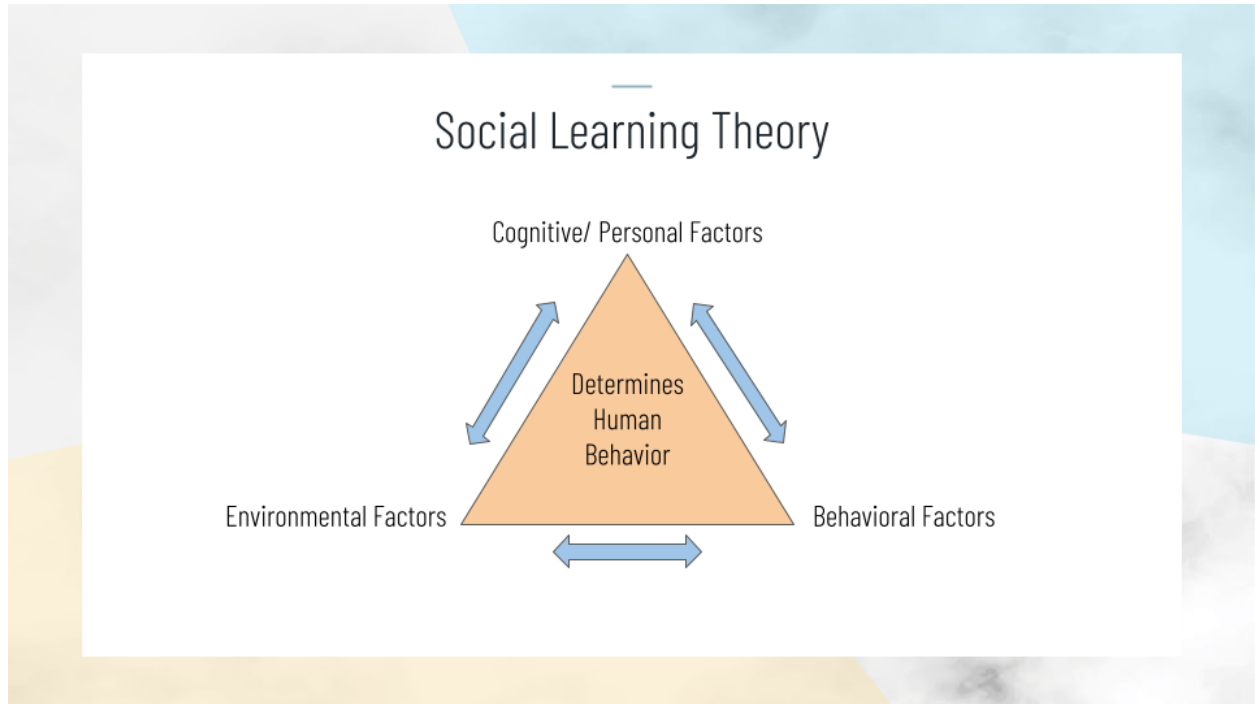
Needs Statement

- Young adults are inexperienced and may lack healthy relationship skills
- According to the CDC, 1 in 5 women and 1 in 7 men experience severe intimate partner violence in their life
- Gower and Baldwin-White (2020) state that sexual assault is prominent in college students and being able to conceptualize healthy romantic relationships behaviors can help them see problematic behaviors
- College students lack healthy relationships skills and knowledge of resources to help others in danger of intimate partner violence.

Theory

Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory

- Emphasizes the importance of social observation, modeling and imitation
- Considers how both environmental and cognitive factors interact to influence human learning and behavior



Toxic Relationships in Media

Ryan & Kelly- The Office




Joker & Harley Quinn




The image is a presentation slide with a pink background and a blue header bar. The header bar contains three colored circles (red, green, yellow) on the left and a white line on the right. The title "Toxic Relationships in Media" is centered at the top in bold black text. Below the title, there are two columns. The left column has the text "Ryan & Kelly- The Office" above a photograph of Ryan and Kelly from the TV show "The Office". The right column has the text "Joker & Harley Quinn" above a photograph of Joker and Harley Quinn from the movie "Joker".

Toxic Relationships in Media

Ross & Rachel- Friends



Alex & Piper- OITNB



Learning Outcomes

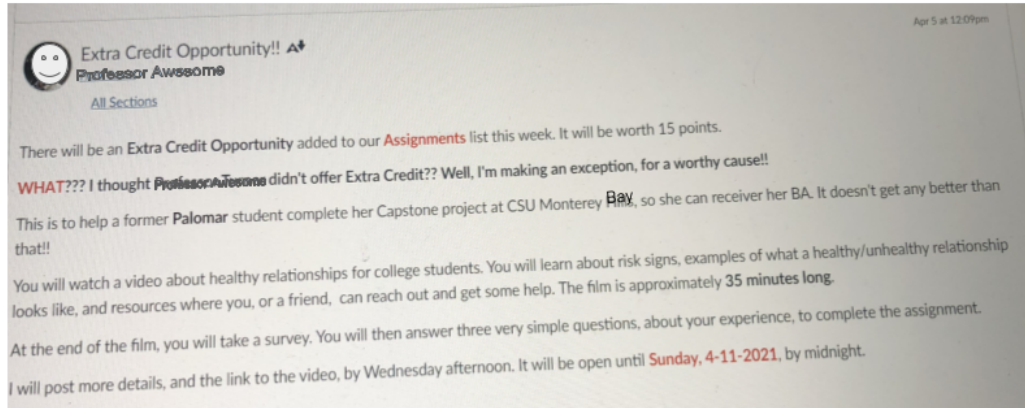
At the end of my workshop, participants will be able to:

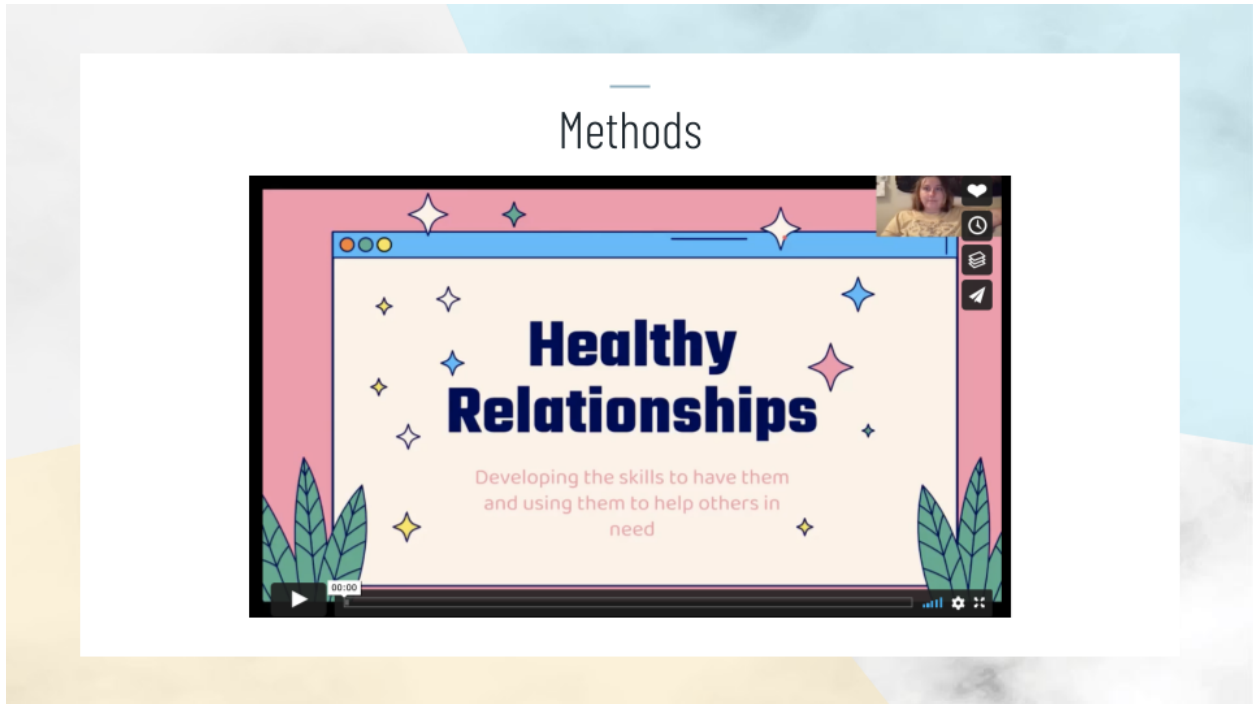
1. Identify two signs of a healthy relationship
2. Identify two signs when relationships are becoming violent
3. Indicate two strategies on how to intervene when partner violence is suspected in others

Methods

- 1 Day Workshop
- Palomar Community College in San Marcos, CA located in North County San Diego
- 41:31 Minute video
- 6 Question Survey

Methods





Methods

The image shows a digital survey form titled "Healthy Relationships Survey". The form is divided into three main sections. The first section is a header with a colorful illustration of people and the title "Healthy Relationships". Below this is a sub-header "Healthy Relationships Survey" followed by a paragraph of introductory text. The second section is titled "Gender" and contains four radio button options: "Female", "Male", "Prefer not to say", and "Other...". The third section is titled "Sexual Orientation" and contains four radio button options: "Gay", "Straight", "Bisexual", "Prefer not to say", and "Other...". To the right of the survey form is a separate box containing three short-answer questions, each with a "Short answer text" label and a dotted line for input. The questions are: "What are two signs of a healthy relationship?", "What are two strategies on how to intervene when partner violence is suspected in others?", and "What are two signs the relationship is becoming violent?". A footer note at the bottom of the right box states: "Palomar Student ID, so you can get extra credit (Professor Turner will not have access to any of the other answers)".

Healthy Relationships

Healthy Relationships Survey

Thank you again for your time and also being apart of my capstone project. I hope you learned some new ideas and skills to help you in your everyday life and will be able to share with the people in your life as well. This survey is used to check the effectiveness of the teaching style I used as just to your best and your answers will remain anonymous. If you have any questions please email me at mturner@cpcc.edu!

Gender *

Female

Male

Prefer not to say

Other...

Sexual Orientation *

Gay

Straight

Bisexual

Prefer not to say

Other...

What are two signs of a healthy relationship? *

Short answer text

What are two strategies on how to intervene when partner violence is suspected in others? *

Short answer text

What are two signs the relationship is becoming violent? *

Short answer text

Palomar Student ID, so you can get extra credit (Professor Turner will not have access to any of the other answers) *

Short answer text



Results

—
L0#1

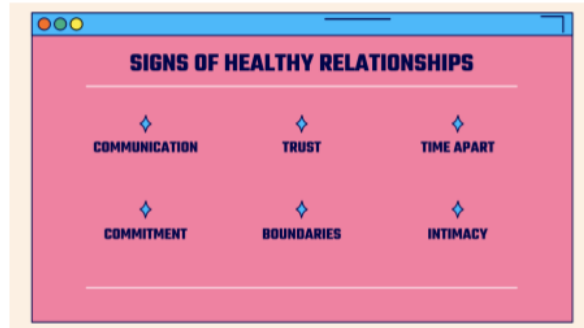
Identify two signs of a healthy relationship

What are two signs of a healthy relationship? *

Short answer text

- 86% of participants were able to complete L0

L0#1- Results



- 41% of participants stated "Trust and Communication"
- L0#1 was met

LO# 2- Results

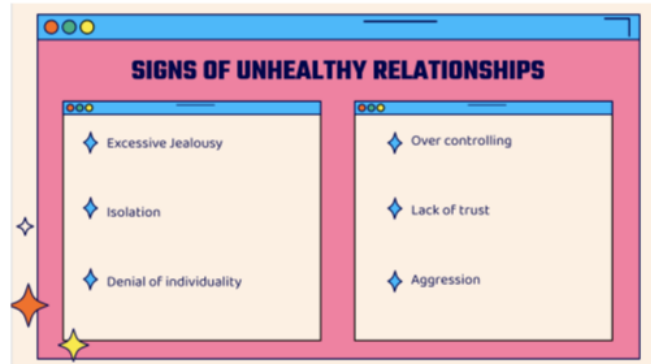
Identify two signs when relationships are becoming violent

What are two signs the relationship is becoming violent? *

Short answer text

- 79% of participants were able to complete LO

LO#2- Results



- 28% of participants stated "Jealousy and Aggression"
- LO#2 was met

LO# 3- Results

Indicate two strategies on how to intervene when partner violence is suspected in others

What are two strategies on how to intervene when partner violence is suspected in others? *

Short answer text

- 77% of participants were able to complete LO

L0#3- Results



- 20% of participants stated "Share Concerns and Contact Family/Professionals"
- L0#3 was met

Discussion

- Learning outcomes were met
- Not in person
- In a history class
- Not accurate of population
- Add more demographics questions



Thank you and any questions?

Special thanks to Palomar College!

And remember it's okay to ask for help!
:)