



## **START A CONVERSATION**

### **Reminders . . .**

**Encourage open, honest, and thoughtful reflection.** Talk openly with young teens about healthy relationships. Allow them to articulate his or her values and expectations for healthy relationships. Rather than dismissing ideas as “wrong”, encourage debate —this helps young people come to his or her own understanding.

**Understand the pressure and the risk teen’s face.** Preteens and young teens face new and increasing pressures about sex, substance abuse and dating. Time and time again, young teens express their desire to have parents/role models take the time to listen to them and help them think through the situations they face – be that person!

**Accentuate the positive.** Conversations about relationships do not need to focus solely on risky behavior or negative consequences. Conversations should also address factors that promote healthy adolescent development and relationships.

### **QUESTION STARTERS . . .**

- **How are things going?**
- **What are your friends’ dating relationships like?**
- **Why do you think someone would abuse someone they were dating?**
- **Why would a young person stay in an unhealthy relationship?**
- **How do you know a relationship is healthy?**
- **What could you do if one of your friends is being abused by their dating partner?**
- **How is your relationship going?**