

SUPPORTING YOUR TEEN

Remember your first high school partner? Remember that first kiss or how it felt when you broke up? Dealing with a break up or a relationship is difficult at any age. As adults, watching a young person go through their relationship reminds us of our own lessons learned and we want to share that information. This tool is a helpful reminder to ensure that we are supporting our teen the best way possible.

ADOLESCENT BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

Be mindful that a young person's brain functions differently than adults when having conversations around relationships..

Keep in mind that young people:

- Think with the more emotional part of their brains
- Believe that how something makes you feel in the moment is more important than how they might feel in the future.
- Are exploring their gender identity/presentation and sexuality.
- Biologically are wired to begin separating from their families and be more independent.

ADULTISM

Its important to recognize that adults hold more power than a young person in this world and not overpower the teen's decision making power.

What to do

- Acknowledge that the feelings and relationship experiences that the young person's experiences are valid.
- Remind the young person they have control over the trajectory of their lives.
- Brainstorm what you and the teen can do for next steps

ADULT ROLE

Tips for the role you can play in the break up conversation.

How to do it

- Empathize. Say back their feelings. Put yourself in their shoes.
- Ask questions to gain a stronger understanding of their feelings and thoughts. What do they want? What's realistic?
- Empower them. What are some options that they have? What do they want? What's realistic?