

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Test your knowledge of relationship abuse by reading each of the statements below and deciding whether it is a fact or a myth. Circle your answer— **FACT** or **MYTH**.

1. A partner who calls all the time to “check up on you” is demonstrating his/her love. **FACT** **MYTH**
2. Jealousy and possessiveness are signs of true love. **FACT** **MYTH**
3. Relationship abuse consists only of physical violence. **FACT** **MYTH**
4. Men are battered by women just as often as women are battered by men. **FACT** **MYTH**
5. Using alcohol or other drugs is a cause of dating violence. **FACT** **MYTH**
6. An occasional punch or slap is not considered abuse. Everybody loses it once in a while. **FACT** **MYTH**
7. If someone stays in an abusive relationship, then the situation must not be so bad after all. **FACT** **MYTH**
8. Girls who stay in abusive relationships have no one to blame but themselves. **FACT** **MYTH**
9. Guys have to be strong, so they have to be “in control” in dating relationships. **FACT** **MYTH**
10. Dating violence happens mostly to people who provoke it. Victims bring the abuse on themselves. **FACT** **MYTH**
11. Young people will frequently tell someone about dating violence when it happens to them. **FACT** **MYTH**
12. If your dating partner hits you, he or she will most likely be so sorry that he or she will never do it again. **FACT** **MYTH**

*The Answer Key for this activity is provided on the next page.*

## Answer Key

- 1. MYTH** A partner who calls all the time to “check up on you” is demonstrating his/her love. *The person is demonstrating massive insecurity. This is not healthy behavior in a relationship. A healthy relationship is based on trust.*
- 2. MYTH** Jealousy and possessiveness are signs of true love. *Jealousy and possessiveness are signs that the person sees you as a possession. They are the most common early warning signs of abuse.*
- 3. MYTH** Relationship abuse consists only of physical violence. *Physical violence is only one form of relationship abuse. Abuse can be physical, sexual, verbal, emotional or psychological—or a combination of these.*
- 4. MYTH** Men are battered by women just as often as women are battered by men. *95 percent of the reported incidents of assault in relationships are committed by males, according to the U.S. Bureau of Justice. However, relationship abuse can be directed at men as well as women, and can occur in same-sex as well as opposite-sex relationships.*
- 5. MYTH** Using alcohol or other drugs is a cause of dating violence. *Alcohol and other drugs are just an excuse to justify the abuser’s use of violence. The cause of dating violence is the abuser, who is making the choice to engage in this behavior. Substance abuse and dating violence are two different issues that need to be addressed separately.*
- 6. MYTH** An occasional punch or slap is not considered abuse. *Everybody loses it once in a while. Even an occasional punch or slap is never okay! It is abuse—and it is a criminal act.*
- 7. MYTH** If someone stays in an abusive relationship, then the situation must not be so bad after all. *It is difficult to leave an abusive relationship for many reasons: fear of the abuser’s threats, loss of self-confidence, not recognizing the relationship as abusive, belief that the abuser needs their help and belief that the abuser will change, to name a few.*

*The Answer Key for this activity is continued on the next page.*

**FACTS VS. MYTH**

**8. MYTH** Girls who stay in abusive relationships have no one to blame but themselves. *The abusers are solely responsible for the abuse and for instilling fear in their victims. To end the abuse, abusers must be held responsible for their behavior and possess a willingness to change.*

**9. MYTH** Guys have to be strong, so they have to be “in control” in dating relationships. *In an abusive relationship, the abuser feels a need to exert power and control over his or her partner. In healthy relationships, both partners share responsibility for decisions, support and encourage each other’s goals, respect the other’s opinions, thoughts and friends, negotiate conflicts and compromise, disagree with each other respectfully and feel listened to and respected.*

**10. MYTH** Dating violence happens mostly to people who provoke it. Victims bring the abuse on themselves. *Abusers believe they have the right to use abuse to control their victims. They see the victim as less than an equal. The decisions that abusers make about when they will abuse, how frequently they will abuse, what the severity will be and where the abuse will take place has nothing to do with the victim’s demeanor or behavior.*

**11. MYTH** Young people will frequently tell someone about dating violence when it happens to them. *Teenagers are reluctant to disclose that they are victims of abuse for many reasons. They may: fear losing independence if they tell a parent; believe that they can handle the situation; fear retaliation; feel ashamed or embarrassed; hope the abuse will end; not see themselves as victims; feel no one will believe them; feel there will be a stigma attached to being a victim; feel responsible for the abuse; feel others will blame them; fear being ousted if they are in a same-sex relationship.*

**12. MYTH** If your dating partner hits you, he or she will most likely be so sorry that he or she will never do it again. *Abusive episodes are rarely isolated. The pattern of abuse usually continues, and abusive incidents increase in frequency and severity over time.*