



HANDS LIFTING HEARTS
INITIATIVES SOCIETY
RESOURCE 01

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS VOCABULARY

Finding the words for safety, respect & connection

For African, Black and Caribbean families,
youth, and caregivers in Alberta



Recognise healthy behaviours,
talk about boundaries, and
find words to ask for help.

Family Violence Prevention /
Breaking Silence, Building Safety

Sponsored by the Ministry of Children and Family
Services, Government of Alberta

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Name what healthy looks like

When respectful behaviour is not named, unhealthy patterns can feel normal. These activities help you describe healthy relationships, recognise concerns and ask for support.

Make this your own

Tick boxes and type in the spaces, or print and write by hand. Use a PDF reader that supports forms. You can skip any question, pause, or return later. There are no scores. Save only if it is safe to keep your answers.

Privacy matters. A completed workbook may contain personal information. Use a device and storage location you trust. If someone monitors your device, consider using a safer device or completing the activities without recording answers.

Choose an activity

Words for respect and choice

Words for care and responsibility

What these words mean to me

Healthy or unhealthy language?

Use the words in daily life

When relationships feel unsafe

You can complete this alone or with others who respect your choices. Shared discussion should be voluntary. If someone feels afraid or controlled, individual support may be safer than a group conversation.

Words for respect and choice

Read the meanings and everyday examples. Tick the words you would like to explore further. These are learning prompts, not a test.

☐ RESPECT

Treating another person's feelings, choices and dignity as important.

In practice: I can disagree without insults or pressure.

☐ CONSENT

A freely given, informed and specific agreement that can be withdrawn.

In practice: I ask, listen to the answer and accept a no.

☐ BOUNDARIES

Limits that describe what feels acceptable or comfortable for you.

In practice: I ask before sharing someone's personal information.

☐ COMMUNICATION

Expressing needs and feelings while making room for another person's voice.

In practice: I describe what I need without threats.

☐ TRUST

Confidence built through reliable, respectful actions over time.

In practice: I follow through on an agreement.

☐ CHOICE

Being able to make decisions without pressure or coercion.

In practice: I respect another person's decision.

Words for care and responsibility

Read the meanings and everyday examples. Tick the words you would like to explore further. These are learning prompts, not a test.

☐ ACCOUNTABILITY

Taking responsibility for your behaviour and working to repair harm.

In practice: I apologise without blaming the person I hurt.

☐ LISTENING

Giving attention and trying to understand without interrupting.

In practice: I ask whether I have understood correctly.

☐ EMPATHY

Trying to understand another person's feelings and perspective.

In practice: I acknowledge a feeling even when my experience differs.

☐ SAFETY

Being free from threats, harm, fear and control.

In practice: I can express a concern without being punished.

☐ MUTUAL CARE

Showing concern for each other while respecting each person's needs.

In practice: We offer support without demanding control in return.

☐ HONESTY

Communicating truthfully without using truth as a reason to humiliate.

In practice: I am truthful and respectful; privacy still matters.

What these words mean to me

Choose three words from the vocabulary pages. Use examples that feel safe to record; you can also make up a situation.

Word 1

What does this look like in a healthy relationship?

Word 2

How do I know when this word is missing?

Word 3

How can I practise this word more often?

Healthy or unhealthy language?

Choose one response for each statement. Think about whether the words respect choice and safety or use blame and pressure.

1. “I respect your decision, even if I do not agree.”

- ☐ Healthy ☐ Unhealthy

2. “If you loved me, you would do what I say.”

- ☐ Healthy ☐ Unhealthy

3. “Let us take a break and talk when we are calmer.”

- ☐ Healthy ☐ Unhealthy

4. “You are overreacting. This is your fault.”

- ☐ Healthy ☐ Unhealthy

Which statements promote safety? Which increase harm, and why?

Compare: 1 and 3 model healthy language when words are matched by respectful actions. 2 pressures someone to prove love through obedience. 4 dismisses feelings and shifts blame. A break should not be used to punish or control.

Use the words in daily life

Complete the sentences privately, or discuss them with willing participants. Listening without interrupting is one way to practise healthy communication.

I feel respected when...

A boundary that matters to me is...

I feel safe communicating when...

One word I want to practise more is...

Conversation starters

Which word feels easiest to practise? Which feels hardest right now? What word would help our relationships feel safer?

One action I want to try

Healthy relationships need respectful actions as well as words. Vocabulary does not replace support if you feel unsafe or controlled.

Support you can choose

You do not have to complete this workbook alone. Choose a service that fits your needs. In immediate danger, call 911.

Hands Lifting Hearts Initiatives Society

Youth and family programs and information.

Kids Help Phone

Support and resources for young people across Canada.

ShelterSafe

Find women's shelters and their support services in Canada.

Government of Canada

Family violence information and support resources.

Plan for your safety

Practical safety planning information.

One support option I may want to explore

Links above are clickable. Support information checked October 15, 2026. Sources: the official service pages linked above. This workbook offers reflection and planning activities; it is not a substitute for individual safety planning or professional support.

Prepared as part of the Hands Lifting Hearts Initiatives Society Family Violence Prevention: Breaking Silence, Building Safety Toolkit.

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