

# Relationship Rights

Page address: <http://www.mnsu.edu/here4you/IPV/rights.html>

**Dating is one of the primary ways we relate to other people on a sexual and intimate level. Dating relationships are also where people are most vulnerable to being assaulted because they trust the person they're dating. It is also more difficult to report assault from within an intimate relationship because of the violation of trust.**

## Dating Bill of Rights

1. I have the right to refuse a date without feeling guilty.
2. I have the right to ask for a date without feeling crushed if the answer is no.
3. I have the right to choose to go to parties alone, without feeling like I've got to hook up with someone.
4. I have the right to do almost anything as long as it does not hurt someone else.
5. I give myself the right not to act macho.
6. I give myself the right not to act seductively.
7. If I want physical closeness, I have the right to ask, and to say "YES" if asked.
8. If I do not want physical closeness, I have the right to say "NO".
9. I have the right to start a relationship slowly, and to say, "I want to know you better before I become involved."
10. I have the right to be my own self without changing to suit others.
11. I have a right to an equality-based relationship.
12. I have the right to change a relationship and to say, "We used to be close, and I want someone else now."
13. I have the right to be told a relationship is changing and not to blame myself, or to change myself to keep it going.
14. I have the right not to dominate, or be dominated.
15. I have the right to be quiet, or spirited, without being misunderstood.

16. I have the right to act one way with one person and a different way with someone else.
17. I have the right to change my goals whenever I want.

### **Responsibilities**

**Dating respectfully means respecting your own rights, but it also means respecting the dating rights of others.**

Here is a short list of some of the responsibilities that accompany the Dating Bill of Rights:

1. Clarify your own boundaries--think about, in advance, what you want and do not want.
2. Respect (with your thoughts, words, and actions) the limits of others.
3. Check your actions and decisions to determine whether they are good or bad for you and the people around you.
4. Respect that others may think, feel, and act differently from you. You have a right to engage in an open dialogue, but not to pressure them to change.
5. Get comfortable communicating about sex and intimacy. Learn how to ask for clarification if you don't understand something.
6. Set high goals for yourself.

*Adapted from Dating Bill of Rights by the Domestic Violence Advocacy Program of Family Resources, Inc.*