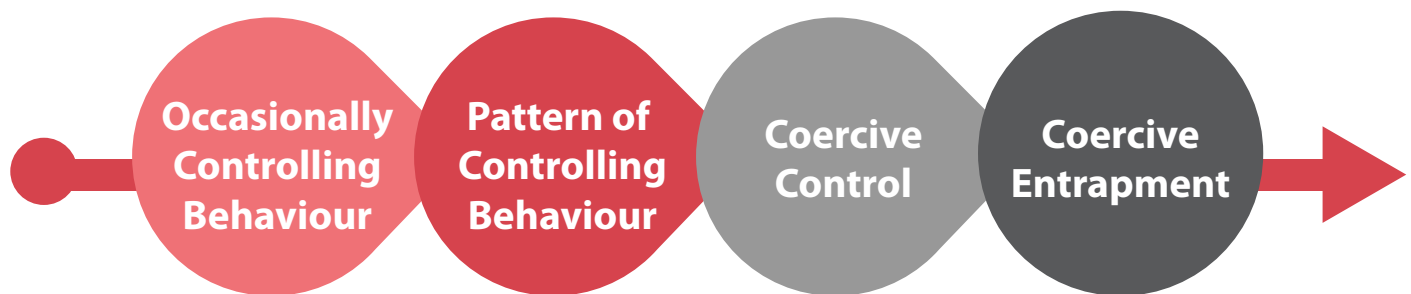


ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

- This document is a guide for educators. It is important that educators know how to support their students in learning how control within relationships occurs along a spectrum and how to address some of the specific control tactics concerns.
- Learning Objectives
 - » Behaviours on the spectrum of control
 - » Different types of coercive control and how to address the issues

A SPECTRUM OF CONTROL



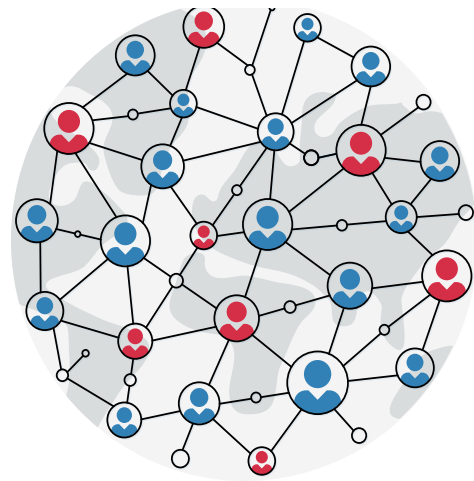
- **Coercive Behaviour**
 - » A pattern of behaviour which seeks to take away a person's freedom and to strip their sense of self
 - » Coercion starts with occasionally controlling behaviour and moves into patterns of controlling behaviour
 - Example: "I can't leave because my partner is threatening to tell my parents about the relationship OR they are threatening to share nude photos of me with other classmates."
- **Coercive Control**
 - » The repetitive use of tactics to regulate and dominate an intimate partner's daily life and restrict personal liberties
 - » The coercive control lens can help to make sense of behaviours and concerns that might otherwise seem "paranoid"
 - » For example, if someone feels they are being stalked or recorded, they may actually be. **In domestic violence situations, it is common to find that victims have had apps downloaded, without their knowing by their perpetrator, that transmits location, and forward calls and emails to the person doing the controlling.**
 - It is important to be aware that apps that transmit this type of information are easily available and prevalent.
 - Keep in mind: Location sharing is very normal between friends and partners these days and this is usually not a problem. It becomes a problem when the information is being used to stalk and harass. **The stalking and threats are what make is a tactic of coercive control.**

- **Coercive Entrapment**

- » Creation of a world in which the person experiencing abuse is constantly monitored and criticized.
- » A person using violence may groom the social circle. Coercive control is an intentional use of isolating tactics and people who use these tactics are skilled at hiding it. Your perception of a particular student might be that they are intelligent and come from a “good home”. This does not mean that they are not trying to gain control.
 - A potential example of this could be an extravagant “promposal” where a partner makes an elaborate invitation to the prom intentionally to exert pressure and show other students what a “romantic” and “good” partner/date they are.
- » **Not all teen dating violence will be characterized by coercive control.** Sometimes it might be reciprocal violence or a relationship that is unhealthy but perhaps not yet dangerously controlling. When the relationship is characterized by coercive control, interventions should be a priority.
- » **Working with a person experiencing violence and control requires providing a supportive response, and supporting a person using violence requires balancing support and accountability for harm caused.**
 - **The person using violence and control needs support but it cannot come at the peril of the person experiencing.**
 - Another important consideration is making sure that conversations about dating violence happen confidentially.
 - This includes not intervening in controlling behaviours with both members of a relationship present.

ACTIVITY: STUDENT EXPERIENCE – THE SPIDER’S WEB

- Activity Details / Information for participants
 - » This activity involves reading a story about a young adult’s experience of dating violence. Although the details shared are not overly explicit it could be upsetting for some.
 - » Further directions for the activity:
 - For access to full activity and discussion guide, please click [here](#)
 - Please practice self-care and feel free to exit the activity if you need a break, refreshments, or anything else.
 - We will debrief afterwards.
 - » This web story was created in 2018 by Mount Royal University students Diana Kurila, Larissa Crawford, Melanie Lockwood, and Scott Montgomery through the Stepping Up program.
- Debrief Questions
- What stands out about this story?
 - » The person representing Alex: What was your experience like in the middle? // The person representing Alex’s partner: What was your experience like in the middle? // The rest of the group: What did you notice about the interactions between the people representing Alex and their partner?
 - » Who was supportive? Who wasn’t?
 - » Who could have been supportive to Alex?
 - » Who could have responded to Alex’s partner?
 - » How did you imagine Alex in terms of gender, sexual orientation, culture, & socioeconomic status?



FINAL NOTE

- Explain to participants: The strangler fig, the image of the two trees in the slide, represent the concept of coercive control. In the picture we see two trees. **The seed of the strangler fig landed in the branches of the other tree and slowly its vines began to constrict, isolating the other tree and working to make it invisible to the outside world.**
- Sometimes, we are responding to someone who is wrapped tightly in these vines, we also may have unique opportunities to see through the vines and to affirm that they are seen, valued, and worthy of their freedom.
 - » In Alex's story, the note from the math teacher and the text from the group member make a difference.
- Ask participants: Think back to Alex's story, where do you see their partner using coercive control?
 - » Discussion Points:
 - Threatening to out the relationship and tell Alex's family
 - Stalking on social media
 - Academic Sabotage- distracting Alex and creating a situation where they cannot succeed in school
 - Threats: verbal and physical
 - Demeaning comments



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