

The Ginsburg Initiative 2025

We Are Where

We Are Essex County's Young Women & We Deserve...

TO BE HEARD

TO BE SEEN

TO BE INFORMED

TO BE SAFE



Why We Are Here



As a teenage girl, I have seen many issues that come with being a girl in today's society. This has caused me to want to take action and solve these issues, creating equality for all. That is why I am a part of the Ginsburg Initiative.

- Evangeline Bennett



I observe everything happening in the current political climate of our country, and feel powerless to all of the issues I see. I knew I wanted to get involved somehow and feel like I was able to make a positive change in my community, even as just a high schooler!

- Madeleine Roberts



I decided to join the Ginsburg Initiative because I believe in empowering the next generation of girls to find their voice and realize their worth. Through helping them create their magazine, I hope to give them the tools and confidence to speak up. - Katherine Blasius



I realized I needed to do something about the problems we are facing in today's world. Ginsburg Initiative has given me an opportunity to take action.

- Victoria Carregal



When I was 8, I learned about the Baptist Street Bombing, where KKK members killed 4 girls attending Sunday School. I realized that if those girls were young enough to be victims of racism, then I was old enough to be an activist. So, I made a promise to myself to always take a stand and fight for what I believe in, especially if I was fighting for girls.

- Maeva Veillard Perry



I was tired of being angry with everything and still having no power, Ginsburg gave me an outlet.

-Evelyn Yu

I was exhausted, constantly watching women not be taken seriously. I wanted to make a change in society instead of watching the inequality.

-Kenderlie DesRosiers

As a high school student, there aren't too many opportunities for me to truly take action on the issues that affect me. I want to help pave the way for a better future for the next generation of girls.

- Evelyn Brunetti

I continuously learn about instances of great women from history being overlooked and undervalued. Our history and achievements should be shown and respected. I joined the Ginsburg Initiative to not only teach others about these amazing women, but to allow others to become one themselves.

- Madelyn Hayward



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2024-2025 Members



Evangeline Bennett

Sophomore

Aspiration: Travel Nursing



Evelyn Brunetti

Junior

Aspiration: Veterinary Medicine



Victoria Carregal

Sophomore

Aspiration: Neurology



Kenderlie DesRosiers

Sophomore

Aspiration: Anesthesiology



Madelyn Hayward

Sophomore

Aspiration: Anesthesiology



Madeleine Roberts

Sophomore

Aspiration: Law and Politics



Evelyn Yu

Sophomore

Aspiration: Social & Environmental Justice



Katherine Blasius

ECCSW Intern,

Aspiration: Lawyer



Maeva Veillard Perry

Ginsburg Liaison, ECCSW

Regional Commissioner

GINSBURG IN THE COMMUNITY

Who We Are & What We're Doing

Written By: Evelyn Yu



Who We Are

We are a group of passionate young women from Essex County, MA, seeking a change in our world. Inspired by Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, we strive to empower others to be advocates and activists and raise their voices for gender equity and social justice.



Ginsburg '24-'25 Members & Regional Commissioners, Maeva Veillard Perry and Brianna Sullivan, at the Menstrual Equity Summit in January 2025.



So many people supported us this year, most of all, our incredible Ginsburg Liaison, Maeva, and Intern, Katherine.

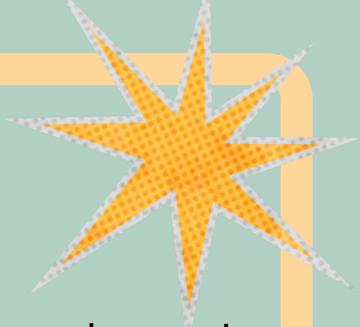


What We Do

Every year, we work on a long-term project focused on an issue impacting women and girls in Essex County. Last year's Ginsburg members created a survey to better understand the mental health of adolescents in Essex County. They presented their findings to their school administrators and advocated for better mental health resources for students.

This year, we published a magazine with information we believe all young girls and women need to know. In the wake of the removal of critical information, we are stepping up! As members of the Ginsburg Initiative, we come from different backgrounds and have different stories, but we have the same desire to make a change in our world. We believe that everyone, everywhere, especially women and girls, should be informed and safe. We hope this magazine makes you feel hopeful, empowered, and prepared!

In the Community



We participate in meaningful and purpose-driven summits and events where we learn from, talk to, and make change with other women and girls in the state. We participated in three events this year!

In January, we tabled at the Menstrual Equity Summit at Suffolk University in Boston! There, we networked, talked about our mission, and learned about period poverty, menstrual equity, and the inequities women and girls face in healthcare.



In January 2025, the Ginsburg Initiative had the honor and opportunity to table at the Menstrual Equity Summit hosted by MassNOW. We were able to practice networking and public speaking by sharing our stories and our project with attendees and speakers at the event!



So many incredible people tabled and attended. We met company founders and saw so much, from innovative new technology aimed at helping women to empowering and informational books and pamphlets. It was a truly eye-opening event!

In the Community

In February, we hosted a Youth Listening Session with the Essex County Commission on the Status of Women at Essex North Shore Agricultural & Technical High School. Students from Essex County schools were in attendance and shared their perspectives on issues facing young women in Essex County and ways to make change.



Girls from this year's Ginsburg Initiative taking the lead in facilitating the discussion at the listening session.



ECCSW Commissioners Brianna Sullivan, Maeva Veillard Perry, and Sara Stanley, who led the session!



So many girls showed up to the Ginsburg Youth Listening Session! Most were students of Essex Tech High School, taking time out of their day to come and have important conversations. It's mind-blowing to be surrounded by such incredible people!



"Feminism is not a bad word, and it is not a binary concept. We need men and women to fight the patriarchy!"

-Listening Session Attendee

In the Community

In April, two Ginsburg members attended the GELI Summit at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Falmouth, MA. We spent the day learning and listening to each other as well as exploring the beautiful “Village of Discovery.” It was so empowering to be around so many smart and passionate women and girls.

Our first workshop was “Raising Our Voices and Advocating for Ourselves,” run by fellow high school students passionate about empowering other girls!
(Top Left)

The Summit began with speeches from head researchers at WHOI and the founders of the GELI Summit!
(Bottom Left)



We heard from different organizations working to advocate and uplift the communities that need it.
(Top Right)

WHOI is a beautiful campus! Girls had the opportunity to learn about the changing coastline right on the beach in one of the workshops!
(Bottom Right)

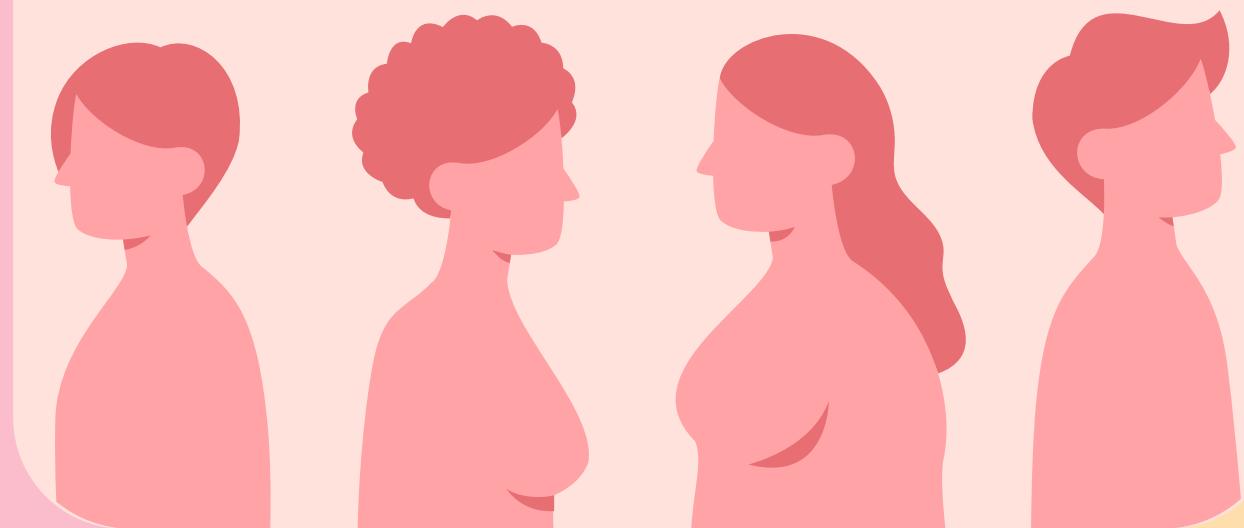
**“Speak your mind
even if your voice
shakes.”**

— Ruth Bader Ginsburg

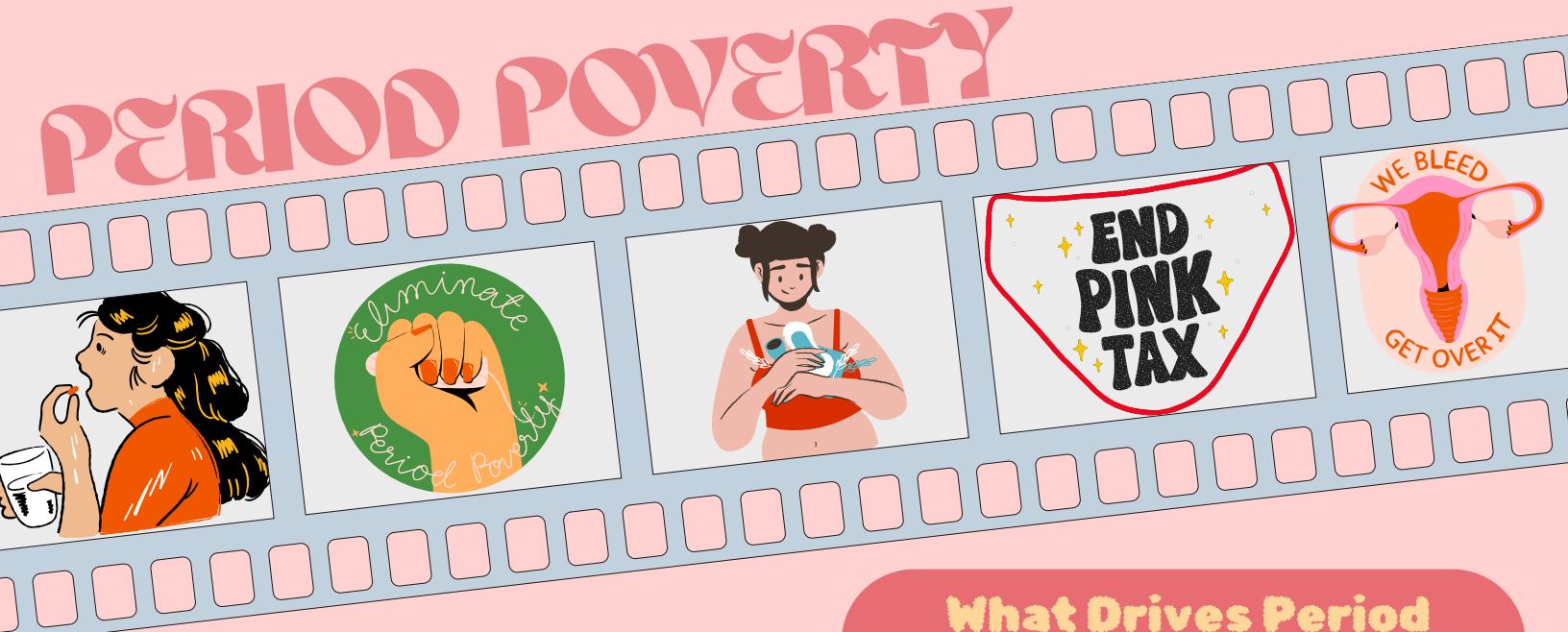
PERIOD POVERTY

Written By: Kenderlie DesRosiers & Madelyn Hayward

MENSTRUAL
HYGIENE IS A
HUMAN RIGHT



PERIOD POVERTY



Period Privilege: Who Has Easy Access to Feminine Products & Who Doesn't?

In the United States and other high-income countries, it's common for someone to simply ask a friend or coworker for a pad or tampon if needed. Period products can be so common that people may even be able to walk to a nearby drugstore or convenience store to pick up a pack of products for usually less than 10 dollars. For some, these sanitary products are even free in schools, or easily accessible for 25 cents in many public places. However, this is not the case for those who suffer from period poverty.

Period poverty is the inability to afford or access menstrual products, menstrual education, and menstrual health. This affects people all over the world.

Millions of people cannot afford these products, and their periods can even cause them to miss work and school.

What Drives Period Poverty?

The cost of menstrual products is a key contributor to this issue. All around the world, women and girls are spending up to 15% of their income on menstrual products. The top three countries for the least affordable menstrual products are Algeria, with women spending 14.8% of their monthly income on period products, and Zambia and Nigeria, with women spending 10.93% of their monthly income. For some, the higher-than-average cost of menstrual products makes it difficult for women to go about their daily lives without worrying about how they will pay for their products. While girls in impoverished places may experience period poverty, it can also be an issue in better-off places, such as Massachusetts.

In Massachusetts:

1 in 9 menstruating women and girls live below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

Over 170K women and girls live 100% below the FPL.

Over 380K women receive healthcare through Medicaid, or other government assistance.

25K women participate in the Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC).

1 in 7 children struggle to pay for menstrual products.

Federal food stamps cannot be used to pay for menstrual products.



PERIOD POVERTY

Another Driver of Period Poverty:

The lack of education and awareness that surrounds menstruation and puberty surely drives period poverty. In many different places, the stigma of periods and how they should be kept private and shouldn't be normalized surrounds many young women and girls. This natural bodily function is shunned in many cultures and environments for being gross and of a personal nature, thus making the topic sensitive to communicate about.

Girls are taught that they should stay quiet about menstruating and not even say the word "period." This makes it hard for people to be rightfully educated about periods. The lack of government action and sanitation facilities also has a serious impact on period poverty. Women and menstruating people all around the country and world have a difficult time affording period products, and the government only does so much when involving menstrual products in public places.

One way the local government has tried to combat this issue is by introducing the I AM Bill. It was passed on October 25, 2023, in the Massachusetts Senate and brought Massachusetts residents one step closer to menstrual equity.

Organizations That Combat Period Poverty:

- SHE (Sustainable Health Enterprises)
- DGI (Days For Girls International)
- Massachusetts Menstrual Equity Coalition
- Love Your Menses

What is the

I AM Bill?

This is a Massachusetts-specific bill that would increase access to free, disposable menstrual products in prisons, homeless shelters, and public schools. Contact your state representatives to get this bill passed!

I AM. An Act to Increase Access to Menstrual Products in Prisons, Homeless Shelters and Public Schools (H.2354 & S.1445)

Lead Sponsors Senators Jehlen and Representatives Barber, Livingstone

1/2 the world menstruates.	MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS ARE ESSENTIAL	The I AM bill would ensure access to free menstrual products, without stigma, to all menstruating individuals in all public schools, homeless shelters, prisons and county jails.	
Non-menstruating people go into a bathroom expecting their basic bodily needs to be met – this is not the case for menstruators.			
No one should have to choose between food, a roof over their head, their education, and access to menstrual products. Yet every day in Massachusetts, menstruators are forced to make exactly that choice.			
BY ENDING PERIOD POVERTY WE'RE TACKLING ECONOMIC INEQUALITY, EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITY & HEALTH INEQUALITY			
	Approximately 1 out of 7 children in MA is living in poverty and struggles to pay for menstrual products.		The federal government does not allow food stamps to be used to pay for menstrual products.
	Ability to access menstrual products affects students' class attendance and productivity. Over half of MA school nurses reported seeing students miss class to get menstrual products.		Restricted access to menstrual products means that they can be used as bargaining chips and tools of control.
	In 2019, 20,000+ people were homeless in Massachusetts – up 14% since 2018. Since the pandemic, we know the state of homelessness is even more dire.		Massachusetts shelters report menstrual products are among the least donated items to homeless shelters.
PERIODS DON'T STOP FOR PANDEMICS. IN FACT, PERIOD POVERTY HAS GOTTEN WORSE.			



PERIOD POVERTY

What is the Pink Tax?



Defined:

The “Pink Tax” refers to an instance where products and services that are marketed and sold to women are priced higher than items, products, or services that are sold to men. Usually, the products are very similar or identical in functionality, like razors and deodorant, for example. The Pink Tax can make a large impact on women's finances, especially if they are suffering from poverty or any other financial hardship. Generally, the Pink Tax is seen as a form of gender discrimination in the form of price.

Facts:

- Individual states, counties, and cities collect taxes on menstrual products, known as the “Tampon Tax.”
- Period products are taxed as luxury items at a rate similar to electronics, makeup, & toys.
- 20 U.S. states charge sales tax on menstrual products that can range from 4% to 7%.
- The tax rate for menstrual products in Mississippi is 7%.
- Massachusetts is one of the 30 states that recognized menstrual products as medical devices, because of this fact, these products are not taxed.

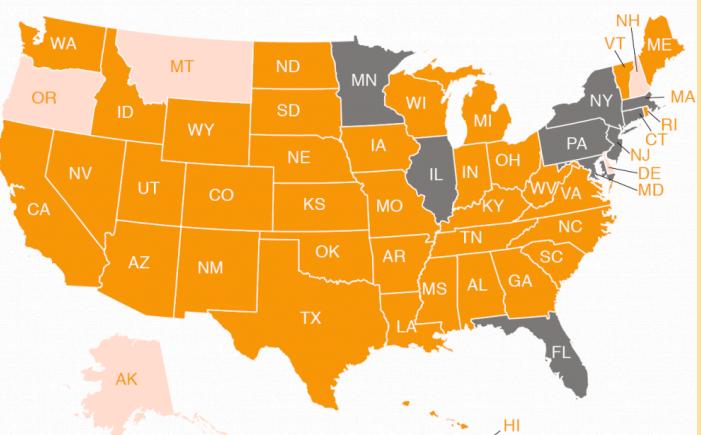
In Massachusetts,

The “Tampon Tax” was ELIMINATED in 2013 by declaring menstrual products as medical devices!

TAMPON TAX THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES

Only 13 states out of 50 do not tax menstrual products.

● States with tampon tax ● States with no tampon tax ● States with no sales tax



SOURCE: BBC “Why is the US ‘tampon tax’ so hated?”

CREDIT: Nicole Schwyn

Periods: Explained

1. The menses phase and overall menstrual cycle begin when you get your period. This is when the lining of the uterus sheds. People may bleed for 3 - 7 days.
2. The follicular phase begins on the day you get your period and ends at ovulation. It overlaps into the 2nd and 3rd phases. During these two phases, estrogen levels rise which causes the endometrium to thicken and the follicles in the ovaries to grow. This will cause a fully mature ovum to form.
3. Ovulation is halfway through the 28-day cycle, this is phase three. The ovaries will release the fully matured egg.
4. The luteal phase, or phase four, is from day 15 to 28. The egg leaves the ovary and prepares for pregnancy. If the egg is not fertilized by sperm, the uterus will shed. If the egg is fertilized, you will become pregnant.

My Period Doesn't Come on the Same Day Every Month...

Is That Normal?

Don't Panic!

Track your cycle on an app or calendar.

Consider causes like stress, weight, medication, or other medical conditions.

Consult your primary care provider and a trusted adult.

[View plannedparenthood.org for more resources.](http://plannedparenthood.org)

Period Products:

Tampon: A cotton absorbent material inserted into the vagina with an applicator and removed with a string.



Cloth Pad: Absorbent layers of fabric that will soak up blood, fastened to underwear with wings and buttons.



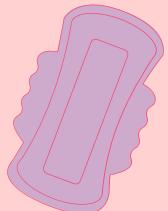
Menstrual Cup: A cup inserted into the vagina that collects menstrual fluid.



Egal Pads: This is a pad on a roll that can be dispensed in every bathroom stall.

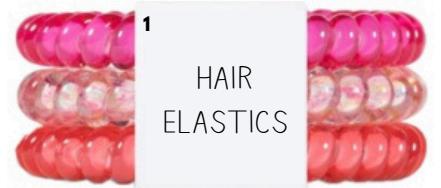
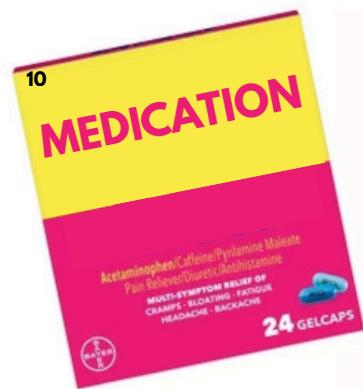
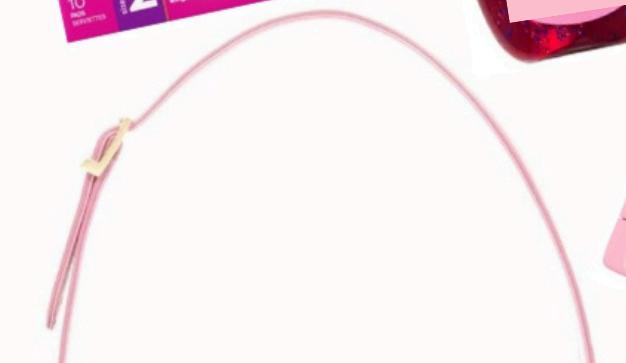


Sanitary Pad: Absorbs menstrual fluid through layers of cotton, attached to underwear and held together by sticky wings.



Inside my PERIOD POUCH

IT'S ALWAYS GOOD TO KEEP AN EMERGENCY KIT EVERYWHERE YOU GO, WHETHER THAT'S IN YOUR SCHOOL BAG OR PURSE. GINSBURG INITIATIVE IS HERE TO TELL YOU ALL THE NECESSITIES.



Inside my PERIOD POUCH

EXPLAINED:

1.

Hair Elastics: They are essential, whether you need to put your hair up or a friend needs an elastic.

2.

Perfume: Needed for a quick spritz to feel cleaner or put together.

3.

Body Lotion: Dry skin? No thanks! Emergency lotion is crucial for rejuvenated and fresh skin.

4.

Chewing Gum: Having gum on hand is non-negotiable. It's a secret weapon for fresh breath!

5.

Lip Balm: Battling dry air? Combat it with a little balm. Bonus points if it's tinted.

6.

Underwear: They are perfect for whatever life throws at you. Spare underwear is like a silent insurance policy.

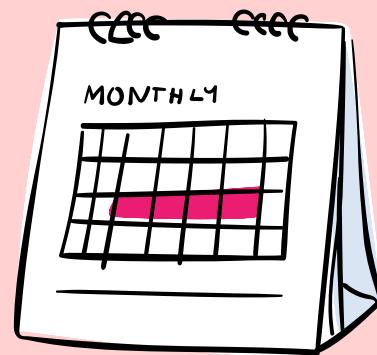
7.

Hand Sanitizer: Don't let germs slow you down! A quick squeeze can save you from sickness.

14.
15.

Liners: For extra protection and peace of mind, liners are a game-changer.

Makeup Wipes: They are a go-to for a clean and fresh feeling.



8.
9.

10.

11.
12.

13.

Pads: Keeping pads is just smart, whether they are for you or a stranger who needs one.

Tampons: Tampons are non-negotiable when being ready for anything.

Pain Meds: Small things make a huge difference, especially for headaches and cramps.

Bag: A bag is essential to a period pouch as it carries everything you need.

Deodorant: Staying fresh is a must, and a mini deo means swipe anytime!

Hair Brush: A good hair day can change everything, and a brush can smooth things over!

15.

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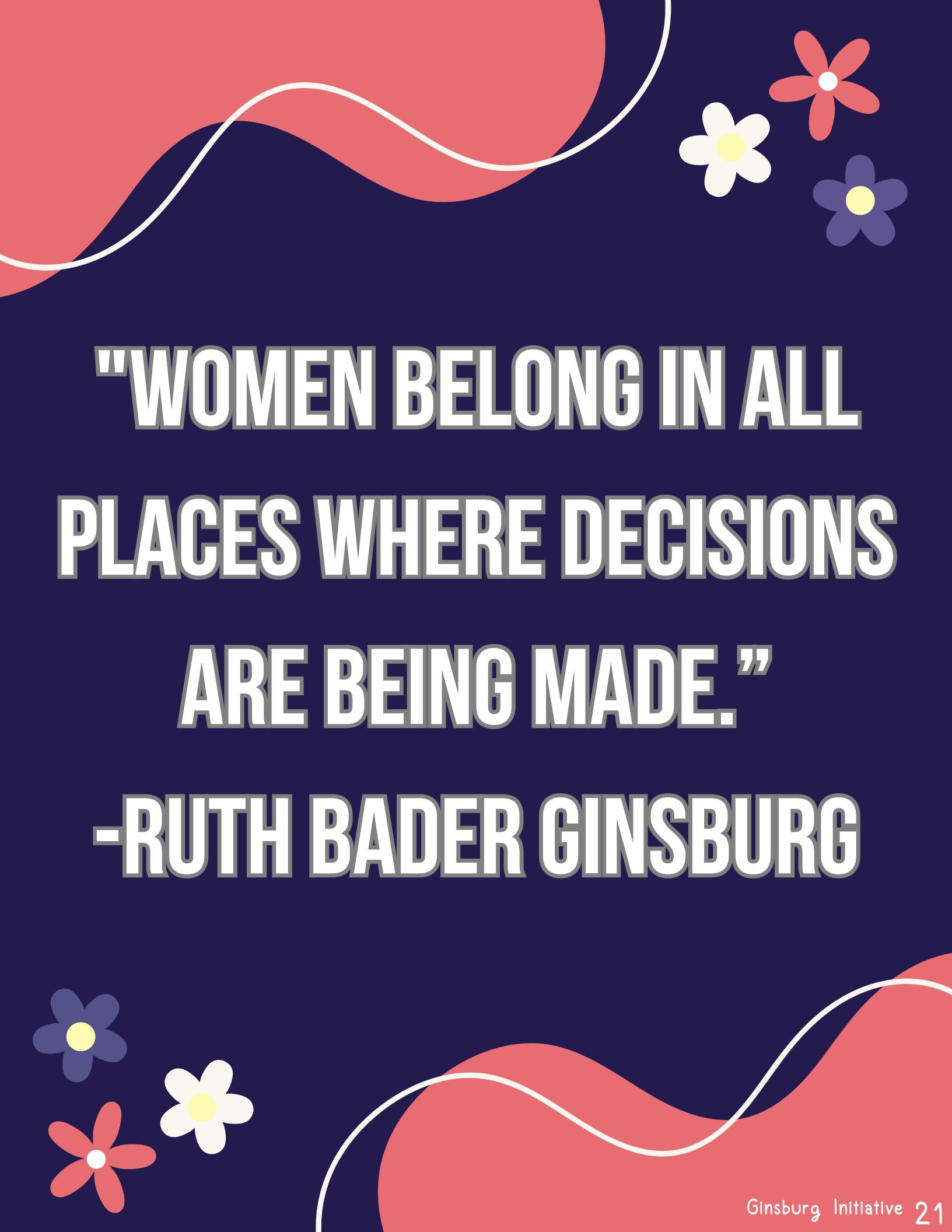
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**"WOMEN BELONG IN ALL
PLACES WHERE DECISIONS
ARE BEING MADE."**

-RUTH BADER GINSBURG

HEALTHY BODY IMAGE AND LIFESTYLE

Written By: Madeleine Roberts, Victoria Carregal, and Evangeline Bennett

INTRODUCTION

From a young age, girls are introduced to unrealistic beauty standards which can lead to them having unhealthy views of their body and developing negative lifestyle habits. Some forms of media that can impact mindsets about body image are social media and television. Young girls need to be aware of what they watch and who they follow to live a healthy lifestyle.

Unhealthy thoughts, like "I'm not good enough" or "I need to look exactly like this person," can be signs that you are comparing yourself to others. Having negative thoughts about yourself or your body can lead to mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression.

It's important to remember that not all body types are the same, and many factors contribute to our physical appearance, such as height, genetics, and bone structure.

Instead of focusing on being a certain size, there are many nutritional values that young women can pursue, such as drinking water throughout the day, eating protein, and taking vitamins and supplements.

"Struggling with your body image is something that will take a toll on you mentally and physically. While having this struggle, you may feel too scared to reach out for help. I remember always comparing myself to my peers or people I may see on social media, and those thoughts used to never leave my mind. It is important to one day realize that not all bodies will be the same, which is perfectly okay. The one thing that truly matters is being truly mentally happy with yourself and comfortable in your own body." - Victoria Carregal

Healthy Body Image and Lifestyle

01.

Body Image and Performance

Body image can harm performance at work. Studies have shown that those preoccupied with their body image are more likely to be distracted from their work and less passionate about their career. A negative body image can often take up a person's mind and distract them from other important things in their life. This can lead to a decline in work performance as well as performance at school. A study done in 2019 found that 87% of women in the workplace felt that their negative opinion of their appearance affected their ability to represent their company at a meeting or conference. Additionally, over 28% of those women said that feeling confident in their appearance improved their work performance. These statistics express how deeply body image is intertwined with all parts of life and how it can affect people's quality of life.

02.

Body Image and Relationships

First, as human beings, relationships are a vital part of our well-being, and maintaining healthy relationships is important for a fulfilled life. Unfortunately, body image can affect our ability to preserve strong relationships. A negative body image can lead to insecurities and self-esteem issues. These factors can cause emotional and physical harm in interpersonal relationships. Because struggles with body image are mainly an internal matter, it can be difficult for others to understand why their loved ones have built barriers around themselves. This distance and lack of communication often lead those struggling with body image issues to become isolated and feel alone in their struggle. A common result of a negative body image is feeling ashamed and unworthy of romantic and platonic relationships, which causes those struggling to avoid seeking out connections with others. This is why it is crucial for anyone who notices a loved one struggling with their body image to show support and compassion towards them to maintain a healthy relationship.



Body Image and Social Media



Many things affect a healthy body image, such as family, friends, and relationships, but one of the most prominent is social media. Social media affects all teens' lives in positive and negative ways. In many cases, social media can cause teens to view their bodies in negative ways. Social media can cause people to be overly focused on comparing size, shape, or appearance to unrealistic ideals. Social media has also normalized having unattainable body proportions, which may cause people who simply cannot reach those proportions even after dieting or working out to feel ashamed. This then causes teens to spiral into mental health issues and view themselves as inferior when they are not. This is why instead of using social media negatively, it should be normalized to find people and content promoting a healthy image of their body. Many times, researchers found that viewing body-positive content improved body image. Moving forward, people should not compare themselves to people online and should be confident in whatever size they are.

Body Image and Sports

Being involved in sports, especially at a young age, can affect a person's perception and image of their own body. This is especially common in female dominated sports like cheerleading, gymnastics, and dance. It is very common for girls in these industries to begin training as young as three or four years old. This can easily create an environment for girls to become overly concerned about their appearance and physical fitness at a young age. These topics are often overly stressed within sports teams and the industry itself. This is why it is very important to take good care of oneself and practice habits to maintain good mental health. Sports in general can be very draining, so when a negative body image is added on top of that, it can be very debilitating to a person's mental and physical well-being. This can lead to decreased performance in the sport and overall be detrimental for one's health and athletic abilities.

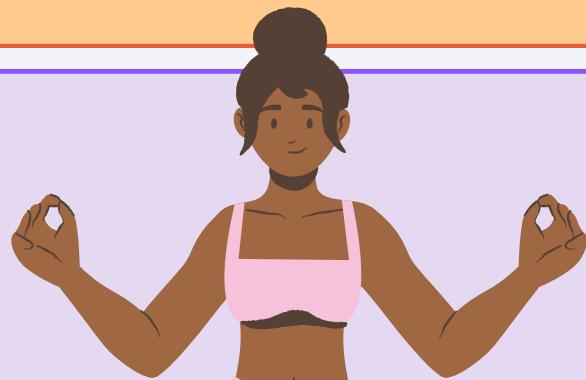
THE STATISTICS

A study has shown that 53% of American 13 year old girls are “unhappy with their bodies.” This grows to 78% by the time girls reach seventeen.



A study has shown that 50% of teens are “self conscious” about their bodies.

15% of women will have or had an eating disorder by age 40, only 27% of those people will receive treatment for it.



Fewer than 6% of people diagnosed with an eating disorder are considered underweight.

Over 70% of those diagnosed with an eating disorder also suffer from other mental disorders, usually anxiety and mood disorders.

Tips to Boost Your Self Confidence and Improve Your Body Image!

Avoid comparing yourself to others

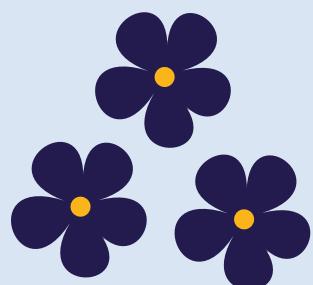
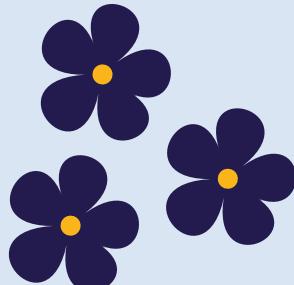
Say positive things to yourself

Celebrate your success

Create a list of things you love about yourself

Build a support network

Practice mindfulness



Q & A with Madeleine

How do you think social media has influenced the way people perceive their bodies?

I think social media has had one of the biggest influences on this generation's mental health and body image. I think that constantly being on social media has had a big effect on how we view ourselves because it is very easy to compare ourselves to those that we see online. Over time, I think this affects body image and how people view themselves.

01.

02.

What are some ways you like to stay healthy?

Some ways I like to stay healthy are to work out, exercise every day, and try my best to eat healthy. However, I think that too much restriction and control over exercise and what we eat can lead to negative body image and eventually, poor mental health. So, I think it's also important to rest and eat junk food sometimes.

03.

What advice would you give someone who is struggling with body image?

I would say that they never need to struggle alone. There are so many resources that can help connect people and offer advice and help. A struggle with body image can make someone feel lonely and isolated, and it can be hard to leave that mindset once you are there. That's why it is so important to talk to people you trust and get help if you need it.

Q & A with Madeleine

How can body positivity be efficiently promoted?

04.

Body positivity can be efficiently promoted through truth. On social media and the internet in general, so many people go out of their way to only show the best possible versions of themselves and their bodies. This can cause many people to become unsatisfied with their bodies because they are not the same. I think that a way to successfully promote body positivity is for more people to be truthful online about their bodies and show their true selves.

What are some habits and routines that make a difference in your well-being, physically and mentally?

05.

Being a highschooler in today's society has presented challenges in my life and has affected my physical and mental well-being. Knowing this, I have tried very hard to put in place healthy habits to try and stay at my best and be as happy and healthy as possible. These habits include going to the gym and exercising, reading, and spending a lot of time with family and friends. I have found that having healthy habits and routines has had a very positive effect on my life and helped improve my physical and mental health.

How does mental health align with the way people see their bodies?

Mental health and body image go hand in hand and can both have effects on the other. Having negative thoughts about one's body can often lead to mental health decline because of the constant negativity coursing through one's mind. Inversely, having a previously existing issue with mental health can also be a cause of someone having negative thoughts about their body, leading to an unhealthy body image.

06.

Help Resources



It is always okay to ask for help when you are struggling. There are resources out there for you, you are never alone.

National Eating Disorder Association

CALL THE HELPLINE: (800) 931-2237
TEXT THE HELPLINE: (800) 931-2237



National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders

Phone Number: 630-577-1333

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*“I ask no favor for
my sex. All I ask of
our brethren is that
they take their feet
off our necks.”*

-Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Healthy Intimate & Personal Relationships

Written By: Evelyn Brunetti and Evelyn Yu



Types of relationships (romantic and otherwise), communication tips, signs of unhealthy relationships, mental health, and resources.

Healthy Intimate & Personal Relationships

The phrase “Healthy Relationships” comes up often in conversation, but what does it really mean, and why is it important? Relationships are a huge part of life and can be difficult to navigate, especially in young people and those part of marginalized communities. Whether it’s an intimate, romantic, personal, or professional relationship, it’s important to know what a healthy relationship looks and feels like in order to prevent potentially dangerous or unhealthy situations.

There’s a lot that goes into a relationship, and a lot to be aware of. Factors like how someone grew up, their life goals, and their culture can all have impacts on how they interact with people and what they look for in a relationship.

There is also a wide spectrum in types of relationships someone can be in and how healthy it is. Regardless of whether you are aroace, queer, cisgender, transgender, or straight, a healthy relationship must include open communication, trust, and respect. These aspects should always be mutual; everyone deserves to feel safe and respected in their relationships.



There are many different identities that people use to describe and identify themselves. All are valid and all can affect what type of relationship someone wants or needs.

Aroace: a person who feels no romantic or sexual attraction

Queer: a person who experiences romantic or sexual attraction or gender differently than “typical”

Cisgender: someone who identifies with their gender assigned at birth

Transgender: someone who identifies with a different gender than they were assigned at birth

Straight: a person who is attracted to the opposite gender

Building & Maintaining Healthy Relationships

When people think about healthy relationships, the first thing that often comes to mind is romantic relationships. While these are important, familial, friend, work, and other types of relationships are also important to maintain! In fact, all of these partnerships can use many of the same tips and tricks to establish, recognize, and maintain healthy relationships.

The most important part of any relationship is communication. When both parties of a relationship are able to truly talk and listen to each other, it leads to better understanding and positive, constructive action. But how can this type of communication be established?

Set aside time to speak – This time can be used to have deep, more personal conversations, or it can just be used to share about everyone's day! Either way, this helps to establish a dialogue between people without distractions or other commitments.

Be clear about your wants and needs – Setting clear goals and boundaries prevents miscommunication or accidental overstepping. It also helps to empower you to be confident in yourself and what you are comfortable with! Never move a serious personal boundary for someone; a positive person will respect you and your boundary.

Be open about your emotions – Holding in all your negative feelings never helps to resolve them. Bringing up your opinions, feelings, and yes, disagreements, as they occur helps to resolve them quickly and effectively.

Be aware of body language – Even if you think you are listening, poor posture, crossed arms, or lack of eye contact can make someone feel as though they aren't being heard. Notice how your body language comes across to the other person!

Be willing to compromise – If a disagreement occurs between yourself and someone else, be willing to find a solution to the problem that meets in the middle. Both parties must be willing to compromise! One person should never have more power or say than the other in choices that have equal impact.

Be willing to apologize – If you realize that you have made a mistake, said something you regret, or escalated a situation, be willing to admit it and apologize! The other party will feel seen and understood, allowing for the two of you to more easily move forward.

Having Tough Conversations

Even in a healthy relationship, disagreements will occur. If this happens and you need to discuss it, how can you bring it up? Having this type of conversation is never easy, but there are some ways to make it slightly less difficult.

First, bring it up that you want to talk. This allows both parties to prepare emotionally. Staying calm is important. So, if needed, take some time to do some deep breathing and recenter. Level-headed discussions are productive discussions!

Sentence starters can be very helpful to bring up an issue in a productive way. Some options for bringing up difficult topics are:

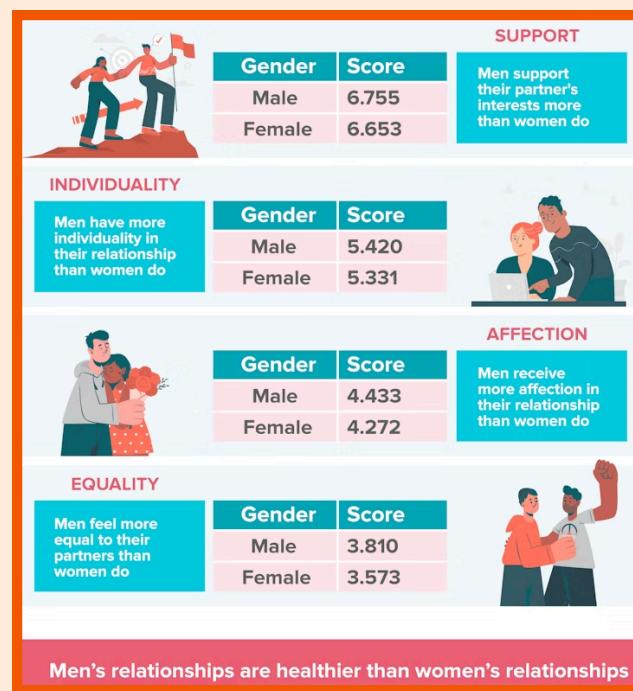
- "When you say _____, it makes me feel _____."
- I think we have different views on _____. I'd like to hear your perspective.
- Can we talk about _____? I want to hear your feelings about this and share my feelings too."(mentalhealth.org.uk)

Once the discussion has begun, be sure to actively listen. Making eye contact, asking questions, and rephrasing and repeating what the other party has said helps to make them feel heard and valued. Proposing multiple potential fixes to the problem can help to find the ideal solution that makes everyone happy. Finally, be sure to view it as the two of you against the problem rather than against each other. Working as a team to make everyone feel seen and heard helps to keep these discussions calm and productive.



Innerbody conducted a survey where participants self-reported on questions talking about important relationship pillars. The survey showed that between women and men, women have, on average, less healthy experiences in their relationships than men do. They do not feel as individual, as equal, or as much affection as men do. It is important to be aware of this difference in a relationship. Everyone deserves to feel equal amounts of affection, support, and individuality.

We also need to be aware of which groups are similarly at risk for these patterns in order to better protect each other, and to be better aware of our own potential challenges and risks within relationships. Examples of groups at higher risk for unhealthy relationships and domestic violence include (but are not limited to) women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and ethnic minority groups.



What Does “Unhealthy” Look Like?

1 in 3

girls in the U.S. are victims of

physical, emotional, or verbal dating abuse

Healthy

A healthy relationship means both you and your partner are:

- Communicating
- Respectful
- Trusting
- Honest
- Equal
- Enjoying personal time away from each other
- Making mutual choices
- Economic/financial partners

Unhealthy

You may be in an unhealthy relationship if your partner is:

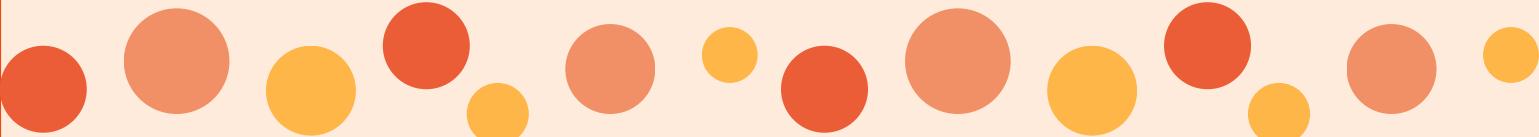
- Not communicating
- Disrespectful
- Not trusting
- Dishonest
- Trying to take control
- Only spending time together
- Pressured into activities
- Unequal economically

Abusive

Abuse is occurring in a relationship when one partner is:

- Communicating in a hurtful or threatening way
- Mistreating
- Accusing the other of cheating when it's untrue
- Denying their actions are abusive
- Controlling
- Isolating their partner from others

Infographic from: <https://www.thehotline.org/resources/healthy-relationships/>



Consent and Safety in Relationships

What is consent?

Consent is permission or agreement to participate in an activity or action. Consent must be given every time by both parties. Nothing less than an enthusiastic "yes" is consent.

Consent
CAN be
withdrawn!

You
CAN change
your mind!

Consent once
DOES NOT mean
automatic consent
next time.

Being in a
relationship DOES
NOT mean automatic
access to someone
else's body.

Domestic Violence

"A pattern of behavior in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner." - United Nations

"This includes any behaviors that frighten, intimidate, terrorize, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure, or wound someone." - United Nations

Domestic violence affects people of all socioeconomic backgrounds, identities, education levels, and relationship types.

No matter who you are or how you identify, you deserve to be **SAFE, SUPPORTED, and LOVED!**

IF ANY OF THESE STATEMENTS RESONATE WITH YOU, CALL: 800-799-7233 or TEXT: BEGIN to 88788

In a relationship it's important to be aware of each other's mental health and support each other. This can look different depending on the situation & your relationship. Just remember to take care of yourself because you should be supported too. Take care to build a strong support system around you that you can rely on when things get tough.



Talk to an adult and take care of yourself too!

• • •

Listen to them and validate their emotions

Ask them what they need.

• • •

Give them space and let them trust you on their terms

Emergency Resources Recursos de Emergencia

You are not alone.
Usted no está solo.

National Domestic Violence Hotline:

- Text: START to 88788
- Call: 1.800.799.SAFE (7223)
- Chat: live on their website

Jeanne Geiger 24 hour hotline:

- (978)388.1888

Safelink:

- (877).785.2020 (24 hour, multilingual)

HAWC 24-hour Hotline:

- 800-547-1649

Suicide and Crisis Hotline:

- 988 (24 hour, multilingual)

Línea ayuda para sobrevivientes de abuso sexual:

- 800-223-5001

TTY: 1-800-688-4889

Safelink:

- (877).785.2020 (24 horas, plurilingüe)

Línea directa de suicidio y crisis:

- 988 (24 horas, plurilingüe)

Empowerment & Safety

Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center Website

- Get Help Tab
- Get Help For Someone Else Tab
- Youth Empowerment Services

For more information:

- www.JaneDoe.org
- <https://girlshealth.gov/relationships>
- www.thehotline.org

Wayside Youth & Family Support Network:

- www.waysideyouth.org (508.469.3231)

Healing Abuse Working for Change (In-person & Virtual North Shore Services)

- About Domestic Violence Tab
- Services Tab

LGBTQIA+ Information

The Asexual Visibility and Education Network (AVEN)

Aromantic-spectrum Union for Recognition, Education, and Advocacy (AUREA)

The Trevor Project

The Human Rights Campaign Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth



Resource Page

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Get Involved!

**Would you like to become a part of the
Ginsburg Initiative?**

Send an email to **eccswomen2@gmail.com** with your:

- Name and age
 - Anyone between the ages 14-22 can join!
- Town you are from
 - Any resident of Essex County can join!
- Reason of interest
 - Short and sweet - why do you want to be a part of the Ginsburg Initiative?

You will then be interviewed by one of our commissioners and Ginsburg Intern to talk more about your interest in the Initiative.

Commitment

Being a member of the Ginsburg Initiative requires commitment. We meet monthly via Zoom, and have opportunities to meet in person. As a member, you must also commit time to work on projects and communicate with other Ginsburg members between meetings. It is important to consider whether or not you can commit to this before joining. However, all of the work pays off! You will have the opportunity to create connections with other like-minded young women and take real action towards a better future! We hope to see you this fall for the 2025-2026 year!

Closing Message

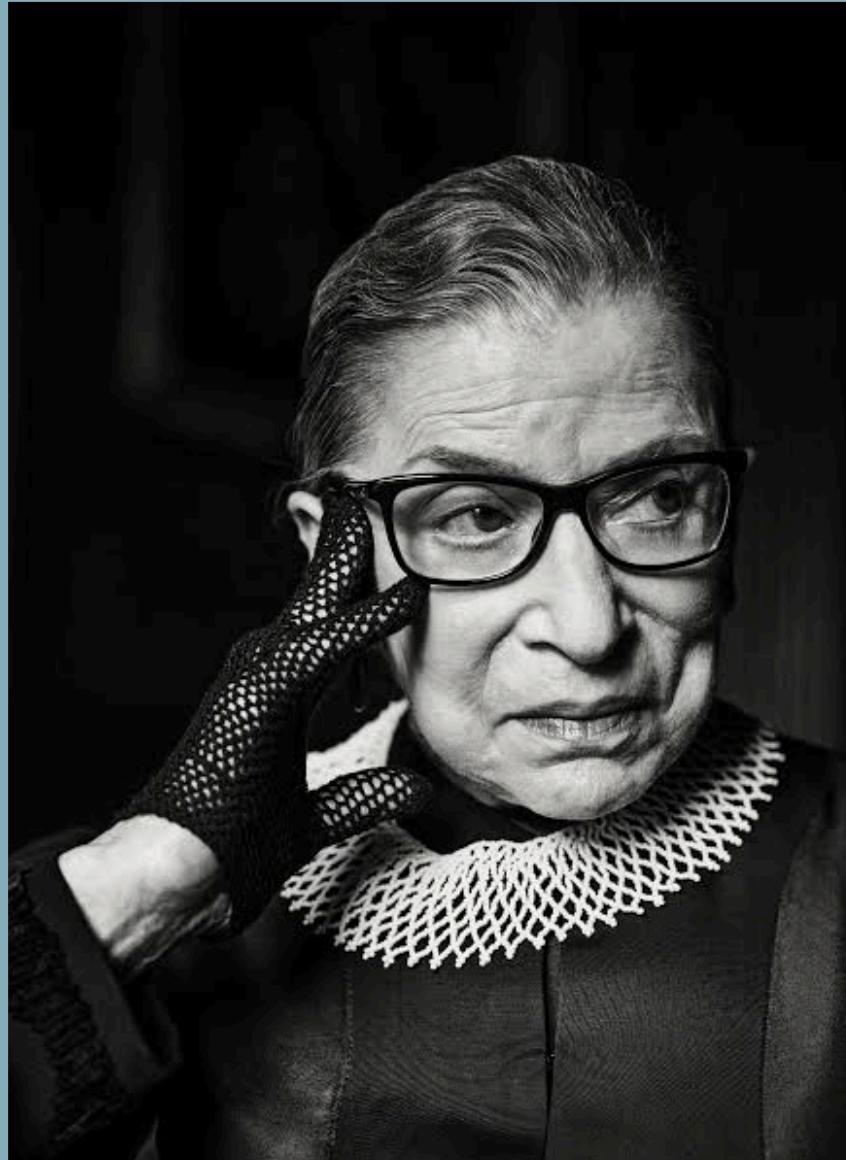
As women, we should lift each other up through education and empowerment. We hope this magazine has done both and brought you comfort and power in knowing what to do in situations, ranging from a period emergency, being at odds with your own body, to navigating relationships.

Being a woman can feel lonely and scary, but you are not alone. WE ARE HERE to help each other stand up and keep pushing forward!

With much love,

The Ginsburg Initiative, 2024-2025

The Ginsburg Initiative



The New Yorker

RUTH BADER GINSBURG

“Fight for the things that you care about. But do it in a way that will lead others to join you.”

— Ruth Bader Ginsburg