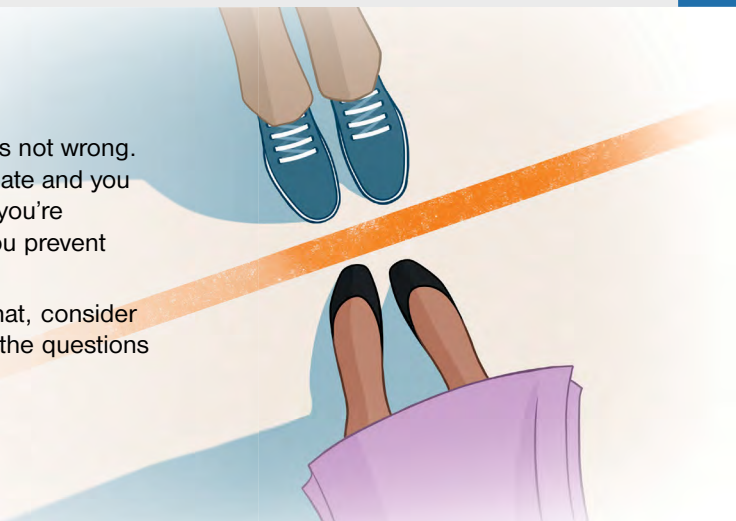


Setting Boundaries

You have friends of the opposite sex, and that's not wrong. But problems will come if you're not ready to date and you inadvertently send signals to one of them that you're interested in more than friendship. How can you prevent that from happening?

The key is to set boundaries. To help you do that, consider the following real-life experiences and answer the questions that follow.



TRUE STORY

“She thought that I had changed my mind”

A young man named Jason had a close friendship with a girl. “We agreed that there was no romantic interest between us,” he says. However, Jason continued texting the girl a lot and seeking out her company. “That was a mistake,” he admits. “She thought that I had changed my mind and that I was leading her on.”

Even though they had already discussed their relationship, why did the girl get the impression that Jason was pursuing her?

What boundaries could Jason have set to protect their friendship *without* sending romantic signals?



“If a girl starts to ‘like’ all my pictures on social media, I get the impression that she has an interest in me.”—Steven.

TRUE STORY

“He said that I played with his emotions”

Annette and a boy started talking—“more than we should have,” she now admits. “I thought he was a good friend. We spent a lot of time together, but I didn’t have a romantic interest in him. I assumed he didn’t have an interest in me either. After a while, he asked me if I wanted to start dating him. When I told him that I viewed him as just a friend, he was upset. He said that I played with his emotions and that I knew what I was doing.”

Do you think the boy was justified in thinking that Annette had feelings for him? Why or why not?



What boundaries could Annette have set to keep this situation from developing?



“There’s a saying, ‘What you allow is what will continue.’ It’s not just leading someone on that can send the wrong message; sometimes just letting someone pursue you will do it.”—Karen.

TRUE STORY

“We were always paired off”

Rachel was getting what she thought were romantic signals from a boy. “Everyone could see that we were always paired off,” she says. “One time he even put his arm around me for several minutes. I assumed that he had feelings for me—but when I asked about our relationship, he told me that he viewed me as just a friend and nothing more!”

Did Rachel have a basis for thinking that the boy was interested in more than friendship? Why or why not?



What boundaries could the boy have set to avoid giving the impression that he wanted more than friendship?



“It may be flattering to have a member of the opposite sex show interest in you, and you may let it go on to keep feeling good about yourself. But it shows maturity to put others’ interests ahead of your own and not risk hurting someone.”
—Brittany.