

Resource for Mentors, Parents,
Educators, and Coaches

Boys & Dating in the Digital Age

1. Overview
2. Digital Content Examples on Dating
3. Mentoring Tipsheet
4. Video Discussion Guide

What messages are boys receiving about romance online?

Boys today don't have to go looking for advice on how to attract girls, it finds them. Through social media algorithms, YouTube recommendations, and podcasts, young boys are regularly exposed to content from the [Manosphere](#) about dating in heterosexual relationships. This advice fills a gap that young boys are genuinely curious about, with often deeply harmful messages about women and relationships.

These messages include:

- **Men should date women:** heterosexual relationships are the hallmark of the manosphere, which implicitly conveys that 'real men' are heterosexual
- **Women are "targets" to be won:** Women are not people to connect with, nor should they have choice. To have sex, men need to manipulate women, such as "negging," or devaluing women in order to seek male validation ([read more](#)).
- **Control & abuse gain status:** Men should be dominant and controlling. They are more valuable and should only date "high value" women. They should punish women's "undesirable behavior" ([read more](#)).
- **Only buff men get women:** Men can achieve heightened status and find "high value partners" by "[looksmaxxing](#)," or dangerously modifying their appearance into an "alpha male": to be ultra-muscular and chiseled.
- **No room for care & empathy:** You're negatively labeled as a "simp," "beta," or "cuck" if you care about women's feelings and needs ([read more](#)). Emotional vulnerability is seen as a weakness.
- **Be an economic provider:** Despite economic opportunity improving for women, men should still be able to provide economically, as opposed to providing care through household duties, childcare, or emotional and cognitive loads. ([read more](#)).



What does the data say?

- » **34% of people aged 18-24 agree** with the statement, "I don't think anyone can fall in love with me." ([Equimundo](#))
- » **Nearly 70% of boys aged 11-14** have been exposed to online content that promotes misogyny. 59% of boys are led to this content through innocent and unrelated searches, due to AI algorithms. ([Vodafone](#))
- » Boys with high exposure to online content about masculinity are **more likely to believe** sharing worries makes them look weak (40% vs. 11%). ([Common Sense Media](#))
- » **33% of Gen Z men say that** a husband should have the final word on important decisions. ([Kings College](#))

If you are concerned about immediate harm to a youth's physical or mental wellbeing, please reach out to a professional using [these resources](#)!

Examples of Dating Advice from the Manosphere

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Pick Up Artists

Promote “quick tips” for boys to attract girls. These rarely include girls’ perspectives, or if they do, they are framed as lying.



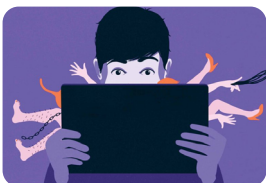
Video Games

Can depict women in hypersexual ways, such as extreme thinness and large breasts, and normalize persistent violence against women. Video games or streaming chat rooms are a frequent location of Manosphere messages about women and dating.



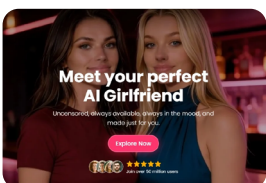
Movies & TV Shows

Stories feature the male hero’s reward as “getting the girl” and where persistence, even after rejection, is framed as romantic rather than disrespectful and even abusive.



Pornography

Porn often reinforces messages that women only exist for men’s pleasure, can contain violent or disturbing images, and imply that consent isn’t important.



AI Dating & Relationships

AI girlfriend apps promote both highly sexualized images of women as well as subservient women who can be trained to do exactly what their predominantly male users want. Candy AI is one of many websites that allow users to customize their girlfriend.

Mentoring Tipsheet

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1

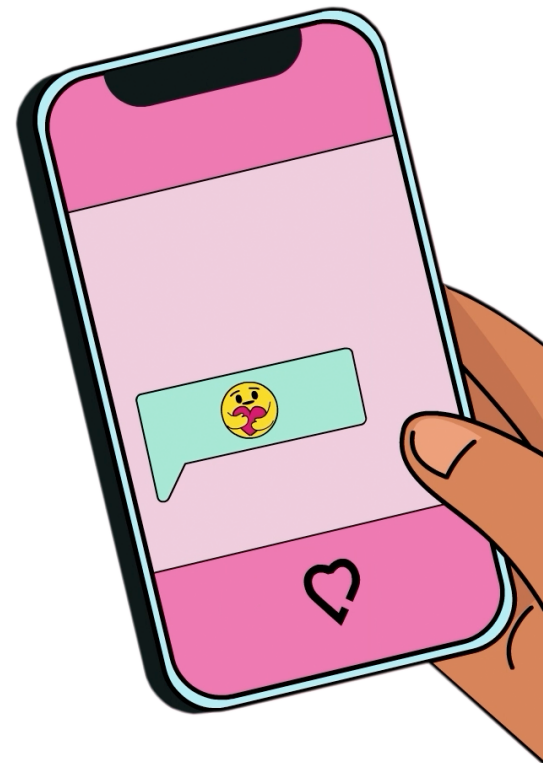
Encourage Boys to Question What They See Online

- Promote critical thinking by asking questions like:
- “What messages does this content communicate about what’s attractive? Do you agree?”
- “Are the online messages about dating and relationships accurate to what you see in your life?”
- “How would you feel if someone treated your sister or friend this way?”

2

Teach Boys Skills to Healthy Skills around Dating, Consent, and Rejection

- **Paying Attention:** Prompt boys to show curiosity about another’s life, listen actively, remember what someone told you last week, ask questions, and don’t interrupt.
- **Finding Common Ground:** Encourage them to notice shared interests, values, or experiences and use those as natural conversation starters
- **Honest Expression:** Help boys push through “cringe” to find words for what they feel, so they don’t rely on mixed signals, showing off, or pulling away when things feel vulnerable.
- **Consent:** Ask boys to consider how the other person is feeling, not just what they want the outcome to be. Remind boys that they not only need to ask for consent, but also give it. Unlike common messages, boys do not always want sex, and should be reminded that they can also give or deny consent.
- **Rejection:** Rejection is normal, but most boys are never taught how to handle it, and as a result are more likely to respond with anger or withdrawal. Help boys understand that rejection is not a reflection of their worth, but instead a signal of the wrong match. It’s equally important to teach boys how to respectfully reject others.



3

Break the “box” that tell boys they need to be an “alpha male”

- Boys can be friends with girls. Being emotional, expressive, and vulnerable are attractive to many women. Being in the “friend zone” or “simping” is not something to be ashamed of. If someone says that’s embarrassing, it’s only because they only value girls for sex and status.
- Treating girls with dignity and respect is the real measure of his character, not proving how much of a man you are.
- Boys are often shamed by peers into staying silent when girls are disrespected. Let boys know that standing up when a friend makes a degrading comment is not weakness, it is exactly the kind of courage that defines a good man.

“How To Get A Girl to Like Me”

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Questions to Spark Reflection and Dialogue with Youth



To watch the video, click the thumbnail or head to:
<https://amaze.org/video/how-to-get-a-girl-to-like-me/>

1. Do you agree with what this video says about flirting and dating?
2. What does it feel like to be genuinely respected in a relationship?
3. Johnny stresses the importance of communication. If you like someone, what makes it hard to tell them or show them?
4. Johnny mentions how important it is to be your authentic self. What parts of yourself do you hide from friends or people you are interested in dating?
5. Besides connection, communication and being yourself, what else do you think would help get a girl to like you?
6. How do you or your friends handle it if someone you're interested in doesn't feel the same way?
7. Do you see dating advice online, and what do you think of it?
8. Is there any dating advice online that you think is disrespectful towards girls, and why?

Wrap Up Points

- 1 A lot of people online say that boys need to be “alphas” in order to be attractive to girls, but that’s not actually what most girls think!
- 2 Finding the right person starts with sharing all of who you are—your passions, your insecurities, and everything in between—and showing you care about learning who they are, too.
- 3 Whenever you hear someone saying something disrespectful about women, like you should only date someone that’s a “high value woman,” call it out if you feel comfortable to do so!

