

2024 Idaho Youth Writing Challenge: Love Language in Healthy Relationships

Submission Guidelines, Awards and Lesson Plan

During February's National Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Month, Idaho middle school/ junior high and high school students are invited to enter the 15th Annual Idaho Youth Writing Challenge. This year's theme is **Love Languages in Healthy Relationships**.

Love languages, or healthy relationship skills, are the ability to build positive, healthy relationships using a variety of approaches, such as open communication, active listening, and healthy boundaries. These skills also include the ability to respond to and resist pressure.

Young people across Idaho have expressed the need for positive messaging about healthy relationships. **Love Languages in Healthy Relationships campaign** strives to meet that need by uplifting positive messaging and promoting skills for healthy relationships.



Writing Prompts! Love language in healthy relationships and this year's writing prompts are:

Open communication is our love language. We trust each other enough to communicate honestly and clearly.

Listening is our love language. We are attentive and actively listen for understanding.

Authenticity is our love language. We openly express our personalities and interests and are encouraged to be ourselves.

Healthy boundaries are our love language. We are clear on our sense of comfort and feel safer when boundaries are respected.

Shared power is our love language. We share decision-making and value each other's perspectives.

Submission Guidelines

Rules: The work submitted must be original work. Writing can be up to 100 words or less (title does not count) of original work related to a prompt. Students can submit up to three original poems or stories. Write in the language in which they can best express themselves.

Who is eligible? Student authors must be in Idaho middle school/junior high school or high school — public, private, alternative school settings, or youth groups — or be a 12- to 18-year-old home schooled student residing in Idaho.

Writing Selection Committee: All of the submissions will be read by adult and youth writers.

Submission Deadline: Friday, March 1st, 2024

How to Submit Your Work:

- 1) Go to www.idahocoalition.org and enter your submission, or
- 2) Mail your writing submission, name, mailing address and email (required for your gift card if you are selected to be published), school name, grade, and teacher's name to the **Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence, Linen Building, 1402 W. Grove Street, Boise, ID 83702**. Only one submission per page.

Questions? For questions, contact Layla at layla@engagingvoices.org at the Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence.

Awards

Author Awards

\$250 cash will be awarded to each of the top 10 selections for middle school/junior high school and the top 10 selections for high school categories. A **\$25** gift card will be awarded to each of the 100 selections for middle school/junior high school and the 100 selections for high school. Be sure to include the student's email on the submission.

All authors selected for publication will also receive a book of the selections to be released in April 2024. All published works will list the author, teacher, and school. A book of the published works will be distributed to Idaho's middle/ junior high school and high school libraries. Make sure your school is represented!



Teacher Stipend

\$50 gift card to each teacher who implements the lesson plan and has more than 10 students who have submitted poems or prose. Confirm implementation of the lesson plan and submission by completing this [form](#) by March 1st.

\$100 gift card to each teacher who has four or more students published in the middle school/ junior high school or high school categories.

Lesson Plan

Preparation

Print the writing prompt themes in the appendix for the students.

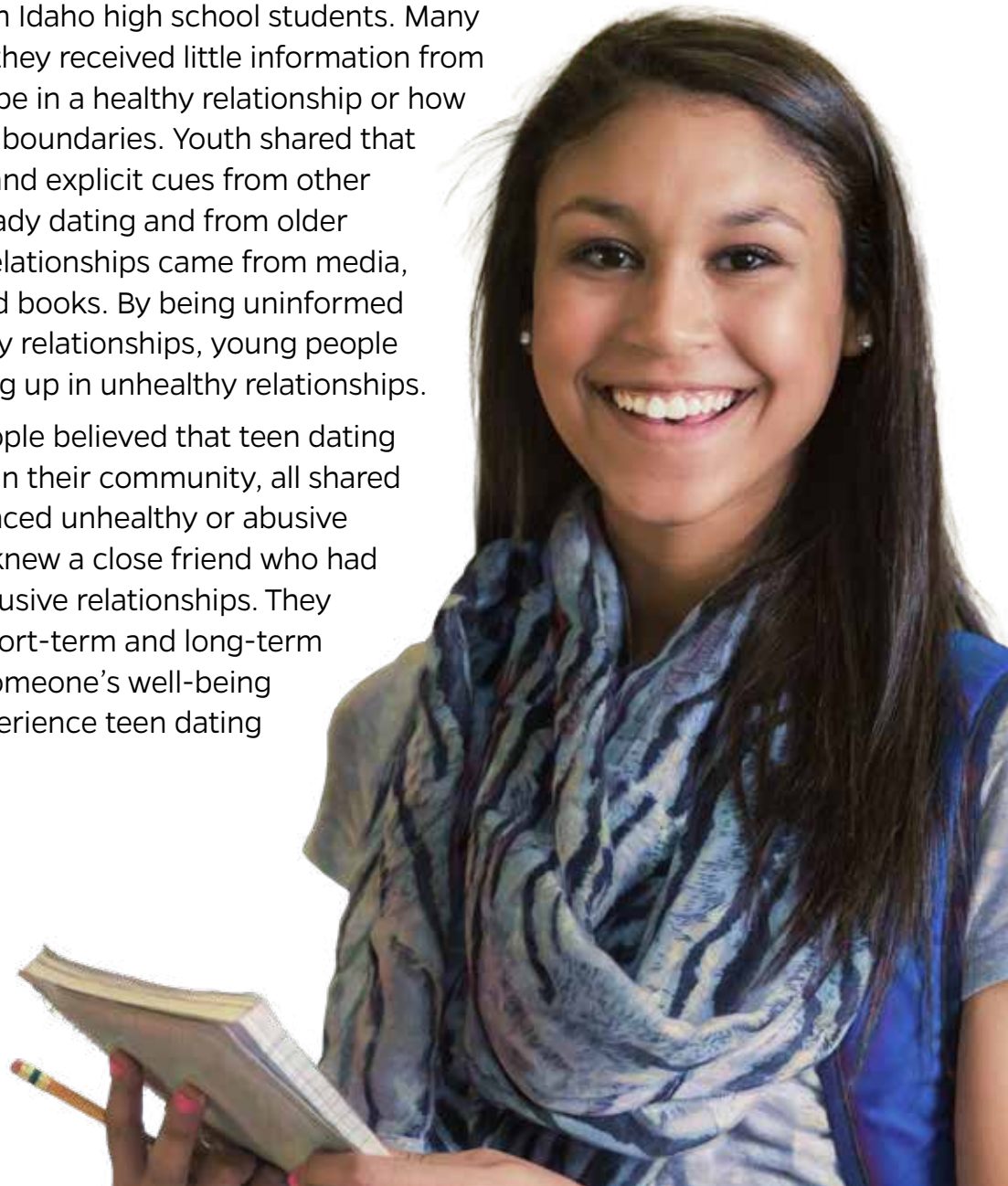
Introduction

Introduce the Idaho Youth Writing Challenge: Love Language in Healthy

Relationships (10 minutes)

In the fall of 2023, the Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence hosted listening sessions with Idaho high school students. Many young people reported that they received little information from trusted adults about how to be in a healthy relationship or how to recognize and set healthy boundaries. Youth shared that they often received implicit and explicit cues from other young people who were already dating and from older youth. Other influences on relationships came from media, such as TV shows, music, and books. By being uninformed or misinformed about healthy relationships, young people were concerned about ending up in unhealthy relationships.

When asked if the young people believed that teen dating violence was a serious issue in their community, all shared that they had either experienced unhealthy or abusive relationships themselves or knew a close friend who had experienced unhealthy or abusive relationships. They understood that there are short-term and long-term negative consequences to someone's well-being and development if they experience teen dating violence or sexual violence.



This year's writing challenge focuses on five of the love languages or skills for healthy relationships. Share the handout with the students.

- **Open communication** is our love language. We trust each other enough to communicate honestly and clearly.
- **Listening** is our love language. We are attentive and actively listen for understanding.
- **Authenticity** is our love language. We openly express our personalities and interests and are encouraged to be ourselves.
- **Healthy boundaries** are our love language. We are clear on our sense of comfort and feel safer when boundaries are respected.
- **Shared power** is our love language. We share decision-making and value each other's perspectives.

Reflective Journaling Activity (15 minutes)

Provide the one-page handout to each student. Begin with small group conversations, then move to journaling.

Triad or Paired Conversations (10 minutes)

Have students talk in small groups about the love languages in healthy relationships, and name the skill they are most energized by and why they think it's important for healthy relationships. (10 minutes)

Journaling (5 minutes)

Ask students to "time travel" to a place or moment when they practiced or weren't able to practice the skill they are interested in writing about or a place or moment where someone successfully or unsuccessfully used the skill in a relationship.

Once they have a moment in mind, ask students to reflect and journal on what they did or didn't do or experience and why they made that choice. What did that feel like? What was the impact on you or the other person? What does it smell, taste, sound, feel, and look like? Specific details are so important!

Poetry or Prose (30 minutes)

Invite the students to write their poems or prose on the skill that they selected. Remind students of the 100-word limit (not including the title). Be descriptive! Students can write in whatever language they are most comfortable with.



Love Languages in Healthy Relationships Writing Prompts

Select one of the **Love Languages in Healthy Relationships** prompts below and write a poem or prose, 100 words or less (title does not count). Write in the language you can best express yourself. Write about a real moment in time in a relationship if you can, or imagine one!

Open communication is our love language. We trust each other enough to communicate honestly and clearly. Write about a time when you and someone else were engaged in open communication. Share how you expressed yourself honestly and clearly. Describe the sensory details: where were you, how did you feel?

Listening is our love language. We are attentive and actively listen for understanding. Write about a time when you were an active listener or when someone actively listened to you. Share how deep listening helped you better understand another person's point of view and develop empathy. Describe the impact on you and the other person.

Authenticity is our love language. We openly express our personalities and interests and are encouraged to be ourselves. Write about a time when you were unapologetically yourself. Write about what makes you, you! Describe how being yourself while in a relationship can create a sense of trust.

Healthy boundaries are our love language. We are clear on our sense of comfort and feel safer when boundaries are respected. Write about a time when you set a healthy boundary in a relationship. What you need to feel comfortable, safe, and respected. Share how you felt before the conversation and after. Were you validated and understood?

Shared power is our love language. We share decision-making and value each other's perspectives. Write about a time in a relationship when you shared in decision-making or felt free to express yourself even knowing there was disagreement. Write about a time you shared your perspective or opinion and it was respected and valued. Describe the moment and how you felt, and the impact on the relationship.

Author Awards: \$250 cash awarded to each of the top 10 selections for middle school/junior high school and the top 10 selections for high school categories. A **\$25** gift card will be awarded to each of the 100 selections for middle school/junior high school and the 100 selections for high school. Be sure to include your name, email, school, grade, and teacher on the submission. All authors selected for publication will also receive a book of the selections to be released in April 2024. A book of the published works will be distributed to published authors and Idaho's middle/ junior high school and high school libraries.

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Questions? For questions, contact Layla at layla@engagingvoices.org at the Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence. www.idahocoalition.org

National Hotline Numbers

National Dating Abuse Helpline – 1-866-331-9474 or www.loveisrespect.org to chat online

National Suicide Hotline – 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or 988 or Crisis Text Line (text HELLO to 741741)

National Sexual Assault Hotline – 1-833-656-HOPE (4673) Trevor Project (LGBTQIA Youth) – 1-866-488-7386