

A STREETWISE GUIDE TO GOING ON A DATE

Can bullying happen here?

A girl is on a date with a boyfriend: they meet up with his friends who want to go to a party. She is not happy about going, but her boyfriend persuades her.

Is she likely to enjoy herself once they arrive?

No she will be worried and annoyed with herself and her boyfriend. It would be better to make an excuse. Her date should not pressurise her. Why should she do what she does not want to do?

There is no-one she knows at the party except her boyfriend. They dance and kiss. He starts to get pushy and wants to go further. She is not enjoying it and says she wants to go home. He says she is making a fuss about nothing and should relax. Is he right?

No. How can she relax when she is anxious and worried? At the moment he is making her feel awful, even if he does not mean to. It is her date too and he should agree to take her home.

She insists on going. He is annoyed and thinks his mates will laugh at him. Will they? How should he react?

They will probably only laugh if he makes a big deal out of having to leave. He should just say 'we are going now' and leave. It is not fair to be annoyed with his date. She did not want to go there in the first place.

They finally leave the party and wait ages for the bus, not talking. Then he starts kissing her again. She likes him but feels nervous after the bad evening. What should she do?

Tell him firmly that he is making her uncomfortable, and explain why. He is going to be grown up enough to see her point of view.

This is not a successful date, but it is not an unusual one either. These two people really like each other, yet the boy spent most of the time persuading the girl to do things she did not want to do. He made her frightened and upset. He put her under pressure to give in to him. All of which add up to bullying.

It can happen the other way round too: it is not always the boy putting on the pressure. Two people on a date are equals. They are both entitled to feel good about what they do.

Things both partners should ask themselves . . .

1. Am I still enjoying the date?
2. Is the other person still enjoying the date?

3. Are we both relaxed and in control?

If you ever feel threatened or afraid on a date, do not hang about. Stop what is going on and GET AWAY FAST.

Make sure you know how to get home. If you are getting a lift, who are you going with? Always set aside enough money for a taxi. Have the phone number of a taxi company you know and trust with you. If you want to get away you can book a taxi to come and pick you up. If you do book a taxi give your name and ask the taxi driver to quote it when he or she arrives. Then you can be sure that the taxi is genuinely the one you ordered.

Date hates

Being pushed into situations.

If you are being asked to go to a party, event or activity you do not like the sound of, make an excuse and stick to it.

Being touched where you do not want to be touched.

Make it clear that you do not like it. If it continues, get away.

Hearing things you do not want to hear.

Tell your date it is boring and change the subject.

Being deliberately got on your own.

Keep it public. If it does happen, do not be afraid to shout loudly. It gives you the advantage. Then get back to the crowd.

Your date is acting as if you owe them something.

Ignore it. You do not owe anyone anything. If your date seems to think that paying for you 'buys' them something, tell them they are wrong. Avoid any more misunderstandings by going halves.