

Q

My friend is dating a boy seriously and I know some disturbing things about the boy's family. Should I keep it to myself, or should I call my friend?

A

Permission to reveal information about a boy's family when not specifically asked would depend on whether that issue has significantly affected the boy or will significantly affect the marriage. Otherwise, it would be considered a minor flaw and should be disclosed only if you are asked directly. Because so many variables are involved, a shailah must be asked.

These shailos and teshuvos are for the sole purpose of opening the eyes of the reader to the many complex shailos that may arise during the course of a shidduch. A specific and personal question should always be asked to a Rav or Posek.

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To ask a shaila to a Rav by phone please call the Shmiras Halashon Shaila Hotline from 9:00 to 10:30 pm EST at 718.951.3696

Master the Halacha

Certain statements are loshon hora when said regarding one person, yet are perfectly acceptable when said regarding someone else. For example, to say that a businessman studies Torah five hours a day is obviously not derogatory. However, to say this of a kollel member who is assumed to be spending his entire day engrossed in Torah study would be derogatory. Similarly, it would be forbidden to relate the amount of tzedakah given by an individual, if that amount is considered respectable only for a man of lesser means.

[There may be factors which would prohibit relating such information even when it is clearly complimentary. For example, people who give charity generously often do not want that fact to become public knowledge.]

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