

SAFER SEX

Lesson 1

GRADE

9

LEARNER OUTCOME¹ W-9.12:

Determine “safer” sex practices; e.g., communicate with partner, maintain abstinence, limit partners, access/use condoms/contraceptives properly.



MATERIALS:

1. **SLIDE: Types of Communication**
2. **CARDS: Communication Scenarios**
3. **HANDOUT: Health Services Detective**



INTRODUCTION:

Abstaining from sexual activity that involves exchange of bodily fluids and/or genital-to-genital and/or skin to genital contact is the only sure way of avoiding the risk of pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections (STI). Safer sex practices are included in instruction for those students who may not choose abstinence. Postponement of initial sexual activity, adherence to one sexual partner and protected sexual intercourse are sequentially offered as the next best alternatives². The programs that are most effective in helping young people to abstain involve education about abstinence, contraception and sexual health decision-making³. This lesson focuses on identifying the consequences of sexual involvement and various “safer sex” practices. Students identify passive, aggressive and assertive communication, and practice assertive communication skills.



APPROACHES/STRATEGIES:

A. GROUND RULES (5-10 min)

Ensure ground rules are established before beginning this lesson. For classes that have already established ground rules, quickly reviewing them can promote a successful lesson.

B. “SAFER” SEX DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (5-10 min)

Students examine the term “safer” sex and brainstorm consequences of sexual activity as well as “safer” sex practices.

1. Why do we use the term “safer” sex instead of “safe” sex?
 - Abstinence, or abstaining from any intimate sexual behaviour involving skin to genital, genital to genital or body fluid to genital contact, is the only 100% safe sexual behaviour. Any form of sexual contact includes risk. Pregnancy can occur without intercourse if sperm is ejaculated near the entrance of the vagina. STI such as genital herpes and HPV can be passed through skin to skin or skin to genital contact.
2. What are some consequences associated with involvement in a sexual relationship?
 - Possible consequences include exposure to an STI and/or HIV, pregnancy, and emotional impacts.
3. What are some “safer” sex practices that become a person’s responsibility when involved in a sexual relationship?
 - Communicate assertively with partner.
 - Maintain abstinence or postpone sexual activity.
 - Limit partners.
 - Access and use condoms/contraceptives properly and consistently.

C. EXAMINING ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION⁶ (20-25 min)

Students identify passive, aggressive and assertive communication, and practice assertive communication skills.

1. Display the slide: **Types of Communication.** Review it with students, and ask students to provide examples of passive, assertive and aggressive behaviours. Point out that people do not communicate using just one of these styles. They



More than half of Canadian youth 15–19 years of age are not sexually active⁴.



Many teens believe that oral sex is “safer” and without risks. STIs such as genital herpes, gonorrhea, HIV and syphilis can be transmitted orally⁵. It is important to consider the consequences of oral sex. When a male receives oral sex, he can wear a condom to provide GOOD protection from STIs for himself and his partner. When a female receives oral sex, she can make an oral dam by cutting a condom lengthwise (and placed over the vulva) which can be used to provide GOOD protection from STIs for herself and her partner.

can combine or change styles depending on the situation and/or person that they are interacting with e.g. Jennifer can be assertive with her best friend whom she is very comfortable with, whereas she may be aggressive with someone that she does not like or respect.

2. Form student groups of 2-3 students.
3. Give each group a **Communication Scenario Card**. Instruct groups to read the scenario and provide a written answer to the questions provided.
4. Have each group pair up with another group. Groups can share their scenarios and answers and verify the responses. If there is time, students can role play practicing assertive behaviour using the responses that have been written.
5. Debrief using the following questions:
 - What type of communication is most effective in solving difficulties within relationships?
 - Why don't the other forms of communication work as well?
 - What are the best examples of assertive communication from each combined group? (Have students read the scenario and the response.)
6. Encourage students to reflect upon the type of communication that best represents their own behaviour and think about ways to use assertive communication within their relationships.

D. HEALTH SERVICES DETECTIVE

Students identify community-based resources where they can go to get tested and obtain information about contraception. You can refer to Community Agencies on our Teacher Portal.

1. Distribute the handout: **Health Services Detective**.
2. Invite students to complete this assignment at home with a parent or guardian.
3. Be sure to debrief this activity with discussion next class.



People in any type of relationship can experience healthy and unhealthy forms of communication. This does not apply only to intimate relationships.



Culture, life experiences, gender, and family beliefs all influence our communication styles. Although assertiveness is regarded as the healthiest and most direct form of communication, in some situations it could put the person at risk (i.e. in a culture where the female is taught to accept unconditionally the authority of the male or the parent). Students should understand they need to choose the style that is best for them in any particular situation.



Teachers with students who may be more likely to engage in risky sexual behaviour need to emphasize the importance of community support networks. You may want to consider turning this activity into a field trip during which you visit agencies in your community.



QUESTION BOX (10 min)

Have students fill out questions and address them next class.



TAKE IT HOME

Students will complete the handout **Health Services Detective**.



Keep in mind that all students do not live in a “traditional” family nor do they have equal opportunities for open discussion within their “family”. Although it is best for students to complete this assignment with a supportive parent or guardian, it may not be possible. Be sensitive to the needs of your students.



SELF REFLECTION

During the lesson, were:

- Ground rules being followed?
- Good practices established regarding group work and discussion?

What will you change for future classes with this group?

What will you change for future use of this lesson?



STUDENT ASSESSMENT

During the lesson, did students:

Knowledge:

- Define safer sex?
- Identify some consequences associated with involvement in a sexual relationship?
- Identify passive, aggressive and assertive communication, and practice assertive communication skills?

Skills:

- Use assertiveness skills to deal with difficulties in relationships?

Attitudes:

- Accept the need for safer sex practices?

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 3. SIECCAN. (2010). *Sexual health education in the schools: questions and answers (3rd ed.)*. Retrieved from http://www.sieccan.org/pdf/she_q&a_3rd.pdf
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 5. Public Health Agency of Canada. (2013). *Sexually transmitted infections*. Retrieved from http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/std-mts/pdf/sti_pamph_e.pdf
 6. Adapted from: Canadian Federation for Sexual Health. (2005). *Beyond the basics: A sourcebook on sexuality and reproductive health education*. Ottawa: Author

TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

ASSERTIVE:

- stand up for their rights without denying other people theirs
- respect themselves as well as others
- ask for what they want in a straightforward manner
- express their emotions(both positive and negative) in a healthy manner

PASSIVE:

- give in and say yes even when they don't want to
- put the feelings and concerns of others before their own
- keep their concerns to themselves

AGGRESSIVE:

- think of themselves first, at the expense of others
- dominate others
- use threats or force

Adapted from: Canadian Federation for Sexual Health. (2005). *Beyond the basics: A sourcebook on sexuality and reproductive health education*. Ottawa: Author

SCENARIO 1

John feels like spending the evening with his friends. Randy prefers to spend a quiet evening watching movies with him. Randy is very disappointed at the thought of spending this Saturday evening without John.

How will Randy express the disappointment to John using:

Passive communication?

Aggressive communication?

Assertive communication?

SCENARIO 2

Mary's had a crush on Christopher for several weeks. She finds him very good looking as well as friendly and sociable. Everyday they travel to school together. She would like to ask him out one evening and tell him how she feels.

How will she do this using:

Passive communication?

Aggressive communication?

Assertive communication?

SCENARIO 3

Helen decides to wear a mini-skirt on a hot summer day. Steven finds it a bit too short and tells her that she should change.

How will Helen respond to Steven using:

Passive communication?

Aggressive communication?

Assertive communication?

SCENARIO 4

Silve and Mark have been going out for several months. They are talking about the day they plan to have sex for the first time. Silve explains that they will have to use a condom. Mark insists that there is no danger of any sexually transmitted infections (STI).

How would Silve react to this using:

Passive communication?

Aggressive communication?

Assertive communication?

SCENARIO 5

Simon asks his girlfriend Marlene to sleep over knowing that her parents will refuse.

How might Marlene react to Simon when confronted with the situation using:

Passive communication?

Aggressive communication?

Assertive communication?

Student name: _____

Parent/Guardian Support: _____

HEALTH SERVICES DETECTIVE

Suppose your best friend told you that s/he was thinking about becoming sexually active and needed to get some advice about contraception. Where would you suggest your friend go for help? Fill out the handout with information from a clinic in your community. If possible, ask your parent or guardian for advice on to where to go.

1. Name of clinic:

2. Address and phone number of clinic:

3. Clinic hours:

4. The following services are available at this clinic:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Birth control | <input type="checkbox"/> STI testing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Condom distribution | <input type="checkbox"/> STI treatment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy tests | <input type="checkbox"/> HIV testing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prenatal care | <input type="checkbox"/> HIV counselling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other agency referrals | <input type="checkbox"/> Support groups |

5. What's the clinic's policy on confidentiality?

6. Would you visit this clinic for a physical examination or consultation about contraception? Write 2-4 sentences telling why or why not.