

Rvsd January 2017



Sexual Risks and Low-Risk Intimacy

Lesson Goals

Identify Risky Situations
Identify Ways to Lower the Risk Level of Sexual Intimacy
Make Responsible Decisions in Sexual Relationships
Communicate Assertively in Sexual Relationships

SEL Skills Addressed

Self-management
Relationships skills
Responsible decision-making

Terms Used

Oral, Anal, Vaginal Sex
Sexual Activity
High-risk and low-risk behavior
Physical Risk
Social Risk
Emotional Risk
Spiritual Risk

Materials: Folders, Journals, *Risky Behavior* cards and signs,

Note to teacher: Some students struggle to understand the difference between the risk levels “**can raise the risk**” and “**high risk.**” Use the example of not standing up for oneself: although it can be risky, it does not put someone at immediate risk of contracting an STI. However, it can raise that person’s risk of contracting an STI.

Activity 1: Discuss Journal Reflections

~The purpose of this activity is to reflect on information taught in the previous lesson and discuss the benefits of choosing not to participate in sexual behavior as a teenager

1. Discuss the benefits to choose not to participate in sexual behavior as a teenager. (Physical, Social, Emotional, Spiritual)
2. Why is it difficult for some teens to postpone participating in sexual behaviors ?

Activity 2: Expression of Sexual Feelings Continuum

~ The purpose of this activity is to describe and discuss a continuum of ways to express sexual feelings and to determine which are appropriate for teens and which are inappropriate for teens

Read the following story to students:

Chris and Pat just met at a party. From the moment they started talking to each other, they felt a special connection. They spent the whole night talking, laughing, dancing, and enjoying each other's company. Neither one wanted to leave the other. When the party was over, they made plans to spend more time together. As they left the party, both wondered what would happen

Ask Students: What could happen next in this relationship?

Point out that in this story, Chris and Pat are clearly attracted to each other, this attraction might include sexual feelings.

Tell students that sexual feelings are normal and a natural part of being attracted to someone. State that people often find sexual feelings exciting and enjoyable.

Explain that sexual feelings don't have to be expressed at all or that they can be expressed independently (masturbation) or with the person to whom one is sexually attracted.

Draw a line on the white board to represent a continuum of ways to express sexual feelings. **Explain** that a continuum represents a range between two opposite points.

At one end of the line, **write** "No Expression of Sexual Feelings," and at the other end, **write**, "Sexual Intercourse."



**No Expression
of Sexual Feelings**

**Sexual
Intercourse**

Sexual Expression Continuum

- Where would holding hands fall on the continuum?
- How about giving someone flowers?

Tell students they will now work in groups to help fill in the continuum's range of possible ways to express sexual feelings.

Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4. Ask students to identify ways to express sexual feelings and to write each behavior on a Post-it note. Each post-it note is to contain only one behavior.

Point out that some of the forms of sexual expression do not include physical contact with the other person to whom one is attracted - for example, a love letter. Ask students to include nonphysical as well as physical expressions of sexual feelings.

Give students a few minutes to generate a range of behaviors. As the students to post the behaviors they identified in the appropriate place along the continuum. Point out that the most physically intimate behaviors go to the right.

Once each group has had a chance to place their identified behaviors on the continuum and the rest of the class has had a chance to read them, reconvene the class and ask the following questions.

Do you think the behaviors are in the appropriate places? If not, how and why should they be moved on the continuum?

Should any behaviors be added?

Do you think the way sexual feelings are expressed should relate to the degree of commitment the couple shares?

How do the possible physical and emotional risks or consequences of behaviors change as a person moves to the right end of the continuum?

What do people need to think about when deciding how to comfortably express their sexual feelings in a relationship?

Activity 3: Risky Activities (25 minutes)

~ The purpose of this activity is to develop strategies for assessing and reducing risks in expressing sexual feelings

Explain that although physical expressions of sexual feelings are meant to be pleasurable and enjoyable, they carry tremendous risk for teens. Knowing how to assess and reduce risks is an important component of sexual health and over-all well-being.

Divide students into four groups. Assign each group one of the dimensions of sexual health (physical, social, emotional, spiritual). Read the first scenario and analyze the risks through the lens of their specific dimension of sexual health.

Examples of Risks

Physical (pregnancy, STI)

Social (breaks up relationship, may harm your reputation)

Emotional (puts tremendous emotional pressure on a relationship, feelings of confusion)

Spiritual (may go against your moral values resulting in feelings of shame and guilt)

Risk to STI Transmission: Place the “High Risk,” “Some Risk,” “Low to No Risk,” and “Can Raise the Risk” signs along the top of the board, and leave space between them for behavior cards that students may be unsure where to place. Explain to the group that you are going to discuss the risks that accompany different behaviors.

Hand out all the Risky Behavior cards and small pieces of tape. Have the students go up and place each card under the appropriate level of risk. Acknowledge that it is OK to put a behavior card between two of the signs.

Once students have made their decisions, go over each of the behaviors. You may need to define behaviors as you go. Be prepared to move the behaviors depending on other factors that you and the group may want to add (partner tested negative for STI’s, etc.)

Be sure to mention that some behaviors would need to be moved depending on which risk was being discussed (e.g., while unprotected oral sex carries only some risk for many STIs, it carries high risk for gonorrhea, syphilis, herpes, and hepatitis B).

Process Questions

- 1 Why is it important to know the risks that certain behaviors have?
- 2 What can people do to reduce their risk?
3. What could people do if they thought that one or more of their behaviors might have put them at risk? If someone wanted to get tested, where could they go?
4. What advice could you give to a friend who was engaging in risky behavior?

Activity 4: Risk Perception Scenarios (5 minutes)

~ The purpose of this activity is to help students identify risky situations

Read the following scenario to your students:

“I get straight As and I am the president of my school council. In my spare time, I volunteer at a home for senior citizens. I love my partner very much, and I know my partner loves me. We have been dating for a year and having sex for about 6 months. I know all about protection and I am committed to using protection with my partner. I have dated other people in the past but never had sex before.”

Ask students for their perceptions of this character. Then have students assess this character’s risk level using their assigned dimension of sexual health.

Read this follow-up scenario with more information about the same character:

“On weekends, I get drunk and sometimes have sex without using protection. I had oral sex with two of my past partners, but I don’t consider it sex, so I never mentioned it to my current partner. Even though we’re in love, my partner got drunk and had sex with somebody else last month. It was a really horrible time for us, but I decided to forgive my partner and pretend like it never happened so we could move on.”

Ask students to assess the character’s risk level again to see if there are any changes in their thinking.

Process Questions

1. Why is it important to have good communication skills in a relationship?
2. Even when a person thinks they are in a committed relationship with good communication, why is it still important to consistently use protection?
3. Is it easy or hard to demand the use of protection or refuse unprotected sex if a person is in a committed relationship? Why?
4. Given all you now know about this student, how sexually healthy is he/she? Explain.

NOTE: Look for an understanding of the different dimensions involved in overall sexual health and well-being. Stress good decision making in each of these dimensions.

Activity 5: “Can Raise the Risk”

Identify the physical, social, emotional and spiritual risks identified by students. Ask students to identify specific behaviors that **“can raise the risk”** for potential harm to overall sexual health. This conversation should focus on those behaviors that can lead to risky behavior.

Some examples should include:

Drinking alcohol or using drugs
One-night stand
Abusive relationship
Peer pressure
Not speaking up for yourself
Dishonest communication
Dating an older partner
Not being clear about your sexual boundaries

Process Questions

1. Why is it important to know the risks that certain behaviors have?
2. What can people do to reduce their risk?
3. Is it easy or hard to demand the use of protection or refuse unprotected sex if a person is in a committed relationship? Why?
4. What advice could you give to a friend who was engaging in risky behavior?
5. What advice could you give to a friend who was engaging in behaviors that can raise their risk of harming their sexual health?

NOTE: Look for an understanding all all the different dimensions involved in overall sexual health and well-being. Stress good decision-making in each of these dimensions.

Additional Activity - Carousel Activity:

~The purpose of this activity is to review the concepts of sexual health and to have students consider the social, emotional, and spiritual consequences of participating in sexual behaviors as a teen

Remind students that sex can be a wonderful experience under the right circumstances:

Maturity
Love and Intimacy
Commitment
Marriage

Having sex at a young age can present all sorts of risks - some more obvious than others. Using the Wellness Hexagon - explain that overall health and well-being encompasses several categories. Explain the different dimensions of wellness.

Intellectual - Expand your knowledge; improve skills, use human learning resources

Physical - gain health related fitness; participate in physical activity; avoid unhealthy habits & practices

Social - Connect with others; pursue family harmony; contribute to the human & physical environment for community benefit

Emotional - Manage your feelings and behavior, assess limitations, develop autonomy and cope with stress

Spiritual - Explore the meaning and purpose of human existence; appreciate the depth and expanse of life and natural forces

Occupational/Leisure

Write the words Physical - Social - Emotional - Spiritual on Newsprint around the room. Put students in small groups and assign each group to one of the dimensions of wellness (newsprint). Remind students that in this class - we have learned about some of the physical consequences to choosing to have sex. Have them think about what they have learned about the teen-age brain. Challenge them to think of other consequences. Include physical - but consider the other dimensions of wellness. What are some of the Social - Emotional - and Spiritual consequences of having sex at a young age?

Give them a few minutes and then rotate the groups to the next source (newsprint). Tell students to add to the signs (not to repeat messages that are already listed). Continue until everyone has had an opportunity to visit all five wellness dimensions. Rotate them around the room one more time so they can have an opportunity to read what other students had written for each source.

Physical

Social

Emotional

Spiritual

Teacher's Notes: