

Grade 8

Responsibilities & Choices



Learner Outcomes

W-8.12 Identify and describe the responsibilities and consequences associated with involvement in a sexual relationship

W-8.1 Examine the relationship between choices and resulting consequences

This lesson addresses all of the specific outcomes listed above. Instruction in human sexuality (***bolded and italicized*** outcomes) requires schools to provide notice to parents about the learning outcomes, topics and resources.

How To Use

This lesson plan contains several activities to achieve the learner outcomes above. You may choose to do some or all of the activities, based on the needs of your students and the time available. Some of the activities build on the ones that come before them, but all can be used alone.

For a quick lesson, combine activities A, B and D.

Classroom Activities & Timing

- A. Ground Rules (5-10 minutes)
- B. Sexual Relationships Brainstorm (20-30 minutes)
- C. Risks and Risk Reduction (15-20 minutes)
- D. Question Box (5-10 minutes)

Required Materials

Index cards or slips of heavy paper

HANDOUT: Sexual Relationships

Background Information for Teachers

Choosing to become sexually active involves responsibility and possible consequences. Thinking about the responsibilities, choices and consequences helps students make healthy decisions around sexual relationships. Consent is the foundation of sexual relationships and is needed for every sexual activity, every time. It is important to acknowledge that not all students are or will be in heterosexual relationships. Therefore, it is important to ensure that students who identify as LGBTQ2S+ are represented in the scenarios and examples used.

Inclusive Language

Language is complex, evolving, and powerful. In these lessons, [inclusive language](#) is used to include all students, including those with diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. This includes the use of ‘they’ as a singular gender-neutral pronoun.

A person’s sex can be assigned at birth as male or female. Some people are intersex (the reproductive, sexual, or genetic biology of a person is unclear, not exclusively male or female or otherwise does not fit within traditional definitions of male or female). Assigned sex is independent of gender.

Gender identity is a person’s internal sense of identity as girl/woman, boy/man, fluid among genders or no gender (regardless of what sex they were assigned at birth).

For many people, their gender is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth (cisgender). For others, their gender identity is different from the sex they were assigned at birth. They may use terms like transgender, trans, non-binary, gender fluid, gender queer, agender or others, to describe their gender identity. The umbrella term ‘trans’ is primarily used here, to describe people whose gender identity and sex assigned at birth differ. While this umbrella term does not fit everyone, the intention is to be inclusive as possible.

A. Ground Rules

Ensure [ground rules](#) are established before beginning this lesson. For classes that have already established ground rules, quickly reviewing them can help ensure a successful lesson.

B. Sexual Relationships Brainstorm

Students identify various activities or behaviours that may occur within a relationship and identify various responsibilities and consequences associated with involvement in a sexual relationship.

There is a continuum of various activities/behaviours between total abstinence and sex, many of which the students will have identified. Each person will place "sexual involvement" at a different place along the continuum. For example, while one person might consider touching one another beneath clothing sexual involvement, another may not. This is normal because we each have different set of values, life experiences and cultural context.

1. Ask students to brainstorm activities/behaviours that are part of being involved in a dating relationship with someone. Provide them with some examples to clarify (e.g., notes/emails, hand holding, kissing, texting, dreaming about the future).
2. Ask students to brainstorm some ways that people express themselves sexually, in addition to sex (e.g., massage, caress, kiss, etc.). Write each suggestion on the board or a flip chart paper where everyone can see it. Ensure the list contains oral sex, hand/digital sex, anal sex, and vaginal sex.
3. Share with the class that for the purposes of discussion safer sex, the definition of sexual activity will be anytime one person's body is coming into contact with the genital or anal area of someone else's body.
4. As a class, circle each item on the master list that meets the definition of sexual activity.
5. Have a student volunteer write each circled activity in large print on a separate index card or piece of paper. The cards will be used in Activity C. If you do not intend to complete Activity C, skip this step.
6. Divide the class into small groups.
7. Give each group the **Sexual Relationships** handout. Ask groups to brainstorm a list of responsibilities and a list of consequences associated with sexual activity and record them on the handout. Answers for responsibilities may include:
 - prevent STIs
 - prevent pregnancy
 - purchase condoms
 - go to the doctor for birth control
 - get STI testing
 - ask for and get consent, accept no
 - talk to partner about boundaries and sexual historyAnswers for consequences may include:
 - STIs or worry about STIs
 - pregnancy or worry about pregnancy
 - closer relationship with partner
 - feeling attractive or better about self

- worries about reputation, parental disapproval or guilt
8. After sufficient time, call the class back together and have groups share their lists, compiling a master list on the board or flipchart.

C. Risks and Risk Reduction

Students determine which activities and behaviours are a risk for STIs or unintended pregnancy, and actions that can reduce the risk. This activity uses materials created in Activity B above.

1. Write a chart like this on the board.

Activity	Risk	Reduce Risk

2. Using the set of cards created in the activity **Sexual Relationships Brainstorm** (Activity B above), ask students to determine if each of the activities would place a person at risk for pregnancy or an STI. If so, place the card beneath the **Activity** heading. Space the cards out so there will be room to write multiple lines in the **Reduce Risk** column later.
3. Next to each card, under the **Risks** column, write *Pregnancy* and/or *STI Transmission* as applicable.
4. In the third column, ask students to name any actions they could take to reduce the risks of pregnancy and/or STI transmission, as applicable.
5. At the end of the activity, the class will have a chart that looks something like this (but with more rows):

Activity	Risk	Reduce Risk
Vaginal Sex	<i>Pregnancy</i> <i>STI Transmission</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Use birth control</i> • <i>Abstinence</i> • <i>Use condoms</i> • <i>Communicate with partner about protection, boundaries, testing</i> • <i>Abstinence</i> • <i>Vaccinations</i> • <i>STI Testing/treatment</i>

Oral Sex	<i>STI transmission</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Use condoms and/or dental dams</i> • <i>Communicate with partner about protection, boundaries, testing</i> • <i>Abstinence</i> • <i>Immunization</i> • <i>STI Testing/treatment</i>
----------	-------------------------	--

6. Debrief this activity using the following questions.

- How does looking at the consequences and ways to reduce risk associated with sexual relationships affect the decisions someone might make about becoming sexually involved?
- When do the responsibilities associated with being in a sexual relationship begin?

D. Question Box

Answer any questions from the [question box](#) in the previous lesson. Have students submit any new questions and address them next class.

Addressing the questions at the next class allows you time to review the questions and prepare responses.

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 involvement in a sexual relationship?
- identify responsibilities and consequences associated with sexual relationships?
- determine what types of sexual relationships would place a person at risk for an STI or unintended pregnancy?

Attitudes:

- accept the importance of behaving responsibly when becoming sexually involved?

Sexual Relationships: Responsibilities

As a group, list all the **responsibilities** of sexual activity you can think of.

Sexual Relationships: Consequences

As a group, list all the **consequences** of sexual activity you can think of.