

Best Practices in STD/HIV and Pregnancy Prevention Curriculum Summary

Lesson 1- Talking about Sexual Health

The first lesson sets the stage for building a safe, trusting environment for students to learn about sexual health. After an icebreaker and setting group agreements, the students define sexual terms and play an interactive trivia game that introduces them to the topics addressed in the program. The lesson concludes with an introduction to the anonymous question box.

Lesson 2- Achieving Your Goals and Aspirations

Students begin the lesson by reflecting on their future goals and discussing, through a group activity, the various messages they receive around sex. Through a mini-lecture (with optional video or article), students learn how the brain functions and may impact sexual risk taking and decision-making. They then take the information they have learned and apply it to a scenario, *Maria's Dilemma*, and complete a reflection of applying the lesson to their own life.

Lesson 3- Effective Communication

This lesson builds communication skills in order to stick with one's personal boundaries. After identifying the characteristic of passive, aggressive and assertive communication styles, students listen to three versions of a role play and discuss which was most effective. Finally, students work in pairs to write responses to pressure lines that may challenge boundaries.

Lesson 4- Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Students participate in an activity that demonstrates how easily an STD can spread and how abstinence and condoms can lower the risk for an STD transmission. By watching a video and taking a quiz, students clarify STD myths and facts. In small groups or pairs, they research and report out on the facts about common STDs. Using reliable sources on STDs, students compare signs and symptoms; whether the STDs are viral, bacterial or parasite; list ways to prevent STDs; and identify testing and treatment information and resources.

Lesson 5- What's the risk?

Through a role-play story, students explore responsibility for communicating about and preventing STDs and the importance of getting regular testing. Students identify and categorize the sexual behaviors and attitudes that put a person at risk for an STD through a risk continuum activity. Finally students reflect on questions as they relate to their own lives, on how it would feel if they were exposed to an STD, how they would feel talking with a partner or with a friend who had an STD and resources available for testing and treatment.

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Lesson 6—Barriers

This lesson builds comfort and skills to properly use male and female condoms and dental dams. Students learn the proper steps to correct condom use as well as how to make a dental dam out of a male condom. After analyzing reasons why people may not use condoms, students identify strategies to make condoms easier to use. Finally, students practice effective communication skills as they respond to condom use refusals.

Lesson 7—Pregnancy Prevention

Students examine their attitudes and perceptions of responsibility regarding contraception. Students review the process of fertilization and conception in order to understand how a pregnancy occurs. They then research and report out on the range and variety of birth control methods commonly used by teens, including abstinence and withdrawal. Finally, students learn about accessing confidential, low-cost family planning services.

Lesson 8—Impacts of STDs & Pregnancy

Students watch *Two Seconds*, a movie written and directed by Maine teens depicting three inter-related scenarios about teen pregnancy, STD infection and an abusive relationship. Students analyze the impact of these situations on the film's characters and reflect on what the characters may have done differently. Likewise, students identify sources for help if they find themselves in a similar situation. Finally, students compare the positive and negative impact of parenting on relationships, education and career, social life and finances.

Lesson 9—Healthy Relationships

This lesson follows up on the abusive relationship story of Sarah and Sean from *Two Seconds*. Students compare healthy versus unhealthy characteristics of relationships. They then define and analyze relationship characteristics and list them in order of importance in their relationships, defining for themselves what they want in a partner.

Lesson 10—Making a Plan

Students identify red flags in various scenarios that may lead to unprotected sex and offer strategies to get out of risky situations. They then review how the brain may influence their decisions and how 'pausing' can help a person make healthy decisions. Applying what they have learned from *Best Practices*, students offer advice to fictional characters about making healthy sexual decisions. Finally, each student personalizes strategies they will use to stick to their boundaries by writing an email that they send to their future self.