

Lesson Seven: Sexual Violence Prevention

Student Learning Objectives:

The students will be able to...

1. Explain the rape laws of Massachusetts
2. Explain who can give consent for sex and under what circumstances
3. Identify three words or cues that signify consent
4. Identify at least two ways to help a friend who may be at risk for being sexually assaulted or for committing sexual assault

Agenda:

1. Review previous lesson
2. Introduce today's topic
3. Share survey results
4. Definition of terms
5. Small group activity and whole class debrief on scenarios activity
6. Summarize the lesson

1. Review previous lessons. For the last couple of lessons, we have talked about gender stereotypes and healthy relationships. During these lessons, we discussed many of the pressures that are put on boys and girls about how to act as individuals and also treat one another. Boys are taught to always act strong, tough and in control. Girls are taught be emotional, act polite, and take care of others. We talked about how some of these gender norms and stereotypes can lead to unhealthy relationships, and can contribute to

things like dating violence and sexual assault. We also learned about some of the qualities of a healthy relationship and how to communicate effectively.

2. Introduce today's topic. Today we're going to continue the conversation about sexual health and healthy relationships, and discuss sexual assault and prevention.

I want to acknowledge that this is a sensitive topic. Everyone in the room has either experienced sexual violence themselves or is close with someone who has experienced it, even if you are not aware of it.

3. Share survey results. Display the results from the *Sexual Attitudes Survey* that you administered at the close of Lesson 4.

What we can see from these results is that most of you did not support these sorts of ideas. Most of you feel that it's important to get consent and respect partners' boundaries. For example, sometimes people say, "I was so turned on I couldn't help myself," or "We've had sex before, so I know they're okay with it." Most of you all wouldn't agree with these sorts of statements.

One other interesting thing I noticed is that although you agreed with the statements on the survey, you weren't so sure your peers would. In almost every case, you thought your peers would feel less strongly than you did about the issues. That is interesting, because of course it is your peers that answered the survey, and we can tell that you all are thinking the same things for the most part.

This is important, because sometimes we make decisions based on what we think our peers are doing. For instance, research shows that people sometimes feel pressured to have sex because they think their peers are, when in fact not so many of their peers are having sex. I am glad that you all had a chance to see that your peers' feelings about sexual responsibility and sexual violence are not so different from yours.

4. Define terms and give overview of laws.

a. Sexual Assault

The first thing we are going to do is start with some definitions. Sexual Assault is generally used as an umbrella term. An umbrella term means that it includes or encompasses many different things.

Rape – forced sex or sex without consent

Child Sexual Abuse – includes rape of a child, which is when an adult has sex with a child or a teen. Sometimes called statutory rape; also includes molestation and incest

Voyeurism – when a person spies on someone changing, showering, or having sex, including videotaping

Child Pornography / Sexual Exploitation of Children – when a person creates, possesses, or distributes pictures or content with naked children or depicting children in sexual acts, including sexting

A good general definition of sexual assault is “coercing or forcing another person into sexual contact.” The term “coercing” or “coercion” is key.

A good working definition of coercion is **the use of emotional manipulation to persuade someone to do something they may not want to do** – like being sexual or performing certain sexual acts.

What are some ways that you think coercion can be used in the case of sexual assault?

What are tactics that someone could use to coerce someone into doing something that they may not normally want to do?

- Physical force
- Manipulation
- Abusing a position of power
- Older person taking advantage of a younger person

- Drugs and alcohol

Unlike what many people believe, sexual assault, including rape, does not usually involve extreme physical force or injury. Often emotional manipulation, coercion, or alcohol and drugs are used as tools to assault.

Now let's look at our laws related to sexual assault. When two people have oral, anal, or vaginal sex, or any type of sexual touching, it may be legal or illegal depending on two important factors:

- The age of the two people involved
- Whether or not there was consent given Summarize: If there is ever force used, or consent is not given, it is sexual assault or rape and that is illegal.

Consent Let's talk about consent. Who can give a definition for consent? What does the word consent mean in general terms? Possible answers: permission, saying it's okay, agreement

State Laws:

At what age are you legally able to consent to have sex? *No person under the age of 16 can legally consent to sex in the state of MA*

Is it considered legal consent if you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol? *No*

What about oral sex? *Sex under the law is defined as vaginal, anal or oral sex*

It is important to remember that males and females are both victims and perpetrators of sexual violence.

There are strong links between dating and sexual violence and teen pregnancy. Recent studies indicate that at least half of all teen pregnancies occur from adult men. The sexual partners of teen women are often not teens themselves, but men 4-6 years older, with one fifth of them being six years older or more. Seventy-four

percent of women who had intercourse before age 14, and 60% of those who had sex before age 15, report having had a forced sexual experience.

5. Small Group Activity/Class Debrief based on Scenarios Activity

6. Today we discussed sexual assault and rape, the difference between sex that people consent to, and assault. It was helpful to work through some scenarios to understand that we all do know what consent looks like even in different scenarios. This information is useful to keep us safe and also keep us from hurting other people.