



## **Working with Youth to Develop Critical Thinking Skills On Sexual Violence and Dating Violence: Three Suggested Classroom Activities**

The Southern Arizona Center Against Sexual Assault's Rape Prevention and Education program provides educational presentations for youth, adults and professionals in the City of Tucson and throughout Pima County. Presentations for youth are provided at local middle schools, high schools, and community youth programs. These programs consist of multi-session presentations that average three hours per session. Topics addressed in the curriculum include sexual assault awareness, dating violence, assertive communication skills, sexual harassment, and healthy attitudes towards victims and perpetrators of sexual violence. Students are challenged to think critically about sexual violence and its impact on society. All presentations are interactive. The Southern Arizona Center Against Sexual Assault's Rape Prevention and Education Program is funded by the Arizona Department of Health Services.

Following are three activities that were designed to help youth develop critical thinking skills on dating violence and sexual violence.

## Activity 1 The Equality and Power and Control Wheel

**Objective:** to help youth develop knowledge of healthy and unhealthy relationships.

**Activity:**

- a) Give a discussion on personal boundaries.
- b) Split the students into groups and ask them to create an equality wheel and a power and control wheel on poster board. Facilitators should review the Power and Control Wheel created by the Duluth Batterer's Intervention Project (but should also note that it is very gendered, since it was designed to be used with men who have battered women). Ask students to think about their own personal boundaries when creating their posters. Ask the students to give a presentation on their poster.

**Personal Boundaries** (suggested script)<sup>1</sup>

Personal boundaries are our own personal limits. These are lines that people shouldn't cross. Boundaries give us a sense of "who we are", empower us to determine how we want to be treated by others, and help us protect our safety and integrity.

**1. Physical/Sexual Boundary:** You have the right to control distance and touch with another person. You have the right to determine how far you want to go with someone sexually. Your body belongs to you. Your physical boundary is your body and the space around it. No one has the right to do something to your body that you don't agree with, and no one should pressure you to do something with your body that you are not comfortable doing.

**2. Emotional Boundary:** You have a right to your emotions and feelings. No one has the right to manipulate your feeling or do things to you that make you feel bad. People cross the emotional boundary when they don't respect your feelings. One way in which people cross this boundary is through *hurtful language*. This can be gossip, name calling, or making fun of you.

**3. Intellectual or Mental Boundary:** You have a right to your ideas and beliefs. Your intellectual boundary is your mind, the way you think, your values, morals, or beliefs.

*The following is a power and control wheel and an equality wheel that was created by local middle school students.*

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<sup>1</sup> The following information on personal boundaries was taken from the book, *Finding Safety: Boundaries for Teenagers*, by Carol Marlowe (1999).

Mental Abuse

Discrimination

Put downs · Mind games  
· Forcing someone to do something against their values · Making fun of someone's ideas, values, or beliefs · Not showing the other person respect for the way they think · Trying to change someone's religion · Telling someone what to do · Telling you to shut-up · Giving you the silent treatment · Trying to change someone's goals · Making decisions for the other person · Telling someone who to hang-out with and who not to hang-out with

Emotional Abuse

Abuse

Cheating · Name calling · Flirting with other people · Guilt trips · Being controlling · Not listening to the other person · Telling someone that they are ugly · Constantly making fun of a person · Controlling another person's social life · Being angry for no reason · Weird looks · Hurtful language · Putting down family and friends · Throwing stuff · Touching without permission · Always making you feel like you did something wrong · Being criticized · Criticizing your friends · Threats of hurting you and your family · Telling you how you should look · Accusing someone of cheating · Giving someone a curfew

**Power and Control**

Physical/Sexual Abuse

Rape

Sexual abuse

Using drugs and alcohol

Not respecting other people's limits

Forcing someone to do something sexual that they don't want to do

Not respecting someone's personal space

Destroying someone's personal things

Refusing to use protection

Unwanted sexual contact

Rough playing

Respecting  
the Mental  
Boundary

Support the other person's decisions · Respect each other's jobs · Be fair and understanding when the other person has things to do, like school work · Respect your boyfriend's or girlfriend's family and friends · Support your boyfriend's or girlfriend's ideas · Don't try to change the person you are with · Communicate · Discuss differences · Be a good listener

Respecting  
the Emotional  
Boundary

Express affection · Show faith in the other person · Feeling safe enough to express your feeling · Support the other person emotionally · Make the other person feel better when they are sad · Acknowledge the other person's natural beauty · Appreciate your girlfriend or boyfriend

Equality

Respecting the  
Physical/Sexual Boundary

Agree on limits in advance to reduce stress  
Respecting each other's personal space  
Respecting someone's sexual limits  
Allow the other person time alone  
Know in advance when to stop  
Respect your partner's body  
No Force  
Ask first  
Respect  
No means no!

## Activity 2 What Men Can Do to End Violence Against Women

**Objective:** To help youth develop healthy models of masculinity.

**Activity:** Give this activity as a homework assignment.<sup>2</sup>

**Homework Assignment:** Your homework assignment is to interview men that you know and ask them to give suggestions on what men can do to end violence against women. You can interview family members, friends, or teachers. Write at least five examples.

*The following are suggestions that were created by local high school students.*

### What Men Can Do to End Violence Against Women

1. Respect women.
2. Men should be as kind to women as they can be and treat them like they would treat their mother or sister.
3. Listen to what she has to say.
4. If you have a friend who is an abuser, tell him that he needs counseling.
5. Do not try to control women.
6. Have a lot of communication with women.
7. Show women love and affection.
8. Never hit a woman.
9. Don't get jealous with your girlfriend.
10. Report abuse when you see it.
11. Men should not put women down, especially in front of their friends.
12. Talk to women who have been victims of sexual or domestic violence.

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<sup>2</sup> This activity was adapted from Jackson Kat's handout, "10 Things Men Can Do To Prevent Gender Violence," presented at the Center for Disease Control's 3<sup>rd</sup> National Sexual Violence Prevention Conference (2004).

### Activity 3 Questions For The Opposite Sex

**Objective:** To help students think critically about gender stereotypes.

Some of the issues that can be addressed through this activity are:

- How gender stereotypes affect the way we treat people of the opposite sex.
- Healthy attitudes towards the opposite sex.
- Healthy attitudes towards the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered community.

**Activity:** Ask each student to write an anonymous question for the opposite sex. Create a handout that lists the questions that females asked males and questions that males asked females. Ask the students to answer each question. Type the student's response in a separate handout. Ask the students to discuss the responses of their peers.<sup>3</sup> This is a great discussion starter. Teens enjoy this activity. Note that this activity will not be effective if it is not followed with a meaningful facilitated discussion.

*This activity was conducted at local high school. The following are the questions that student's asked the opposite sex and their responses.*

#### Questions That Girls Asked Boys

**Here is what your male classmates think...**

1. Why do men get jealous but get mad when we get jealous?

- We are just looking for people to scrap with for looking at you. We get mad because we want to look like players.
- I don't get jealous, but who cares if they get jealous.
- Because a man is sensitive.
- Everyone gets' jealous.
- Because a guy is just being friendly, but a girl flirts with guys.
- Maybe because their girlfriend likes to flirt with other guys.
- Not all men get jealous about stuff like that.
- Because they are more capable of doing something.
- Because the girl is with me not with someone else.
- Guys don't get jealous.
- Because most of the time girls are more capable of doing something, but I guess when they get jealous we get mad because we don't like to deal with their attitude.
- Because I am like that.
- Because some girls get mad over little things.
- When girls get jealous, we think that they do like us.

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<sup>3</sup> This activity was taken from the book "May I Kiss You? A Candid Look at Dating Communication, Respect, and Sexual Assault Awareness," by Michael J. Domitrz (2003).

- Guys don't get mad when girls get jealous, it's the other way around, we like it when they get jealous.
- Some girls just try to make guys jealous by commenting something stupid, and girls don't like it when we do it.

## 2. Why do guys consider a girl a slut when they sleep with a lot of guys, but when guys do that, they are considered a pimp.

- Because if you like a girl and she is sleeping around, she is a slut, but this is just how guys describe some girls. Guys are also described as pimps in history.
- Because that's just how it is. That's the way that people think about it.
- That's how guys are. Girls aren't like that.
- It doesn't look good in girls to be sleeping around with guys. But on guys, it's different.
- It doesn't look right on a girl.
- Because guys like to show off.
- I guess us guys don't want to feel like a slut, just like the girl, but maybe they are not a slut and just like to have sex.
- Because some girls are easy.
- Because we have hormones.
- Because we got it like that.
- Because girls can get pregnant and girls call us guys' dogs.
- That's just the way we think.
- Because guys think they are all hard and bad.
- Because we are boys.
- They are sluts. If they do that, they are dirty. But the guy's part is alright.
- We call girls sluts because they are easy to get with.

## 3. What do guys want from girls?

- A good relationship that will last long.
- A good relationship.
- Loyalty.
- Sometimes just sex. But, when you like a girl, we want them to like us back and be loyal.
- Sex
- A good relationship, not a slut, and someone who is pretty.
- Love
- We want them to do what ever we ask.
- A guys wants a friend and a girl friend at the same times. Also, a girl that has respect for herself.
- Love and a caring attitude for a stable relationship.
- Some guys want love and some want sex, but all guys are different we're not all the same.
- They don't want to be by themselves.
- We want them to love us and care for us. Then when they don't show us that, we play them, so we want them to be there for us and all that.

## Questions That Boys Asked Girls

Here is what your female classmates think.....

### 1. Why do girls fall in love so fast?

- Because they have stronger emotional feelings than guys, and they can get attached quicker than males.
- Because they are stupid.
- They are more emotional than guys and want something in life.
- Because they are always looking for someone to be with, someone to always be there, so they get attached.

### 2. What do girls want from us guys?

- Money, respect, love, affection and trust.
- Money, cars, clothes, pleasure, respect.
- They want everything that a guy has to offer. A guy can make a girl feel good by just being there and showing his love.
- Faithfulness.

### 3. How come girls tell me I'm cute, but they don't do anything "like ask me out"?

- Because girls don't ask guys out.
- Guys usually ask females out, and if a guy can't get enough courage to do that, then that's his fault.
- It's a guy's job to do that.
- Because it's not the girls job to ask the guys out, but some do, but don't expect all girls to do that. If they think you are cute, they are probably hinting.

### 4. Why are some girl's lesbians?

- They are attracted to girls not guys.
- Because a lot were hurt by males and can't take it anymore. Or if a female was looked up for a while and all that she was around with were females.
- Some are just gay.
- Because some girls are too tuff for a guy.

**For more information about the Southern Arizona Center Against Sexual Assault's Rape Prevention and Education Program, please contact the Southern Arizona Center Against Sexual Assault:**

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