

Get Real: Comprehensive Sex Education That Works

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Grade 6 Lessons

Lesson 6-1: Creating the Classroom Climate

Classroom expectations and group rights and responsibilities are established. Students are introduced the key Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) skills they will focus on in the program: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making. Students play a game to get to know each other and begin to become comfortable talking about sexuality in the class. They brainstorm caring adults to whom they can go with questions or concerns.

Lesson 6-2: Communication and Refusal Skills

Students are introduced to effective communication skills and practice active listening and assertive communication. They discuss refusal tactics and various refusal techniques that can help them say NO clearly and effectively.

Lesson 6-3: Relationships and Boundaries

Students examine relationships and identify the different relationship circles in their lives. They explore the idea of physical boundaries and the importance of respecting others' personal space. Then they discuss qualities of healthy versus unhealthy relationships, including some of the risks of young people dating older partners. They practice communication skills for establishing clear boundaries and resisting peer pressure.

Lesson 6-4: Male Anatomy and Reproduction

This lesson focuses on male reproductive anatomy and physiology. Students test their knowledge and then review and label the parts of the male reproductive system using a poster and handout. The teacher explains how pregnancy occurs, and the role of condoms in preventing pregnancy.

Lesson 6-5: Female Anatomy and Reproduction

This lesson focuses on female reproductive anatomy and physiology. Students test their knowledge and then review and label the parts of the female reproductive system using a poster and handout. The teacher explains the processes of ovulation and menstruation. Then students play a game to review what they've learned.

Lesson 6-6: Puberty

Students examine the physical and emotional changes of puberty, identifying what changes are exclusive to males, exclusive to females and happen to both. They explore the range of feelings young people going through puberty might have in a variety of situations.

Lesson 6-7: Abstinence

This lesson introduces abstinence—choosing not to participate in any sexual behaviors that can result in pregnancy or STI. Students brainstorm examples of unhealthy behaviors in general and examine the concept of abstaining to protect one's healthy. They examine motivations for becoming sexually activity and the benefits of delaying sex. They apply their learning by giving advice to the characters in different scenarios on how to remain abstinent in pressure situations.

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Lesson 6-8: Decision Making and Values

Students discuss how responsible decision making reduces unhealthy behaviors. They examine their personal values around a variety of situations and discuss how values affect behavior choices. They learn a decision-making model that can help them understand the consequences of various choices and how to use their values and short-term goals to support responsible and healthy decisions.

Lesson 6-9: Grade 6 Conclusion and Review

This culminating lesson reviews the topics covered in Get Real Grade 6 and reinforces the importance of abstinence and refusal skills. Students develop a character case study and role-play the refusal skills this character could use in a sexual pressure situation to make a healthy decision. They consider messages about sexuality they could give to someone younger to promote healthy choices.

Grade 7

Lesson 7-1: Creating the Classroom Climate

Classroom expectations and group rights and responsibilities are established. Students review the key Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) skills they will focus on in the program: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making. They review the decision-making model by applying the steps to a scenario, and brainstorm caring adults and other resources they can go to with questions or concerns. They also play a game to review male and female reproductive anatomy.

Lesson 7-2: Media Literacy and Sexuality

This lesson focuses on media literacy and sexuality. Students identify different types of media and discuss the ways sexuality is portrayed on television. They examine the effects of advertising on body image and critique an ad to understand how it uses sexuality and people's insecurities to sell a product.

Lesson 7-3: Sexual Identity

In this lesson on sexual identity, students use a visualization to explore characteristics of attraction and what it feels like to be attracted to someone. Then they review definitions of various terms related to sexual identity and examine myths and facts about sexual orientation.

Lesson 7-4: Creating a Safe School Environment

With the intention of creating a safe school environment, students clarify their understanding and values around bullying. They define harassment and discuss what it means to be an ally who supports others' rights, using a scenario case study. Then they practice identifying and stopping harassment using role-plays.

Lesson 7-5: Deciding About Sexual Behavior

Students examine risks and decisions around sexual behaviors in this lesson. They begin by defining different sexual behaviors and examining factors that influence a person's decision to engage in these behaviors. Then they categorize various behaviors according to the risk they pose for pregnancy and STI transmission. The lesson concludes with a discussion of what dating means and the kinds of dating activities seventh graders can safely enjoy.

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Lesson 7-6: Defining and Maintaining Abstinence

In this lesson, students define abstinence—choosing not to participate in any sexual behaviors that can result in pregnancy or STI—and analyze which behaviors fit this definition. They determine their own abstinence guidelines and how the concept of postponement can help them avoid engaging in sexual behaviors until they are older. They review key components of refusal skills, including avoiding alcohol and other drug use and respecting a partner’s limits, and practice responding to challenges to abstinence.

Lesson 7-7: Introduction to Sexually Transmitted Infections

Students learn about STIs (sexually transmitted infections) and how they are prevented. They define STI and test their current knowledge with a quiz. Then the teacher reviews various STIs, including what causes them, how they are transmitted, and which can and cannot be cured. Students identify important ways to prevent or avoid STIs, and then participate in a handshake demonstration to model how STIs can spread based on the number of sexual partners a person has.

Lesson 7-8: Introduction to Protection Methods

After reviewing abstinence as the healthiest choice for people their age, students discuss questions people should consider before becoming sexually active and reasons to use protection. They learn about various protection methods and the effectiveness rates of different methods. They review why condoms are the one method besides abstinence that protects against both unplanned pregnancy and STI transmission, place the steps to correct condom use in the proper order, and watch a condom demonstration by the teacher. They also review how hormonal contraceptive methods work and the different forms of emergency contraception.

Lesson 7-9: Grade 7 Conclusion and Review

This culminating lesson reviews the potential consequences of sexual activity and the decision-making model. Students also practice skills for refusals and negotiating condom use through role-plays. They reflect on ways that being able to say NO will help them keep themselves safe.

Grade 8

Lesson 8-1: Creating the Classroom Climate

Classroom expectations and group rights and responsibilities are established. Students review the key Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) skills taught in the program: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making. They review the decision-making model by applying the steps to a scenario, and complete a “roadmap to resources” in which they identify people and places they could go to for questions about sexuality or relationships.

Lesson 8-2: Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships

Students explore the characteristics of healthy versus unhealthy relationships. They are introduced to two diagrams that present the different characteristics associated with power and control in unhealthy relationships and those associated with equality in healthy relationships. Then they analyze scenarios to identify the aspects of power and control and/or equality depicted in each. To personalize the learning, students make their own plan for having a healthy relationship.

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Lesson 8-3: Addressing Obstacles to Abstinence

After reviewing the definitions of abstinence and postponement, students identify positive outcomes of abstinence and suggest strategies for making it effective. They brainstorm obstacles to abstinence and write advice columns to a teen who wishes to remain abstinent.

Lesson 8-4: Comprehensive Protection Methods

This lesson reviews protection methods. Abstinence is reinforced as the healthiest choice for eighth graders, and students discuss why protection is important when a person decides to become sexually active. Students play a game to review what they know about various contraceptive methods, and are shown samples of the methods. They explore obstacles to condom use and reasons for using condoms. As homework, they create a 1-page fact sheet on one of the protection methods they've learned about.

Lesson 8-5: STI/HIV Transmission

In this lesson, a simulation introduces students to patterns of STI transmission, then students examine feelings and responsibilities associated with STIs. They discuss the risk of multiple partners and compare how sequential versus concurrent partners affects transmission of STIs. Students examine the risk of various behaviors, and review the importance of testing. They review facts about HIV transmission in preparation for the speaker presentation in the next class.

Lesson 8-6: Living with HIV

In this lesson, students hear a presentation by and participate in a question-and-answer session with a speaker who is living with HIV (or watch a video featuring HIV-positive people). They reflect on the experience by writing a thank-you letter to the speaker (or a letter to someone in the video). As homework, they created HIV awareness posters that contain information about modes of transmission, how to get tested and ways to reduce risk.

Lesson 8-7: Refusal Skills

Students debrief the speaker presentation or the video from the last class. Then they review communication and refusal skills and practice these skills using roleplays with different scenarios involving both resisting pressure to have sex and maintaining abstinence and negotiation of protection methods.

Lesson 8-8: Goals and Decision Making

Students brainstorm future wishes and ideas of what they want to become, and link the SEL skills to these desired outcomes. They work in small groups to consider how the consequences of sexual activity might affect the characters in various scenarios, both positively and negatively, and review protection and risk-reduction.

Lesson 8-9: Get Real Capstone Project

In this culminating lesson, students create media projects to demonstrate the positive messages of Get Real. They are shown examples of public service announcements, pamphlets, educational posters and print ads, then are given class time to work on their projects. They conclude the lesson by reflecting on their own personal limits around sexual behaviors and how they can address challenges to those limits.