

Lesson Plan: Foundations of a Healthy Sexual Relationship

Note to the Teacher (Parent/Guardian): This lesson addresses the sensitive topic of sexual relationships by focusing on the essential pillars of consent, emotional readiness, and safety. The goal is to empower your student with the knowledge to make healthy, informed, and respectful decisions in the future. The tone should be open, honest, and non-judgmental, creating a safe space for questions.

Materials Needed:

- 15-20 index cards or small pieces of paper
- Markers or pens
- A whiteboard or large sheet of paper (optional)
- **Visual Aid 1 (Teacher-Sourced):** A diagram illustrating the key components of a healthy relationship (e.g., a wheel with spokes for Trust, Communication, Respect, Honesty, Equality, etc.).
- **Visual Aid 2 (Teacher-Sourced):** A link to the video "Consent: It's as Simple as Tea" to watch together if time permits or as a follow-up.

Lesson Plan (30 Minutes)

1. Introduction: Building the Blueprint (5 minutes)

Goal: To frame sexuality as part of a larger, healthy relationship structure.

Teacher says: "You've expressed curiosity about sex, which is a normal and healthy part of growing up. A sexual relationship is much more than just a physical act; it's built on a strong foundation. Think of it like building a house. Before you can put up the walls or a roof, you need a solid foundation to make sure it's safe and strong. Today, we're going to talk about what that foundation looks like for a healthy relationship."

Activity:

- Ask the student: "What words or ideas do you think are part of a strong, happy relationship of any kind—whether with friends, family, or a romantic partner?"
- As they share ideas (like trust, fun, talking, honesty), write them down on the whiteboard or a large piece of paper. This creates a visual "blueprint" of positive relationship traits.

2. Activity 1: The Core Component - Enthusiastic Consent (10 minutes)

Goal: To understand that consent is a mandatory, ongoing, and enthusiastic agreement.

Teacher says: "The single most important part of any physical intimacy is consent. Let's break down what that really means. Consent isn't just about 'not saying no.' It's about enthusiastically and freely saying 'yes.' It has to be given without pressure, and it can be taken back at any time, for any reason."

Discussion using "What If?" Scenarios: Read these scenarios aloud and discuss the student's thoughts.

- **Scenario 1:** "What if someone says 'yes' to a kiss, but then their partner wants to do more and they feel uncomfortable? Is it okay for them to stop? Why?" (Reinforce that consent for one thing isn't consent for everything, and it can be revoked.)
- **Scenario 2:** "What if someone feels pressured to say 'yes' because they don't want to make their partner upset? Is that true consent?" (Explain the difference between enthusiastic consent and compliance under pressure.)
- **Scenario 3:** "What if two people agreed to be intimate yesterday, but today one of them isn't in the mood? Do they still have to go through with it?" (Emphasize that consent must be given every single time.)

Key Takeaway: "Consent should be clear, ongoing, and enthusiastic. A helpful way to remember it is the 'FRIES' acronym: Freely given, Reversible, Informed, Enthusiastic, and Specific."

3. Activity 2: Sorting Healthy vs. Unhealthy Signs (10 minutes)

Goal: To identify tangible behaviors that contribute to or detract from a healthy relationship.

Preparation: Before the lesson, write the following words/phrases on separate index cards:

- **Healthy Cards:** Respecting boundaries, Listening to understand, Celebrating successes, Feeling safe to disagree, Honesty, Encouraging each other, Making decisions together.
- **Unhealthy Cards:** Checking phone without permission, Guilt-tripping, Name-calling, Making threats, Controlling who you see, Pressuring you, Ignoring your feelings.

Activity:

1. Spread the cards out, face up.
2. Ask the student to sort them into two piles: "Behaviors that build a strong foundation" (Healthy) and "Behaviors that crack the foundation" (Unhealthy).
3. As they sort, ask questions like, "Why did you put that card in that pile?" or "How do you think that behavior would make someone feel?"
4. **Connect to safety:** Explain that the "unhealthy" behaviors are red flags. In a sexual relationship, these signs are especially dangerous because they undermine trust and safety, which are non-negotiable.

4. Conclusion & Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

Goal: To summarize the key concepts and open the door for future conversations.

Teacher says: "So today, we didn't just talk about sex—we talked about what's required for it to be a positive and healthy experience: a strong relationship foundation, enthusiastic and ongoing consent, and both emotional and physical safety. Being ready for a sexual relationship means being ready for all of these responsibilities."

Assessment (Exit Ticket Question): "In your own words, what is the most important thing you learned today about what it means to be ready for a healthy sexual relationship?"

Closing Statement: "I'm really glad we had this talk. My door is always open if you have more questions about this or anything else. Nothing is off-limits to ask, and it's important that you have a safe person to talk to about it."