

Session 6.4

Interpersonal Interactions and Romantic Relationships

Session Overview:

- 1 Review Session 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3.
- 2 Pass out blank question cards only to those students that need them.
- 3 Discuss what it means to “go out” in middle school.
- 4 Define the words appropriate and inappropriate and give examples.
- 5 Develop a list of appropriate, non-physical ways to show affection.
- 6 Discuss why hugging and kissing are inappropriate for their age and to be careful about flirting.
- 7 Emphasize it is ok not to have romantic feelings at this age.
- 8 Talk about love and explain the different types of love.
- 9 Lead the Different Types of Love activity.
- 10 Complete and discuss the Ask Dr. Love activity, including student volunteers.
- 11 Collect completed Parent Connection Forms from Session 3: Emotional Needs/Identity Reflection.
- 12 Collect completed question cards.
- 13 Distribute Parent Connection Forms for Session 6.4: Appropriate Behavior.

Learning Objectives:

- Participants will understand acceptable attitudes and appropriate conduct.
- Participants will identify and describe the experience of different feelings, including attraction.
- Participants will understand the terms appropriate and inappropriate.

Materials Needed:

- Computer, projector, and speakers
- Jar of Now and Later Candy
- Giant pad of paper, markers, tape
- Types of Love Cards (6.4.3)
- Handouts:
 - Ask Dr. Love (Handout 6.4.5)
 - Parent Connection Form Session 6.4: Appropriate Behavior
- Question cards
- Question bag

Classroom Planning:

- Review the curriculum content for this session, specifically review the definitions of appropriate and inappropriate as well as the different types of love.
- Make copies of handouts.

The Standards:

- See Appendix E for a list of state and national standards met in this session.



Notes:

Educator states:

During Session 6.1, we talked about how important it is to choose good friends so they can influence us in a positive way. We did the Build A Friend activity where we named **qualities to look for in a good friend**. Can someone please tell me one of the qualities we discussed?

[Ask for several qualities from different students.]

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| • Respectful | • Helpful |
| • Fun | • Trustworthy |
| • Kind | • Honest |
| • Loyal | • Responsible |
| • Good listener | • Good role model] |

What are the **3 steps to healthy decision-making**?

Who can name me the first step? [STOP]

The second? [THINK]

What is it that you have to think about in the second step?

[The reasons to do something and the reasons not to do something.]

The last? [DECIDE]

During Session 6.2, we split you up and talked about the word **puberty**. Can anyone remember the definition?

[The process of changing from a child into an adult.]

What are some of the changes that happen to both boys and girls during puberty?

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| [• Grow/Get Taller | • Clumsiness |
| • Body Odor | • Oily Skin/Pimples |
| • Aching Muscles | • Emotional Changes |
| • Hair Growth | • Ability to Reproduce |
| • Breast Growth | • Voice Changes] |

In reproduction, the male provides the what? [Sperm]

And the female provides the what? [Egg]



Notes:**Educator states:**

Yesterday, we split you into groups of boys and girls and we had you come up with a list of what you like about being a boy or a girl. GIRLS, can you name me 2 things the boys mentioned? BOYS, can you name me 2 things the girls mentioned?

We found that we are all unique, but there are similarities between boys and girls as well.

We then went over **emotional needs**, how we all have them, and they can be met in either a healthy or an unhealthy way. What is one emotional need we talked about? Can you try to remember the definition? Do you remember the skit?

[Ask for several needs from different students.

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| • Support | • Safety |
| • Guidance | • Respect |
| • Unconditional Love | • Recognition |
| • Affirmation | • Belonging] |

We also had you use your creativity and write the **I Am Poem** to think about the ways that you are special as an individual.

Remember, it is YOUR choice to meet your emotional needs in a healthy way and choose good friends. And we know that,

The choices you make...**NOW** will affect you...**LATER!**

[Let students know that if they need a question card or an extra one to please go see an educator.]



Educator states:

What does it mean to “go out” in middle school?

[Write student answers on the board.]

It sounds like it means a lot of different things to different people. Here is another question: **Why do you think it might be best for young people your age to go out in groups instead of being alone with the person you like?**

Educator highlight:

Encourage students to brainstorm possible reasons why spending time in groups is better. Record answers on the board, taking time to discuss each one. Make sure the following answers are covered:

- Allows you to get to know someone better
- You're less likely to get into a situation where you feel pressured to do something you are uncomfortable with
- Easier to talk in a group/can find more things to talk about
- Safer
- No rumors can spread
- Less awkward

Who knows what inappropriate means? The dictionary definition is **unsuitable and improper**.

So today we are going to define **inappropriate** as **anything that makes another person feel uncomfortable, or unwanted**. It includes **physical violence, teasing/making fun of someone**, or any kind of **unwanted touch**.

[Write the word INAPPROPRIATE on the board.]

Now the word **appropriate** is anything that makes another person feel comfortable or wanted.

Can you come up with a list of appropriate ways for students your age to show affection to someone without being physical? Or to express your feelings in an appropriate way when you're with them?

We are going to divide the class with the boys in one group and the girls in another. I want you to talk with the members of your group and come up with a list of appropriate, non-physical ways to show someone that you care for them in a special way. You are to choose a “scribe” and a “speaker” for your group. The scribe will write all your answers down on paper. The speaker will share that list with the class.

Remember that we have to show respect to each other. If any group is too loud or does not show respect for another group, they will lose points.

Notes:

Notes:**Educator highlight:**

It can be fun to make this a healthy competition. Make sure the students' answers are given positive feedback. Emphasize that though it was a competition, they are all winners because they came up with such great ideas.

Educator states:

The best way to show someone you like them is by being a good friend.

We want you to really understand that it's best not to be alone with someone you are romantically interested in; it is best to go out in groups. We also want you to know that these are the appropriate ways to show affection to someone you like. Non-physical ways of showing affection to someone are often more meaningful than the physical stuff. It's also more appropriate for your age.

Think about it, if you were hugging or kissing someone and your parents or teacher walked by and saw you doing it, they would be upset. Or another way to look at it is if you are hanging out with your friends and they start making out in front of you, how would that make you feel? What about if they were doing it in front of your mom, your teacher, Ms./Mr./Mrs. _____?

[Insert teacher's name in the blank line.]

Would that be awkward or uncomfortable?

Again, let's go back to the definition of **inappropriate**. It is anything that is unsuitable or improper. Since physical contact feels uncomfortable or awkward to do in front of your parents or a teacher, most likely its unsuitable or improper for someone your age.

Educator highlight:

The following discussion about flirting is to stress the fact that flirting has limits and students need to be mindful of when their flirtatious behavior has crossed over into something inappropriate and potentially hurtful.

We also want to talk to you about flirting. We have a saying at Healthy Futures - "**Flirting can lead to hurting.**" What we mean by this is that you have to be careful with any kind of flirting because, if it goes too far, it can send the wrong message and make the other person feel uncomfortable.



Educator states:

For example, looking at someone and making eye contact could be ok, but if you are staring at them and making them feel uncomfortable or embarrassed, then it becomes inappropriate. Or if you compliment someone, that could be ok. But if they feel uncomfortable and tell you to stop, then it has become inappropriate. Flirting has limits. It is never ok to embarrass someone intentionally or try to make them feel uncomfortable. Always respect the other person's feelings.

Remember everybody is unique and different. It's perfectly normal not to have any special or romantic feelings at your age. Don't assume that because you're not "going out" with someone that you're not cool. You shouldn't feel pressured to pursue that just because your friends and peers are.

The most important thing to remember is that the best way to show you care about someone is to **be a good friend** and show them the positive character traits that go along with that.

Notes:

Educator states:

Since we are talking about appropriate ways to show someone you like them, we are going to talk about this word called LOVE. So, who wants to volunteer to tell me what love is?

[Write the word "LOVE" on the board and allow time for students to answer.]

It is important to understand that there are different kinds of love. The word "love" can be confusing and can mean different things to different people. Is saying that you "love" ice cream the same thing as saying that you "love" your family? We are going to do some activities together that will help us define the different types of love.

Let's take a look at these different pictures and see if we can identify what kind of feelings or thoughts go along with each one. Please raise your hand to share what you think about the pictures.

Educator highlight:

As you already indicated to the students, this can be confusing for 6th graders. Make sure you give the students clues and prompts to help them interpret the pictures.

These pictures cards describe 5 different types of love. They represent what we often mean when we use the word "love".

[Give a description of each kind of love.]

- **Love of Enjoyment** - take pleasure in a particular activity or thing, or being with a certain person. It's usually used for things or activities. Ex: I **love** football.
- **Love of Admiration** - to hold in high esteem or regard, to look up to. Ex: I **love** that singer. I just downloaded her new song.
- **Crush or Puppy Love** - temporary, feeling of passion; it can be intense, but the feeling is not expected to last. Ex: I **love** that girl on American Idol™.
- **Family/Friendship Love** - a relationship marked by mutual affection and loyalty. Ex: I got this card for my mother because I really **love** her.
- **True Love (Marriage/Commitment)** - a deep feeling of affection that has permanence, faithfulness and unselfishness. Ex: You can see how much my grandmother **loves** my grandfather. She would do anything for him.

Educator highlight:

Take time to go over these different descriptions/definitions. Emphasize the difference between Crush/Puppy Love and True Love. This idea of commitment is one of the many things that makes a faithful lifelong relationship, so beautiful and fulfilling.

Notes:

Notes:

[Read scenarios. Have students respond with the type of love that best represents the kind of feelings being expressed in the scenarios being read aloud.]

Educator states:

Love / Like Scenarios

1. Aaron thinks Tom Brady is a great football player, and practices every day so that some day he'll be able to throw just like him.

[Love of Admiration]

2. I love Six Flags™. I wish my house was closer to it. I would go there every day!

[Love of Enjoyment]

3. Sunday is the best day of the week because my little brother, little sister, mom and dad get together and we eat a big meal!

[Family/Friendship Love or Love of Enjoyment]

4. John and Amy have been dating for 4 years. One night John took Amy out to a nice restaurant that she loves. He got down on one knee, pulled out a ring and said "Honey, will you spend the rest of your life with me?" They've been together for 50 years!

[True Love]

5. There is a new girl in class. Every time I walk by her desk I feel like I have butterflies in my stomach.

[Crush/Puppy Love]

6. Kisha went on a couple of dates with Kevin. Kisha tells her friends that she is so in love with him. Two months later, when her friends ask "Where is Kevin?" she says, "Kevin who?"

[Crush/Puppy Love]



Educator states:

7. I love snowboarding (or any activity you personally like) because it's so much fun!

[Love of Enjoyment]

8. One day I will grow up to be just like my uncle who is a firefighter and saves people.

[Love of Admiration]

9. I love Tony, Mia, Joshua, Stephanie, Michael and Michelle (or any of your close friends). We met in 3rd grade and now we are still great friends.

[Family/Friendship Love]

10. My grandfather and grandmother have been together for many years. Every time I visit them I can see how much they love each other.

[True Love]

Notes:

Notes:**Educator states:**

It's important to understand that there are different kinds of love. Now that we have a better idea of the different kinds of love and the feelings associated with each kind, we are going to put together all that we learned today with this next activity.

Educator highlight:

Pass out the Ask Dr. Love (Handout 6.4.5) and explain to students how they will fill them out. Educators should read all three letters aloud to students before they begin to write. Some students need to hear the letters read to get a better understanding. Then have them choose one of the letters, read it, and respond to it on the back of the sheet with their advice. After they are finished writing the letters, have 2-3 student volunteers share their work.

You are Dr. Love, a famous love doctor who gets letters from people every day, asking for advice about their relationships. Choose one of the letters on your sheet and write a letter of response on the back of the sheet. Be sure to practice the guidelines you learned in class about appropriate ways to show affection.

[Go over the answers with the students and explain in more detail if necessary.]



Notes:**Educator states:**

You did a great job with your letter. You gave some good advice to your readers. We want to make sure all of you understand that right now it's most important for you to be focusing on friendship. Figuring out what you like in a friend and how to be a good friend to others will have a positive effect on you in the future. Understanding and practicing what we learned about healthy friendships is important.

Choosing to behave in an appropriate way with people that you care about will strengthen your relationships and keep you from having misunderstandings. These friendships are the foundation for all other relationships that you will encounter as you get older.

[Pass out Parent Connection Form Session 6.4: Appropriate Behavior.]

