Session 7.5

Consequences of Sexual Activity - Pregnancy and Emotional Risks

Session Overview:

1. Review Session 7.4.
2. Review puberty and pregnancy.
3. Discuss the importance of abstinence as it relates to pregnancy prevention, STI prevention, and emotional heartache.
4. Discuss the emotional risks involved with sexual activity.
5. Explain the purpose of the pregnancy scenario is to illustrate the concerns teen parents face.
6. Use the pregnancy scenario to lead a discussion of the challenges faced related to teen pregnancy.
7. Wrap up session.
8. Distribute Parent Connection Form Session 7.5: Consequences of Sexual Activity – Pregnancy and Emotional Risks.

Learning Objectives:

- Participants will understand the physical, mental, and emotional repercussions of sex and pregnancy.
- Participants will recognize the importance of abstinence and why it is the healthiest choice for 7th graders.

Materials Needed:

- Computer, projector, speakers
- Jar of Now and Later candy
- Boundaries in Relationships PowerPoint (7.5.3)
- Pregnancy Audio - Kim and Anna (7.5.5)
- Pregnancy Audio - Kim and TJ (7.5.5)
- Handouts
  - Boundaries in Relationships (Handout 7.5.3)
  - Resource Brochure
  - Parent Connection Form Session 7.5: Consequences of Sexual Activity - Pregnancy and Emotional Risks
- Sports Ball (Soccer Ball Size)
- Paper hearts (2)
- Question cards
- Question bag

Classroom Planning:

- Review Session 7.5 curriculum.
- Make copies of handouts.
- Gather question cards and the question bag.

The Standards:

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

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Educator states:
During the last session we discussed sources of stress, the importance of positive character traits and avoiding unnecessary stress, and peer pressure. Who can remind me of three healthy ways to manage stress?

[Allow time for participants to respond. Answers may include exercising, eating healthy, talking to a trusted adult.]

During the last session we also discussed the important role our friends play in helping us achieve our goals and dreams. Friends should always respect your decisions and never force you to do anything that you do not want to do. If you are faced with a situation where you feel conflicted or uneasy, and believe this choice will not lead you on the path to success, then you need to be firm and say "no." Saying "no" is not easy, but it is the right thing to do in this case. Who can remind me of the three steps to say no?

[Speak up, stand up, and walk away.]

Great! And remember…

The choices you make…NOW, will affect you…LATER!

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Educator highlight: The purpose of the review is to emphasize what the participants should take away from understanding the biological processes of puberty and pregnancy before addressing the potential consequences of a sexual relationship. Choose what review questions are relevant to enter into this discussion. Some questions have been provided below.

Educator states:
Recently we talked about puberty and pregnancy. Puberty means that you are changing from a child into an adult. It also means that you are experiencing a lot of changes physically, mentally, and emotionally. Let's just do a brief review (together out loud as a class shouting out the answers):

What is the name of the primary sex hormone in males?

[Testosterone]

What is the name of the white fluid released from a male's penis?

[Semen]

What are the male reproductive cells that, when combined with a female's egg can lead to pregnancy?

[Sperm]

What is the name of the physiological change that happens to a male's penis when he becomes sexually aroused?

[Erection]

What is the name of the process of the release of fluid when a male has an orgasm?

[Ejaculation]

What is the name of the primary sex hormone in females?

[Estrogen]

What is the name of the female organ that produces and releases an egg every month?

[Ovaries]

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Educator states:

What is the process of mature egg(s) being released from the ovaries?

[Ovulation]

What is the name of the tube that the released egg travels through to reach the uterus?

[Fallopian tube]

What is the joining of a sperm with an egg called?

[Fertilization]

Where does the fertilize egg implant?

[Uterus]

What is the medical term for the monthly shedding of a woman's lining of her uterus (Hint=Period)?

[Menstruation]

Educator states:
We also discussed common questions teens have about puberty. These questions addressed normal teen concerns such as "When will I be able to date?" or "Is it okay to have sexual thoughts or feelings?" As a result of the body growing and maturing, teens begin to think more about sex or have sexual feelings.

This is normal. As you begin to become interested in girls or boys, it is important for you to talk with your parents/guardians. When can you date? Who can you date? These are important questions that should be answered before you are ever in a dating situation. Remember that if you have these concerns right now, that is normal. If you don't have these concerns yet, that is also normal.

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Educator states:
Can I get a volunteer for our next activity? If you win this game, you will receive a prize. Alright, are you ready? Let's go!

[Throw the ball around and, without explanation, give and take away points from the volunteer and yourself. They will soon get frustrated, not being able to figure out how to get points. Make sure the volunteer loses the game at the end. This will add to their frustration.]

So, did you have fun playing that game?

[No.]

Were you frustrated?

[Yes.]

How about the rest of you, were you confused watching the game?

[Yes.]

What was it that made it so frustrating and confusing?

[Allow time for participant feedback.]

It was because the volunteer didn't know the rules. In fact, it looked like there weren't any rules or that I was making them up as I went along.

So, in any game, what is the purpose of rules?

[Make it fun, safe, fair, etc.]

Why are rules important? What would happen if there were no rules?

[Not fun, people could get hurt, etc.]

Yes! The reason I played this game with you is to help you understand how important rules are. If you walk into a game and you don't know the rules, you will lose. In life, if you don't have rules for yourself, it can be frustrating (just like this game was).

Notes:

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Educator states:
Remember the keys to success?

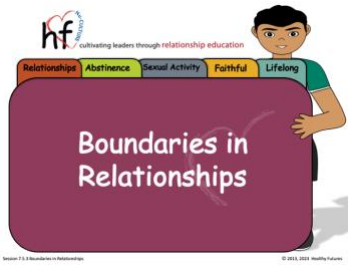
[Know what you want and know how to get there.]

Part of knowing how to get there is to set rules or limits for yourself. Now, apply this principle to relationships. Just like in games or sports, there are certain rules or boundaries that can make your experience with relationships more fun, safe, and healthy. If you follow certain boundaries in relationships, it can protect you in the same way that rules of a sports game protect the players.

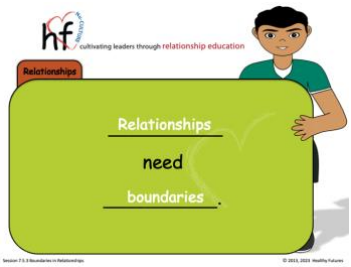
Next, we are going to talk about boundaries in relationships.

[Pass out the Boundaries in Relationships (Handout 7.5.3). Show the Boundaries in Relationships Powerpoint and have participants fill in the handout blanks as you discuss the slide.]

PPT Slides: Boundaries in Relationships



[Slide 1]



[Slide 2]

What are boundaries? They are limits you set for yourself. It is a line that you don't want to cross because if you do, it could create problems. When we're talking about relationships, I mean all relationships: with your mom, your dad, teacher, aunt, uncle, brother, sister, friends, and especially a romantic relationship (i.e., with a boyfriend or girlfriend). One of the boundaries we will talk about in this program is abstinence. Abstinence means choosing not to be involved in any sexual activity.

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[Slide 3]

Educator states:
One of the decisions that you are going to have to make in life is whether or not to be sexually active at a young age. To abstain means to choose not to do something. So, abstinence is choosing not to be sexually active. If you choose to become sexually active outside of a faithful lifelong relationship, there are three risks. Can someone give me one of the risks?

[Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), pregnancy or fathering a child, emotional heartache. If they do not come up with emotional heartache, you can tell them most people only mention the physical consequences but there are emotional consequences as well. That is emotional heartache, also known as a broken heart.]

Who knows someone that has experienced emotional heartache in the past and they are still feeling the pain of it? Having a broken heart can really impact your life. These three risks and dangers are examples of why it's important to set limits and boundaries for yourself.

[Slide 4]

At Healthy Futures we define sexual activity as any type of private area touching, not just penis in vagina. Private area touching means to touch someone's body in the genital and breast area sometimes described as the areas covered by a swimsuit.

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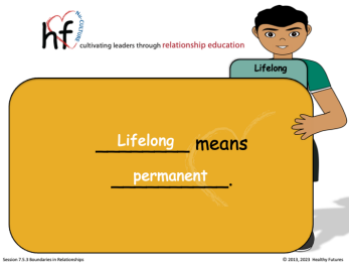
Educator highlight: If participants begin giggling or acting out during this discussion, remind them that they are 7th graders now, they have been discussing these topics for two years, and are all mature enough to handle the conversation. If a participant seems extra uncomfortable or disruptive have one of the educators check in with the participant.

[Slide 5]



[Slide 6]

Educator states:
At Healthy Futures we define a faithful relationship as one that is just between two people. Lifelong means permanent, or forever. Abstinence, or choosing to wait for sexual activity, is the only way to protect yourself 100% from both the physical and emotional risks associated with early sexual activity. At Healthy Futures, we believe it is the safest and healthiest lifestyle for teenagers.

It's very important to have limits and boundaries when you are in a relationship, especially when it comes to sexual activity. Today and tomorrow we are going to discuss in more detail the three risks we just mentioned.

A few sessions ago we talked about the keys to success in life. Who can remind us what they are?

[Know what you want and know how to get there.]

So, if you were to become pregnant or father a child, how do you think that that would affect your goals and dreams?

[Allow time for discussion. Choosing to have sex as a teenager may make it harder for you to achieve your goals later, especially as it relates to future relationship(s).]

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Educator states:
We are going to hear an example in a minute of how pregnancy can change your life, but first, I want to talk to you about when sex is appropriate in a relationship.

First, if you are feeling uneasy or conflicted, recognize that you are not ready. Second, sexual feelings are normal and sex is a good thing at the right time and in the right relationship. At Healthy Futures, we believe sex is always the most valuable, intimate, and pleasurable when experienced in the context of a faithful, committed, lifelong relationship (in our society, this is often referred to as a partnership or marriage).

I know that waiting to have sex is not something that you hear much about these days. You are bombarded with sexual images and the consequences of sex are often not shown. What the media doesn't tell you is that sex is not just a physical act. Sex also affects you emotionally. We are going to see this in our next activity.

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Educator highlight: The purpose of this activity is to demonstrate that relationships and sexual activity have emotional consequences if we aren't careful to guard our hearts. The purpose of this activity is to show that each relationship may take away pieces of ourselves and our hearts, so it is important to think carefully about whom we choose to give our hearts to.

Educator states:
I need two volunteers. Each paper heart represents the volunteers' hearts. You are both going to hold onto these for right now. Now I need 4 more volunteers. Two of you will stand on each side of our first two volunteers.

Before we continue, I want to tell you a story. This is a made-up story and not about our volunteers here.

(Ask volunteers to give a pretend name for each of their characters.)

_____ and _____ have decided they want to go out. They really like each other and they are always talking, texting, and checking in on social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.). _____ and _____ have both been in a couple of different romantic relationships and with each relationship they wound up getting more involved in sexual activity. It seemed like nothing at first, but with each new relationship they found themselves ignoring the limits and boundaries they had once set for themselves. They did not realize their emotional heartache from previous relationships would affect their current relationship. Now, they are going out and really want to give their hearts to each other. Let's see what happens. This activity will show us what effect their past relationships have on their present relationship.

[The original volunteers who are holding their hearts are going to pass their heart down the line of people connected to them. Each person from the line is going to rip off a piece of the heart as it is passed down the line. The broken pieces should then be passed back up the line, back to the original owner of the heart. The original volunteers will then face each other with their broken hearts and exchange them.]

_____ and _____ want to give their whole hearts to each other but they realized they no longer have their whole heart to give.

[Thank volunteers and give them prizes for participating.]

This activity represents the emotional toll sexual relationships can take on our heart. Each piece that was ripped from the heart represents some form of sexual activity. While _____ and _____ wanted to give each other their whole heart, they no longer had their whole heart to give. Along the way, they had given pieces of their hearts and themselves to others they had been in relationships with. They didn't choose to set limits and protect their emotions.

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Educator states:
It is hard to know that each sexual relationship may take away pieces of our hearts. This is because when you have sex with someone, you form a strong emotional bond with that person. When you break up, it causes emotional pain, like a piece of your heart is missing.

Having sex is a choice, just like not having sex is a choice. If you have been sexually active in the past, you can still choose to hold off on sexual activity until you meet that person that you finally want to give your whole heart too.
Remember that the choices you make NOW will affect you LATER. These choices affect your dreams, and whether or not you will reach them.

What are some possible consequences of becoming sexually active now?

[Pregnancy, STIs, emotional heartache, etc.]

Choosing to wait for that sexual relationship until a faithful lifelong relationship is the only way to 100% protect yourself from physical and emotional risks of early sexual activity.

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Educator highlight: The focus of this discussion is to explore with the participants the realities faced by pregnant and parenting teens. The discussion should focus on what issues, responsibilities, and feelings the teens might be experiencing. Remember that this is intended to be an interactive discussion, not a lecture. Give positive feedback to participants that contribute. Try not to get sidetracked by conversations about details of any particular topic.

Before beginning the Pregnancy Audio (7.5.5), make sure to open up discussion around the question: "Why do teens become pregnant?" This will help to transition into the teen Pregnancy Audio.

Educator states:
Why do teens become pregnant?

[Allow time for discussion about this question before transitioning into the audio.]

[Play the Pregnancy Audio - Kim and Anna (7.5.5). After it finishes, ask participants the questions written below.]

Educator highlight: As one of the educators is asking the questions to the participants, another educator should be writing the participants' responses on the whiteboard.

1. Who remembers the names of the two characters in this recording?

[Anna and Kim.]

2. Something happened, one of them is pregnant, right? Was it Kim or Anna who's pregnant?

[Anna.]

3. What's the name of Anna's boyfriend?

[Joe.]

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Kim is Anna's best friend. Anna has told Joe that she's pregnant. So Kim wants more information and she is going to call Joe's best friend, TJ, and find out what Joe thinks.

[Play the Pregnancy Audio - Kim and TJ audio (7.5.5). After it finishes, ask participants the questions below.]

1. What did Kim find out that Joe is planning to do?

[Break up with Anna.]

2. Is that the right thing to do?

[No.]

3. What is one of the reasons why Joe is breaking up with Anna? TJ was talking about it.

[His friends have been making fun of him about how much he loves Anna and he couldn't take the pressure. He figures with everything going on, he might as well end the relationship.]

4. Just because he ends the relationship, does that mean the pregnancy didn't happen and it just goes away?

[No.]

Now that Anna is pregnant, it will change her life and Joe's life.

Now that Anna is pregnant, let's discuss some choices she has to make. What does she have to decide now that she is pregnant?

[Parent the baby or place the baby up for adoption.]

Educator highlight: If a participant mentions abortion as an option for Anna, be sure to say, "Yes, that is an option for Anna. However, abortion it is a very sensitive subject and people have varying opinions about it. For the purposes of our discussion we will only be talking about the options of parenting the baby or placing it for adoption. If you have questions about abortion, we encourage you to talk to your parent/guardian/or a trusted adult.

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As a teenager, if Anna decides to keep the baby, what are some of the feelings she might be having?

[She may be wondering (1) if she will be a good mother, (2) if she will be able to support the child, (3) if she will be able to continue her education, (4) how involved the father will be, etc.]

Is the baby going to need food?

[Yes.]

What else does the baby need?

[Milk, formula, diapers, etc.]

Are these things cheap?

[No.]

Say Anna's in high school and she's 15 years old. What kind of jobs can she get?

[Part time work at a grocery store, restaurant, retail store, etc.]

If they hire her, she may only have limited employment options (e.g., mop floors, bag groceries, or push carts) and may only be allowed to work a certain number of hours per week (due to child labor laws). Is that enough to take care of a child?

[No.]

What else does the baby need?

[Attention, love, etc.]

If the baby is crying at night, does she have to wake up and take care of it?

[Yes.]

In that audio, what is it that Joe has already decided to do?

[Leave her.]

Anna is going to have to provide for the baby on her own. Is that going to be easy?

[No.]

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Does anyone know a teen parent that had to take care of a child on their own?

[Allow time for participants to discuss.]

Does it seem easy?

[No.]

You only get to be a teenager once in your life. The choices you make will impact your ability to enjoy your teenage years. If someone becomes pregnant or fathers a child during their teenage years, or at a younger age, there goes their chance to be a teen. They won't be able to enjoy it as much because they have the responsibility of being a parent at an early age.

So, if Anna decides to keep the baby, what is Joe's responsibility now?

[Decide to help her.]

What if he decides not to help her? What could happen?

[Anna could take him to court and he would have to pay child support.]

How long does he have to pay child support for?

[Until the child is 18; if the child decides to go to college, the judge may decide he has to pay until the child finishes college, so until around age 23.]

If a father doesn't pay child support, a court could order the money taken directly from his paycheck or he could possibly go to jail. If he does go to jail, the judge may have him work in prison and that money will go to the child. It really depends on the judge's decision based on the individual case.

Do you want to be in that kind of a situation where you're a teenager and you become pregnant or father a child? Whose choice is it to stay out of that situation?

[Your choice.]

Because…

The choices you make…NOW will affect you…LATER!

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Let's talk about adoption now. If Anna decides to place the child up for adoption, what are some things she might have to think about?

[What type of relationship she will have with her child.]

Is it going to be easy for her to let her child go?

[No.]

There are 2 types of adoption: open adoption and closed adoption. Open adoption is if someone adopts the child, the birth parent can visit the child and take them out and have a relationship with their child. (Open adoption involves initial and/or ongoing contact between birth and adoptive families, ranging from sending letters through the agency or intermediary (sometimes called semiopen adoption), to exchanging names and/or scheduling visits). Closed adoption means that once you give that child away, you can never see the child (unless that child comes looking for you once he or she is an adult). Anna is going to have to decide which type of adoption she's going to choose and she's going to have to think about the type of home she wants her child to grow up in with whoever is going to adopt her baby.

These are not easy decisions to make, but these are the choices that come with pregnancy or fathering a child at an early age.

Whose choice is it to wait to become sexually active?

[Your choice.]

And…

The choices you make…NOW will affect you…LATER!

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Educator states:
Today we have seen that sexual activity affects our hearts, our minds, our bodies, our time, our finances, our future, and our dreams. Having a family is a wonderful blessing when the child has a stable home with loving parents. However, having a child as a teenager is often accompanied by many obstacles and difficulties. Protect you heart, your mind, your body, and your future by choosing to wait until you are in a committed relationship. Making this choice now will open up the path to achieving your dreams later!

Educator highlight: It is important to provide the participants with local centers that offer services in regards to pregnancy and reproductive health. Refer participants to the Resource Brochure.

If you have been sexually active and would like information about where you or your partner can access teen pregnancy support services, we have included a resource brochure in your folder that lists local resources. If you would like to speak with any of us or receive more information, please do so. You can write a note on your question card as well.

[Remind participants of the question cards and to place them in the question bag. Pass out Parent Connection Form Session 7.5: Consequences of Sexual Activity – Pregnancy and Emotional Risks and collect the previous day Parent Connection Forms.]

Notes:

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