

Session 8.5

Emotional Needs and Bonding

Session Overview:

1. Review Session 8.4.
2. Pass out blank question cards.
3. Review emotional needs and their importance in healthy relationships using the poster activity.
4. Illustrate the concept that sexual activity emotionally bonds people.
5. Collect completed question cards.
6. Pass out Parent Connection Form Session 8.3: Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs).

Learning Objectives:

- Participants will understand how bonding occurs and which chemicals in the brain are involved in that process.
- Participants will have a better understanding of emotional heartache due to break ups.

Materials Needed:

- Computer, projector, speakers
- Jar of Now and Later candy
- Construction paper
- Markers
- Big 3 Review Video (Session 8.5)
- Handouts
 - Emotional Needs (Handout 8.5.2)
 - Parent Connection Form Session 8.5: Healthy Relationships - Emotional Needs and Bonding
- Question cards
- Question bag

Classroom Planning:

- Review Session 8.5 curriculum.
- Make copies of handouts.

The Standards:

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



Notes:**Educator states:**

Before we begin today's session, we want to review The Big 3 from the last session:

The BIG 3:

- STIs spread quickly and easily.
- The most common symptom of an STI is no symptom. If you have been sexually active, get tested!
- Choosing not to have sex (vaginal, oral, anal, or intercourse) until you are in a faithful lifelong relationship is the only 100% way to protect yourself from STIs. If you are sexually active, or in a faithful lifelong relationship with someone who has an STI, it is important to use a condom every time to reduce the risk of spreading the STI.



Notes:**Educator states:**

Today we are going to talk more about relationships. Why do people want to be in relationships?

[Brainstorm about what people need in relationships. Write participant responses on board. Possible responses include: to not be lonely, to have someone to love them, to feel comfortable, to feel attractive, to feel popular, etc.]

Many of the reasons we just discussed have to do with our emotional needs. Remember the first day we talked about emotional needs and how important they are in relationships. In fact, it is in relationships that many of our emotional needs are met and we meet some of the emotional needs of others.

Let's talk some more about what those emotional needs are. In your packets you have a list of emotional needs and the definitions. We are going to quickly go over that list and then talk about which of the ones listed really mean a lot to you personally.

Now that we talked about what these emotional needs are and what they look like we want you to take your sheet and rank what you think are the most important emotional needs to be met in a relationship. Rate the top 5 emotional needs that are most important to you with 1 being the most important and 5 being less important.

[Go over emotional needs using Emotional Needs (Handout 8.5.2). If time permits, have participants share their priority emotional needs.]



Notes:**Educator states:**

Now we are going to break up in small groups of 3 or 4. Just gather around with the people who are closest to you, near your desk. We want each of you to choose an emotional need that you feel is the most important to be filled in a relationship – for example, maybe you think that belonging is the most important, or respect, or trust. We are going to give you a piece of paper and markers to create a small poster using pictures and/or words that represent what that emotional need means to you.

Although you are working in a group, you are each to create your own poster. When it is time to share, you will come up as a group to share your posters with the entire class.

[Give the participants time to complete their posters. Circulate around the room and give feedback/direction as needed.]

Which group would like to come up first and share their posters?

[Provide participants with positive reinforcement on their posters.]

Wow! This gives us all a good idea about what emotional needs are important to you. We also want to stress that while we all have priority emotional needs, it is important for the other emotional needs to be met as well.

You all did a great job! We are going to collect all of your posters so that we can display them at another time.



Notes:**Educator states:**

It is important to have emotional needs met in a healthy way. If we try to fulfill our emotional needs in an unhealthy way that could impact our ability to achieve our goals and dreams. Can you give me some examples of having our emotional needs met in an unhealthy way?

[Examples may include gangs (need for belonging), listening to the wrong people (need for guidance).]

Many times teens think that becoming sexually active is the best way to meet their emotional needs and build a relationship. But as we mentioned earlier in our sessions together, sexual activity, especially in middle school, brings with it many risks and consequences and complicates relationships. What are the three risks associated with sexual activity?

[Pregnancy/fathering a child, STIs, and emotional heartache.]

Right now we want to talk to you about the risk to your emotions. But first I need two volunteers to come join me in the front of the room.

Educator highlight: This activity can be done with one or two couples depending on the size of the class, the time, or any other factors.

We are going to give you a heart to hold between the two of you. This heart is really two hearts stuck together. This represents a bonded couple. Now we are going to tell a short story and want you to remember the story is not about our volunteers here. They are just representing the couple in the story.

Educator highlight: Make sure you emphasize that the story is not about the participants in the activity. It might also be helpful to give the volunteers different names. The story included is the basic scenario. If time allows, the story can be embellished to make it more interesting.

_____ (Fictional names) represent a couple who have been dating for a while and decide to be sexually active. They eventually decide they don't get along as well as they used to and they decide to break up. Having sex bonded them and we are going to use two hearts to represent that.



Notes:

[Tell the participants to carefully take their own heart back by pulling the hearts apart without breaking them. Continue talking to the class as the volunteers are trying to pull the hearts apart.]

Educator states:

What's happening to their hearts?

[They are ripping, there are holes, pieces of one heart are stuck on the other heart.]

Exactly. This represents their emotional bond. Sex wasn't just their bodies coming together but also their hearts and emotions.

_____ (Fictional name 1) thought that if he/she got rid of everything that reminded him of his boyfriend/girlfriend, the pain would go away. But no matter what he/she did, he/she still had memories stuck to his/her heart. In fact, in the process of breaking up, his/her heart got pretty torn up.

[Point to his paper heart.]

It will take a long time to heal those holes. _____ (Fictional name 2) was feeling the same way.

What will happen if they rebound right into another relationship without giving themselves time to heal? That could do even more damage to their hearts.

Just because your heart was broken doesn't mean it can't become whole again. Give it time for your heart to heal.

[Show a fold paper heart.]

[Thank the volunteers and ask them to sit down.]



Activity 8.5.5

Healthy Ways to Meet Emotional Needs*

Break up into groups and assign each group an Emotional Needs card with one emotional need and the instruction sheet. Go over the instruction sheet after handing it out and throughout the activity. Refer to Emotional Needs (Handout 8.5.2) for a full list of emotional needs. Write on the board: 1) How could that need be filled for you? 2) How could that emotional need be filled for you? Tell participants they have _____ minutes to brainstorm and then they will present to the class. They will need to appoint writers to document their progress and presenters to present their answers to the larger class. Have groups brainstorm how needs could be met for them and how they can meet that need in someone else. Circulate to encourage participants and answer questions. Then have each group present their solution(s) to the class. After each group presents, acknowledge effort and affirm ideas. You may want to collect all the lists and create a master list for each question and pass them out to the class later. Remind participants of the ways they have discovered to meet emotional needs in a healthy way. Explain that these needs are always present and now each of them is more equipped to handle them in a healthy way.]

* For quality improvement purposes, Activity 8.5.5 Healthy Ways to Meet Emotional Needs (originally an optional activity) was included in the final curriculum in place of the “How We Bond” activity which was identified during process evaluation as confusing for students.

Notes:

Notes:**Educator states:**

Let's review The Big 3 for today's session:

The BIG 3:

- We all have emotional needs that need to be met to be successful in life.
- It is important to meet our emotional needs in a healthy way.
- Sexual activity creates emotional bonds that lead to heartache if they are broken.

And whose choice is it to make good decisions about meeting your healthy needs in a healthy way?

[Ours.]

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

[Remind participants of the question cards and to place them in the question bag. Pass out Parent Connection Form Session 8.5 Emotional Needs and Bonding and collect completed forms from sessions 8.4.]

