Session 8.8

Sex and the Law, Media Influence, Review Topics and Discuss Lessons Learned

Session Overview:

1. Review Session 8.7.
2. Review the legal implications of sexual activity.
3. Discuss how the media can influences decisions.
4. Discuss advertisements and identify messages used in advertisements.
5. Review Session 8.1-8.7 using the Big 3 Review Game.
6. Show "Wait" music video by Lukus Simari.
7. Pass out evaluation forms.
8. Pass out Now and Later candy.
9. Pass out Parent Connection Form Session 8.8: Sex and the Law, Media Influence, Review Topics and Discuss Lessons Learned

Learning Objectives:

- Participants will understand the legal implications of sexual activity.
- Participants will understand that sexual assault is never the victim's fault.
- Participants will discuss the importance of reporting sexual assault.
- Participants will discuss ways to protect themselves from sexual assault.
- Participants will identify ways the media promotes sexual activity.
- Participants will discuss advertisements and how they influence behaviors.

Materials Needed:

- Computer, projector, and speakers
- Jar of Now and Later candy
- Sex and the Law PowerPoint (8.8.2)
- Advertising: What are they Really Trying to Sell? PowerPoint Template (8.8.3)
- Wheel and Big 3 Review Game Cards (8.8.4)
- "Wait" Music Video by Lukus Simari (8.8.5)
- Handouts:
  - Sex and the Law (Handout 8.8.2)
  - Teacher(s) Feedback Form
  - Participant Feedback Form
  - Parent Connection Form Session 8.8: Sex and the Law, Media Influence, Review Topics and Discuss Lessons Learned
- Question cards
- Question bag

Classroom Planning:

- Review Session 8.8 curriculum.
- Populate the Advertising: What are they Really Trying to Sell? PowerPoint Template with current advertisements.
- Make copies of handouts.

The Standards:

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

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Educator states:
Let's review The Big 3 from the last session:

The BIG 3:

- It's important to respond to peer pressure with an assertive answer.
- Self-control is like a muscle, the more your exercise it, the stronger you will be. You need to exercise self-control to practice delayed gratification.
- It's important to set limits in relationships so that you stick with your healthy choices. Make decisions about limits before you're in a high pressure situation.

Notes:

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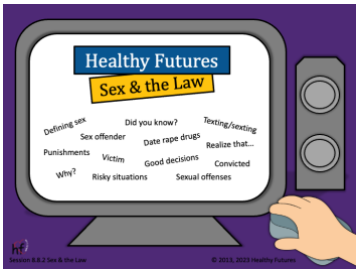
Educator states:
It's important to make good choices because it will help you to get to your goals and dreams. We're going to give you the facts about what the law says about teenagers and sexual activity. It is important for you to know about these laws so you can make informed decisions. It will also help you avoid getting in trouble with the law.

[Pass out the Sex and the Law (Handout 8.8.2). Show the Sex and the Law PowerPoint and have the participants fill out the Sex and the Law handout as you go through the presentation. The answer key to the handout is also in Appendix B.]

PPT Slides: Sex and the Law



[Slide 1]

Today we are going to discuss the laws around sexual activity. Specifically, as the laws relate to sexual activity as a teen. If someone chooses to become sexually active as a teenager it can be against the law. So it is important for you all to be aware of these laws to make informed decisions.

Educator highlight: In the United States the age of consent is determined at the state, territorial, or federal district levels. According to Massachusetts law[7], you have to be 16 years old to legally consent to have sex. If you are implementing this program outside of Massachusetts, check with your state legislature to determine age of consent in your state, territory, or federal district and definitions of felony sexual offenses. Remember that sexual assault is a very serious subject. There may be participants in your class or people that participants know that have been assaulted. Before you begin the PowerPoint, be sure to remind participants that they need to be respectful and take this subject seriously.

[7] Massachusetts Laws Part IV, Title I, Chapter 265 Section 23 and Chapter 272 Section 35A. Available online: https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartIV/TitleI

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[Slide 2]

Educator states:
Defining sex - Sexual activity is any contact with sexual organs with the intent to arouse or gratify sexual desire such as Sexual Touching and Vaginal Sex. It's all sex!

[Slide 3]

There are laws in your state that decide the age at which teens can consent to sexual activity. In _____ (insert state), _____ (insert age) is the age of consent. Can someone tell me what the word "consent" means?

[To give permission.]

Yes. Consent means to give permission. In _____ (insert state), if you are not _____ (insert age) yet, you cannot legally give consent to have sex. That means, anyone who has sex with someone under _____ (insert age) can be charged with rape (event if you both agree to it) because legally, the person under _____ (insert age) is not old enough to give consent.

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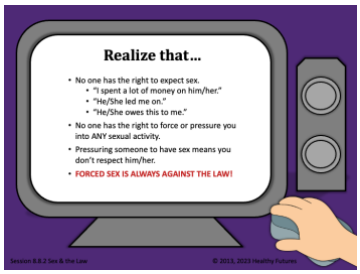
[Slide 4]

Educator states:
You may be asking yourself, "Why are there laws about how old you have to be to consent to sex?" Laws, like rules, are in place to protect people. In this case, children and young teens. Think back to 7th grade when we talked about sexual offenses. One category of sexual offenses we discussed is sexual assault. Can anyone remind me what the definition of sexual assault is?

[Any sexual act in which a person is threatened, coerced, or forced to engage against their will.]

Exactly. Another way of saying this is nonconsensual sexual touching (such as groping). The worst form of sexual assault is rape (such as forced vaginal, anal, or oral penetration using a body part (penis, finger) or an object).

So, in addition to there being laws about when you are legally old enough to consent to sexual activity, there are also laws that punish perpetrators of sexually assault.



[Slide 5]

Remember, forcing sex on someone else is a serious crime no matter what their age. It is ALWAYS wrong to force sexual activity on someone. Also remember victims are not at fault, the perpetrator is at fault. You can only control your behavior. We can't control somebody else's behavior.

Notes:

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Educator states:
No matter what a victim might think or feel, it is never their fault. No one has the right to expect sex. You need to realize that no one owes you sex for any reason. And you never "owe" anyone sex for any reason, and you always have the right to say "No" to any form of sexual activity at any time and any place! Forced sex is against the law – ALWAYS!

[Slide 6]

Don't blame yourself if you are sexually assaulted. It is never your fault if you are sexually assaulted. No one has the right to force you to have sex or to touch you sexually, not even your boyfriend or girlfriend! And you do not have the right to force sex or to touch sexually, not even your boyfriend or girlfriend.

Get help—tell a trusted adult and REPORT the assault. If you were assaulted, you need to tell someone about it. Even if you think you might have been assaulted, you need to tell someone you trust about the incident. Also, you need to report the assault because most likely the abuser is abusing more than one person. You want to protect yourself and protect others by reporting it.

Be believed– If you are sexually assaulted, we recommend that you tell your parent or guardian first. If that isn't possible, tell your teacher, your counselor, your principal…But you need to be believed if you tell someone your story. So if the first person you tell doesn't seem to believe you, tell another person. If the second person doesn't believe you either, tell another person. Keep telling until you are believed.

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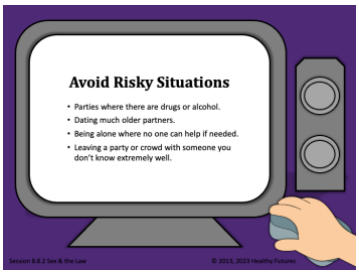
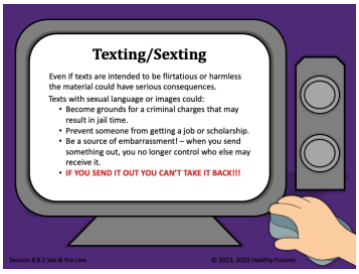


[Slide 7]

Educator states:
Who remembers the tips we taught you in 7th grade to protect yourself?

[Avoid parties where there are drugs and alcohol, avoid dating much older partners, avoid being alone where no one can help if needed, don't leave a party/crowd with someone you don't know well.]

We talk about these things, not to scare you, but to give you important information about how sexual activity can have legal consequences that can really affect your life. Understanding sex and the law as a teenager is important to help you make informed decisions about your sexual activity and understand your rights.



[Slide 8]

Technology allows us to send and receive inappropriate and oftentimes explicit pictures and texts. Even when it's intended to be flirtatious or harmless this material can have very serious consequences. Texts with sexual language or images could: (1) become grounds for criminal charges that may result in jail time, (2) prevent someone from getting a scholarship or job, (3) be a source of embarrassment. Remember, when you send something out, you no longer have control over who else may receive it. If you send it out, you can't take it back! Know the laws in your state and protect yourself from the serious prosecution associated with sexting or texting something inappropriate. Sexting can have serious consequences.

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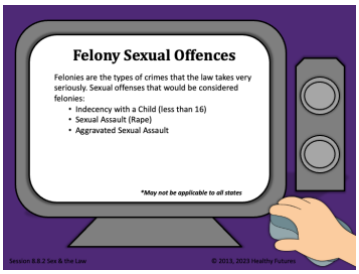

[Slide 9]

Educator states:
Felony sexual offenses are crimes that the law takes extremely seriously. Sexual offenses considered felonies include: indecency with a child (under 16 years old), sexual assault (e.g., rape), and aggravated sexual assault. Aggravated sexual assault is typically defined as a sexual assault that maims, wounds, or disfigures the victims, or involves a victim who is physically or mentally incapacitated. It may also be defined to include a sexual assault that is aided or abetted by another person, occurs during commission of another crime, or involves use of a deadly weapon.

[Slide 10]

GHB and Rohypnol (slang term is “roofie”) are date rape drugs. Regardless of whether you gave them to someone, if you even just have them in your possession, you can be charged with a felony. It is similar to how you would be charged if you were caught with cocaine.

Date rape drugs are very dangerous. People can slip them into your drink without you knowing. These drugs are tasteless, colorless, and odorless. You’d have no idea it was in there. These drugs attack your Central Nervous System. If you consumed that drink with this drug in it, you would pass out. And while you are passed out, someone could take advantage of you.

We are telling you this, not to scare you but so you are prepared for situations you might face in the future. For example, when you are older and going to parties, don’t take an open drink from someone (whether it is soda or alcohol).

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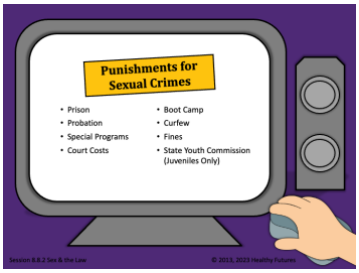
Educator states:
Get your own drink and don't leave it unattended. Meaning, don't set it down and walk away. Keep it with you. You can never be too careful because these are dangerous drugs.

Educator highlight: Sexual assault involving date rape drugs is classified as aggravated sexual assault, a felony.



[Slide 11]

Prison, probation, special programs, court costs, boot camp, curfew, fines, and state youth commission are all examples of potential punishments for sexual crimes. Often a punishment will include several of these. All crimes are different, and the punishment is designed to fit the crime.

[Slide 12]

In addition to serving their sentence, people convicted of felonies may never hold public office (e.g., principal, governor, senator, etc.), never carry a firearm, may lose licenses (e.g., driving, fishing, hunting, professional medical license, etc.) and have to report the felony when you're applying for part-time jobs in high school or college. One of the questions on job applications is "Have you ever been convicted of a felony?" This is a mandatory question and you will have to answer it honestly.

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Educator states:
Once you are convicted of a sexual offense, you will have to register as a sex offender. Regardless of age, he or she will be required to register as a sex offender. Every time they move somewhere, they have to check in with local law enforcement agencies and register with them. This is mandatory. If required to register as a sex offender, the person's picture and address will be published in the newspaper with the crime they have committed and may be posted on the internet. By law, the ad has to run two consecutive Sundays and is paid for by the sex offender. A judge can also assign other punishments such as requiring a sex offender to post a large sign at his/her residence to alert neighbors that a sex offender lives at that address. The law considers public safety more important than the privacy rights of persons convicted of sexual offenses.

Educator highlight: A federal crime law called "Megan's Law" requires all 50 states to inform the public of convicted sex offenders.

[Slide 13]

Remember how we say the choices you make will affect you later? Getting in trouble with the law as a teen will impact your future. And making informed decisions about your sexual activity will help you avoid legal ramifications if you break the laws in your state. Offenses committed when you are young can follow you for the rest of your life. Making good choices can help you avoid getting in trouble with the law. And that's important because: The choices you make…NOW will affect you…LATER!

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Educator highlight: Before class, populate the Advertising: What are they Really Trying to Sell? PowerPoint Template with examples of current advertisements that use sexual images to sell a product. For example, an advertisement featuring two teens kissing may be using sexual activity to sell gum.

Educator states:
Next we are going to talk about something else that can have an influence on us, the media. What do we mean when we say "the media"?

[Have participants respond and write the list up on the board. The list may include television, radio, magazines, movies, music, the internet, etc.]

Do you think advertising affects what you think, do or buy?

[Give time for various answers.]

Who can think of their favorite commercial? What is it about? How do they get their message across?

Raise your hand if you agree that media can influence you. Raise your hand if you disagree with me.

Let me give you an example of how media can influence you without you even realizing it.

Who has ever gone around singing a song they don't even like? Let me ask you: Why do you go around singing that song? It doesn't matter what reason you give me. You have been influenced. Before you know it, you are starting to like the song, hum the song, and you might even wind up purchasing it. Why? Because you were influenced by the music industry, the radio, maybe YouTube, or iTunes, or other places you heard the song.

Do you think that advertisers who spend millions of dollars on ads think that their ads affect you in any way?

[Yes.]

Why do they spend this money on advertising?

[To get people to buy their products.]

What is their goal?

[To make money.]

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Educator states:
What about relationships? What do the TV shows, music, and movies say about relationships? About sex?

[Give time for answers.]

So we talked about music but let's talk about advertising in magazines or TV.

We are going to look at some ads. What they're actually advertising is covered up but from the context of the ad (the pictures and words used) I want you to guess what they're trying to sell.

[Show the Advertising: What are they Really Trying to Sell? PowerPoint. Stop on each slide, show the advertisement, and have participants guess what the advertisement is for. After participants guess, lift up the block covering the product in the advertisement. Ask participants after each one, "Do they really need to do this to advertise _____ (insert product here)? No. But it gets your attention.]

PPT Slides: Advertising: What are they Really Trying to Sell?

[Slide 1]

[Slide 2]

That is the way that advertisements are used to influence the way we think. They want to make you think that if you use this product you will be gorgeous, sexy, and rich and have all the guys or girls running after you. Is that really true?

[No.]

Notes:

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[If time allows, discuss the following.]

Educator states:
What about how we use media in relationships? How do we use social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, SnapChat, etc.) in relationships?

We use social media to:

- Meet people
- Make connections
- Impress people
- Fight with people

Remember that it is unhealthy, inappropriate, and sometimes illegal to:

- Send unflattering or partially clothed or unclothed images of yourself or others (sexting),
- Spread rumors,
- Instigate a fight,
- Set up a false identity to fool people (catfishing)

Again, we're not here to tell you what to do. You have to make your own decisions. We're here to have you think from a new perspective and for you to be able to make healthy and smart choices for yourselves. Be careful what you're listening to and realize that it's only meant for entertainment, nothing more. The TV shows and the music you listen to can definitely impact your decisions.

Here are The Big 3 from our session today:

THE BIG 3:

- There can be legal consequences to sexual activity
- Nobody has the right to demand sex. Forced sex is against the law.
- The media often uses sex to sell products. Be aware of the obvious and hidden messages in the media you use (television, music, magazines, social media, etc.) and the influence the media has on your decisions.

Notes:

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[Using the wheel, review the topics covered during the 8th grade program.]

Educator states:

Session 8.1:

- You need to stay focused on your goals and dreams if you are going to be successful.
- Choices have consequences. There are three risks associated with sex: pregnancy/fathering a child, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and emotional heartache. Choosing to delay sexual activity will help you stay focused on your goals and dreams.
- The people you spend time with influence your decisions and your ability to achieve your goals and dreams. Choose to spend time with people that meet your needs in a healthy way.

Session 8.2:

- Puberty is the process of changing from a child to an adult and a time when there are physical, social and emotion changes.
- Unplanned pregnancy is a risk of sex. Think about it – Are you ready to be a parent?
- Choosing not to have sex can help you avoid the responsibilities of being a teen parent.

Session 8.3:

- The only 100% effective way to prevent pregnancy is to choose not to have sex.
- If you are sexually active, you need to use a dual method by choosing an effective method of birth control to prevent pregnancy and condoms to reduce the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- If you want to learn more about these effective methods of contraception please talk to your doctor, parent or guardian, or other trusted adult.

Session 8.4:

- STIs spread quickly and easily.
- The most common symptom of an STI is no symptom. If you or someone you know has been sexually active, get tested!
- Choosing not to have sex (vaginal, oral, anal, or outercourse) until you are in a faithful lifelong relationship is the only 100% way to protect yourself from STIs. If you or someone you know is 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:

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Educator states:

Session 8.5:

- 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.

Session 8.6:

- A healthy relationship is one that builds up both people emotionally and physically.
- It is important to know the characteristics of a healthy relationship so that you can know if you are in one.
- Choosing a healthy relationship can help you avoid risky behaviors and achieve your goals and dreams.

Session 8.7:

- It's important to respond to peer pressure with an assertive answer.
- Self-control is like a muscle, the more your exercise it, the stronger you will be. You need to exercise self-control to practice delayed gratification.
- It's important to set limits in relationships so that you stick with your healthy choices. Make decisions about limits before you're in a high pressure situation.

Session 8.8:

- There can be legal consequences to sexual activity.
- Nobody has the right to demand sex. Forced sex is against the law.
- The media often uses sex to sell products. Be aware of the obvious and hidden messages in the media you use (television, music, magazines, social media, etc.) and the influence the media has on your decisions.

Bonus Questions:

[For the Bonus Questions cards write up bonus questions based on curriculum content/topics that you think this class needs an additional review on. The questions and answers can be written down on the purple Bonus Question cards.]

Notes:

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Educator states:
Now, we are going to show you a music video by Lukus Simari. It was filmed in Lowell, Massachusetts.

[Show the "Wait" music video.]

Remember that regardless of whether or not you think about the consequences to your decisions:

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

Notes:

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Notes:

Educator states:
We have really enjoyed our time with you for the last eight sessions! We know that as 8th graders you all will be entering high school next year. High school can be exciting and intimidating so we want you to take your Healthy Futures lessons with you.

We want you to remember to choose good friends because you can't choose your mom, dad, brother or sister but you can choose your friends. So choose your friends with positive qualities we discussed. At Healthy Futures we like to say "show me your friends and I'll show you your future!"

Next we want you to remember to focus on your dreams and goals, not the every day problems, issues, or drama you may face! If you want to be successful, so know what you want and know how to get there!

And lastly, remember to think about the consequences of the decisions you make because…

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

[Pass out Participant Feedback Forms and Teacher Feedback Form(s). Collect the forms once they are completed.]

[Pass out Parent Connection Form Session 8.8: Sex and the Law, Media Influence, Review Topics and Discuss Lessons Learned and collect completed forms from sessions 8.7. Distribute Now and Laters and incentives.]

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