

Consent: Ready vs not ready for sexual activity

Curriculum links

[WA curriculum links](#)

HPE: Healthy and active communities

- Impact of external influences on the ability of adolescents to make safe and informed choices relating to:
 - sexual health behaviours
 - alcohol, drugs or other harmful substance use
 - risk-taking

[International technical guidance on sexuality education](#)

Key concept 2.3 (12-15 years old):

- Culture, religion and society influence our understanding of sexuality.

Materials

- A4 blank paper [2 per student]
- Teaching Resource: [Conversation starter](#)
- Teaching Resource: [Who is having sex?](#)

Before you get started

- Begin this lesson with a reminder for students to look after themselves and their friends. If students feel uncomfortable about the subject matter, they are welcome to take a break for a drink or bathroom visit. Ensure a [group agreement](#) are established before beginning this activity.
- Self-esteem and confidence of some students may be an issue during this activity. Be reassuring and support students as they develop the ability to practise assertive “no” statements. This will help students with their resilience and emotional wellbeing development.
- It is possible that a student has been involved in a traumatic experience relating to sexual abuse. Teachers should know and understand the [protective interrupting](#) technique and what, why, when and how it is needed and used before facilitating this activity. It is important that teachers are familiar with the [managing disclosures](#) Guide and have a risk management strategy in place.
- Refer to additional Guides: [STIs/BBVs](#) and [Sexual decision making](#) for further content information related to this activity.

Learning activities

Group agreement

5 min

Teaching tip: A group agreement must be established before any Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) program begins to ensure a safe learning environment. Read [Essential Tool: Establishing a group agreement](#) for tips on how to create one and what to include.

1. Revise or create the class [group agreement](#).

Considering your values

25 mins

1. Write a range of the following words (depending on the class) on the whiteboard. Have students form small groups and using a [T-chart](#) categorise each sexual activity into either “Sex” or “Not sex”:
Massage; Cuddling; Kissing; Sexting; Holding hands; Vaginal intercourse; Oral sex; Masturbation; Touching genitals; Rubbing nipples; Anal sex; Pornography
2. Ask:
 1. Which behaviours did groups agree on?
 2. Which behaviours were there disagreement about?
 3. Was it hard to classify these behaviours? If yes, why?
 4. Was it easy for the group to come to a shared decision for each behaviour?
 5. What would be a good definition of sex?
 6. People have very different views about what they define as sex. What could be the implications for couples who have different definitions of sex?
3. Stress that if someone wants to and agrees to have sexual contact, this may include things such as holding hands, kissing, caressing and other intimate activity, and that it does not have to be sexual intercourse to be pleasurable. For some people, sexual activity may be in a context of love, and for others, in certain situations, it may not. It should, however, always be in a context of trust and respect.
4. Discuss with students the different types of sexual relationships, e.g. 'going out together', 'hooking up', 'bootie call', 'friends with benefits', 'one night stand' etc.
5. Have students write down an estimate of what percentage of their peer group they think have experienced some form of sexual activity and sexual intercourse. Present the Teaching Resource: Who is having sex? outlining these statistics and discuss reactions to the survey findings.
6. Have students brainstorm in small groups responses to the following questions:
 1. How does somebody know they are ready for a relationship?
 2. How does somebody know they are ready for sex?
7. Refer to the Teaching Resource: Conversation starter as a starting point for discussing whether students are ready or not ready for sex. The statements provide a starting place for a conversation with a young person if they are considering about whether or not they are ready to begin having sex. It's crucial that young people decide whether they are ready before someone else decides for them. This handout is based on the resource: [Talk soon. Talk often. A Guide for Parents Talking to Their Kids About Sex.](#)

Prepared or not prepared?

25 mins

8. Provide each student with two blank A4 sheets of paper.
9. On the first sheet, students draw a [T-chart](#), illustrating, labelling and describing the qualities and features of an adolescent who **is prepared** and ready for making the choices related to having sexual intercourse.
 1. What does this young person **feel like** and **sound like**? It is suggested that the teacher model the T-Chart for the adolescent who is prepared.
For example:
Feels like... it's in the context of trust and respect and you are in control of basic aspects of your life
Sounds like... being able to communicate fully and openly about preventing infection and unwanted pregnancy.
10. On the second sheet, students independently complete the T-chart for an adolescent who **is not prepared** and not ready for making the choices related to having sexual intercourse.
 1. Incorporate social and emotional elements using thought bubbles and feelings vocabulary.
11. Consider the influence that alcohol and other drugs may have upon choices made.

3-2-1 Reflection

1. Students share and compare their [T-charts](#) in small groups or in pairs. Promote discussion about common features, realism of concepts, accuracy, etc.
Ask:
 1. How would you discuss contraception options with your partner?
 2. How would you deal/cope/feel if you found out you and your partner were pregnant?
 3. You and your partner have been sexually active for a few months now. You are not enjoying it as much as you thought you would. What do you do?
2. Group the 'ready' and 'not ready' charts together and discuss as a whole class.
3. Identify the most common indicators of readiness and highlight the most frequently used vocabulary to describe feelings. Consider that sounds can also indicate consent.

External related resources

The practical guide to love, sex and relationships

A teaching resource from the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University.

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