Lesson for
Breaking the Ice

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
By the end of this lesson, participants will be able to

1) Describe at least three strategies to initiate difficult conversations
2) List at least three topics related to sexuality that teens can find difficult to talk about

TIME NEEDED
80 minutes

MATERIALS
• One copy of each “Breaking the Ice” article
• Chalkboard or flipchart paper
• Chalk or markers
• Masking tape, if using flipchart paper
• Copies of the Winter 2008 issue of Sex, Etc.–one per student
• One copy of each “A ‘Breaking the Ice’ Conversation” worksheet–eight total

PREPARATION
Make three or four copies of each article, so that each student in each of the eight groups receives his or her own article.

PROCEDURE
1. Tell students that this lesson will address topics about sexuality that teens might find difficult to break the ice about. Ask students to brainstorm some topics that they feel might be difficult to talk about with a boyfriend or girlfriend, friend or family member. Write their responses on the chalkboard or flipchart paper. (Facilitator’s Note: Responses might include asking someone out, talking about sex, telling someone you’re pregnant, telling someone you have a sexually transmitted disease, etc.) [2 minutes]

2. Divide students into eight groups. Tell students that each group will receive a different “Breaking the Ice” article. Explain that their task is to read the article and then discuss their reactions in their small group. Distribute copies of the “Breaking the Ice” articles so that each group has a different one. Allow groups five minutes to read and discuss. [7 minutes]

3. Next, explain that in order to help students practice having these difficult conversations, each group will help create a sample dialogue. Explain that each small group will receive a worksheet showing the topic that matches their article. The group is to come up with how the teen could start a conversation about the designated topic with Person B, who might be the teen’s girlfriend, boyfriend or parent/guardian. After they have come up with the first line of the
conversation from the teen, they are to stop and wait for instructions. [3 minutes]

4. Explain that there are unique ground rules for this activity:
   - The conversations need to be realistic, not cheesy or overly dramatic
   - The conversations need to be appropriate for a school setting, meaning no swearing or threats of physical violence, etc. [3 minutes]

Ask if there are any questions about the directions.

5. Distribute copies of the worksheet “A ‘Breaking the Ice’ Conversation,” so that each group has the worksheet that matches the topic they were discussing. Give students five minutes to complete their first line of dialogue. (Facilitator’s Note: It is helpful to mill around the groups and help problem solve or encourage groups as needed. This is also an opportunity to ensure that groups remain on task and participate appropriately.) [5 minutes]

6. Call time when five minutes have passed and explain to students that the worksheets will now rotate among groups. They will next be creating dialogue for Person B or the girlfriend/boyfriend or the parent/guardian depending on which “Breaking the Ice” worksheet they receive next. Explain that once the groups receive their new worksheet, they should read the situation and dialogue created by the previous group and then create their own response for Person B. Remind groups of the ground rules as needed. Allow groups an additional five minutes to complete. [5 minutes]

7. Call time when five minutes have passed and continue rotating worksheets, following the above procedure until the entire conversation has been created. [15 minutes]

8. Next, ask groups to select two members to read the dialogue aloud to the entire group. Ask which group would like to volunteer to begin and continue hearing back from each group until all groups have participated. [10 minutes]

9. Ask the following discussion questions to the whole group:
   - What strategies did the teens use to initiate discussion?
   - Which of these strategies do you think was most effective, and why?
   - What other factors might have an impact on these conversations?
   - If the conversation was not unfolding the way the teen had hoped, what other suggestions could you offer them? [10 minutes]

10. Distribute copies of the Winter 2008 issue of Sex, Etc. and ask for eight volunteers to read a different “Breaking the Ice” article aloud to the group. [10 minutes]

11. Write the following stem sentences on the chalkboard or flipchart paper one at a time and have students write on a scrap piece of paper the first response that comes to mind. [5 minutes]
   - As a result of this lesson, I think...
   - As a result of this lesson, I feel...
   - As a result of this lesson, I wonder...

12. Ask students to volunteer responses to each statement as you read them one at a time. Close by encouraging your students to use some of the strategies brainstormed during the lesson to initiate any difficult conversations they may need to have in their lives. [5 minutes]
Instructions: The teen is nervous about asking someone out. Work with your group to come up with an effective way to start this conversation. Write what your group thinks the teen should say below, and when time is called, pass the sheet to the next group. The next group will come up with a response to what the previous group has written. PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY, SO OTHERS CAN READ YOUR HANDWRITING!

Teen: __________________________________________________________

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Person B: _______________________________________________________

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Teen: __________________________________________________________

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Person B: _______________________________________________________

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Teen: __________________________________________________________

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Person B: _______________________________________________________

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Teen: __________________________________________________________

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Instructions: The teen isn’t a virgin and is nervous about telling his or her boyfriend or girlfriend. Work with your group to come up with an effective way to start this conversation. Write what your group thinks the teen should say below, and when time is called, pass the sheet to the next group. The next group will come up with a response to what the previous group has written. PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY, SO OTHERS CAN READ YOUR HANDWRITING!

Teen: __________________________________________________________________________

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__________________________________________________________________________________

Girlfriend/Boyfriend: __________________________________________________________________________

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__________________________________________________________________________________

Teen: ___________________________________________________________________________________

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Girlfriend/Boyfriend: __________________________________________________________________________

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Teen: ___________________________________________________________________________________

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Girlfriend/Boyfriend: __________________________________________________________________________

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Teen: ___________________________________________________________________________________

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A “Breaking the Ice” Conversation
How to Tell Your Partner What You’re Ready (or Not Ready) for Sexually

Instructions: The teen is not ready to have sex and is nervous about telling his or her boyfriend or girlfriend. Work with your group to come up with an effective way to start this conversation. Write what your group thinks the teen should say below, and when time is called, pass the sheet to the next group. The next group will come up with a response to what the previous group has written. PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY, SO OTHERS CAN READ YOUR HANDWRITING!

Teen: ________________________________

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Girlfriend/Boyfriend: ________________________________

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Teen: ________________________________

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Girlfriend/Boyfriend: ________________________________

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Teen: ________________________________

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Girlfriend/Boyfriend: ________________________________

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Teen: ________________________________

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Instructions: The teen is ready to have sex and is nervous about telling his or her boyfriend or girlfriend. Work with your group to come up with an effective way to start this conversation. Write what your group thinks the teen should say below, and when time is called, pass the sheet to the next group. The next group will come up with a response to what the previous group has written. PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY, SO OTHERS CAN READ YOUR HANDWRITING!

Teen: ____________________________________________________________

Girlfriend/Boyfriend: ____________________________________________

Teen: ____________________________________________________________

Girlfriend/Boyfriend: ____________________________________________

Teen: ____________________________________________________________

Girlfriend/Boyfriend: ____________________________________________

Teen: ____________________________________________________________
A “Breaking the Ice” Conversation
How to Tell Your Parents You’re Pregnant or That Your Girlfriend Is Pregnant

Instructions: The teen is nervous about telling her parent or guardian that she’s pregnant or telling his parent or guardian that his girlfriend is pregnant. Work with your group to come up with an effective way to start this conversation. Write what your group thinks the teen should say below, and when time is called, pass the sheet to the next group. The next group will come up with a response to what the previous group has written.

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY, SO OTHERS CAN READ YOUR HANDWRITING!

Teen: ________________________________________________________________

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Parent/Guardian: __________________________________________________

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Teen: ________________________________________________________________

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Parent/Guardian: __________________________________________________

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Teen: ________________________________________________________________

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Parent/Guardian: __________________________________________________

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Teen: ________________________________________________________________

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Instructions: The teen has a sexually transmitted disease and is nervous about telling his or her boyfriend or girlfriend. Work with your group to come up with an effective way to start this conversation. Write what your group thinks the teen should say below, and when time is called, pass the sheet to the next group. The next group will come up with a response to what the previous group has written.

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY, SO OTHERS CAN READ YOUR HANDWRITING!

Teen: ________________________________________________________________

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Girlfriend/Boyfriend: ________________________________________________

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Teen: ________________________________________________________________

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Girlfriend/Boyfriend: ________________________________________________

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Teen: ________________________________________________________________

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Girlfriend/Boyfriend: ________________________________________________

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Teen: ________________________________________________________________

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Instructions: The teen is gay, lesbian or bisexual and is nervous about telling his or her parent or guardian. Work with your group to come up with an effective way to start this conversation. Write what your group thinks the teen should say below, and when time is called, pass the sheet to the next group. The next group will come up with a response to what the previous group has written. PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY, SO OTHERS CAN READ YOUR HANDWRITING!

Teen: ____________________________________________________________

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Parent/Guardian: ______________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

Teen: __________________________________________________________

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Parent/Guardian: ______________________________________________

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Teen: __________________________________________________________

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Parent/Guardian: ______________________________________________

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Teen: __________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________
Instructions: The teen is nervous about breaking up. Work with your group to come up with an effective way to start this conversation. Write what your group thinks the teen should say below, and when time is called, pass the sheet to the next group. The next group will come up with a response to what the previous group has written. **PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY, SO OTHERS CAN READ YOUR HANDWRITING!**

Teen:  
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Person B:  
________________________________________________________

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Teen:  
________________________________________________________

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Person B:  
________________________________________________________

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Teen:  
________________________________________________________

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Person B:  
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Teen:  
________________________________________________________

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