Lesson Plan
By Michelle Scarpulla, M.P.H., MCHES
For Professionals Working With Teens
Sexetc.org       Winter 2012

Like Mother, Like Son?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
At the end of this lesson, students will be able to

1. List one message they have received about sex from four different sources.
2. Discuss what impact those messages have on their sexual decision making skills.

NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS ADDRESSED

Standard 2: Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology and other factors on health behaviors.

Standard 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

TIME NEEDED
50 minutes on Day 1
25 minutes on Day 2

MATERIALS
• Index cards—one per student
• Copies of “Like Mother, Like Son?”—one per student
• Copies of Like Mother, Like Son? Homework Instructions—one per student
• Copies of Like Mother, Like Son? Worksheet—one per student

PREPARATION
If needed, brush up on your knowledge about birth control methods and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) so you can respond to potential questions and correct misinformation that might arise during this lesson. One way to refresh yourself is by visiting Sexetc.org and checking out the birth control and STD topic areas, especially the FAQs section. Additionally, this lesson plan can serve as a review for students who have recently completed a unit about birth control and STDs.

PROCEDURE
Day 1

1. Write the word “sexuality” on the board and ask the class how they would define it. Be sure that they include sexual orientation, gender identity, relationships, intercourse, romance, contraception and STDs in their definition. Explain that today we are going to examine where we learn about and get messages regarding sexuality.
Ask them, “Who have you learned about sex and sexuality from?” After taking some responses, which may include parents, teachers, friends, siblings, etc., distribute an index card to each student. Tell them that you are going to ask them to think about and write down messages they have gotten about sexuality from different sources in their lives. [5 minutes]

2. Starting with the top left corner of the index card, ask them to write down one message they have gotten from their parents or guardians about sex or sexuality. Remind them that silence can be a message, too. (Facilitator’s note: Pause after giving each instruction so that students have time to write. You may want to draw a rectangle on the board, simulating an index card, and write each source in the corner as you go along so that at the end, the board looks like the following.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Peers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religion/Culture</td>
<td>Media</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the top right corner, ask students to write down one message they have gotten from their peers about sex or sexuality. Remind them that “peers” includes not only their friends, but others who are a similar age. In the bottom left corner, ask them to write down one message they have gotten from their religion or culture about sex or sexuality. In the bottom right corner, ask them to write down one message they have gotten from the media, including TV, music, movies, the Internet or magazines about sex or sexuality. Finally, on the back of the card, ask them to write down which message has been the “loudest” or the strongest message they have gotten about sexuality. [5 minutes]

3. Divide students into groups of four to five. Ask them to discuss with their group the messages that they received. Ask students to note any conflicting messages and any messages that all group members had in common. [10 minutes]

4. After 10 minutes, call the group back together. Process with some or all of the following questions:

- What message(s) did your group have in common?
- What message(s) were the loudest?
- Were there any conflicting messages (e.g., religion says, “Don’t have sex until marriage,” while media says, “Have sex, but use protection.”)? If yes, what were they? How do you decide which message to listen to?
- Is there any information or message that you have not gotten from any of those sources, but that you wish you did?
- How do these messages affect your decisions regarding sex?
- How do teens make decisions about sex or sexuality with conflicting or missing information?
- How do you think these messages compare to the messages your own parents/guardians received about sex and sexuality when they were growing up? [15 minutes]

5. Distribute a copy of the article “Like Mother, Like Son? Talking to Mom About Sex” and read together. After reading the article, ask the following questions:

- Have any of you had a conversation like this with your parents or guardians? If so, what was it like?
- Do you think it’s easier, harder or about the same for kids today to talk with their parents/guardians about sex? Why? [10 minutes]

6. Conclude the lesson by telling students that their next assignment is to have a conversation like this with their parents. Give each student homework instructions and a worksheet. Tell them that they are going to show their parents the article and do the index card activity with them for homework. Ask if there are any questions. [5 minutes]
Day 2

1. Collect the homework from the class. Ask the students to stand up and find a partner. If there is an odd number of students, there can be one group of three. Tell the group that they will have two minutes to discuss the following question with their partner: How did it feel to ask your parents these questions? [5 minutes]

2. After two minutes, call time and tell the group to find a new partner. Tell them they will again have two minutes to discuss the next question: How did your parents’ answers compare to your own? [5 minutes]

3. After two minutes, again call time and tell the group to find a new partner and discuss the following questions: What message do your parents hope you get? How do you feel about that? [5 minutes]

4. Have the class return to their seats and ask for a few students to share their answers to each of the questions. [8 minutes]

5. Conclude this lesson by acknowledging that for some parents and teens this is a difficult conversation. Ask students who they can go to for answers to any questions they have if they are not comfortable talking to their parents or guardians. List the following Web sites on the board and tell them that these are also great sources of information regarding sexuality:

   • Sexetc.org
   • Planned Parenthood.org

   [2 minutes]
Like Mother, Like Son?
Homework Instructions

Directions: You will need a parent or guardian and about 15 minutes of uninterrupted time to have a conversation. Tell your parent or guardian that you need his or her help with a homework assignment, which will take about 15 minutes.

1. Give your parent or guardian the article to read to him-or herself.
2. Once your parent or guardian has read the article, ask about some of the messages he or she received as a teenager about sex and sexuality.
3. Give your parent or guardian the worksheet and a pen.
4. Say the following: “During the first part of this activity, please do not talk. I am going to ask you to write some things down, and then we will talk about them.”
5. Continue by saying, “Think back to your teenage years and write down in the top left corner one message you received about sex or sexuality from your parents.”
6. Once your parent or guardian has written down a message he or she got from parents about sex or sexuality, say, “In the top right corner, write down one message you received about sex or sexuality from your peers.”
7. Once your parent or guardian has written down a message he or she got from peers about sex or sexuality, say “In the bottom left corner, write down one message you received about sex or sexuality from your religion or culture.”
8. Once your parent or guardian has written down a message he or she got from his or her religion or culture about sex or sexuality, say “In the bottom right corner, write down one message you received about sex or sexuality from the media (TV shows, music, movies, magazines, etc.).”
9. Finally say, “On the bottom of the paper, write down one message you hope that I get about sex or sexuality while I am a teenager.”
10. Now ask your parent or guardian, “What were the messages you received about sex and sexuality?”
11. Ask your parent or guardian, “Looking back, do you think those were healthy and realistic messages for a teenager? Why or why not?”
12. Ask your parent or guardian, “What message do you hope that I get about sex or sexuality? Why?”
13. Wrap up the conversation with “Thank you for helping me.”

Remember to collect the worksheet from your parent or guardian to hand in as homework tomorrow in class.
Like Mother, Like Son? Worksheet

Student Name: ___________________________  Parent/Guardian: ___________________________

Note: This worksheet will be handed in to the teacher as a homework assignment.

Parents:  Peers:

Religion/Culture:  Media: