



Discussion Guide

For Adults Working with Teens

Sexetc.org

answer
sex ed, honestly

RUTGERS
UNIVERSITY

Lesson Title: The Choices We Make

Time: 50 minutes

Learning Objectives: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- 1) Recognize and dispel two common myths about how teens can or cannot become pregnant
- 2) Identify at least three choices available for teens facing an unplanned pregnancy and reflect on the potential consequences of each choice
- 3) Explain why preventing pregnancy is easier than dealing with an unplanned pregnancy

Materials:

Scenarios USA DVD “The Choices We Make”

(available at www.scenariosusa.org/shop/index.html or by calling 866.414.1044)

TV/DVD or Internet connection and LCD projector

Find Someone Who worksheet – one copy per student

Four Corners Scenarios for Facilitators – one copy

Teen Sexual Health Resources – one copy per student

Four 8.5 x 11 signs each with a number 1, 2, 3 or 4 written on it

Masking Tape

Index Card

Prize for Find Someone Who – gum, candy, sticker, etc.

Scrap paper for use during Four Corners

Preparation:

- Review the Find Someone Who warm-up activity to ensure that your students will be able to respond adequately. If you believe your students will not know the answers, adapt the statements to better fit the knowledge level of your group.
- Tape a sign in each corner of the room. Make sure that there is sufficient space for students to move around the room and cluster by each sign for discussions.

Procedure:

1) Explain to students that you will distribute the worksheet Find Someone Who? and the goal is to find someone for whom each item is true, introduce yourself and have them tell you the answer and initial your worksheet next to that item. The rule is you can only have another person sign your worksheet once. Explain that the first person to get all 12 items signed will win a prize. Ask if there are any questions about the directions and if not, distribute copies of the worksheet. Have students stand up and complete the exercise, then award the prize to the winner. Next instruct all students to return to their seats. [Facilitator's Note: If you have less than 12 students in your group, allow students to receive two signatures from each person.]

Process the activity by asking:

- How did it feel to do that activity?
- Which items on the worksheet were more difficult to find someone to sign? Why do you think that is?
- Did anyone learn something new from this activity? If so, what was it?

[Facilitator's Note: Items #3 on Find Someone Who addresses the myth that there is a "safe time" during their menstrual cycle when girls can have unprotected sexual intercourse and not become pregnant. Make sure teens understand that due to irregular and short cycles, there is no time when it is safe to have unprotected sexual intercourse. Item #4 on Find Someone Who addresses pulling out or withdrawal as a method of pregnancy prevention. Make sure teens understand that if a guy pulls out his penis before he ejaculates, that is better method than using nothing, but it is still possible for a girl to become pregnant since timing pulling out in time is very difficult.]
[10 minutes]

2) Introduce the film by explaining that Scenarios USA is an organization that invites teens to write stories and scripts, which if they win the annual contest, are made professionally into films. The film you will show is called The Choices We Make and is about a young couple and the choices they face. Explain that you will play the video and about half-way through will stop the video and ask students to do some writing. Then you will play the remainder of the video and talk about it together as a group. Ask if there are any questions about the directions and if not, begin playing the video. [Facilitator's Note: Stop the video at the conclusion of the scene in which Maria is writing in her journal the second time, with her voiceover. The last line the viewer sees is "What am I going to do?"] [10 minutes]

3) Once you have stopped the video, distribute an index card to each student. Explain that they are to imagine that Maria is their younger sister and she is writing this same journal entry to you as an email, text message or letter. Instruct students to write back to Maria with advice, suggestions or anything you'd want her to know at this point. Explain that they are to keep this activity anonymous and that you will be collecting their responses to Maria and reading some aloud at the end of class. Allow students two minutes to complete. [5 minutes]

4) Collect these from from students and continue playing the rest of the video.
[Facilitator's Note: While students are watching the remainder of the video, screen their responses to Maria and select two or three that seem poignant or powerful to read aloud to group at the conclusion of the lesson. Try to select a variety of responses from the students' submissions.] [5 minutes]

5) Once the video is over, ask the group the following process questions:

- Did you think this situation was realistic? Why or why not?
- What did you think about the ending to the video? Would you have created an alternate ending? If so, what would it be?
- Any guesses about what you think has happened or might happens next?
- What choices were Maria and Trammel facing?
- What are some consequences of each potential choice?
- If you were Trammel or Maria's friend, what advice would you have given?
- What are all the things Maria and Trammel done to prevent pregnancy?
- In your opinion, which is easier, deciding what to do about an unplanned pregnancy or preventing pregnancy? Why? [5 minutes]

6) Explain that the next activity will explore some difficult situations about teens and unintended pregnancy. Point out that there are four signs, one in each corner of the room representing a choice. Explain that you will read a scenario aloud and four possible choices about what a person could do next. Explain that each student should select which choice they believe is best and move to the corner that represents their choice. Go on to explain that if a person does not feel that any of the four choices represent the best decision, they are to stand in the center of the room and write on the scrap paper what they believe a better decision is and why. Ask participants if there are any questions about the directions. If not, begin by reading the first scenario.
[Facilitator's Note: It can help to read the four options twice for the group.] [2 minutes]

7) Once students have moved to the corner that represents their choice, give students a couple of minutes to talk with others in their corner about why their believe that is the best choice. Then, ask for a couple of volunteers from each corner to share why they believe that is the best choice with the large group. Ask probing questions that explore the pros and cons of each decision. If any students are in the center, ask what option they felt was best and why. Repeat procedure with the two remaining scenarios and when complete, have students return to their seats. Ask students what they learned as a result of this exercise and facilitate a brief discussion. [10 minutes]

8) As a closure for this lesson, read two or three of the student's responses to Maria. End the lesson by explaining the importance of prevention and distributing a copy of Teen Sexual Health Resources to each student. [3 minutes]

Extension Activity

- Have students write a letter to the most important adult in their life explaining that they are or have gotten someone pregnant. After students write that letter,

ask them to discuss how they told the adult and what it felt like to have to tell an adult about the pregnancy.

- Research community-based organizations that provide sexual health information and health care services for teens. Students can create a teen resource guide.
- Research cultural attitudes about abortion, adoption and teen parenting.
- Research current statistics about teen pregnancy in the US and compare and contrast different racial/ethnic groups, ages, geographic locations, etc.
- Research sexuality education policy and the absence or presence of abstinence-only-until-marriage programs compared to statistics of teen sexual health, such as pregnancy, STD rates, abortion rates, HIV rates, etc.

Find Someone Who

1. Knows someone who is dating someone who is three or more years older than they are. _____
2. Can correctly tell you what the “morning after pill”, also called emergency contraception, is. _____
3. Can tell you why a girl could get pregnant even right before, during or after her period. _____
4. Can describe the “pulling out” method and why it doesn’t work well to prevent pregnancy. _____
5. Can tell you how they feel about abortion. _____
6. Can tell you how they feel about adoption. _____
7. Can tell you how they feel about teens becoming parents. _____
8. Knows someone who has had unprotected sexual intercourse and wishes they had waited. _____
9. Can tell you three places where teens can buy condoms in your city/town. _____
10. Knows someone who got pregnant while they were a teenager. _____
11. Can tell you two reasons why not having sexual intercourse is the healthiest option for most teens. _____
12. Can predict how their parents/guardians might react if they got pregnant or got a girl pregnant. _____
13. Knows how soon a pregnancy test can correctly tell someone if they’re pregnant or not. _____
14. Knows three symptoms of pregnancy. _____

Four Corners Scenarios for Facilitators

A) Your close friend is having sexual intercourse with their partner, but they don't always use condoms because their partner said that right before a girl's period is the "safe time."

- 1) Applaud your friend for using condoms most of the time, it's better than never using them
- 2) Tell your friend how someone can get pregnant or an STD from just having unprotected sex just once, there is no safe time
- 3) Buy your friend some condoms and strongly encourage them to use them every single time
- 4) Tell your friend that the girl should take a pregnancy test since it might already be too late

B) Your good friend is pregnant, or their girlfriend is pregnant, and they are very scared about telling their Mom and come to you asking for help.

- 1) Offer to go with friend to tell their Mom
- 2) Role-play with friend what Mom might say and how to handle it
- 3) Encourage friend to tell Mom but really, it's their problem and you don't want to get in the middle of it
- 4) Tell friend that they don't need to tell Mom, she'll just freak out anyway, and they can go to a clinic without anyone parents knowing about it

C) Your friend is pregnant and just told her boyfriend, who said he'd break up with her if she has an abortion, which is what she thinks she wants to do.

- 1) Encourage friend to make her own choice regardless of what boyfriend threatens to do, it's her life and her body
- 2) Encourage friend to do what boyfriend wants since it's his baby too
- 3) Talk to your friend's boyfriend, perhaps you could help diffuse the situation
- 4) Encourage friend to consider adoption since perhaps she hasn't really thought about that option

Teen Sexual Health Resources

Web sites:

www.sexetc.org	Sexual health information written by teens, for teens
www.scarleteen.org	Sexual health information on a wide range of topics
www.youthresource.com	Sexual health information for gay, lesbian and bisexual teens
www.iwannaknow.org	Sexually transmitted disease information
www.teenwire.org	Information to find Planned Parenthood in your community
www.itsyoursexlife.org	Sexual health information including birth control and STDs

Hotlines:

1-800-230-PLAN	Locate the nearest Planned Parenthood health center
1-800-656-HOPE	Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network
1-800-342-2437	National HIV/AIDS Hotline
1-800-227-8922	National Sexually Transmitted Infection Hotline
1-800-662-HELP	National Drug and Alcohol Treatment Hotline
1-800-HIT-HOME	National Youth Crisis Hotline
1-800-877-6736	Independent Adoption Center