



## Discussion Guide

For Adults Working with Teens

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### Lesson: You Are Not Alone

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

- Articulate reasons why someone might disclose or not disclose a rape.
- Identify ways to support someone who has been raped.
- Determine where, on a continuum of consent/exploitation, a particular kind of touch belongs.
- Recognize that sexual assault is illegal and that all exploitive touch is wrong.

**Facilitator's Note:** *This discussion guide provides you with a two-part lesson on sexual coercion. They can be used together for a two-day or two-hour session or each lesson can stand alone for a one-hour or one-day presentation.*

#### Part 1: WHISTLE-STOP GRAFFITI BOARDS (One-hour lesson)

##### Materials:

- Copies of the article “**You Are Not Alone**”—one per student
- Five sheets of flipchart paper
- Three to four markers per sheet of paper

##### Preparation:

Write one of the following headlines at the top of each of the flipchart paper so that you have created five “graffiti boards” with different titles.

1. Why would someone not tell anyone about a rape?
2. Why would someone decide to tell someone about a rape?
3. What small steps could someone take to make it easier to talk about a rape?
4. What have you learned by hearing Stephanie's story?
5. If you shared an experience like Stephanie's, how would you want people to respond?

Gather a few local sexual violence resources in your community to share with students. Go to [answer.rutgers.edu](http://answer.rutgers.edu) and click on “Resources for Parents” to find Web sites and books on sexual violence for further reading.

## Procedure:

1. Distribute copies of the article **“You Are Not Alone”** and read it together with your students.
2. Introduce the topic by quoting the last few sentences of the article: “I urge victims to seek help. Please know that rape is not your fault and you did not ask for it. It’s not healthy to keep it bottled in. I know it’s extremely difficult to say you’re a victim. But in order to continue your life and have closure, you need to find help. Trust me, you are not alone.”
3. Explain that students will be working in small groups and writing their thoughts on flipchart paper called “graffiti boards.”
4. Divide the class into five groups.
5. Give each group a sheet of flipchart paper with a topic at the top and three to four markers.
6. Announce that you will give the group five minutes to write their responses to the topic on the sheet of paper. Ask them to be prepared to stop when you signal for time. Commence the whistle-stop stations, allowing five minutes for the groups to accomplish their task.
7. After five minutes, signal the stop of that session—blow a whistle, ring a bell or verbally announce to the class that time is up. Ask students to stay seated and hand off their graffiti board to the group next to them. Make sure the graffiti boards are rotating in a systematic way, such as clockwise or counterclockwise.
8. Start the next whistle-stop, having students briefly read what has been written, then adding their own contributions. After five minutes, signal the time and have them pass the graffiti board to the next group. Continue whistle-stop stations until each group has been able to work on each of the five graffiti boards. Debrief boards one through five by asking each group to report on the one they’ve just finished. Boards do not have to be covered in any particular sequence. If short on time, post boards in the classroom for students to peruse.
9. If this lesson is done as a single lesson, conclude by writing on the board a few community resources (books, Websites, phone numbers) for sexual violence, such as the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network, which operates a free, confidential, counseling hotline, 24 hours a day, at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) or find them at [www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org).
10. If this lesson is done as a single lesson, conclude by writing on the board a few community resources (books, Websites, phone numbers) for sexual violence, such as the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network, which operates a free, confidential, counseling hotline, 24 hours a day, at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) or find them at [www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org).

## Part 2: CONTINUUM OF CONSENT/EXPLOITATION (One-hour lesson)

### Materials:

- Copies of “**Sexual Exploitation Reference Sheet**” for each student
- Six sheets of flipchart paper and six markers
- Copies of the article “**You Are Not Alone**”—one per student

### Procedure:

1. If this is a follow up to part 1, review by reflecting on the graffiti boards posted in the room.

#### **Facilitator’s Note:**

*If this is not a follow up, distribute copies of the article “You Are Not Alone” and read it together with your students.*

2. Explain to students that it helps to think of consent and exploitation on a continuum. Hand out “**Sexual Exploitation Reference Sheet**” to each student. Have volunteers take turns reading the page aloud. Ask them to carefully listen to the definitions of each of the points of the continuum. They will later be assigned to write a short story on a particular point on the continuum.

3. Divide the class into six groups. Assign each group a point on the continuum. Give them a piece of flipchart paper and a marker.

4. Their task is to create a scenario that illustrates that particular point on the continuum. They can create fictitious names and tell us a bit about the situation (i.e., is the couple dating or married, where this takes place, how long have the people known each other, etc.). Each scenario should be about two to three paragraphs long, written on the flipchart paper. Allow approximately 15 minutes for the small group work.

**Facilitator’s Note:** *For added interest, do not have them label their papers and then have the class guess where on the continuum the story falls. You also might want to reiterate some definitions while you check in with the small groups as they complete the task.*

5. Have each group read their story to the class and discuss where it falls on the continuum. What did they see in each story to place it at that particular point of the continuum? What messages would they want to give each of the characters in the story?

**Facilitator’s Note:** *Use their stories as a springboard to remind students of important learning. For example, if they have only characters of the opposite gender, use this opportunity to remind students that sexual exploitation can occur between people of the same gender, just as it can between people of the other gender.*

6. Summarize with these “take home” messages:

That exploitive touch includes:

- a. “unfair pressure” (if a person has to say “no” more than twice, it is no longer fair persuasion, it’s unfair pressure),
- b. “sexual coercion” (threatening to physically or emotionally hurt someone is

coercion...taking advantage of a person under the influence of drugs, including alcohol, is coercion),

c. “sexual aggression” (touching a person’s genitals, without their permission or while they are drunk or high, even in a “teasing” way, is sexual aggression),

d. “sexual assault” (forcing a person to have intercourse, or certain other kinds of sexual touch, is rape, and it is illegal. Whether it’s illegal or not, forced sexual touch of any kind is sexual assault).

e. that consenting touch can be a joyful, enriching part of life, and

f. that their generation can be the one that chooses love (caring, consideration) over hate.

7. Conclude by writing on the board community resources (books, Web sites, phone numbers) for sexual violence, such as the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network, which operates a free, confidential, counseling hotline, 24 hours a day, at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) or find them at [www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org).

*The Discussion Guide was created by Teri Tomatich, M.Ed., professional trainer/consultant. For additional lessons, go to [http://answer.rutgers.edu/page/lesson\\_plans](http://answer.rutgers.edu/page/lesson_plans).*

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## **Sexual Exploitation Reference Sheet:**

mutually  
consenting  
touch

persuasion  
and  
consent

unfair  
pressure &  
touch

sexual  
coercion

sexual  
aggression

sexual  
assault/rape

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### **“Mutually consenting touch”**

This is what people do when they make out. It is how they learn what feels good to them, and one another, how to do things like kiss, take someone’s hand. They learn how to tell a partner what they do like and what they don’t like. This is an important part of growing up. It works best when the two people like, care about and trust each other.

### **“Persuasion and consent”**

This is when one person isn’t sure about trying something...and the other one wants to. It’s common that when two people get together, they’re not in complete agreement about what to do. As long as whoever does the persuading cares about the other person’s feelings and is willing to take “no” for an answer, and as long as they reach a decision they both feel good about, there’s nothing unfair about it.

### **“Unfair pressure & touch”**

This is the start of exploitation...one person using the other. A boy might tell a girl what he thinks she wants to hear (like, “I love you”), even though it’s not true. Or make a promise he doesn’t plan to keep. A girl might trade sex for presents or dates. Or a person might just ask and ask and ask. This isn’t rape (there’s no force, only dishonesty), but it isn’t fair.

### **“Sexual coercion”**

Here, there is some kind of threat, although not of physical harm.

If you don’t, I’ll...

- *find someone else who will*

- *tell people you’re gay*

- *tell everyone you did it*

- *break up with you*

- *fire you*

Threats are a kind of force. It isn’t rape, but it’s getting closer.

### **“Sexual aggression”**

The random pinching, touching and feeling that goes on at parties and in the hallways at school are sexual aggression. A lot of folks think it’s OK to show people you like them by grabbing at them in a “teasing” way. But it can feel like an attack because the victim doesn’t even get a chance to say “yes” or “no”...the person is either not consulted or is too drunk or high to freely consent. Sexual aggression is very close to sexual assault and rape.

### **“Sexual assault/rape”**

Forcing a person to have any kind of intercourse (vaginal, oral or anal) is rape, according to the law...it doesn’t matter if they know each other, or how much money the rapist has spent on the person, or whether the person changes her mind. It is rape. We define sexual assault more broadly than rape, as any sort of forced sexual activity.