

Sexual Rights

Rationale/Overview: This interactive activity is an opportunity to explore our rights as youth and as people when it comes to sex. This specific approach helps participants to reflect on their own lives and the role they play in their relationships and community.

Grade Level: 9 (can be adapted for use in other grades)

Subject Area: Physical and Health Education

Big Ideas:

- Healthy choices influence our physical, emotional, and mental well-being.
- Advocating for the health and well-being of others connects us to our community.

Competencies:

- Propose strategies for avoiding and/or responding to potentially unsafe, abusive, or exploitive situations
- Propose strategies for developing and maintaining healthy relationships
- Create and evaluate strategies for managing physical, emotional, and social changes during puberty and adolescence

Content

- Healthy sexual decision making
- Strategies to protect themselves and others from potential abuse, exploitation, and harm in a variety of settings
- Influences of physical, emotional, and social changes on identities and relationships

Core Competencies:

- Critical Thinking: Question and Investigate
- Personal and Cultural Identity: Personal values and choices
- Personal Awareness and Responsibility: Self-determination
- Social Responsibility: Building relationships

First Peoples' Principles of Learning:

- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.
- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).

Learning Activity

Time: 10-15 mins

Pre-activity Discussion:

- In order to communicate our needs and wants effectively, we must believe that our needs and desires have the right to be respected and heard.
- We must believe in what we are communicating. One way of being confident in our own needs is to recognize that we each have rights when it comes to sex.

What is a right?

- It is something that each of us is entitled to. It is something that nobody can take away. Nobody can argue with our rights.
- Each of us has rights when it comes to sex. If we are aware of some of our rights it might help us seek out relationships, partners or sexual experiences that respect our rights.
- What are these rights? Let's brainstorm together based on what we already know about sexual health.

Setup:

- 1.) Hand out sticky notes/pieces of paper.
- 2.) Have everyone write down at least one right we believe we should have in relation to sex, sexuality, our bodies, or relationships
- 3.) Toss notes into the centre of the room and have everyone pick up a new note.
- 4.) Read aloud around the circle.
- 5.) Debrief

Examples:

I have the right to...

- Sexual pleasure
- Set my own sexual limits
- Be in control of my own body

- My own beliefs, opinions, and values
- My own needs, boundaries, and desires
- Explore what sex and sexuality mean to me
- Change
- Say “no”
- Say “yes”
- Be the initiator in a sexual relationship
- Be in control of my sexual experience
- Express my needs and desires
- Pursue sexual relationships with people of any gender
- Be confident in the sexual decisions I am making
- A partner who respects me
- A partner who communicates openly and honestly
- Talk with my partner about any violence or trauma I may have experienced
- Ask questions
- Give and get accurate sexual information (ex. our STI status) free from stigma and shame
- Non-judgement, relevant, and accurate sexual health education

Debrief:

- How did it feel to hear everyone reading each other’s rights?
- Why might we want to take the time to write them down and talk about them out loud?
 - Saying them and hearing them out loud can reinforce that they are true!
 - It can be helpful to be aware of and talk about our rights, so that we know we are being respected in a sexual relationship or situation.
 - If we feel like any of our rights are being violated we might want to talk to someone about it.
 - Knowing our rights can empower us to have sexual experiences that feel good for us.
 - Along with sexual rights, we also have responsibilities
 - If these are our rights, what are some of our responsibilities? (e.g. respect our partner’s boundaries)

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YouthCO is a youth-led, [values-based](#), HIV and Hep C organization that seeks to reduce stigma related to HIV and Hep C throughout BC. We’ve been around since 1994 providing peer education and support to communities most affected by HIV and Hep C. We offer peer-facilitated workshops on a variety of topics, including sexual wellbeing, HIV, and Hep C. To book a workshop, visit us online at www.youthco.org.

Sexual and Reproductive Health Education Resources

- **Websites/Phonelines**

The following websites and phonelines provide information and resources on various sexual and reproductive health topics:

- <http://teachers.teachingsexualhealth.ca/>
- <http://www.sexualityandu.ca>
- <http://www.scarleteen.com/>
- Sex Sense Line #1-800-SEX-SENSE
- Kids Help Phone #1-800-668-6868 (KidsHelpPhone.ca)

- **Services**

The following organizations/individuals provide sexual and reproductive health education and other supports for teachers and/or parents:

- [Native Youth Sexual Health Network](#)
- [Options for Sexual Health](#)
- [Saleema Noon Sexual Health Educators](#)
- [Sexplainer](#)
- [YouthCO](#)

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Resources

- **Websites & Tools**

The following websites and tools provide information and resources on various sexual orientation and gender identity topics:

- [Pride Education Network](#)
- [Questions & Answers: Gender Identity in Schools](#)
- [Questions & Answers: Sexual Orientation in Schools](#)

- **Services**

The following organizations provide supports for teachers, parents and/or students:

- [C.A.L.L. Out!](#)
- [The Trevor Project](#)