

Moving From Friend To Partner/Sweetheart Lesson Seven

Goals:



- ★ What it feels like to be attracted to someone as more than a friend
- ★ Learn ways to show you are interested in someone as more than a friend
- ★ Practice ways to ask someone out

Materials:



- Easel, easel pad, markers, and tape
- Name tags
- Teaching Tools:

Handout #16: Pictures of Relationships (pages 153 - 164)

Handout #17: Moving From Friend to Partner (page 165)

Time:



Welcome, Name Tags & Group Agreements	10 minutes
Activity One: More than friends	30 minutes
Break	15 minutes
Activity Two: Meeting a Partner	30 minutes
Wrap Up	5 minutes



Welcome, Name Tags & Group Agreements (10 minutes)

Have your group get into pairs. Give each of them their name tags and tell them to wait until after we have a discussion to put them on.



We are going to get into pairs and talk about the different kinds of pressure you have experienced or have heard about from another person. Talk for a few minutes in your group.

Possible examples of pressure: force, lies, begging and threats etc.

After a few minutes ask:

What were some of the things you talked about?

Now, each person will give another person their name tag and say something that gives them support in resisting pressure.

You could say, "It is not okay for someone to force you to do something you don't want to do. Here is your name tag."

After everyone has their name tags and received a positive message, ask:

What was it like to have your partner give you a supportive message?



Have the group agreements taped to the wall. Make sure everyone sees and understands the group agreements.

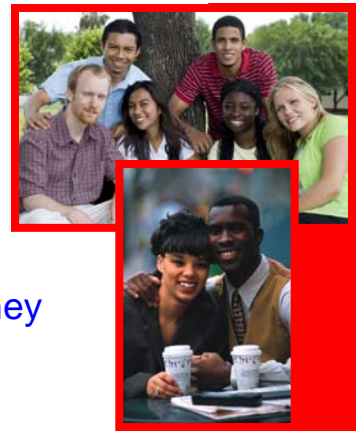


Activity One: More Than Friends (30 minutes)

Today we will talk about kinds of relationships that can involve our bodies and being sexual. Today we will talk about intimate relationships with partners, boyfriends, girlfriends or sweethearts.



Let's work on a list of what makes us attracted to someone. It can be about how he or she looks, how someone makes you feel, and what kind of personality they have.



Write all their answers on easel paper. Possible answers: funny, kind, sexy, look "hot" in jeans, sweet, considerate, I just want to kiss them, can't stop thinking about them.

Many of the things we want in a partner are the same as what we want in a friend.

Which one of these answers could happen in a friendship?

Which ones are just for partners?

Use a different color marker to circle the ones that are for boyfriends and girlfriends.

These are the extra feelings we feel for this person. Sometimes people say that a sexual romantic relationship is a friendship plus more, these extra feelings.

These extra feelings are physical or sexual attraction – like having feelings of attraction in our bodies when you look at someone.

Pass out copies of Handout #16: Pictures of Relationships (pages 153 - 164).

Now let's take a look at some pictures of people expressing feelings for each other – and see which ones we think are friends or family, which are romantic or sexual types of relationships. Remember



there is not always one right answer.

For some people the extra feelings may not be about wanting to touch another person in a sexual way. What else might these feelings mean?

Possible answers: special connection, wanting to be with just that person, special names or things you do together (this allows inclusion of relationships that are deep and loving and committed – but not necessarily sexual).

For some the extra feelings are sexual feelings. This is the type of relationship we talked about in our second class, the intimate relationship. Again, it always has to be consensual.

Look at the pictures and discuss the different types of relationships. Pass out copies of Handout #17 Moving From Friend to Sweetheart on page 165.

Let's talk about how someone moves from friend to a romantic or sexual relationship.

These are three of the most important steps:

1. Feeling interested: noticing how you feel about the person, flirting, phone calls, doing things with the person as part of a group activity, etc.
2. Getting to know the person: asking the person out, letting them know how you feel, etc.
3. Becoming a couple. We will cover this part next week.



Step One: Feeling interested.

Let's look at the list that we made earlier. Look at the words that are



circled. These are the ones that we said were about sexual attraction and sexual feelings. During puberty we start to have sexual feelings and get crushes on people. It is up to you to decide what you do with these feelings. What are some reasons you would not follow up on feelings of interest?



Possible answers: you don't know them well enough, they seem kind of mean, you went out with them before and they cheated on you, etc.

Have these questions on easel paper.

Can a potential girlfriend or boyfriend be:

1. Someone of the same gender?
2. Someone already in a sexual relationship with someone else?
3. Someone who has said she/he is not interested?
4. A paid support person?
5. Someone under 16 if you are over 18?
6. Someone 15 if you are 16, 17 or 18?

After you ask a question from the list above ask,

- Why or why not?
- Then, go to the next question and ask,
- Why or why not?

Possible points to make:

Same gender: It is okay because some people have these extra feelings about the same gender. Some people may have the feelings, but decide not to act on them.



Already In a relationship: Sometimes this happens, but it can also cause some problems. What could happen?

Not interested: If they aren't interested we may want to look for someone else. You can try again, but after they say no a couple of times to you, you need to stop asking.

Paid staff person: No, they are working and aren't available to be your boyfriend/girlfriend. They would fit more into the relationship of Helpers and professional helpers.

If you are 19 or older: The laws in Vermont say you can not be in a sexual relationship with someone under 16.

If you are 16, 17 or 18: The laws in Vermont say you can not be in a sexual relationship with someone under 15.

If you are in a different state: find out what the laws are for your state.

Step Two: Getting to know someone. Saying how you feel.

It can be tricky letting someone know you are interested in him or her as more than a friend. What are ways we can let someone know?

Possible answer: Through our body language and what we say. Remind the class about the activities we did using body language to communicate.

#1. Flirting. One way is to flirt with a person. So what is flirting?

Possible answer: Talking with someone in a way that shows you are interested.



What are some things you could **say** to a person to flirt?

- You look nice
- Love your shirt
- Nice seeing you here again

What can you **do** to flirt or let the person know you are interested?

- Use your body language: smile, look them in the eyes, wink.

How do we know it is working?

- If they say something flirty back to you, smile, or wink at you.

How do you know it isn't working?

- They look away, look nervous, give you a mean look, or tell you to leave them alone. (Flirting is something that both people have to want. If the other person doesn't want it, it can be seen as harassing them. Make sure they are okay with it.)

What if you are nervous?

- You can practice in the mirror or with a friend.

#2. Talking on the telephone.

If you are interested in someone, talking on the phone sometimes offers a private way of getting to know him or her a little better.

Just like flirting, calling someone on the phone needs to be respectful. One way to be respectful is to talk about things that are



public. Remember we talked about what kind of talk is okay in public and private. When you are getting to know someone you can talk about public things until you get a little closer to the person.

You can ask:

- How was your day?
- What did you do today that was fun?
- What did you do today that was boring?
- Did you eat any good food today?
- What is your favorite music?

What are some other things you could talk about that are respectful and public?

Another way to be respectful is to call them ... but not too much!

How many times per day is okay to call someone?

That is difficult to answer because everyone is different, but a general rule would be once a day or once every other day.

Also, calling or texting during the day or evening is better than at 3:00 in the morning. People are different, but a general rule is to not call or text people after 9:00 unless they tell you it is okay to contact them later. (And not before 9:00 am in the morning.) This is another way to be respectful of others.

Sometimes when we are interested in someone we get excited and can't stop thinking about them, but it is important not to call too much or too late at night and not to talk about private things before you get to know the person because it may scare them. If you are excited



about someone, talk with your friends about your feelings and try to be respectful of the person you are interested in.



#3. Join you in a group activity.

Another way to let someone know you are interested is to ask him or her to join you in a group activity. Sharing time in a group can be a good way to get to know the person a bit better and find out if you are really interested in being in a relationship with them.

What are some group activities that you could do with this person?

- go to a self-advocacy meeting
- a dance or movie with friends

#4. Ask him or her out on a date.

If you are thinking about asking someone out on a date, it is important to think about things you both might enjoy. Asking someone who hates sports to a basketball game may not be the right start!

How can you find out about someone and what they like?

- ask them if they like to go to movies
- ask a friend of theirs what they like to do

Who pays for the date? Is it always the man if it is a man and a woman on the date? How come?

People do different things on dates. Sometimes the two people split the cost of the date. Each person can pay for their own bill.

Sometimes the person who made the invitation pays. It really depends. What do you think should happen?



But more than money can get in the way of dating. Unfortunately some people with disabilities are told by their parents, guardians or support staff that they can not go on a date.

Persons with disabilities have the same rights as anyone else to date and have a romantic relationship.

What can you do about that?

Later, when we talk about bodies, we will also talk about getting ready for a date.



Break (15 minutes)

Let's take a 15 minute break and come back to practice asking someone out.



Activity Two: Meeting a Partner (30 minutes)

Let's practice ways to let someone know you are interested.



Make sure the role play group agreements (used in Lesson #4 on page 98) are posted on the wall. Review them before you do the role plays. Remind everyone that they can ask for help, if they need it.

Role Play One: The Phone Call



We need two people to volunteer to do a short role play about asking someone out on a date. Any volunteers?

Here is the situation:

- You are friends, but one of you wants to become more than friends.
- One person will call the other person on the phone and try to let them know that he or she wants to be more than just friends.



- The other person is not interested and says, “I just want to stay friends.”

Provide support for the volunteers to do the role play. At the end of the role play ask:



1. How do you think each person is feeling right now?
2. How can the person who was told NO feel better?
3. What should the interested friend do?

Now, let's try the same situation, but this time, the other person **does** want to become more than friends.

At the end of the role play ask:

Now, what can they do?



Extra Activity if you have time

Role Play Two: The Conversation.

You will need two actors for this role play. Amber likes Dylan.

Amber runs into Dylan at coffee shop. She gets some coffee and asks Dylan to join her. Role play the conversation. Amber might ask Dylan about his job, sports or plans for the weekend. Dylan begins to talk about his girlfriend. At this point stop and ask the class, “Is this a good person to pursue as a sweetheart?”

Now, act out the role play again, but this time the Dylan does not say he has girlfriend. Stop and ask, “What should Amber do now?”

Some ideas may be:

- give out her phone number or e-mail
- ask to meet for coffee some other morning





Wrap Up (5 minutes)

In these role plays, one person had to deal with rejection.

- How does it feel to be rejected?
- What can you do if you are rejected?

It can be exciting and fun to feel interested in someone as a possible girlfriend or boyfriend. It can also be difficult and scary.

It is worth remembering that we all experience these feelings and we have all been turned down at one point or another. Next week, we will focus on building relationships and some of the issues that come up in relationships.

Collect participants' name tags at the end of each session and bring them back each week.



- Friendship
- Romantic Relationship
- Romantic Sexual Relationship



- Friendship
- Romantic Relationship
- Romantic Sexual Relationship





- Friendship
- Romantic Relationship
- Romantic Sexual Relationship



- Friendship
- Romantic Relationship
- Romantic Sexual Relationship





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- Friendship
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- Romantic Sexual Relationship



Handout #17

Moving from Friend to Partner or Sweetheart



Step 1: Feeling interested.

Can a potential girlfriend/boyfriend be....

- ⇒ Someone of the same gender?
- ⇒ Someone already in a relationship?
- ⇒ Someone who has said she/he is not interested?
- ⇒ A paid support person?
- ⇒ Someone under 18?



Step 2: Getting to know someone.



- Flirting – what is flirting?
- Talking on the telephone.
- Ask him/her to join you at a group activity.
- Ask him/her out on a date.

Step 3: Becoming a couple



What you may need to talk about.

- ⇒ Are you only dating each other?
- ⇒ What sexual behaviors are okay and not okay?
- ⇒ How will you spend time together and apart?

What else do you have to talk about?

