

CHAPTER 12: SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARMFUL PRACTICES

Sexuality should be a source of pleasure and emotional connection for people, but the unfortunate truth is that sexual violence, harassment, and abuse are prevalent in most societies, as are harmful practices, such as female genital cutting and “dry sex.” All of these problems compromise people’s health and human rights, particularly women’s, and in many cases harm women’s sexual functioning and capacity for pleasure. Young people may have already suffered years of abuse at the hands of a relative: it has been estimated that in some places one in three girls and one in eight boys are victims of sexual abuse. Some may have experienced female genital cutting. Some may have been raped. And it is likely that many have experienced sexual harassment in one form or another. The World Health Organization estimates that one in three women worldwide will experience violence in her lifetime.

Discussing sexual violence in a sexuality education program is important for many reasons, but primarily to raise awareness, break the silence, and reduce its incidence whenever possible. People often turn a blind eye to issues like rape, harassment, and abuse, and that silence feeds into what in many cases is tacit social acceptance. Adolescents need to be able to recognize abuse and know where to go for help; they need to be aware of the prevalence of date rape (or acquaintance rape) and clearly understand the concept of consent; they need to understand that drug and alcohol use can impair judgment and lead to risky, coerced, or violent sex; they need to recognize the elements of sexual harassment and know what recourse is available; and they need to understand the psychological and physiological effects of harmful practices and their origins in the desire to control women through their sexuality.

To help end violence and harmful practices, educational programs must promote people’s right to dignity and equality; their right to full information; and their right to the full enjoyment of, and control over, their own sexuality, including their bodies. Educational programs must empower people to protect and take responsibility for their health.

Teaching Tips

- Gather data about sexual harassment, rape, and abuse in your country, but remind students that numbers are often highly inaccurate (that is, much lower than the real numbers) because of stigma and fear. Use this as an opportunity to discuss why such incidents go unreported.
- Be prepared for the possibility that students may disclose abuse, violence, or harassment to you. Respond by acknowledging their trust in you, listening, comforting, and providing referrals. First and foremost, it is important to believe them.
- In some countries, teachers are required by law to report evidence or suspicion of child sexual abuse to a social welfare agency. If there are such laws where you live, make sure your participants understand your legal obligations.
- Because most rape and sexual harassment is done by men to girls and women, teaching about it may bring up gender divisions in your group. Be aware of this, and make sure to point out that women are also capable of sexual abuse and harassment, and that men sometimes harass or assault men or boys, often the result of homophobia.
- Gather information about any resources for adolescents who have experienced sexual abuse, violence, or harassment. Make sure that you are not referring adolescents to places where they will suffer more abuse. Sometimes those who claim to help can cause more harm by

blaming the young person, challenging the story, or discounting it altogether. Law-enforcement officials, legal personnel, or health professionals may not be trained or may be subject to bribery – or they may simply leave the young person in the abusive situation. These kinds of responses will only make it more difficult for the adolescent to get out of the situation and to recover.

- When discussing traditional practices that are harmful, such as female genital cutting, be sensitive to those who have experienced the practice. If you do not belong to the group whose practices you are teaching about, consider inviting someone to facilitate or co-facilitate with you who is committed to ending such practices and mitigating their harm. The best advocates for ending a harmful practice are those who have been directly affected.
- Gather information about traditional practices in your community, particularly the groups in your community to which you do not belong. There may also be national studies on the prevalence and effects of such practices.

Content Considerations

- Teach your participants about their right to live free from abuse, whether the abusers are family members, friends, lovers, acquaintances, or strangers, and help them learn how to identify, avoid, resist, and escape abuse.
- Provide participants with basic information about rape and other abuse, and help them understand fully what rape is and what consent means and requires. Discuss different forms of rape, including stranger rape, acquaintance rape (including date rape), gang rape, marital rape, and child sexual abuse. Some forms of rape may not be illegal where you live, in which case discuss the values this reflects.
- Present a clear definition of what constitutes sexual harassment and explain it using examples. In some places, the law helps to define sexual harassment, although usually not all forms of sexual harassment are illegal. If your country does not have laws about harassment, give students information about extralegal recourse available.
- Consider conducting a small survey about sexual harassment in your school, if applicable. Explore how gender discrimination and homophobia contribute to the acceptance and perpetuation of sexual harassment and violence.
- When discussing traditional practices, make it clear that you are not against tradition or cultural practices in general, and that some can be beneficial or neutral, like dietary restrictions for pregnant women. Participants could make an inventory of practices in their community.
- Explore the gender aspects of the practices. For those that only affect one gender, look at their link to discrimination and assess whether the practice is consistent with a community in which equality and social justice is desired.

SELECTED LESSON PLAN **12.1**: DATE RAPE

SOURCE

“Workshop 35: Date Rape,” *Our Whole Lives: Sexuality Education for Grades 10-12* by Eva S. Goldfarb and Elizabeth M. Casparian. Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2000. Reprinted by permission of the Unitarian Universalist Association. www.uua.org

Suitable for ages 15 to 18

Summary

Unfortunately, date rape is common among young people, and this lesson skillfully illustrates how unclear communication can play a role. The lesson centers on a story of a young man and woman who have sex without sufficient communication to establish consent. Participants look carefully at both the male and female interpretations of events leading up to the intercourse and then discuss whether or not the situation described was rape and why. Participants are asked to consider how the male character would feel if the female character accused him of rape. They also analyze what the characters in the story could have done to prevent the rape from occurring. The lesson emphasizes issues of consent and clear communication about sexual limits. The responsibility of both genders for rape prevention is raised by having participants brainstorm a list of ideas about things men can do and things women can do to reduce date rape.

Teaching Notes

- If you have covered sexual assault in other lessons, ask participants to define rape at the beginning of the session. To get participants thinking about the topic, ask them to define date rape, instead of giving them the definition.
- If you have many participants, divide them into more than two groups in step 3 to increase participation.
- To establish factors that increase risk, ask participants during the discussion what behaviors and attitudes contributed to what happened in the story (alcohol use, poor communication skills, being away from other people).
- As a part of the final question in step 5, ask participants to explain their opinions. You could also ask them how realistic they think the story is.

Adapting the Lesson

- Read over the stories and adapt them to reflect situations that occur where you live.
- If you cannot make copies of the stories for each participant, make one copy per group and ask them to share.

WORKSHOP 35 **Date Rape**

RATIONALE

Acquaintance, or date, rape is a serious concern for young people. Poor communication and sex role stereotyping can put adolescents in exploitative and violent sexual situations. This workshop helps participants to avoid such situations by identifying strategies that reduce the risk of misinterpreting another person or of being misinterpreted.

Time Required: 40 minutes

GOALS

To help participants

- analyze why date rape might occur in a given situation.
- identify how date rape might be prevented.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to

- demonstrate their understanding of factors that increase the risk of date rape by discussing, as a group, why date rape may have taken place in a fictional story.
- develop, through group discussion, strategies that men and women can employ to prevent date rape.

MATERIALS

- Newsprint, markers, and masking tape
- Handout 17, Diane's Story, and Handout 18, Mark's Story

PREPARATION

- Review this workshop and decide how to share leadership responsibilities with your coleader.
- Make copies of Handout 17, Diane's Story, and Handout 18, Mark's Story, for all participants.
- Post the ground rules from the Opening Session.

Activity

AVOIDING DATE RAPE

40 minutes

1. Tell participants that this workshop deals with date rape, also called acquaintance rape. Explain that date rape is a sexual assault that occurs between people who are in a dating situation, even though it may be the first date. Unlike stranger rape, date rape involves people who have some kind of relationship; they may even have had a sexual relationship in the past. Date rape can occur between people of all ages, but it is very common among people between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five.
2. Acknowledge that rape can be hard to talk about and tell participants that they may pass on participating in the discussion if they wish to do so. (Keep in mind that a member of your group may have firsthand experience of rape or abuse.) Explain that understanding why date rape occurs and working on ways to prevent it are sometimes the best ways to deal with the feelings of fear, anger, and helplessness that talking about rape can bring up.
3. Divide participants into two groups. Explain that each group will read and discuss a story about a dating situation. Have each group select three volunteers to take turns reading the group's story out loud, one paragraph per person. After the stories have been read, have each group discuss the questions that follow the story.
4. Ask the groups to sit away from each other so that the conversations do not disturb them. Give Handout 17, Diane's Story, to the members of one group and Handout 18, Mark's Story, to the other. Tell participants that they will have about 10 minutes to read the stories and discuss their responses.
5. When time is up, bring two large groups together and have a participant read Handout 17 to the whole group. Then have someone read Handout 18 to the whole group. Use the questions that accompany the stories to lead a group discussion. Invite participants to compare how they felt about the characters before and after they heard the other side of the story. Use the following questions to discuss the activity:
 - When a person is very aroused and wants to continue sexual activity but isn't sure what a partner wants, what should she/he do?
 - When a person is unsure what he/she wants to do as a sexual encounter continues, what should she/he do?
 - What do you think Mark would say if Diane accused him of rape?
 - What will happen if Diane does not say anything?
 - What could Mark and Diane have done differently?
 - Some colleges have a code of dating etiquette that requires couples to ask permission before engaging in any sexual activities. For example, one partner may ask, "May I kiss you?" or "May I touch your breasts?" Is this type of code useful?
6. Ask the group for ideas about what can be done to prevent date rape. Have the group brainstorm a list and record their responses on newsprint. Then make two additional lists: one of things that men can do to prevent date rape and another of things that women can do to prevent date rape.

Handout 17

WORKSHOP THIRTY-FIVE

DIANE'S STORY

Diane and Mark were going on their second date, and Diane could not believe her luck! She'd only been at college for a month, and already she was dating a great guy. Mark was a junior, captain of the soccer team, in a great fraternity, and really cute. Her friend Joan told her that she thought Mark was an honor student, too, but he was too modest to tell anyone. On their first date, they had gone to a party at his fraternity and Diane had met a lot of his friends. Most of them seemed really nice but a little rowdy. At the end of the date, he had driven her back to her dorm and been a perfect gentleman. She had thought he was really cute and she had felt so attracted to him that she would have loved to have kissed him, but she was glad to see that he was a really nice guy and not too pushy. Diane really wanted to make a great impression on him for the second date. She dressed carefully and spent more time than usual on her hair and makeup.

On their second date, Mark took her to a very fancy and expensive restaurant; all of her friends had been impressed when she had told them where they were going. "He must really like me a lot," she thought. Mark ordered a bottle of wine with dinner, and it was so good that they finished the whole thing, something Diane almost never did. Mark was funny and easy to talk to, and he seemed really interested in her. She felt as though she would just melt into his brown eyes. After dinner, she didn't want the date to end. She was happy when he asked her back to his frat house. They walked there from the restaurant, holding hands and stopping every once in a while to kiss gently. When they got back, they sat on the couch in the main room and watched some television with his fraternity brothers, and Mark had a few beers. After a while, the guys were getting loud and Mark asked her if she would prefer going up to his room. She said sure.

When they got to his room, he asked her if she'd like to hear some music. She said yes, and he put on something low and jazzy. Then, he asked her to dance. As they moved together, they kissed and he rubbed her back. She felt beautiful and sexy and very aroused. She felt that she could keep kissing him and dancing forever. She held herself close to him and moved her body against his. She was really getting into it, and then she realized that she could let things go too far if she didn't get a hold of herself. She gently pulled back from Mark and asked him if he could drive her home in a few minutes. He said yes, but then he said he felt pretty drunk and didn't think it would be such a good idea for him to get behind the wheel. Diane didn't feel sober enough to drive either. Mark suggested that she stay over and sleep in his bed. He said he would sleep on the floor. He sounded so responsible and caring that she agreed. They started dancing again and kissing. It felt so good, and she was re-

ally attracted to him. She didn't stop him when he moved her over to the bed, and they sat down next to each other. They made out for a while, and then he took off his shirt. Diane decided there was no harm in that; she wanted to feel his skin against hers, so she took her shirt off too, and they held each other and touched each other for a long time. When Mark put his hand inside her pants, Diane tried to squirm away. She was very turned on, but everything was happening so fast. She kept on kissing him, whispering "no" between kisses. He climbed on top of her and they lay together, moving against each other. Mark kept trying to push her pants down, and she kept trying to squirm away. Before she knew what was happening, Mark was yanking her pants down and pushing her legs apart. All of a sudden she felt him pushing his penis inside her. She was trying to scream "no," but his mouth was over her mouth and he was so strong.

Discussion Questions

- Would you define this situation as rape?
- Why or why not?
- What could Diane have done to prevent this situation from occurring?
- What could Mark have done differently?
- What should a person do when she/he wants to be sexual but doesn't want to have intercourse?
- Do you think Mark planned to have sex with Diane from the beginning of the date?

Handout 18

WORKSHOP THIRTY-FIVE

MARK'S STORY

Mark really liked this new girl, Diane. Although she was pretty young, she seemed smart and together, and she was just beautiful. His fraternity brothers had been really impressed when he had shown up at the party with her last week. He was proud of himself, too, because he hadn't even tried to kiss her at the end of their first date, even though he was dying to! He didn't want her to think he was just after sex. For their second date he wanted to let her know how much he liked her, so he made reservations at the best restaurant in town. She sounded pretty thrilled when he told her about it. When he picked her up, she looked fantastic, even more beautiful than before. It was exciting to be out with someone so pretty. He ordered wine with dinner, and before he knew it they had finished the whole thing! They talked about everything, and she was really smart and funny. He really enjoyed being with her. As they walked back to his frat house after dinner, they held hands and stopped every once in a while to kiss gently. Although he would have loved to have taken her up to his room and made love to her, he had no idea if she would be into it and he didn't want to offend her by just blurting it out, so he decided to wait and see if she gave him any signals. They sat and watched television with his buddies for a while and Mark had a few beers. Then the guys started getting kind of loud, and he asked Diane if she'd like to go up to his room with him. She said sure.

When they got to his room, he asked her if she'd like to hear some music and she said yes, so he put on something low and jazzy. Then he asked her to dance. They moved together on the floor and kissed. Her body felt so great as she pressed herself against him, and she smelled so good that Mark was really getting turned on. His head felt kind of fuzzy from the wine and beer and the music, and he just wanted to keep touching her and feeling her. Then she gently pushed back from him and asked him to drive her home in a few minutes. First he said sure, but as he tried to clear his head, he realized that he was pretty drunk, and he said that he was too drunk and it wouldn't be safe to get behind the wheel. He offered to let her have his bed and he would sleep on the floor. Although she seemed to hesitate, she agreed and they went back to dancing.

Mark was really turned on, but he was getting tired of standing, so he maneuvered Diane over to the bed and they sat down. They touched and made out for a while. Mark was really getting aroused, and he felt that she was, too. Then he took off his shirt. He wanted to see what she would do, and he was just dying to touch her bare skin. She took off her shirt, too, and they touched for a long time. It seemed that she was as into him as he was into her. When he tried to put his hands inside her pants, she squirmed away, but she didn't seem mad,

so he kept kissing her. He laid her back on the bed and climbed on top of her, and they moved against each other. Mark felt as though he would just explode. He wanted her so badly. She seemed to want him; she was moving against him and kissing him back, and she had taken off her shirt! Mark thought that she really wanted him but she probably didn't want him to think she was too easy. He just wanted her so much and she was moving under him and if he pulled hard he could get her pants down and then he could get inside her. She was squirming under him . . . and he could hear her say no, but he wanted her and she really wanted him . . . and he really wanted to do it . . . and he pushed her and he was inside her.

Discussion Questions

- Would you define this situation as rape?
- Why or why not?
- What could Mark have done to prevent this situation from occurring?
- What could Diane have done differently?
- What should a person do when they want to be sexual but don't want to have intercourse?
- Do you think Diane planned to have sex with Mark from the beginning of the date?

SELECTED LESSON PLAN 12.2: GENDER TRADITIONS AND HIV INFECTION

SOURCE

Jill Lewis, "Gender traditions as the risky ground of HIV infection," *Gendering Prevention Practice: A practical guide to working with gender in sexual safety and HIV/AIDS awareness education*, The Living for Tomorrow Project at the Nordic Institute for Women's Studies and Gender Research (NIKK), 2003, Oslo. Reprinted with permission.

Suitable for ages 15 to 18

Summary

This activity uses a fairly simple technique to help participants recognize and discuss the critically important but often neglected issue of how gender-based traditions related to sexual behavior can be harmful to sexual safety and reproductive health. Participants are given a questionnaire and broken up into groups, and each group is assigned to work on a different part of the questionnaire. They discuss their ideas and opinions and then regroup and share their conclusions. The questions address the impact of a range of gender-based sexual traditions, from issues of rights and power, to body practices, to the relationship between sex and money. Finally, the group as a whole discusses the impact of these gender traditions on sexual health. Because the questions ask participants to identify their own gender-based practices and traditions related to sexuality, the lesson can be used in any culture.

Teaching Notes

- If you have time, ask the groups to discuss more than two of the questions in the section that they have been assigned.
- Review the discussion questionnaire headings and questions, and determine if there are some questions or issues that you want your participants to focus on more than others. Not all sections or questions need to be used. Alternatively, this session could be broken into several sessions in order to go into more depth, or some questions or sections could be assigned as homework.
- If you are working with teenagers who will not be providing health education to others, consider changing the concluding questions. Alternative questions include: "How do these issues affect the prevention of sexual health problems?" "How do they influence establishing positive relationships based on equality?" "What changes in gender traditions would increase sexual safety?" "What can you do to achieve this?"

Adapting the Lesson

- If you cannot make copies of the questionnaire for every student, give each group one copy of either the entire questionnaire, or just those questions that group will be considering. If you want the participants to have the whole list of questions to do the follow-up activity, write it on the board and ask them to copy it down.

Gender traditions as the risky ground of HIV infection

- Aim:** To activate reflections on how sexual behaviors often taken for granted in relations between men and women embody damaging gender norms and HIV risk
- Materials:** Printed handouts of the following questionnaire, enough for all participants
- Time:** 20 minutes in groups, 30 minutes feedback and reflection on HIV implications

Give everyone a copy of the following questionnaire. Ask participants to form groups of 4 or 5.

Each group should be assigned one numbered part of the questionnaire. Ask them to read through the questions together and then select one or two of the questions to discuss. The group should also prepare feedback to the full group on the main issues raised in their discussion.

Back in the full circle, after 20 minutes discussion, each group should report back:

- **What questions were discussed?**
- **What issues were raised?**

Conclude the session by asking people to reflect on what might be the implications for sexual health education and HIV/AIDS prevention.

Follow-up: participants can be asked to take the full list of questions home, and discuss some of them with people in their family, friends, community organizations in the coming days.

Gender traditions as the risky ground of HIV infection and AIDS

Discussion questionnaire

Gender differences in our culture: questions of rights and power

Do men and women have equal rights in determining sexual behavior?

Do men and women have equal power to share decisions about sexual behavior?

Can or do men and women collaborate equally in taking initiative for sexual relations and acts?

Can men and women equally take part in negotiations about safer sexual behavior?

Is it hard for women and men to communicate about sexual issues? What would make discussion of sexual safety more open and possible between men and women?

Do you think there are equal rights for men and women to have protection against sexual violence and exploitation?

Gender, body practices / body vulnerability

Are there practices men do to their own bodies that make them vulnerable to sexual infection?

Are there practices women do to their own bodies that make them vulnerable to sexual infection?

Are there practices men do to women's bodies that make women's bodies vulnerable to sexual infection?

Are there practices women do to men's bodies that make men's bodies vulnerable to sexual infection?

Given these practices, how are women placed to help stop the spread of HIV?

How are men placed to stop it?

What collaborative strategies can men and women build together to make sexual traditions and behaviors safer?

Beliefs and traditions involving gender and sexuality

Are there traditional beliefs about men's or women's bodies that promote risk and vulnerability to infection? Where and from whom do boys learn about sex – both physical information and behavior information? And girls?

Do inheritance issues or family traditions affect sexual behaviors in any way where risk of HIV infection is increased?

Are there traditions, customs, or popular beliefs that give men rights over women's bodies? Or give women rights over men's bodies?

Are there traditions that inhibit women from participating equally in sexual decision-making – including safety practices? And men?

Are there traditions where, for example, certain sexual relations MUST take place?

Sex, “freedoms,” constraints, gender and power

Are the aims and expectations of sexual relations and behaviors considered different for men and women? If so, in what way? And do any differences affect the spread of HIV?

Is it assumed that ‘real men’ have a lot of sexual relations, sexual partners? What would be the best strategies to make men’s sexual behaviors safe, so they do not get HIV and do not spread it?

Is there a double standard – where men marry and are meant to be faithful – while in reality many men have other partners or buy sexual services from others? If many men do this, what must happen to stop HIV spreading through these behaviors?

What happens if wives and mothers have other partners outside marriage or buy sexual services from others? Does this happen? Are the consequences the same for men and women? What would have to happen to stop HIV spreading through these behaviors?

Are there things women do to please men and be ‘proper’ women in the eyes of others (that women dislike or do not necessarily feel good about)?

Are there things men do to please women and be ‘proper’ men in the eyes of others (that men dislike or do not necessarily feel good about)?

Sex and money, sex and exchange of goods or privileges

How can women’s economic and social subordination to, or dependence on men impact on sexual behaviors?

Does a man’s capacity to earn more than women affect his sexual relations with women? His wife? Other women?

What happens if he cannot find work, so cannot earn? In what ways might this impact sexual relations in our culture?

Do women fear men will go elsewhere if they question men’s unsafe sexual behaviors or if they do not comply with men’s sexual demands (even if risky) and expectations?

How could men be encouraged to keep sexual health and HIV in mind when they pay for sex?

Do older men in your culture use their experience or age or money or goods to get younger women or girls to have sex with them? What do you feel about this (as a man, as a woman)?

Do women’s economic vulnerability, greater poverty, and their need to provide for children and help the household or family cope mean they are cornered into exchanging sexual services for survival?