Your Body Your Rights

A Lesson Plan from Rights, Respect, Responsibility: A K-12 Curriculum

Fostering responsibility by respecting young people's rights to honest sexuality education.

NSES ALIGNMENT:

IV.5.CC.1 - Define child sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and domestic violence and explain why they are harmful and their potential impacts

IV.5.IC.2 – Explain that some survivors are not believed when they disclose sexual abuse or harassment and that it is important to keep telling trusted adults until one of the adults takes action

IV.5.SM.1 – Describe steps a person can take when they are being or have been sexually abused

IV.5.IC.1 – Identify strategies a person could use to call attention to or leave an uncomfortable or dangerous situation, including sexual harassment

TARGET GRADE:

Grade 5 Lesson 6

TIME: 40 Minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Worksheet: "What Do You Know about Sexual Abuse?" – one per student
- "Teacher's Guide: What Do You Know About Sexual Abuse?" – one per teacher
- Homework: "What We Talked about Today" – one per student
- Markers/chalk
- Flipchart paper or chalkboard/ dry erase board
- Extra pencils in case students do not have their own

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

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

1. Define the terms "sexual abuse" and "sexual harassment." [Knowledge]
2. List at least 3 accurate facts about sexual abuse among young people their age. [Knowledge]
3. Demonstrate that they have a trusted adult with whom they can speak if they or someone they know is being sexually abused or harassed. [Knowledge]
4. Describe steps a person can take when they are being or have been sexually abused [Knowledge]

ADVANCE PREPARATION:

- Speak with the school counselor and let them know that you will be addressing this topic in class today in case the topic triggers students to come forward about themselves or someone they know being abused or harassed.
- Review the "What Do You Know about Sexual Abuse?" teacher's guide

PROCEDURE:

STEP 1:

Start the session by explaining that you are going to be discussing a particularly sensitive topic today, sexual harassment and abuse. Acknowledge that the students may have learned a bit over the past few years about bullying and harassment in general. Explain that the main difference in today's lesson is that you are going to be talking about abuse and harassment that are sexual in nature.

If you created groundrules at the beginning of the unit, remind students about them. If not, say, **"As you will hear shortly, sexual abuse – even among students your age – is more common than you think. Please keep in mind that it is very possible that students in this class may know people who have experienced this. So let's be sure to ask questions and discuss this topic as sensitively and respectfully as we can."**

(3 minutes)

STEP 2:

Say, **"When you were younger, you might have heard an adult talk with you about a 'safe' touch vs. an 'unsafe' touch. Does anyone remember the difference between the two?"** Probe for: safe touch is a touch that feels "right" – that makes you feel safe and loved and unsafe touch as being a touch that makes you feel uncomfortable, bad, scared or that physically hurts. In this case, an unsafe touch would include someone touching your body, especially your genitals, for any reason other than for a health issue. Say, **"At your age, even if the way someone touches your genitals feels good, no one should touch your genitals – nor should they ask you to touch theirs."**

Say, **"Sexual harassment is kind of like bullying. It's behavior that's designed to embarrass you or make you feel bad about yourself, but again, that relates to something sexual. This might include unwanted touching, telling sexual jokes that make you feel uncomfortable or passing you sexual drawings or notes. Many times, it's done by someone who has power over the person they're harassing. For example, the harasser may be an older student or adult, someone who is very popular at school, etc. It's sexual harassment if it goes on for a while and makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe – or distracts you so much you find it hard to pay attention at school or enjoy the things you do outside of school."**

(3 minutes)

STEP 3:

Divide the class into pairs. Tell them you are going to distribute a worksheet that you would like them to complete together that has some information about sexual abuse. Tell them that if they don't know the answer to a particular question they should just guess. Distribute the worksheet, "***What Do You Know about Sexual Abuse?***" and tell them they will have 5 minutes in which to complete it with their partner.

(7 minutes)

STEP 4:

After about 5 minutes, ask the students to stop wherever they are. Ask them whether they felt like they knew a lot of the answers, some or none. After a few responses, go through the worksheet, asking for different pairs to volunteer to answer each one. Use the "***What Do You Know about Sexual Abuse?***" teacher's guide to provide the correct answers, as well as some additional, important take-home points about each. (14 minutes)

STEP 5:

Tell the students, **"It might seem pretty easy to make sexual abuse stop, right? All you need to do is go tell an adult you know well and trust. But that doesn't happen all the time. What are some reasons why you think someone might not tell at first?"** Probe for: "They might feel embarrassed," "they might feel like it's their fault," "they might not get that what's happening is abuse or wrong," "they might feel scared because the person said they'd hurt them or someone in their family if they told," etc. After you've heard from a number of students, tell them that, no matter what, no one has a right to touch them in ways that feel

uncomfortable or bad; that no one has a right to abuse or harass them sexually, whether at school, at home or anywhere else. Explain that you are now going to work to come up with some ideas of how a person can talk with a trusted adult if they or someone they know is being sexually abused. (5 minutes)

STEP 6:

Divide the class into different pairs. Tell them that one will be the writer but both will participate. Say, **"Talking about sexual abuse can be tough. Imagine a friend comes to you and tells you they're being sexually abused and they want it to stop. What are some things you can suggest they do if they're nervous about telling an adult?"** Ask the pairs to each write down one adult they could talk to if this were happening to them or someone they know. Tell them it is okay if they both say the same person in their lives.

Then instruct them to come up with five ideas – or as many as they can in 2 minutes -- of how a young person could tell an adult they are being abused. Provide an example as a guide:

"Be direct. Just say, 'I have something to tell you but I don't know how to say it.'"

After about 2 minutes or before then if most of the students have generated their lists quickly, ask for some examples. Write them up on the board or on flipchart paper, probing for or adding the following:

- Draw a picture
- Text or email a parent or caregiver
- Tell it to your teacher in a class journal or assignment
- Write a note that says, "I need to talk" or "I need help"
- Write a note that tells the whole story
- Close your eyes or turn your back and tell
- Use a stuffed animal to do the telling
- Start by just talking about the feelings you are having before talking about why you're having them
- If your parent/caregiver has a car, wait until you're in the car so you don't have to talk about it face-to-face

Say, **"These are some really good ideas. As you can see, there are many ways a person can bring this up. And please remember that the school counselor is always available to speak with you about this or any other issue you may need to talk about. One last idea is if you really feel like you cannot talk with an adult in your life, you can call this hotline: 1-800-4ACHILD."** Tell the students that even though you'll be erasing this

at the end of class, you will always have this number available if anyone wants it and didn't remember it or didn't feel they could write it down.

Distribute the homework assignment and provide instructions. Tell the students they need to bring this in to the next class you have together.

(8 minutes)

RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES AT CONCLUSION OF LESSON:

Since you will be providing definitions and the correct answers to the worksheet in class, students will have received at least three facts about sexual abuse, which are the first and second learning objectives.

The in-class discussion of who they would tell about sexual abuse, as well as ideas for how they could tell, will be part of the assessment for the third and fourth learning objectives. This will also be assessed by the completion of the homework activity.

HOMEWORK:

Have students bring home and complete the "***What We Talked about Today***" worksheet with a parent or caregiver. Collect during the next class session.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT SEXUAL ABUSE?

Teacher's Guide

Instructions: Go through the teacher's guide, providing the correct answers to the students. After sharing the correct answer, share some of additional information and take-home messages outlined below. While this is formatted as a lecture, feel free to conduct this as a back-and-forth discussion with your students, which will help you get a sense of what they know coming into the lesson.

1. AT WHAT AGE ARE KIDS MOST LIKELY TO BE SEXUALLY ABUSED?

A. 2 to 5 years old

B. 7 to 13 years old

C. 14 to 18 years old

D. Kids under 18 don't get sexually abused.

Say, "The information we have about sexual abuse is limited. We are pretty sure that even more kids are abused than we know about because so many are afraid to come forward and say something. But from what we know, the most common age for sexual abuse to happen is 7 to 13 years old. Now, that does not mean that ALL children ages 7 to 13 will be abused – not at all! But when kids are this age, they tend to have more unsupervised time without the adults they know and trust around them. Also, they have not learned to speak up for themselves as much as older kids. That's something we're going to take care of later in this lesson."

2. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS IS TRUE:

A. Only girls can be sexually abused

B. Only boys can be sexually abused

C. Anyone can be sexually abused, no matter what their gender is

D. Boys are more likely to be sexually abused

Say: "There's a myth out there that only girls are sexually abused, but that's not the case. As I shared before, we don't completely know how many people have experienced this as students. But based on the number of adults who were sexually abused as children, one estimate is that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys is sexually abused during their lifetime."

3. WITH WHICH OF THESE STUDENTS CAN SEXUAL ABUSE HAPPEN?

A. Students whose parent(s) have more money or a nicer home than others

B. Students whose parent(s) have less money or a more modest home than others

C. Students who only have one parent or are being raised by another family member

D. All of the above

Say, "There's nothing about where you live, or how you're growing up, that means you will or won't experience sexual abuse. It can happen to anyone. It has to do with speaking up if anyone makes you feel uncomfortable in any way. It also means knowing that YOU can never touch anyone else in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable or bad, whether that's now or when you're older."

4. WHICH IS TRUE ABOUT PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN SEXUALLY ABUSED?

A. They are sometimes not believed when they tell someone

B. They should never talk about it to another person

C. They should only talk about it if they don't know the person who abused them

D. None of the above

Say, "Sometimes, unfortunately, when a young person tells an adult that they have been sexually abused, the adult doesn't believe them. This is really hard on the young person! The most important thing they can do, though, is to try again, whether with that adult or another adult, and not stop trying until they find an adult they can talk with and trust to help make the abuse stop."

5. IF SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS BEING SEXUALLY ABUSED, WHAT MIGHT YOU NOTICE?

A. A change in mood – someone who's usually happy and outgoing becomes quiet or irritable

B. They won't want to participate in fun things you used to do together and may not give a reason for that

C. They might wear big, bulky clothes to cover as much of their body as possible – even in warmer weather

D. All of the above

Say, "Someone who is being sexually abused might show some, all or none of these. Everyone is different. These can also happen when kids are going through something else really major at home – like if someone close to them has passed away or their parents or caregivers are separating. You all aren't counselors – I'm not even a counselor! But if you notice a change in a friend's behavior like what's named here, ask them if they're okay. Encourage them to go tell an adult if they need some support. Say that you'll go with her or him to talk with that adult if they want. Just don't keep it a secret – there's no reason why anyone should have to endure sexual abuse. But you need to speak up in order to make it stop."

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT SEXUAL ABUSE?

Worksheet

Name: _____

Instructions: Go through the worksheet with your partner and circle the correct answer. We will be going through the answers when you're done, so if you're not sure, feel free to make your best guess.

1. AT WHAT AGE ARE KIDS MOST LIKELY TO BE SEXUALLY ABUSED?

a. **2 to 5 years old**
b. **7 to 13 years old**
c. **14 – 18 years old**
d. **Kids under 18 don't get sexually abused.**

2. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS IS TRUE:

a. **Only girls can be sexually abused**
b. **Only boys can be sexually abused**
c. **Anyone can be sexually abused, no matter what their gender is**
d. **Boys are more likely to be sexually abused**

3. WITH WHICH OF THESE STUDENTS CAN SEXUAL ABUSE HAPPEN?

a. **Students whose parents have more money or a nicer home than others**
b. **Students whose parents have less money or a more modest home than others**
c. **Students who only have one parent or are being raised by another family member**
d. **All of the above**

4. WHICH IS TRUE ABOUT PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN SEXUALLY ABUSED?

a. **They are sometimes not believed when they tell someone**
b. **They should never talk about it to another person**
c. **They should only talk about it if they don't know the person who abused them**
d. **None of the above**

5. IF SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS BEING SEXUALLY ABUSED, WHAT MIGHT YOU NOTICE?

a. **A change in mood – someone who's usually happy and outgoing becomes quiet or irritable**
b. **They won't want to participate in fun things you used to do together and may not give a reason for that**
c. **They might wear big, bulky clothes to cover as much of their body as possible – even in warmer weather**
d. **All of the above**

WHAT WE TALKED ABOUT TODAY

Homework

Dear Parents/Caregivers: Today in class, we talked about the very important topic of sexual abuse and harassment. We encouraged students to talk with you if they ever feel uncomfortable with how someone acts with them, even if that person is an adult. For tonight's homework, we are asking you to have a conversation with your child and come up with the answers together. Please be sure your child hands this in the next time we have class so I know you did it. I will be sure to return it to you so you will always have it at home.

FOR STUDENT TO SHARE WITH PARENT/CAREGIVER:

Here are three things I learned today in class about sexual abuse and harassment:

FOR STUDENT TO SHARE WITH PARENT/CAREGIVER:

If I or someone I know is being sexually abused or harassed and I told you about it, here's what I'd want you to say or do:

FOR PARENT/CAREGIVER TO DISCUSS WITH STUDENT:

If for any reason you feel you can't tell me what's going on, here are some other adults we feel you could go to about this:

Student Signature: _____

Parent/Caregiver Signature: _____