

A Healthy Look at Sexuality

Lesson Three

Communication for Better
Relationships

(Adapted from 7/8 F.L.A.S.H., Lesson 16; 9/10 F.L.A.S.H., Lessons 2A & 10;
www.kingcounty.gov/health/FLASH; and Streetwise to Sex-wise, Lesson 7.)

LESSON 3: COMMUNICATION FOR BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

Time needed

One class period

Student learning objectives

1. Discuss the question, “How can you tell if someone really wants to have sex?”
2. Recognize how the belief in false assumptions and the failure to communicate honestly and clearly with a partner can lead to a date rape.
3. Identify samples of miscommunication and recommend behavior change.
4. Understand passive, aggressive, and assertive communication and practice assertive communication.

Agenda

1. Introduction and Overview
2. When “No” Means “No”
3. Sex, A Decision for Two
4. Communication Skills
5. Closure
6. Homework

Materials needed

1. Agree, Disagree, and Unsure Signs
2. Masking Tape
3. Scenario: *Sex, A Decision for Two* (1 per student)
4. Scenario: *Jamie’s Communication Skills* (2)
5. Scenario: *Alex’s Communication Skills* (2)
6. Family Homework: *Sex in the Media* (1 per student)
7. Family Homework: *Sex in the Media Confirmation Sheet* (1 per student)
8. Homework: *Sexual Choices* (1 per student)
9. Whiteboard or Newsprint
10. Appropriate markers
11. Handout: *Health Resource List* approved by District 81 Human Growth and Development (or approved list of local health resources)
12. Index Cards of the Same Size, Shape, and Color
13. Anonymous Question Bag or Box

Preparation

1. Print and cut the **Agree, Disagree, and Unsure** signs and laminate for future use (located under Worksheets and Printouts at the end of the lesson).
2. Print 2 copies each of the following (located under Worksheets and Printouts at the end of the lesson):
 - **Scenario: *Jamie’s Communication Skills*** and

(Adapted from 7/8 F.L.A.S.H., Lesson 16; 9/10 F.L.A.S.H., Lessons 2A & 10; www.kingcounty.gov/health/FLASH; and Streetwise to Sex-wise, Lesson 7.)

- **Scenario: *Alex’s Communication Skills***
3. Print 1 copy per student of the following (located under Worksheets and Printouts at the end of the lesson):
- **Handout: *Health Resource List* approved by District 81 Human Growth and Development**
 - **Scenario: *Sex, A Decision for Two*,**
 - **Family Homework: *Sex in the Media*,**
 - **Family Homework: *Sex in the Media Confirmation Slip*, and**
 - **Homework: *Sexual Choices***

Instructions

1. Introduction and Overview

- a. Go over homework from the previous lesson. Allow everyone a chance to share their homework and the results that they got. However, make sure that they understand that this part is optional and if they are doing their homework with a partner or family member, they must have their permission to share also.
- b. Explain to participants that the last lesson was about how to tell the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships. Knowing how to communicate with people is an important part of healthy relationships. This lesson concentrates on how to communicate honestly and clearly with people especially around issues of sexuality.
- c. Remind participants that this is a sensitive topic and ask everybody to remember the group agreements.

2. When “No” Means “No”

- a. Explain that we’re going to start out with what a person really means when they say “no” to sex.
- b. Hang **Agree, Disagree, and Unsure** signs around room and ask students to stand by the sign that represents their opinion of the following statement:

“When someone says ‘no’ to sex, they usually mean ‘no.’”

NOTE TO TEACHER: Make sure someone occupies all signs (i.e., Agree, Disagree, and Unsure), so that all sides are represented. When you do this, however, make sure that everyone knows that the person you place at a sign, may or may not represent their opinion.

(Adapted from 7/8 F.L.A.S.H., Lesson 16; 9/10 F.L.A.S.H., Lessons 2A & 10; www.kingcounty.gov/health/FLASH; and Streetwise to Sex-wise, Lesson 7.)

- c. Use the following questions for discussion:

Why did you stand where you did?
(Get responses from all parts of the room.)

To the people under “Disagree”:

If you think sometimes people mean “yes” when they say “no,” how do you know when someone really WANTS to have sex?

What do people mean when they say some people are teases? How do such people act? Why do you think that they might be acting this way?

Why might a person be unsure whether they want to have sex? How common is it for someone to be unsure about having sex? What could the other person do if they sense that someone is unsure?

What could a person do if they are unsure about having sex? How do people feel when they get mixed messages?

What if someone says “no” to you, but then gives you non-verbal cues that they want sex, what should you do?

3. Sex, A Decision for Two

- a. Explain that now we know that when someone communicates “no” to sex they mean no, we’re going to read through a scene to see if you can interpret what is going on in the scene.
- b. Deliver a warning about being respectful and sensitive when reading this scene. Explain that the scene that we’re about to read could set off some triggers for some people because of what happens. Explain to them that they can leave the room if the scene gets to be too much.
- c. Pass out the **Scenario: Sex, A Decision for Two** and have each participant take turns reading out loud. Make sure that they have the option to pass if they don’t want to read out loud.
- d. Facilitate the following discussion with large group:

How often does this kind of thing happen among teens your age?

What signals did Alex ignore or misinterpret?

(Adapted from 7/8 F.L.A.S.H., Lesson 16; 9/10 F.L.A.S.H., Lessons 2A & 10; www.kingcounty.gov/health/FLASH; and Streetwise to Sex-wise, Lesson 7.)

(Point out that Jamie was thinking one thing about their actions and Alex thought something totally different about these same actions.)

What *did* Jamie want?

What would have been the perfect evening for Jamie?

What is sex?

NOTE TO TEACHER: Different people have different definitions for sex. Some people define sex as vaginal sex (penis and vagina contact), but do not include oral sex (mouth and genital contact) and anal sex (penis and anus contact). Some define sex as engaging in any sexual behavior, including masturbation. In this class, “sex” will mean: oral, anal, or vaginal sex. These three forms of sex are the most likely way to become pregnant and/or get Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs.)

Might Jamie have wanted to fool around?

Can a person want to fool around, and not have sex?

When in the scenario did Jamie become more vulnerable?

If Alex felt like Jamie was sending mixed signals, what could he have done or said to make sure that Jamie understood?

What things could Jamie have done or said to Alex to make the real feelings clear?

What role did alcohol have in this situation?

Do you think this situation would still have happened if alcohol was not consumed?

Was this date rape?

NOTE TO TEACHER: Stress that what Alex did was wrong and illegal.

- e. Share the **Handout: *Health Resource List*** with students. This resource list provides phone numbers for more information and services related to the topics discussed in these lessons.

4. Communication Skills

- a. Explain that now we're going to learn the different kinds of communication styles that may have helped or hindered the Alex and Jamie situation.
- b. Write Passive, Assertive, and Aggressive on newsprint or whiteboard.
- c. Ask the group what each communication style is and write down what they say on the newsprint or whiteboard. With each definition give examples and the likely results. Use the following as a guide:

Passive: Giving in and saying “yes” when you don’t really want to. Not asking for what you want. Acting this way in order to be liked, to be nice or to not hurt the other person’s feelings.

The Results: You don’t get what you want. The other person wins, and you feel like you’ve been used.

Examples: You and your girl/boyfriend are making out on the couch. You don’t really like the way they are kissing you and you wish they would stop. But, you don’t say anything because you want the person to like you and you don’t want to make them feel bad.

Aggressive: Trying to get your own way by putting someone else down or violating that person’s rights. Taking what you want without caring about how it hurts another person. Threatening or forcing a person to give you something. (**Note:** Aggressive communication does not just mean being physical with someone. A person can be just as aggressive by calling a person names, yelling, using put-downs, threatening someone with words, and non-verbal body language (i.e., clenching fists, staring you down, rolling your eyes, etc.)). **Aggressive behavior and language is used by both people in the example below. It is important for students to understand that using language such as “you stupid jerk” can also escalate a situation and lead to physical and sexual violence.**

The Results: You may get what you want, but the other person loses.

Examples: You and your girl/boyfriend are making out on the couch. You don’t really like the way they are kissing you. You say, “Get off me, you stupid jerk this isn’t CPR class. Who taught you how to kiss anyway?!”

Assertive: Giving people an honest “no” to things you don’t want. Asking straight for what you do want without putting them down. Not using other people and not letting yourself be used.

The Results: You often get what you want. You keep your self-respect. You respect and don't hurt others.

Example: You and your girl/boyfriend are making out on the couch. You don't really like the way they are kissing you and you wish they would stop. You say, "I like you, but I'm not really into this. Let's stop."

NOTE TO TEACHER: It's important to convey to the participants that each person needs to be assertive with what they want or don't want. It is not up to just one person to be assertive.

- d. Describe the scene on **Scene: Jamie's Communication Skills** and ask for two volunteers to play the roles of Alex and Jamie.
- e. Ask the volunteers to role play the scene so that Jamie communicates either passively, aggressively, or assertively. Ask the rest of the group to try to guess what kind of communication style Jamie is using.
- f. Get two new volunteers. Describe the scene on **Scenario: Alex's Communication Skills** and repeat the process as you did with **Scenario: Jamie's Communication Skills**.

5. Closure

- a. Ask the group what they learned with this lesson.
- b. Provide students with the **Handout: Health Resource List** that is included with this curriculum.
- c. Pass anonymous question bag or box around.
- d. Answer anonymous questions

6. Homework

- a. Participants have the following options for homework:
 - Complete the **Family Homework: Sex in the Media**. Instead of returning the worksheet for credit, they will turn in the **Family Homework: Sex in the Media Confirmation Slip**.
 - Complete the **Family Homework: Sex in the Media** by themselves by writing out their responses and finding print examples of the various messages to share with the class.

(Adapted from 7/8 F.L.A.S.H., Lesson 16; 9/10 F.L.A.S.H., Lessons 2A & 10; www.kingcounty.gov/health/FLASH; and Streetwise to Sex-wise, Lesson 7.)

- Complete and turn in the **Homework: *Sexual Choices***. They will have the option to share the homework with the rest of the class in the next lesson.

- b. Explain that before the next lesson, everyone will have a chance to share what they did for their homework and the results that they got. However, make sure that they understand that this part is optional and if they are doing their homework with a family member, they must have their permission to share also.

Worksheets and Printouts

(Adapted from 7/8 F.L.A.S.H., Lesson 16; 9/10 F.L.A.S.H., Lessons 2A & 10;
www.kingcounty.gov/health/FLASH; and Streetwise to Sex-wise, Lesson 7.)

Agree

Disagree

Unsure

(Adapted from 7/8 F.L.A.S.H., Lesson 16; 9/10 F.L.A.S.H., Lessons 2A & 10;
www.kingcounty.gov/health/FLASH; and Streetwise to Sex-wise, Lesson 7.)

Scenario: Sex, a Decision for Two

- 8:00-- The doorbell rang. Jamie answered it, saying to their friend Jill, "I could have just come outside to the car." Jill replied, "Yeah well, I sort of have a surprise." Alex, that person you know from math class is with us." Jamie was very excited. Jamie said, "Alex is really cute! I thought Alex was going out with someone. What do I say?" Jill answered, "Just act natural!" Jamie was both nervous and excited to meet Alex and hang out at the party that evening.
- 8:15-- At the party, Alex was very attentive to Jamie. Jamie was thrilled. They started to dance. Jamie was a terrific dancer, and loved to dance, especially with such a cute person like Alex. They spent about an hour together, talking and dancing. Jamie had a few beers. The alcohol made Jamie's body feel looser and Jamie felt like an even better dancer.
- 10:30-- A slow song came on and Alex immediately pulled Jamie closer. Jamie did not feel very comfortable dancing close this way but did not say anything. Instead, in Jamie's attempt to keep their bodies from pressing too close Jamie's hands went up to Alex's chest. Alex had noticed Jamie in math class and thought that Jamie was hot. And now Alex was slow dancing with Jamie. Alex felt so lucky. Alex was acting so smooth and charming and could sense that Jamie was responding to it when Jamie touched Alex's chest. Alex decided to kiss Jamie.
- 11:30-- The dance floor became packed again as the music got fast. Jamie felt slightly dizzy from the beer and wanted to get some air. Alex felt very turned on and wanted to be alone with Jamie. Alex said to Jamie, "Want to go outside for some air? It's pretty stuffy in here." Jamie looked around for Jill but didn't see her. Jamie said, "Ok but just for a little while." Jamie felt nervous about being alone with Alex, but felt silly feeling that way.
- 11:40-- Once outside, Alex immediately hugged and started to kiss Jamie, thinking how much Jamie wanted to be kissed since Jamie had been dancing so sexy all evening. Jamie, unsure about what was happening, pulled away and began talking about school and how much homework there was to do. Alex thought Jamie was drunk and very talkative when drunk, so Alex continued trying to kiss Jamie. Jamie pulled away and stood up saying, "I think I should get going. Let's find Jill."
- 12:00-- Alex followed Jamie inside the house. They found that Jill had just left with her date, Willie. Alex offered to walk Jamie home, thinking that they could spend some more time alone together. Not wanting to walk alone at night, Jamie agreed.

(Adapted from 7/8 F.L.A.S.H., Lesson 16; 9/10 F.L.A.S.H., Lessons 2A & 10; www.kingcounty.gov/health/FLASH; and Streetwise to Sex-wise, Lesson 7.)

Scenario: Sex, A Decision for Two continued...

12:30-- Arriving at Jamie's dark house, Alex asked "Aren't your parents home?" Jamie said that they were away. Alex thought, Jamie wants to be alone with me too. That's why Jamie brought me back here. Alex said to Jamie "Let's go inside then. We don't have to say goodnight out here." Jamie hesitated and said that it was getting late and it was almost time to go to sleep. Alex said, "I won't stay long," and took Jamie's house key and opened the door. When Jamie stood in the hall and said, "good night," Alex laughed. Alex walked into the living room saying, "come sit for a while," and motioned Jamie over to the couch.

Jamie sat down, still buzzed from the beer, and began to explain again that it was late and Alex should stay only for a few minutes. Alex, thinking about how sexy Jamie was, moved over and began kissing Jamie again. Alex pushed Jamie down onto the couch and began to unbutton Jamie's shirt. Jamie did not respond to Alex's kisses and pushed Alex away muttering, "No, stop." Alex ignored Jamie, and continued to undress both of them thinking that Jamie really wanted it.

Jamie stopped saying no, and began to cry when Alex began to have sex.

Handout: Jamie's Communication Skills

The scene: Alex and Jamie just finished slow dancing on the dance floor. Alex began to kiss Jamie while dancing but Jamie backed away a little to end the kiss. Jamie felt uncomfortable kissing Alex in the middle of the dance floor. They walk off the dance floor.

Passive Response

Alex: You want to go outside for some air?
Jamie: Well um, I guess so.
Alex: Come on its stuffy in here.
Jamie: Wait...well ok, but just for a little while.

Aggressive Response

Alex: You want to go outside for some air?
Jamie: Not with a loser like you.
Alex: What did I do?
Jamie: (With a finger in Alex's face) As if you don't know. Who do you think you are, kissing me in the middle of the dance floor in front of all of my friends? Get outta my face.

Assertive Response:

Alex: You want to go outside for some air?
Jamie: Alex, I really like you but you're going too fast.
Alex: What do you mean?
Jamie: I mean I'm just not comfortable kissing you in the middle of the dance floor. We just met.
Alex: I got the feeling you liked me.
Jamie: I do like you, but I just met you. Can we take this a bit slower?
Alex: I didn't mean to pressure you.

(Adapted from 7/8 F.L.A.S.H., Lesson 16; 9/10 F.L.A.S.H., Lessons 2A & 10; www.kingcounty.gov/health/FLASH; and Streetwise to Sex-wise, Lesson 7.)

Handout: Alex's Communication Skills

The scene: Alex offers to walk Jamie home when they find out that Jill and her date have left. Jamie agrees. They arrive at Jamie's dark house. Alex is really turned on and wants things to go farther with Jamie sexually.

Aggressive Response

Alex: Hey, aren't your parents home?
Jamie: No, they're away.
Alex: Good let's go inside. We don't have to say goodnight out here.
Jamie: I'm really tired and I have to get up early tomorrow.
Alex: Come on Jamie. Don't be a baby. Here I'll open the door for you.
Jamie: No Alex I don't want you to come in.
Alex: (Alex grabs Jamie's arm.) Let me in, or I'll tell everyone what a tease you are.

Passive Response

Alex: Hey, aren't your parents home?
Jamie: No, they're away.
Alex: Oh. Well, I had a nice time tonight. Do you want to...um...never mind...
Jamie: What?
Alex: Oh, forget it.
Jamie: Thanks for tonight. You're fun to dance with.
Alex: Yeah, you are too. Well see you at school.

Assertive Response:

Alex: Hey, aren't your parents home?
Jamie: No, they're away.
Alex: Good let's go inside. We don't have to say goodnight out here.
Jamie: I'm really tired and I have to get up early tomorrow.
Alex: Ok. But you know, I'm confused, it seemed like you liked me at the party. Then we come back here. Your parents aren't home and you're tired?
Jamie: I am tired.
Alex: I really like you but I can't tell how you feel about me.

(Adapted from 7/8 F.L.A.S.H., Lesson 16; 9/10 F.L.A.S.H., Lessons 2A & 10; www.kingcounty.gov/health/FLASH; and Streetwise to Sex-wise, Lesson 7.)

Handout: Alex's Communication Skills continued...

Jamie: I like you too Alex, but we've just met. I'm sorry I'm sending mixed signals. Can we go a little slower? I don't want you to think I'm ready to have sex with you.

Alex: Ok...can we do something next weekend?

Family Homework: Sex in the Media

NOTE: ALL FAMILY HOMEWORK EXERCISES ARE OPTIONAL.

According to the Reverend Marie Fortune, ***“Advertising affects us all. If it didn’t work, they wouldn’t use it...The images of the ways that men and women relate shape our expectations about our own relationships.”***

Advertising often uses sexual messages to sell products. These messages often suggest that it is OK to be aggressive and take advantage of others. They can also encourage men and women to act in certain ways, such as passively, no matter how they feel.

One ad in a magazine for a popular gum shows a woman in tight jeans in a man’s arms. The man is taking the pack of gum from her pocket and the caption reads, “Everyone wants a piece”. What do you think the advertiser is saying? Talk about it.

With your family member, flip through a few of magazines or watch a couple of hours of television. Look at the ads; talk about them. Can you find any that imply any of these messages:

- “Real men are in control.”
- “Real women manipulate men.”
- “When a woman says ‘No’ she really means ‘Yes’.”
- “When a person dresses sexy, it means they want sex.”
- “Sex is best in marriage.”
- “Men and women can be friends.”
- “Being polite and not saying what you feel is feminine.”
- “Being aggressive and loud (and not listening) is masculine.”
- “Real men protect those they love.”
- “Healthy adults don’t take stupid risks.”
- “Children and preteens are sexy.”
- “Violence is sexy.”
- “Certain kinds of bodies are beautiful and others aren’t.”
- “Healthy relationships are sexy.”

How do the two of you feel about each of the messages listed above? Talk about it. If you were going to call or write the magazine or TV station about their ads, what would you say?

FOR FULL CREDIT, THIS EXERCISE IS DUE: _____

OPTIONAL EXTRA CREDIT: Choose one of the ads or TV shows you observed and find out where you could send reader/viewer feedback. Send them a letter that includes your comments about their advertising or programming, and bring a copy of your letter to share with the class.

(Adapted from 7/8 F.L.A.S.H., Lesson 16; 9/10 F.L.A.S.H., Lessons 2A & 10; www.kingcounty.gov/health/FLASH; and Streetwise to Sex-wise, Lesson 7.)

Family Homework: Sex in the Media

CONFIRMATION SLIP

We have completed “Family Homework: *Sexual Exploitation.*”

Date: _____

X _____
Student’s signature

X _____
Signature of family member or friend

