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So What's Next?: Making Responsible Decisions Lesson Objective

Time: **40-80 minutes**

New York State Parenting Standard: **Standard 1: Roles and Responsibilities, Standard 2: Human Growth and Development, Standard 3: Support Systems and Services**

Aim: To assist participants in developing skills to choose abstinence, postpone sexual activity and prevent unintended pregnancy.

Objectives: Students Will:

- 1. Explore myths and facts concerning issues of abstinence and teen pregnancy.**
- 2. Affirm the skills students already have to be in control of their own lives and to make safe choices.**
- 3. Practice these skills and reflect upon decision making regarding healthy relationships.**

Materials Needed:

Lesson outline, ball, "Myth or Fact Cards", Healthy Relationship scenarios, What is abstinence? Handout (see Positive Life Choices I – What's an Abstinence lesson for handout), "Abstinence Quiz" brochure (available through Journey Works Publishing 800-775-1998).

So What's Next?: Making Responsible Decisions

Lesson Outline

I. Introduction:

A. You may not have thought about money, stress, delay of future plans...associated with teen pregnancy, but you've probably been aware that there are changes going on in your body...

B. Lead into myth game which will clarify the facts about teen sex and how pregnancy happens.

II. Myth or Fact Activity:

A. Myth or Fact Activity: Divide class into 2 or 3 groups and hand out several Myth/Fact" statement cards to each group. Each group has to decide if these statements are myths or facts, and post them on the appropriate spot on the wall.

1. Suggested Myth/Fact Statements (feel free to develop your own, but check for accuracy before you use in the classroom!):

- A girl owes a guy sex if he takes her out or spends lots of money on her (myth)
- A person can be abstinent no matter what they have done in the past (fact)
- You can't get pregnant if it is your first time having sex (myth)
- Over 90% of teen pregnancies are planned (myth)
- If every high school male abstained from intercourse or used a condom perfectly, 75% of all births among teen females would still occur (fact)
- The teen pregnancy rate hasn't dropped at all since 1990 (myth)
- A girl cannot get pregnant if she has not had her first period (myth)
- Abstinence is the only 100% effective way to avoid unwanted pregnancy (fact)
- 70%-80% of 15 year olds stated they practice abstinence (fact)

2. Process:

- Affirm correct answers, correct any wrong placements. Answer and questions...elaborate on statements when appropriate.
- Ask where you can get more information about this topic, your own body, etc.
- Offer suggestions: Parents, guidance counselor, health teacher, relative, etc.

III. Making healthy decisions around abstinence and sex:

A. Often decisions we make have to do with making a commitment to do or not to do something i.e. join the basketball team, exercise more, watch less TV, give up chocolate. This commitment to **not do something** may be thought of as choosing abstinence.

B. Ask students what is something they have tried to abstain from?

1. What made it hard? What helped?
2. Helped you keep the commitment?
3. What or who helped you follow through with this commitment.

C. Most of the time when you decide to abstain from something you only need to tell yourself and stick to it. Abstinence from sex is different, because there is always

someone else involved. You have to make your decision clear to this other person as well and they need to make their decision clear to you.

1. Statistics, 98% of teens pregnancies are unintended, 7 in 10 girls under age 13 who had sex say that they “didn’t want to.” (research the most recent statistics)
2. Why might this be so? Highlight the importance of communication!
3. Abstaining from sex to avoid a pregnancy or STI is a big decision. How well you are able to stick to it may determine what the rest of your life will be like.

D. Activity: “What do we mean by a healthy relationship?” (You can either pose this question to the group, or use a “ball toss” format.) Toss the ball to someone in the class – they need to respond to the first question, or toss the ball to someone else for help or to answer the next question. Try to get several responses to each.

1. What is the most important element in a healthy relationship is?
2. What is the difference between a personal relationship and the relationship you have with your parents, caregiver, siblings, best friend?
3. What is one sided relationship?
4. What is the hardest part in maintaining a healthy relationship?

E. Yes, No, Think It Over... -

1. Break students into four groups giving each group a scenario handout (A-D).
2. Give students a chance to discuss the scenario with their group, and have them specifically identify the skills used or not used in their particular scenario.
3. Bring the groups back together and address the skills used or not used, and the outcomes in each scenario.
4. As a whole, discuss other positive alternative that would sustain a safe and healthy relationship.