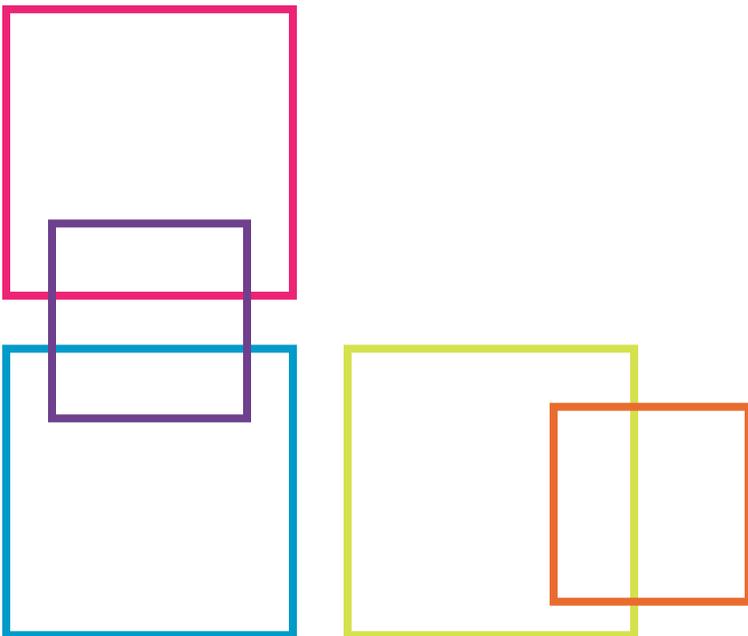


MODULE 5



TELL IT LIKE IT IS

Sexual Health + Wellness Education



CHECK-IN

- Briefly review the main concepts covered during the previous module
- Address any questions or concerns that participants may have at this time
- Introduce the concepts that will be covered during this module

TOPICS TO BE COVERED:

- Understanding different types of relationships and touch boundaries
- Identifying healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Abuse and our Rights
- Exploring Trust

INTRODUCTION

There are many different kinds of relationships that we have with the people in our lives. Relationships may include friends, family, neighbours, co-workers, teammates, and more. There are also intimate kinds of relationships, such as those we may share with a romantic partner, which may involve a greater amount of sharing and closeness. People who are strangers may become acquaintances and acquaintances may become friends. People with whom we are good friends may become romantic partners. Understanding how relationships may change or evolve is important in helping us decide how we should interact with others. Knowing how to interact appropriately with different kinds of people is an important part of recognizing and having healthy relationships. Relationships can be positive, supportive, safe, and healthy, but can also become, negative, toxic, harmful or unhealthy. It is important to recognize the difference between a healthy and an unhealthy relationship.

AS A PERSON YOU HAVE RIGHTS:

- You have the right to be treated in a caring way.
- You have the right to be treated as a valuable person.
- You have the right to be respected.
- You have the right to feel safe in your relationships.
- You have the right to make your own choices and to say “no” to something you are uncomfortable with.
- You have the right to know the truth.

What other rights would you add? Encourage each individual can create a list of their rights that they can take home as a healthy reminder of what their rights are.

ACTIVITY: EXPLORING RELATIONSHIPS

Materials needed: Flip chart and markers

The purpose of this activity is to provide an overview of different types of relationships. Ask participants to identify different types of relationships we have. Encourage participants to think about the people in their lives who they encounter at home and in the community—family, friends, co-workers, partners, acquaintances, and even strangers. While reviewing types of relationships, begin a conversation about touch, and the touch boundaries that may apply to each. Ensure that participants are aware that the touch boundaries we are accustomed to may vary across cultural and societal norms. Utilize the information provided below to guide and deepen the conversation as needed.

- Family Member:** A family member is someone who is related to you or sometimes someone with whom you have grown up. Family members can be people who are close to us and whom we love (mother, father, brother, sister, grandparents) or may be people who are related to but we do not know as well or to whom we are not as close (for example, cousins, aunts and uncles).
 - Touch Boundaries:** Touch will vary depending on the strength of relationships, comfort level, and closeness. Family touch may include consensual supportive touch such as a rub on the back or pat on the shoulder, handshakes, hugs, and kisses on the cheek.
- Friend:** A friend is someone with whom we like to spend time and who may share many of the same interests. A friend is also someone with whom we can share personal feelings and who likes us for who we are. A friend is someone who respects our choices and decisions but may voice concerns if they see a decision might put us or others in harm's way.
 - Touch Boundaries:** Touch will vary depending on the strength of relationships, comfort level, and closeness. Friend touch may include consensual handshakes, supportive touch such as a rub on the back or pat on the shoulder, and hugs.

- Intimate partner (e.g., husband, wife, boyfriend, and girlfriend): An intimate partner is someone we trust and with whom we can share personal feelings. An intimate partner is often someone we have romantic feelings for, are attracted to, and with whom we can engage in consensual intimate touch and sexual activity.
 - ▣ Touch Boundaries: Touch will vary depending on the strength of relationships, comfort level, and closeness. Intimate touch may include consensual and pleasurable supportive touch such as a rub on the back or pat on the shoulder, hugs, kisses on the cheeks and lips, cuddling, making out, oral sex, vaginal sex, and/or anal sex.
- Helper: A helper is someone who helps us do things or does things for us as part of their job. A helper can be a support, doctor, dentist, teacher, mail carrier, firefighter, and so on. Sometimes, we may share personal feelings with a helper (e.g., therapist or counselor) if we need help to deal with problems we are experiencing.
 - ▣ Touch Boundaries: A helper, such a nurse or doctor, must always get permission to touch you in any way required for medical care. The touch of helpers typically involves physical examination, like getting your stomach examined or your blood pressure take, but never intimate or sexual touch. Helper touch may also include consensual handshakes and hugs.
- Stranger: A stranger is someone we do not know (for example, someone sitting beside us in a restaurant) or someone we may have just met. A stranger is someone we know very little or nothing about. A stranger is someone with whom we do not share our personal information or feelings.
 - ▣ Touch Boundaries: We do not typically engage in touch with strangers. We may bump into, or brush up against a stranger while sharing space in a public place. Touch with a stranger may also involve a handshake when meeting them for the first time.

ACTIVITY: DEFINING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Materials needed: Flip chart and markers

Explain to the group that you are going to talk about healthy and unhealthy relationships. Write the word “Relationships” at the top of a large sheet of paper. Make two columns on the flip chart labelled “Healthy” and “Unhealthy”. You may also choose to use “Positive” and “Negative”.

Encourage participants to share their thoughts about what a healthy or unhealthy relationship looks and feels like. It may also be helpful to prompt participants to identify specific qualities or characteristics that may help differentiate between healthy and unhealthy relationships. Utilize the following lists to facilitate the discussion:

Healthy Relationships:

- Being honest and building trust
- Listening to what the other person has to say
- Being open-minded
- Love and care for each other
- Respecting each other’s decisions
- Enjoy doing things together
- Being able to open up and share personal feelings
- Being able to build each other up and encourage one another
- Being able to be yourself
- Being able to respect each other’s need to spend time alone
- Be able to communicate concerns or problems

Unhealthy relationships:

- Not being honest with your partner
- Being physically, mentally, or emotionally hurtful
- Not being able to communicate concerns
- Being pressured to do things that you don’t like, or don’t want to do
- Being selfish and only thinking about ourselves
- Not respecting each other’s decisions
- Being jealous when the other person spends time with other people
- Feeling that you need to be with that person all the time in order to feel happy

WHAT IS ABUSE?

Abuse is about power over another individual. There are different types of abuse. Abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional, and verbal or a combination of all. Neglect can also be a form of abuse, when caregivers or guardians fail to provide the basic needs for those that depend on them.

Review the various kinds of abuse with participants:

Sexual abuse: Sexual abuse happens when someone touches you on your private parts or does something sexual to you without permission. Some people may not be aware that they are allowed to refuse sexual advances of their boyfriend, girlfriend, or partner. They may feel that they have to perform sexual activities. They also may not fully understand what their partner is asking of them when they want to engage in sexual intimacy. Some examples of sexual abuse are:

- Someone forcefully hugging or kissing you
- Someone saying things that make you feel uncomfortable
- Someone doing sexual things to your body that you do not want them to do
- Someone making you do things to their body that you do not want to do

Physical abuse: Physical abuse is when someone hurts or harms your body on purpose. Some examples of physical abuse are:

- Hitting, kicking, or slapping
- Pushing or shoving
- Other actions that cause injury, leave marks, or cause pain.

Emotional abuse: Emotional abuse hurts your feelings. It causes invisible pain. Some examples of emotional abuse are:

- Someone making you feel sad or lonely on purpose
- Not speaking or listening to you

Verbal Abuse: Verbal abuse is a form of emotional abuse. Verbal abuse is things a person says. Some examples of verbal abuse are:

- Someone always yelling or screaming at you
- Someone using swear words when talking to you
- Someone making fun of you or calling you names

Medication Abuse: Medication abuse is when you are not given your medication or someone gives you too much medication. It also includes not being taken to the doctor when you need to see one.

RECOGNIZING ABUSE

Recognizing the warning signs of abuse is not easy, even when it is happening to us. If it is something that someone has grown up with or it has been happening for a long time, it can be difficult to recognize. A person might even think that being abused is their fault.

Living in an environment where any form of abuse is a common occurrence can make a person think that it is the only way to live or an acceptable way to be treated or treat others. Abuse is in fact unacceptable. It is unhealthy, unsafe, and against the law. If you ever feel that you are being abused, question your own actions, or suspect someone you know is being abused, it is important to tell a trusted friend, family member, support, or social worker.

WHY DOES ABUSE HAPPEN?

There is no one reason for people to have abusive behaviour but some factors may contribute to people acting out in abusive ways. Growing up in abusive surroundings, not able to manage their feelings and cope with stressful situations, or drug and alcohol addiction can make it difficult for someone to control their actions.

WHAT SHOULD SOMEONE WHO IS BEING ABUSED DO?

People who are being abused need help. Keeping the abuse a secret does not protect anyone and could mean that the abuse will continue. If you or anyone you know is being abused, speak to someone you trust. This could be a family member, a friend, or someone who supports you in your daily life. People who are being abused often feel afraid, lonely and numb. Getting help and support is the first step toward feeling better and being safe.

ACTIVITY: EXPLORING TRUST WITH A RELATIONSHIP CIRCLE

- | **Materials needed:** Pens and Relationship Circle handout (Appendix 4.0)
- | This activity helps participants identify the people that they trust and feel safe with—the people they can go to when they want to share their feelings or report any form of abuse. The relationship circle provides a visual that captures the people that are in the participant's life and the strength of those relationships. The circle also provides the opportunity to explore relationships that can be strengthened.
- | The relationship circle consists of a figure in the centre which represents the participant, and four relationship quadrants representing family, friends and non-paid relationships, school/work, and home and other paid supports. The distance an individual's name is placed from the figure in the centre identifies how close or strong the participant perceives that relationship to be. It is beneficial for the facilitator(s) to complete their own circle to demonstrate its use. Remind participants that their completed relationship circle does not need to be shared with anyone.
- | Encourage participants to take the circle home and keep it somewhere safe so that it can be accessed when needing to talk to someone they trust.

CHECK-OUT

- Review the main “takeaways” from today’s module
- Address any question or concerns that participants may have
- This may be a good opportunity to complete a “Head, Heart, and Hands” check-out. Head explores elements of ‘what’ and ‘why’, heart explores values, beliefs, and feelings, and hands explores practical skills and tools. Invite participants to pause and reflect on their learning experience, and ask:
 - Head: What’s one thing you learned?
 - Heart: What’s one thing you are feeling?
 - Hands: What’s one thing you can do?

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