

High School Single Session Assertive Communication

Objectives:

1. Students will define and give examples of assertive, passive and aggressive communication.
2. Students will define sexual harassment and identify it as a type of aggressive communication.
3. Students will practice identifying passive, aggressive and assertive behaviors.
4. Students will identify their own sexual limits and ways to communicate them.

Rationale: Sexual harassment, intimate partner violence, and sexual violence are all examples of aggressive behaviors. The societal factors that allow them to persist are often passive actions like: collective silence around these issues, not empowering women and girls, and lack of intervention on the part of bystanders. By teaching teens to recognize the differences between passive, aggressive, and assertive communication, this lesson seeks to give them the skills needed for treating themselves and others with respect.

Standards of Learning:¹

1. Knowledge and Skills: The student will analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the protective factors related to achieving and maintaining a sound mind and healthy body throughout life. Key concepts and skills include:
10.2a: the power of assertiveness
2. Knowledge and Skills: The student will implement personal injury prevention and self-management strategies that promote personal, family, and community health throughout life. Key concepts and skills include:
10.3a: strategies to reduce and prevent violence

Supplies Needed: Pre-test papers, post-test papers, sexual harassment brochures, candy, setting sexual limits handout

¹ www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Instruction/healthsol.pdf

Introduction: Introduce yourself as a teacher from the Family Resource Center. Explain (or remind the students) that the FRC provides services to victims of sexual and domestic violence. Go over some of the services we provide:

- crisis hotline
- accompany victims of sexual and domestic violence to the hospital and to court
- emergency shelter
- individual counseling
- support groups
- education/presentations
- We serve Wythe, Smyth, Bland, Carroll, Grayson and Galax.

Pre-test: Pass out the pre-test, ask students not to put a name of their paper, but complete it. Assure students that they are not expected to know all the answers, and it's fine if they don't. Take up the papers.

Introductory Activity: Ask the students to explain what they think these words mean: passive, aggressive and assertive. Then, define them as follows:

Passive communication is communication that does not respect the self. It is often more about what is not said or done, rather than what is said. Examples include: not telling others when they have upset you or not saying what you need or want.

Aggressive communication is communication that does not respect others. Examples include: name-calling or yelling.

Assertive communication is communication that respects both others and yourself. Examples include: telling others what you want/don't want or respectfully letting others know when they have upset you.

Assertive communication is difficult.

For older groups or groups who understand the concepts well, you might also include the definition of passive-aggressive communication.

Passive-aggressive communication is communication that seeks to manipulate another person by saying something different than what you actually mean to communicate. Examples are: Oh, don't worry about helping me move the couch. My back really hurts and the doctor says I shouldn't do things like that. But I'll be fine. Don't get up. I wouldn't want you to strain yourself. (Tone of voice is everything in getting this concept across.)

Examples:

Offer the following as examples of passive, aggressive, and assertive behaviors.

Imagine you are a part of a group that is putting together a school play. They are deciding which play they will put on, "Romeo and Juliet" or "Great Expectations". One young woman says, "I'd like to do Romeo and Juliet. We could do it around Valentine's Day and lots of people would come." This is assertive communication because she is honoring herself by communicating her idea and why she thinks her idea is valuable. Another young woman says, "That's the lamest idea I've ever heard of. None of your ideas ever work out. Great Expectations would be much better." This is an example of aggressive communication because it insults the other person instead of honoring her. The rest of the students think that Romeo and Juliet is a good idea, but don't want to say anything because the discussion seems tense. This is passive communication because they are not honoring themselves or their ideas by not communicating them. In fact, because they are passive, the group may make a decision based on what the most aggressive voice communicates, rather than the opinions of everyone.

Ask students to volunteer to read each of the following scenarios. Then, ask the class to decide if they are examples of assertive, passive, or aggressive communication.

1. Someone cuts Judy off in traffic and she yells and makes rude hand gestures at them. (aggressive)
2. Jim thinks the cashier at the grocery store didn't give him correct change. Jim walks away with \$10 less than he thinks he should have. (passive)
3. Judy and her friends, a group of young men and women, go to the lake for Spring Break. Their first day out on the water, one of her friends decides it would be fun to go skinny dipping. Most of the group quickly agrees and begins undressing to swim. Judy feels uncomfortable, but she doesn't want to be teased, so she joins in anyway. (passive)
4. Jim's friend Kyle borrowed his shirt last month. Jim has asked him repeatedly to give the shirt back, but Kyle keeps forgetting. Jim calls Kyle and offers to drop by his house to get the shirt. (assertive)
5. Judy and her boyfriend are making out, and her boyfriend takes off his shirt. Judy tells him that things are moving too fast for her and asks him to put his shirt back on. (assertive)

6. Jim is with a group of friends and they all want to see a horror movie. Jim doesn't like horror movies, but he doesn't want to upset his friends. He goes with them and watches the film, even though he hates it. (passive)
7. Judy and Michael have been dating for a while and always go out to eat on Saturday nights. Michael always asks Judy what restaurant she'd prefer, and she always says, "Wherever you'd like to go is fine with me." (passive)
8. Jim has been dating his girlfriend Carrie for several months and cares a great deal about her. At a party, Jim sees her kissing another guy. Jim gets angry and begins yelling at Carrie and hitting the other guy. (aggressive)
9. Judy's teacher asks her to stay after class to talk about her test paper. The teacher offers to give her a better grade if she goes out to dinner with him. Judy reports him to a school official. (assertive)
10. Jim is hanging out with some of his male friends at the swimming pool. They decide to rate women as they walk by in their swimsuits. Some of the guys begin making crude comments to the women as well as rude hand gestures. This makes Jim uncomfortable. He asks them to stop and tells them they're getting out of bounds. They continue and Jim decides to leave. (assertive)

NOTE: If time permits this activity could be expanded by discussing how to make passive and aggressive scenarios into assertive scenarios.

Discussion: Sexual Harassment

Ask the students the following questions to and discuss the answers. It's important to let them offer as much information as possible so that the discussion will be relevant to their situation and you can have the opportunity to address misinformation.

1. What is sexual harassment? Explain that sexual harassment is a type of non-assertive communication that is against the law. It can be defined as any **UNWELCOME** behavior of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is committed with no regard for the comfort or wishes of another person. Examples are:
 - touching (arm, breast, buttock, shoulders, etc.)
 - verbal comments (about parts of the body or what type of sex the victim would be good at doing)
 - name calling (honey, sweetie, etc.)

- sexual or dirty jokes
- pulling down someone's pants
- standing too close to someone
- rating an individual (on a scale of 1-10 for example)
- wedgies
- rude hand gestures
- howling, catcalls, etc.

2. What can you do if it happens to you?

* If it's safe, assertively communicate that the behavior is unwanted. The person may not know it's unwanted and stop immediately if you let them know.

* If the behavior continues tell a trusted adult. They can help you report it to a teacher or school administrator if it happens at school. A trusted adult can often help you report it in other places as well.

* Write down the harassing behavior. Write down what happened, when it happened, where it happened and if anyone else was there. Write down who you told and the date.

* If the first person you ask for help isn't helpful, keep trying. There are people out there who can help you.

* You can contact the Family Resource Center for help as well.

Activity: Sexual Respect Activity²

Ask the group if they can define the phrase sexual limits. (Sexual limits are sexual behaviors identified by an individual as either acceptable or unacceptable.) Then, ask students to name some benefits of setting sexual limits. (You think about what you are comfortable with doing before you have to make a decision. You can communicate a limit clearly with others if you know what your limits are.)

Explain that sexual limits are personal and vary from person to person. Then, give each student the "Setting Sexual Limits" Handout. Emphasize that this is a personal

² Sexual Assault Risk Reduction Curriculum: A Comprehensive Guide for the Classroom Teacher or Community Educator. Offices of Community Oriented Policing Services, 1999.

exercise, and not information anyone will be asked to read or share with the entire group. Ask students to go through each sexual behavior listed on the page and write down whether or not they are comfortable with that sexual behavior. They can put qualifying statements on the behavior like, "Maybe when I'm older, but not now." But, if their answer is "maybe" or "it depends," ask them to write specifically what it depends on.

Give students some quiet space to complete the activity. If the teacher is comfortable with it, it may be helpful to let students leave their seats and find more private space in the room to complete the activity.

After students complete the exercise, divide the students into groups of 4-5. Announce a contest. The groups will have 2 minutes to write down as many creative ways as they can think of to communicate their sexual limits with a partner. Before starting, identify some examples as a group like, "I'm just not ready for that." or "that makes me uncomfortable", "I don't want to go there right now,", "We just haven't known each other that long," ; "If you respect me, you'll respect my limits", etc. After the students make their lists, let each group share with the class. The group with the longest list wins.

Then, give the groups another 2 minutes to make an additional list. This will be a list of questions you can ask a partner in order to help him or her communicate his or her sexual limits with you. Some examples are: "Are you comfortable with that?" or "How do you feel about _____?" Again, have groups share their responses.

***If you wish you can bring a bag of candy as a prize and give groups a piece for each question/statement on their lists. (Just make sure everyone gets at least one piece.)

Closure: Pass out brochures on sexual harassment and the Family Resource Center. Ask students if there are any questions and answer them. Thank them for their participation.

Post-test: Pass out the post-test papers, have students complete them and take them up.

Assertive Communication Pre-Test

1. Give an example of passive communication.
2. Give an example of aggressive communication.
3. Give an example of assertive communication.
4. Give an example of sexual harassment.
5. Give an example of a way to communicate a sexual limit.

Assertive Communication Post-Test

1. Give an example of passive communication.
2. Give an example of aggressive communication.
3. Give an example of assertive communication.
4. Give an example of sexual harassment.
5. Give an example of a way to communicate a sexual limit.

SETTING SEXUAL LIMITS

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR	MY LIMITS
Hugging	
Kissing	
Holding Hands	
Going out with someone two years older	
Touching above the waist	
Touching below the waist	
Calling someone a pet name like sweetie or honey	
Making out in a bedroom at a party	
Oral Sex	
Vaginal Sex with a Condom	
Vaginal Sex without a Condom	
Anal Sex	
Kissing in Public	

High School Single Session Sexual Assault

Objectives:

1. Students will discuss a scenario involving sexual assault and the power dynamics at play in it.
2. Students will identify ways to respond if they or someone they know is a victim of sexual assault.
3. Students will identify at least three major societal factors that create a climate where sexual violence exists.
4. Students will work together to create an example of media that seeks to address and change these societal factors.

Rationale: In order to have a fruitful discussion about the issues of sexual assault and the cultural factors that help create and reinforce its existence, students must first define sexual assault and the many myths that often surround it. Then, students can move on to use critical thinking skills to analyze causes of the problem. Students will work together to create a media-based response to some of these causes for several reasons. Media influences are a powerful part of this problem, and a powerful part of teenagers' lives. Also, teens will work together in groups of male and female students to provide an opportunity for dialogue and working together on these issues. Also, teens are at a stage in their development where creativity and problem-solving skills are high. Their ideas might just change the world, and it is important to give voice to those ideas.

Standards of Learning:³

1. Community Health and Wellness: The student will identify how different types of behavior impact the community. Key concepts and skills include:
 - 10.5d: the need for organized efforts to address community health issues
 - 10.5e: the responsibilities of citizens to promote health goals of the community
2. Community Health and Wellness: The student will identify the benefits of collaboration in relation to community health and wellness initiatives. Essential skills include:
 - 9.5a: Identify health professionals, agencies and organizations that impact community health.

³ www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Instruction/healthsol.pdf

9.5b: Identify community projects that promote health for children, adolescents, adults, and older populations.

9.5c: Identify examples of community projects that address health-related social issues.

Supplies Needed: Pre-test, Post-test, Ben and Shawna scenario, Sexual Assault brochures, FRC brochures, small poster board, markers

Introduction: Introduce yourself as a teacher from the Family Resource Center. Explain (or remind the students) that the FRC provides services to victims of sexual and domestic violence. Go over some of the services we provide:

- crisis hotline
- accompany victims of sexual and domestic violence to the hospital and to court
- emergency shelter
- individual counseling
- support groups
- education/presentations
- We serve Wythe, Smyth, Bland, Carroll, Grayson and Galax.

Pre-test: Pass out the pre-test papers, let students answer questions, and take them up.

Activity #1: Sexual Assault Scenario

Read the scenario involving Ben and Shawna to the students. Pass out the scenario and let them answer the questions. Take up the papers. Then, as a group, use these questions to discuss the scenario.

1. Does this scenario describe sexual assault? Why or why not?
2. What things do you think give Ben power in this situation?
3. What things do you think give Shawna power in this situation?
4. Who has more power, Ben or Shawna? Why?
5. How do you think drinking affects this situation?
6. In what ways were Shawna's friend Amber's actions helpful or not helpful?
7. How could Amber have been more helpful in the situation?
8. What could Ben have done to find out what Shawna wanted to do?
9. Again, does this scenario describe sexual assault? Why or why not?

Activity #2: Discussion Questions

1. What can you do if you or someone you know is sexually assaulted?
 - Tell someone that you trust. Have the students identify trustworthy people.
 - If it just happened, even though it may be difficult, go to the emergency room for an exam.
 - Call the Family Resource Center and talk to someone.
 - Remember that it's not your fault.
2. Ask older students, "What kinds of things in our culture create an environment where sexual assault is tolerated?" Let students generate some answers and then add the following to the list.

For younger students, go over the factors listed below as things that influence a culture that tolerates sexual assault.

* **Silence:** Sexual assault is not something we talk about, so people don't think it happens very often. This contributes to us thinking it's not a big problem.

* **Gender Roles:** The idea that men are supposed to be sexually aggressive and that women are supposed to fight them off and be chaste creates a climate where sexual assault looks more normal than sex by mutual consent.

* **Media Influences:** There are many television shows, movies, advertisements, and magazines that devalue and objectify women and men. Ask the students to offer some examples of a media that they think contribute to this problem.

3. What kinds of things can we do to change the way people think about sexual assault, gender roles, silence, and media influences? (Some examples of answers are listed below, but try to let the students generate at least some of their own ideas. Students are more likely to enact and own their own ideas.)

- * Educate our friends.
- * Look at media (tv, books, music, advertisements, etc.) with a critical eye.
- * Be a part of positive peer pressure. Let your friends know that it's not acceptable to treat others with disrespect, make fun of someone for setting sexual limits, etc.)

Activity: Changing Our Culture

Divide the students into groups of 4-5. Give each group one of the following tasks and ask them to work on it and present it as a group. Multiple groups can receive the same task assignment.

1. Your local radio station has asked you to come up with a public service announcement that encourages people not to be silent about the problem of sexual assault and its causes. It can be 30-60 seconds long, so think about the most important things to say. The group should work together to create and present this public service announcement to the group.
2. You work at a local company and have been asked to submit a t-shirt that encourages respect between men and women. Work together to come up with an idea, draw it on a poster board or paper and present it to the class.
3. You have been asked to do a skit for a local community service group to educate them about sexual assault and its causes. Come up with a short skit and present it to the rest of the class.
4. You have been asked to lead a panel discussion on how television influences the way that we think about what men are supposed to act like as men, and what women are supposed to act like because they are women. Choose three different television shows you will use for your discussion and explain each of your choices. The television shows can have both positive and negative messages about gender roles.

Closure: Pass out brochures with information about sexual assault and the Family Resource Center. Ask if the students have any questions they would like to ask.

Post-test: Pass out the post-test papers, let students complete them and collect them.

Pre-Test: Circle the answer.

List three things in our culture that create an environment where sexual assault is tolerated:

1.

2.

3.

Post-Test: Circle the answer.

List three things in our culture that create an environment where sexual assault is tolerated:

1.

2.

3.

High School Single Session

Healthy Relationships

Objectives:

1. Students will identify characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships.
2. Students will identify healthy ways to resolve conflicts in relationships.
3. Students will identify positive actions to take if they are in a violent relationship.

Rationale: Recognizing characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships is crucial to ending dating violence. It teaches young people not only what kind of relationships to avoid, but also what kind of relationships to try to build.

Standards of Learning:⁴

1. Knowledge and Skills: The student will implement personal injury prevention and self-management strategies that promote personal, family and community health throughout life. Key skills and concepts include:
10.3a: strategies to reduce and prevent violence
10.3b: peaceful resolution of conflicts
2. Knowledge and Skills: The student will apply health knowledge and skills to the development and analysis of personal goals to achieve and maintain long-term health and well-being. Key concepts and skills include:
9.1i: peace resolution of conflicts
3. Knowledge and Skills: The student will analyze, synthesize and evaluate the relationship between positive health behaviors and the prevention of injury and premature death. Key concepts and skills include:
9.3c: identification of situations involving risks

Supplies Needed: index cards, Healthy Argument handouts, Healthy Relationships handouts, Brochures on the FRC and dating violence, pre-test papers, post-test papers, Ben and Shawna scenario (if necessary)

Introduction: Introduce yourself as a teacher from the Family Resource Center. Explain

⁴ www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Instruction/healthsol.pdf

(or remind the students) that the FRC provides services to victims of sexual and domestic violence. Go over some of the services we provide:

- crisis hotline
- accompany victims of sexual and domestic violence to the hospital and to court
- emergency shelter
- individual counseling
- support groups
- education/presentations
- We serve Wythe, Smyth, Bland, Carroll, Grayson and Galax.

Pre-test: Pass out pre-test papers. Instruct students not to put their names on them. Let them complete the test and take it up.

Introductory Activity:

Write the following words or phrases on 3 by 5 index cards:

- respects sexual limits
- forces you to have sex
- asking about what touches make you comfortable or uncomfortable
- touching you in ways that make you feel uncomfortable
- one person makes all the decisions
- you both participate in the decision making
- demands you dress a certain way
- respects your choices about how you dress
- allows you time with your friends
- expects you to spend all your time with them
- keeps your private information private
- tells other people your secrets
- lies to you
- is honest with you
- talks to you when they are upset
- gives you the silent treatment when you are upset
- threatens to harm himself/herself if you break up
- can still value themselves if you break up
- it's safe to disagree
- yells, shoves, hits or kicks you when you disagree
- asks how you are feeling
- doesn't care about your feelings
- listens to you

- interrupts you constantly
- forces you or intimidates you into doing things you don't want to do
- respects your boundaries
- values your opinion
- belittles your opinions
- gets mad at you over little things or things you don't have control over
- says I'm sorry when they upset you and stops doing whatever was upsetting
- says I'm sorry when they upset you but continues to repeat the upsetting behavior anyway
- your significant other blames alcohol or drugs for their anger
- your significant other takes responsibility for his or her actions
- both people can see things from the other's perspective
- your significant other has a "my way is the only way" attitude
- obsessive jealousy
- you trust each other

Ask student to read what is on their card. Tell them all the phrases on the cards describe relationships. Some describe healthy relationships, others unhealthy. Each card has an opposite—one card describes a trait of a healthy relationship and the other card describes its opposite. The students should go around the room and find the person with the card that is their opposite. When all students have located their opposite, ask them to decide which of their cards describes a healthy relationship, and which card describes an unhealthy relationship. Have those with unhealthy relationship cards go to one side of the room and those with healthy relationship cards go to the other. Then, have the students read take turns reading their cards. When everyone has read their card, students can return to their seats.

Discussion:

1. What are some characteristics of relationships that are abusive?
(hitting, kicking, pushing, name calling, threatening suicide if someone breaks up with you, etc.)
2. Is violence ever an acceptable solution to a problem in a relationship?
(no)
3. What can you do if you're in a violent or abusive relationship?
(tell an adult and/or friend you trust, get advice on how to end it, call the FRC)
4. What are some ways to deal with disagreements that don't involve violence?

Activity: How to Have a Healthy Argument

Pass out the handouts on how to have a healthy argument and go over each of these points:

- Only deal with one problem at a time.
- Describe how the problem affects you.
- Describe the problem without attacking the other person.
- Ask how the person is feeling.
- Keep an open mind and listen to what the other person says.
- Talk without interruptions.
- Keep a sense of humor, but don't make fun of the other person.
- Wait until the effects of drugs or alcohol have worn off.
- Don't try to have one winner and one loser.
- Take a break if you are not getting any closer to reaching an agreement.
- Do not destroy property.
- There is NEVER an excuse for violence. Period.
- Once you have come up with a solution to the problem, remember it doesn't have to be permanent.

Activity: Healthy or Unhealthy?

Ask several students to volunteer to read the following scenarios. Then, the students can decide if they describe healthy or unhealthy relationships and why.

Healthy/Unhealthy Relationship Scenarios

- Suzanne and Jason have been dating for 2 weeks. Suzanne decides where they will go, what they will do, and who can be invited to go with them. Jason wants to invite his friends Brett and Tina on a double date, but Suzanne insists that they go alone. Then she accuses Jason of wanting them to come just so he could flirt with Tina.
- Kyle has been dating his girlfriend Carrie for several months and cares a great deal about her. At a party, Kyle follows Carrie around and accuses her of dressing sleazy to flirt with other guys. Later he apologizes and says that he just drank too much.
- Tony and Maria have been a couple for a year and a half. Tony's friend Carla asks Tony to come over to her house to play video games when her parents aren't home. Maria is uncomfortable with Tony and Carla being alone, and asks Tony to think about inviting another person to join them.

- Joy has waited forever for Martin to ask her out, and finally he called and invited her to go to a party with him. She said yes and was really excited. Two days before the party, he said he wanted to come over and help her decide what to wear. Joy thought that was odd, but was so excited for him to come over that she agreed. Two days later, whenever he picked her up for the party, he insisted that she change several times so that she looked perfect.
- Juan and Sarah started dating for two months before Valentine's Day. Sarah demands that Juan buy her a nice ring to show his affection. Juan doesn't want Sarah to break up with him, so he buys her the ring.
- Chris and Michelle have been dating for several months. Eric is hanging out with his guy friends and they begin asking him if he's "gone all the way" with Michelle. He tells his friends that he hasn't, and they start to tease him and say that he's not a real man. He tells them that real men respect women, and sometimes that means not going all the way.
- Salina goes to a party with some of her friends and notices that Mark is there without his girlfriend. Salina has always liked Mark and begins to talk with him. They go upstairs to a bedroom and make out. He asks her not to say anything to his girlfriend. The next week Salina calls him and asks him to come over after school. Mark says he doesn't want to hang out with Salina anymore. Salina threatens to tell his girlfriend about the party if Mark doesn't continue to hang out with her in secret.
- Pat and Jamie were at a party. Pat has too much to drink. They go upstairs to lay down and start making out. Pat passes out and Jamie has sex with her.
- Angela and Jody are planning a date for Valentine's Day. They want it to be special. They decide to exchange homemade gifts and go to the school's Valentine's Day dance with friends.

Closure/Post-Test: Pass out handouts on healthy relationships and brochures about the Family Resource Center and Dating Violence. Ask if students have any questions. Give the post-test and the Ben and Shawna scenario if it has not been done previously. Thank the students for their participation.

Healthy Relationships: Pre-Test

1. Identify five characteristics of healthy relationships.
2. Identify five characteristics of unhealthy relationships.
3. Name three ways to have a healthy argument.

Healthy Relationships: Post-Test

1. Identify five characteristics of healthy relationships.
2. Identify five characteristics of unhealthy relationships.
3. Name three ways to have a healthy argument.