

CASA Multi-Session Curriculum (High School)

I. DAY ONE INTRODUCTION TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Objective: To define Sexual Violence and discuss the range of actions that constitutes sexual violence.

1. *Introduction:*

- Introduce self and services
- Explain that you will be talking about sensitive and difficult issues and they should remember that some of their classmates may have had personal experiences with these issues and to **be respectful** to one another.
- Explain that these issues can also bring some disagreement and that's ok. Students can be honest about their opinion, but it is important that we all continue to **be open** to each other regardless of our opinion.
- Encourage students to ask questions and not feel embarrassed.
- Tell students you are available for questions after and you will be giving them all the number to your agency at the end of the presentation.

2. *ACTIVITY:* Sexual Violence Defined

Ask students to define sexual violence. Offer rewards to anyone who attempts a definition. Use the Definition (**SEE Attachment 1**) from Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance (VSDVAA) to lead discussion.

Discussion Questions: What is consent? What is conduct of a sexual nature? What is threat? Coercion, exploitation, deceit, force, physical or mental incapacitation and power of authority? It's a "candy for a guess" game.

Talking Point:

- As demonstrated, sexual violence is not always physical violence and can include a wide range of behaviors that are not always considered to be sexual violence.

3. *ACTIVITY:* Is This Harmful?¹

If students are mature enough to come up with scenarios on their own, illicit examples from them. If not, use pre-made examples of different kinds of sexual violence (**SEE Attachment 2**) and have volunteers from

¹ Building Healthy Relationships Across Virginia: A Facilitator's Guide for Teen Dating Violence Prevention, Unit 5: Exploring Gender, Sexuality, and Power, p. 23.

the group place the examples on a spectrum of Not *So* Harmful to Extremely Harmful.

Talking Points:

- a) All of the examples are a form of sexual violence, from “cat calls” to rape. It is important to stress this connection for day 2 and day 3. It’s OK if not everyone in the class agrees to defining “cat calls” as “sexual violence”, but at least build consensus in the room that “cat calls” are harmful / disrespectful behavior and are tied to more “serious” behaviors. It’s important not to get caught up in a semantic argument with the class that will undoubtedly be time consuming and possibly undermine the facilitator’s credibility about whether or not cat calls equal violence.
- b) Different people will attribute a different level of harm to the examples, it is not absolute. Although we may all agree that in general rape is more harmful than cat calls, it is not so black and white as to how someone will experience any of the forms of violence represented.

4. **ACTIVITY: Healthy Relationships/Stay or Leave Activity² (SEE Attachment 3).**

Discussion Questions:

- a) What were some of the warning signs/red flags in this relationship that shows it was not healthy?
- b) Ask the question, “Would the situation change if the gender was switched? Why?”
- c) This situation showed emotional as well as physical abuse. Some victims say emotional abuse is actually harder to deal with and move on from. Why do you think that is?

Talking Points:

- a) Talk about how many people want to help out the girlfriend when she reveals the abusive home situation. This shows compassion (a good thing), but keeping yourself in that situation when she has been consistently abusive is not safe for you.
- b) Discuss the importance of seeing dating violence as emotional as well as physical violence. There are several reasons for this. Some victims say physical abuse may leave scars that you can see and that the process of healing is more complete because the broken bones or blackened eyes usually heal. Emotional abuse doesn’t leave a bruise, so it’s not as obvious when it is

² Building Healthy Relationships Across Virginia: A Facilitator’s Guide for Teen Dating Violence Prevention, *Unit 2: Addressing Teen Dating Violence*, p. 54.

present or when there is healing. Also, because it's harder to detect it may not be as easily believed when someone discloses emotional abuse.

II. DAY TWO: THE BIG PICTURE-GENDER, CULTURE, and CONSENT

Objective: To see the limitations of gender norms in society and their connection to violence in relationships and to begin to build skills for more clear communication and respect in relationship.

1. *Introduction:*

- Ask for volunteers to tell you one thing you talked about in previous day
- Generally review previous day and give brief introduction to Day Two activities.

2. *Activity:* Male/Female Box³

Discussion Questions:

- a) Discuss the term “stereotype” and the limitations
- b) Discuss the words in the boxes and how they are neither positive nor negative.
- c) Ask if students see any themes about what it means to be male or female in society.
- d) Talk about the terms outside the box and how they make the box more important/defined. Talk about the themes of the words outside the box and how the devalued (female and homosexual) gets driven into us without us knowing it. So, most men work hard to NOT be associated with anything female or homosexual and women try not to be too sexual or lesbian.
- e) Talk about how gender stereotypes do not CAUSE violence, but when taken to extremes they can help support violent behaviors and even send the signal that to be a MAN or WOMAN is to have to perpetrate or be a victim of this violence. “Proving” gender fits here too – that is, a guy wants to prove to his buddies that he is a real man by “giving it good” to girls and adopts an adversarial view of sexual relations, etc.
- f) (via Bob Franklin) If the stick I’m beat with since I am very young is “girl” how likely is it that I will treat women as equals in relationships?

3. *Activity:* Good Friend Conclusion⁴

Ask the participants to list off characteristics of a person who is a good friend, a healthy relationship. Make sure they have time to brainstorm a significant list and do not judge their answers.

³ Building Healthy Relationships Across Virginia: A Facilitator’s Guide for Teen Dating Violence Prevention, *Unit 5: Exploring Gender, Sexuality, and Power*, p. 8.

⁴ Men Can Stop Rape, Washington, DC. www.mencanstoprape.org

Discussion Questions:

- a) How does the list of healthy relationship characteristics compare with the gender stereotype lists?
- b) Why is the list of what we value in a relationship look so different from the one media's list?
- c) How does this connect with dating violence/sexual assault?

Talking Points:

- a) Discuss that healthy relationships characteristics do not have any resemblance to the list the media and society give us about being male or female (ie. No one says a good friend has big muscles or large breasts).
- b) The box that boys and girls have to live up to/try to fit into is full of attributes that the majority of us don't want to be around or at least don't really value that highly.
- c) The box for men involves themes of control, power over, never backing down, while the girls are told to submit, not be too strong, etc. This pattern breeds dating violence and sexual assault. But no one wants to be controlled or told what to do in a relationship. The two lists don't match up! Dating violence can happen when one partner holds these rigid stereotypes and is trying to act out of that box on another person who values equality, cooperation, and listening.

4. *Activity:* Myth-Fact Spectrum (**SEE Attachment 4 for Activity**)

III. DAY THREE: ACTIVE BYSTANDERS-THINK GLOBAL ACT LOCAL

Objective: To help participants build skills to take an active role in preventing sexual violence by being an active bystander.

1. *Activity:* Pyramid of Abuse⁵

Show examples of ads from magazines that portray this kind of rape supportive culture (Ads must be prepared ahead of time from any magazine) that correspond with the media part of the pyramid. Ads that portray a wide variety of violence against women are not hard to find. It is nice, however, to find a variety of types of ads. Ads that depict women being helpless without men, portraying women in powerless poses beside men in powerful poses. Essentially, any ads that support the stereotypes the Male/Female Box exercises discuss.

Discussion Questions:

- a) How does the gender information connect to the sexual violence information?

Talking Points:

- a) Walk through handout and talk about how the top of the pyramid is built on the foundation of language and jokes that paint violence against women as normal and even supported. Like any structure, the top portions cannot be built without the foundation. The foundation is language, jokes, and disrespectful behavior that we generally see as “Not So Harmful.”

3. *Activity:* Close Your Eyes Activity⁶

Discussion Questions:

- a) Ask how it felt to visualize a close woman in their life being assaulted. Ask how it felt to know that someone could do something, but chose not to.
- b) Acknowledge that it is ok and actually good if this activity is disturbing. It should be disturbing to us.

4. *Activity:* Active Bystander Scenarios with Options⁷.

⁵ The Center for the Study of Sport in Society, Northeastern University, *Mentors in Violence Prevention Program Supplemental Exercises and Curriculum Guide*, p. 24.

⁶ The Center for the Study of Sport in Society, Northeastern University, *Mentors in Violence Prevention Program Supplemental Exercises and Curriculum Guide*, p. 10.

⁷ The Center for the Study of Sport in Society, Northeastern University, *Mentors in Violence Prevention Trainer’s Guide (Male)*, p. 10-37 and *Trainer’s Guide (Female)*, p. 10-28

Split class into groups, hand each group a scenario and ask them to discuss. After 10 minutes, come back to the whole group and ask them to report to the larger group about their discussion.

5. Prevention Education Evaluation Scenario, VDH
Administer Scenario, reading it aloud and answering any questions.

Definition of Sexual Violence:

Sexual Violence is conduct of a sexual nature which is non-consensual, and is accomplished through threat, coercion, exploitation, deceit, force, physical or mental incapacitation, and/or power of authority.

**Adopted by Sexual Assault Training for Trainers Planning Committee,
July 26-27, 2004**

Attachment 2

MOST HARMFUL	LEAST HARMFUL
Sexual Harassment	Molestation
Marital Rape	“Date Rape”
Exhibitionism	Voyeurism

Incest	Statutory Rape
Cat Call	Sexually soliciting minors over internet
Forcible Object Penetration	Fondling
Rape	Forcible Sodomy

**Starting a
Sexual Rumor**

**Sending
Unwanted Sexual
E-mails to an
Acquaintance**

**Sexual
Harassment by
an Adult
(coach, teacher,
friend's parent)**

**Calling a Woman
"ho" or "slut"**

Attachment 3

Stay or Leave Activity

Materials:

- Sign that reads: I WANT TO STAY
- Sign that reads: I WANT TO LEAVE
- Jack and Maria Story

Directions:

- Ask for 5 Volunteers. Have 2 Volunteers stand facing the group, but at opposite ends of the “stage.” Have the 3 remaining Volunteers stand in-between the 2 signs. Then Read this explanation:

“I am going to read a story told by a guy named Jack about his girlfriend Maria. As I read this story I want each of you to pretend that you are Jack. People often go back and forth in their thinking about a relationship trying to decide whether to stay or to leave. People also break up and then get back together. Your movements are going to represent Jack’s thoughts. When I say something that makes you want to stay in the relationship, stand under the “I want to stay” sign. When I say something that makes you want to leave, stand under the “I want to leave sign.”

- Pause at the conclusion of each paragraph to allow students to move between the 2 signs.

Jack’s Story

I met Maria during my freshman year of high school. She is everybody’s ideal girlfriend, and the only one that I ever think about. Everyone says I am so lucky to have such a great-looking girlfriend.

Another girl, Carrie, started to be interested in me. Maria confronted Carrie and they had a fight after school. I guess Maria won, because Carrie hasn’t spoken to me ever since.

Maria makes me feel so good. She is so pretty and so popular and yet she always says that she needs me. I have fallen completely in love and I feel like the luckiest guy in the world.

She can be demanding sometimes, though. She doesn't want me to even look at other girls.

Maria is the definitely the best-looking, hottest girl in the whole school. I don't really care if I ever look at anyone else, but she is always convinced that I'm checking out my other options. She can get pretty jealous.

Going out with her is wonderful, though. We feel like we are in our own little world. For my birthday we went to a movie with a bunch of my friends. It was so fun. But after my friends left it was even better. Maria and I took a walk in the park near my house. She gave me a mix CD of our favorite songs and told me that she loved me.

Shortly after my birthday, she got really mad one day when she was trying to call me and I was gone for a few hours. She said that she really needed to talk to me, but couldn't get a hold of me. When I asked her what was wrong she just said that it didn't matter anymore. She started wanting to know where I was going even if I was just out playing basketball with my brother. If I went somewhere without telling her, she would accuse me of being somewhere I shouldn't be. Usually, she was convinced that I was out flirting with another girl.

Sometimes when we would have these jealous fights she would throw things at me or slap me. It never hurt, though.

I know that she was just mad because she loves me so much. My parents raised me not to hit people, so I just stand there. She has quite a temper.

Things are getting worse. Once she pinched me in the mall because she thought that I was looking at another girl.

I have pushed her away a couple of times, but then she only gets angrier. Every once in awhile, I get so frustrated with her mood swings that I try to break up with her. She always comes back crying, "I love you, I need you." She would say she was sorry and that she knew she was a bad girlfriend sometimes, but that if I loved her I would help her work through these things. Whenever she would cry, beg & plead, I'd remember how gentle and loving she could be.

The last time that I tried to break up, she explained the problem to me. Her family is really abusive. Her dad hits both her and her mom. She thinks that she learned her behavior from her dad. She says that she hates him and she wants to unlearn the behavior. Maria doesn't want to hurt me. She would be the perfect girlfriend if she learned to control her temper and stopped getting so jealous. I know that she loves me.

END STORY

After the Story

- Abusive relationships are very complicated. Each of us made different decisions at different points in the story – we all have different priorities.
- Sit down
- For those who stood under I WANT TO STAY at the end of the story, why would you remain in a relationship with Jack?
- List responses on board
- Think of other reasons Jack might stay a little while longer

I
WANT
TO STAY

I
WANT
TO
LEAVE

Attachment 4

Agree-Disagree Spectrum

Begin by telling the group that you are going to read off several statements about sexual violence and ask them to place themselves on a continuum from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. Establish basic ground rules:

1. Think for yourself (Avoid the “herd” mentality)
2. Participate constructively (Disagree respectfully)
3. Listen to all perspectives

For each of these three statements, read the statement. Let the class move to their desired location on the spectrum. Then, ask for them to give their different perspectives on the issue. When the discussion has died down, give the following talking points.

1. A woman should be careful of how she dresses in order to prevent sexual assault.

Talking Points:

- We all communicate by the way we dress. This means we also create our identity by how we dress. Some people judge others on how they dress, and if we don't like the way we are “seen” because of how we dress, we may want to reconsider our dress.
- There is no good research that say how a person dresses has anything to do with sexual assault.
- How does one explain that sexual assault victims include elderly people and young children. Are we saying they dressed too provocatively? Of course not.
- Sexual assault is largely about power and control, not about looks or dress. This is what we call victim blaming. The person responsible for making the decision to assault is the perpetrator.
- To address “prevention” as the statement says, we need to address the person responsible and that is the perpetrator. Instead of talking about how women dress, we should confront perpetrators, usually men, who think it's ok to exert power and control over their victims.

2. A man can be raped by his girlfriend.

Talking Points:

- Is this possible? Legally in some states, the term rape is only when a man forces a woman to have sexual intercourse against her will. But if we define rape as forcing a person to have sexual intercourse, regardless of gender, then it is possible.
- Does this happen very often? No. But that doesn't mean men are not victims of sexual assault. The studies show about 1 in 6 to 1 in 8 men are sexually assaulted. But usually the perpetrators are other men.
- It's important we acknowledge that many men as well as women are affected by this issue. It's not just a women's issue and we need to be serious about that.

- Why do you think we hear as much about men as victims? Because it's not as safe for men to talk about their victimization. Our culture doesn't allow it.
 - I'm looking for men who will be allies and realize that this is an issue men need to talk about, because the changes need to happen with men first to prevent sexual assault if they're the predominant perpetrators.
3. A woman should be careful of how much she drinks in order to prevent sexual assault.

Talking Points:

- Alcohol increases the risk that a lot of things might happen. I am more at risk to fall on my face walking across the room if I am under the influence of alcohol. So, it is important that any person think before they drink alcohol and understand what it does to a person's body.
- The decision to drink alcohol is not the decision to have sex. Even if a person drinks a lot, even if they pass out, there is no excuse for sexual assault, and they did not "ask for it."
- If a man were to pass out drunk at a party and he were sexually assaulted, most people would say, "Who would do that? That's disgusting!" That should also be our reaction when a woman is assaulted.
- Prevention starts with looking at who's to blame, and when it comes to assault, the perpetrator is the one we need to prevent.
- This doesn't mean that women and men cannot be smart when they drink, or that there are no consequences to your actions when you get drunk. Certainly people should be responsible with alcohol. Sexual assault, however, is not a consequence of being drunk.