

TAKE CHARGE:
Resisting Sexual Pressure

DVD Version

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TEACHER'S RESOURCE BOOK

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DVD MENU

MAIN MENU

➤ **PLAY**

➤ **CHAPTER SELECTION**

From here you can access many different paths of the DVD, beginning with the introduction and ending with the credits.

1. Introduction
2. Sexual Pressure
3. Setting Limits: What gets in the Way?
4. Communication
5. How to talk about Sex
6. Setting Limits: How to do it!
7. Conclusion

➤ **TEACHER'S RESOURCE GUIDE**

A file of the accompanying Teacher's Resource Guide is available on the DVD. To open the file you need to load the DVD onto a computer that has a DVD-ROM and Adobe Acrobat Reader. Right click on the DVD icon and then double click on the file titled "Teacher's Resource Book."

INTRODUCTION

Sexual intercourse should be an act of love and deep intimacy among consenting adults. Yet many of today's youth are confronted with choices about sex at a dangerously early age: at a point in their development when their minds have not matched their bodies' maturity. Why do so many teens equate sexual activity with adulthood and being cool? For most adolescents, the present moment is what counts; their concept of the future is limited. They don't yet have the skills to plan ahead or to consider the impact that their day-to-day choices may have on their future. Indeed, when it comes to sexual decision-making, many teens conduct their lives with a dangerous nonchalance.

The pressure to become sexually active can be especially strong in the context of a dating relationship. If one partner does not want to have sex, and the other one does, the unwilling partner might be subject to repeated requests, threats, and ultimatums. Because often there is very little honest discussion among adolescents about the deeper, more complex aspects of relationships, teenagers may not find much support for their decision to say no. Even teens who have already lost their virginity but who choose to refrain from any further sexual activity may find that their peers reject their decision.

Peer pressure isn't the only kind of persuasion that can influence a young person's sexual decision-making. Teens receive conflicting messages from society and especially from the media. Sometimes the message is subtle, and sometimes it is blatant. But it is always pervasive.

Young people need help sorting out all the conflicting messages about sexuality. The first step is to help them determine what they want for their future. They need to examine what they believe a relationship should be, and sort out their own feelings about sexuality. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, they need to learn to resist pressures. The video ***Take Charge: Resisting Sexual Pressure*** was created in order to help educators get this important message across to young people today, when the landscape of sexuality is fraught with dangers such as sexually transmitted infections, AIDS, teen parenthood, and the devastating decision to terminate an unwanted pregnancy.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After viewing the video *Take Charge: Resisting Sexual Pressure* and participating in class discussion and activities described in this Teacher's Resource Book, your students will be able to:

- appreciate that it's okay to decide not to have sex
- understand that sexual activity involves many responsibilities that they may not be ready to accept
- implement new refusal skills and self-assertion techniques
- recognize that they always have the right to say no to people who are trying to pressure them
- be sensitive to the ways that society can influence a young person's view of sexual activity
- realize that sexual activity is not a simple decision of the moment, but a choice which can provoke life-long consequences
- understand that two people should only decide to enter into a sexual relationship when they are both emotionally mature enough to handle it
- stand up for their own personal choices in a self-assured manner

PROGRAM SUMMARY

As *Take Charge: Resisting Sexual Pressure* begins, a series of young women describe the awkwardness of trying to decide if they are ready for sexual activity. Viewers meet Karla, the 17 year-old narrator who admits that she finds it difficult to speak about sexual issues. “Have you ever felt pressure to kiss someone, or to be sexual in a way that makes you uncomfortable?” she asks. “The kids in this video will show you how to say no, and how to put all of that into words.” The video’s first section features interviews with teens who describe moments when they have felt pressured to be sexually active. “I always thought it was stupid to talk about the heat of the moment,” says one girl, “but now I fully understand what it means. It’s a whole different ball game when you’re actually there.”

As sexual education expert Susan N. Wilson puts it, “We are sexual beings. The pressure to have sex is biological, evolutionary. There’s an enormous pressure even from our own bodies.” Karla explains further that sexual pressure comes from every direction. Whether from our own bodies, from our friends, or from the movies, teens are constantly being encouraged to test their sexual limits. John Bess, Executive Director of Valley, Inc., a peer counseling center in East Harlem, New York, adds, “The message is straight up: have sex, have sex, have sex. There is nothing we see anywhere that tells young people not to have sex. It’s everywhere. Young people are swamped. Having sex is like drinking water.”

The young speakers share occasions when they have felt pressured. One young man says that he and his girlfriend “felt like we should do something, but we weren’t sure. Shouldn’t we be doing what other couples do?” Another girl says that some of her friends have been caught off-guard, unprepared to respond to their partner’s demands that they have sex in order to prove their love. Another young woman says that her female friends are “so into it” that she feels pressured to lose her virginity in order to fit in with her peers. “You feel like you’ll relate to your friends better if you have sex. You just sit there, and you feel younger than the others.” A young man, talking about his male friends, confesses that “If I don’t do it, they’ll think I’m a wimp.” Each story of pressure echoes this segment’s main theme: the urge to be sexually active can come from many different sources.

Karla returns to introduce the next section: **Setting Limits**. As she puts it, “It’s easy to say, ‘Set limits,’ but it can be hard to do when you’re with someone.” A young man admits that setting limits is difficult when it comes to sex, and even harder if you’ve been drinking alcohol. “You can really lose your self-control,” he says. “When you’re drinking, you don’t really care what you’re doing.” A girl agrees that she has had bad experiences with sexual behavior when she has been with friends who drink. The video opens up the topic of “hookups.” These are defined as anything from kissing to having sex with someone you have just met. Karla points out to viewers that “when you’re in a hookup, it makes it really hard to set limits.” Other teens agree that hookups are often the result of unwise decisions.

PROGRAM SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

“When you can’t talk to someone honestly,” says Karla, “they really do feel like the enemy.” She recounts the story of a young man who she really liked. Instead of speaking to him honestly, Karla found herself in an uncomfortable sexual pressure situation. “I was so eager to be liked that I didn’t work out what my boundaries were,” she remembers. “What I should have said was, ‘Let’s stop kissing and just hang out for a while.’ Why is it so hard to talk honestly?”

This question is echoed by other teens. One young man calls dating “guesswork. A girl’s not going to wear a note that says ‘go this far, but please do not go any further.’” Another girl admits that “In other aspects I can be as outgoing as I want, but when it comes to this, I’m so quiet.” To complicate the matter even further, Karla points out, “some kids think they have to say the opposite of what they really feel.” One teen says that her mother “taught me that in order to get a boy’s attention, you have to ignore him. Show him that you don’t need him.” Another girl accuses young men of being unable to communicate. “Guys can’t open up to girls,” she says. “They just say what a girl wants to hear.” A young man defends his friends, saying that “there’s too much male bashing going on these days, but there are a lot of good guys out there.”

Clearly there are many disparities between the views of males and females when it comes to communication and sexual pressure. At this point, Janet Rotter of the Studio Elementary School appears to discuss the difference between boys and girls. “For boys, sex is a biological urge. For girls, it’s biological, too, but it’s also incorporated into their emotional needs. They see sex more as intimacy rather than just biological.”

At this point, the video begins to address the question of **How to Set Limits**. Karla says, “If you set clear limits and stick to them, you won’t have to worry about dying [from AIDS] or going too far. You’ll be in charge.” The teens interviewed agree that they urgently hope to create safe limits for themselves. “I need to make sure that the things I’m doing are really me,” one teen says. “I have enough going on right now, I don’t worry about sex right now.” Another admits, “I have to learn how to open my mouth. If you don’t open your mouth, you won’t get anywhere.”

Deborah Haffner, executive director of SIECUS, confirms the importance of setting and then communicating one’s limits. “The hardest thing for teens is how to begin the discussion. Here it is: [you tell your partner] I want to talk about how far to go. I really like you, we really need to talk about how we feel about sex. You need to practice this. Say it to the mirror.” Next, we see Karla practicing before a mirror. “Before we go any further, I want to make sure I’ve said this out loud: These clothes stay on.” Other teens agree, there are many ways to say no: make an excuse, be clear, use body language, challenge your date to respect your wishes. “You have to be honest with yourself,” says Haffner. “You need to say I am not comfortable, please don’t pressure me, it’s not helping our relationship for you to pressure me.”

PROGRAM SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

Next, the video shows a trio of young girls shopping for clothes, singing “Like a Virgin.” This introduces the topic of virginity. One young man says, “I’m a virgin, and I’m pretty proud of it.” He believes that if he had casual sex with someone he didn’t care about, he would regret his actions. Another young man shares his philosophy: “You have to realize that when you give away your virginity, you can’t go up to someone a few months later and ask for it back.” John Bess returns to tell viewers not to rush into sexual activity. “Sex ain’t going no place. When you’re an adult, it’s going to still be there. You’ve got time.”

As the video draws to a close, viewers hear a boisterous rendition of “Express Yourself.” The teens sing, “You deserve the best in life, and if the time isn’t right, then move on.” Karla returns to remind viewers that “there are a million great, sexy things you can do between kissing and the big one.” Other teens agree, and offer their own suggestions: go to the movies, to an amusement park, have a romantic candlelit dinner, cuddle, hold hands, feed each other, just talk... Karla ends the show with these words, “If there is one thing to take away from this video, it’s that you have to decide what your limits are. Talk about sex, even if it’s embarrassing. Talk to your parents, your boyfriend, your girlfriend. If you can’t talk about it, you’re not ready to do it.”

TEACHER'S INSTRUCTIONS FOR CLASS ACTIVITY

This class activity is intended to encourage students to realize that expectations for a relationship are drastically different between males and females, and should be examined carefully. After conducting this class activity, you should be able to generate a lively discussion among students.

PREPARATION:

You will need enough photocopies of the *Relationship Poll* (page 7) to distribute to all your students.

IN CLASS:

1. Distribute copies of the *Relationship Poll* to your class.
2. Review the instructions. Students should rank the qualities as follows:
 - 1 a VERY IMPORTANT quality in a dating relationship
 - 2 a MODERATELY IMPORTANT quality in a dating relationship
 - 3 a LESS IMPORTANT quality in a dating relationship
 - 4 an UNIMPORTANT quality in a dating relationship
3. Allow five to ten minutes for students to make their choices.
4. Poll the females in your class to determine which were their five most important qualities in a relationship.
5. Poll the males in your class to determine which were their five most important qualities in a relationship.
6. Encourage your students to discuss the findings of this poll. Among the questions you might ask are these:
 - Do boys and girls look for the same qualities in a relationship?
 - Are these the same qualities you looked for a few years ago? Why might there be differences?
 - Do you expect your current preferences to remain the same in the years ahead? Why or why not?
 - How does this poll influence your expectations about a relationship?

STUDENT WORKSHEETS

RELATIONSHIP POLL

Listed below are some qualities that you might find in a dating relationship. Rank these qualities as follows:

- 1 a VERY IMPORTANT quality in a dating relationship
- 2 a MODERATELY IMPORTANT quality in a dating relationship
- 3 a LESS IMPORTANT quality in a dating relationship
- 4 an UNIMPORTANT quality in a dating relationship

having fun / good times _____

finding a future spouse _____

having someone to confide in _____

sharing intimacy _____

having sex _____

sharing experiences _____

creating a strong commitment _____

keeping “no strings attached” _____

having a friend _____

sharing mutual respect _____

finding an intellectual partner _____

sharing values and beliefs _____

RESEARCH PROJECT

Research one of the topics on the following list. Write a brief paper on your findings. You can locate information at your school or local library, as well as on the Internet. Use a *Resource Tracker* (Worksheet 2-B) to collect your information.

The Morning After Pill

What is the morning after pill?
Has it been approved by the FDA for use in the United States?
How is it used? How effective is it? Is this a form of birth control, or is it used for other purposes?

The History of Abortion

What choices were available to pregnant women before the Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade decision in 1973? Did abortion exist in the years before this decision?

Sexual Abstinence

What percentage of US teens are choosing abstinence? What are some of the major advantages of abstinence as a teen? How might this lead to a better intimate relationship as an adult?

Sex and the Media

What kind of messages about sex are commonly found in the media? Are these messages constructive, or are they misleading? What can teens do to protect themselves from media influence?

Making Choices

Research a famous person who had to overcome insurmountable odds or great adversity. How did the person change his/her life around? What resources did he/she use? What does this person's life story tell you about the importance of making choices?

Self-Esteem

Adolescents who have a high level of self-esteem can more easily resist sexual pressures than other teens. In what other ways does a healthy sense of self-esteem influence a person's choices? What do psychologists say about the importance of self-esteem?

NAME: _____

RESOURCE TRACKER

WORK
SHEET
2-B

Title of book or article:	Title of book or article:
Author(s):	Author(s):
Published by:	Published by:
Copyright date:	Copyright date:
Subject covered:	Subject covered:
Quote:	Quote:

HRM VIDEO

TAKE CHARGE: RESISTING SEXUAL PRESSURE

CLASS DEBATE

Choose a topic for debate. Divide the class into two equal groups. One group must argue yes, and the other group must argue no. Each side must support its position with facts and valid arguments.

Choose one of the following debate topics:**1**

Do males get more pressure to be sexually active than females?
Why or why not?

2

Would sexual pressure between males and females be reduced if all dates were “Dutch treat?” Why or why not?

3

In general, do people respect those who resist peer pressure?
Why or why not?

4

Should teens be forbidden to trade stories about their sexual conquests, real or imagined? Why or why not?

5

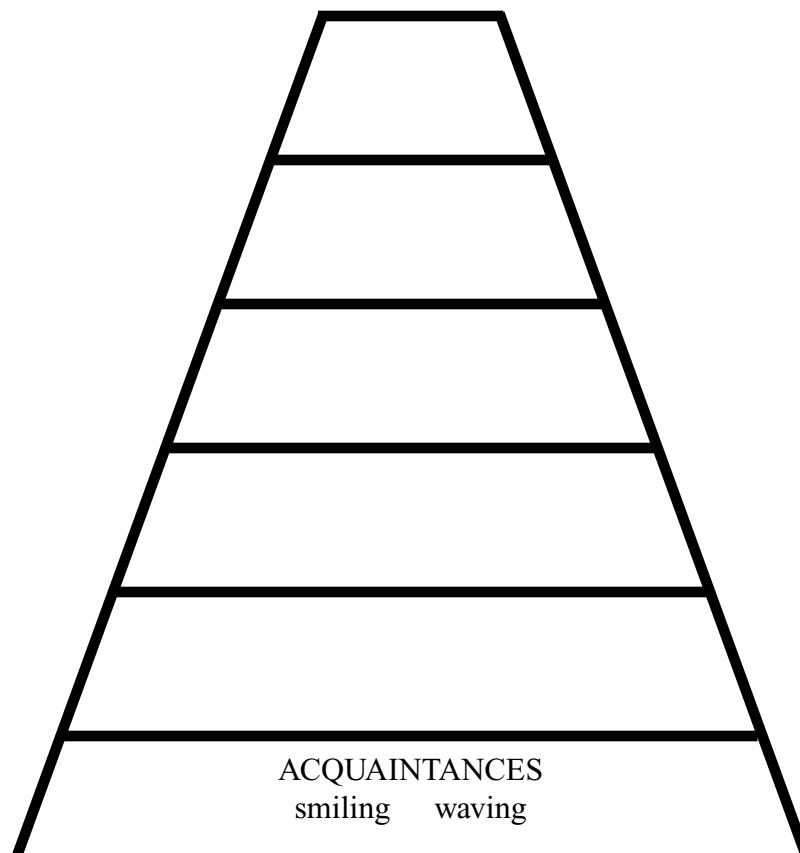
If a person wears provocative or revealing clothes, does that mean that he/she is encouraging others to be sexually aroused? Why or why not?

INTIMACY

There are many ways to physically express our feelings. Not all demonstrations of affection are the same. You might hug your parents, kiss your best friend, shake the hand of a teacher you respect, or put your arm around the person you're dating.

Using the illustration below, make an intimacy ladder for yourself. Your ladder should show the many levels of physical intimacy that you can climb before having sexual intercourse. On each rung, write down a few ways to physically express yourself—of course this will depend on the kind of relationship you have with each person. For each step of intimacy, indicate a category of people such as acquaintances, friends, very close pals, family, and so on. As your ladder ascends, your actions should indicate a greater degree of intimacy. Keep in mind that there are ways to express your sexuality or your sexual feelings towards another person without having sexual intercourse.

You don't have to show this worksheet to anyone. It is for you.



REASONS

Teens may decide to become sexually active for many reasons—even if they aren't always the best reasons. For instance:

- to rebel
- curiosity
- to feel loved
- to be popular
- getting back at parents
- don't know how to say no
- to strengthen a relationship
- to lose the label of "virgin"
- to make a partner fall in love
- trying to cure loneliness or unhappiness
- wanting to prove you're not gay or lesbian
- believing the first time is not important so just get it over with
- not using good judgment because you're high on alcohol or other drugs

Can you think of other reasons why teens decide to have sexual relationships?

Are any of these reasons acceptable to you? Explain.

What would you advise someone who was planning to have sex for these reasons?

What reasons are acceptable to you? Do you think they will be acceptable to you when you are 18 years old? 25 years old? Explain your answer.

DEFINING LOVE

Love is a word that we use often, but it means different things to different people. Use this worksheet to decide what you think about love. After you have answered the questions in Part 1, be prepared to discuss this issue with your classmates and then answer the questions in Part 2.

PART 1

What is your own definition of love?

Do you believe in love at first sight? How does it happen? Is it really love, or simply physical attraction at first sight? Is love the same for men and women? Explain.

What are the essential components of a loving relationship?

How do you know when you love someone?

How do you know when you are loved by someone?

PART 2

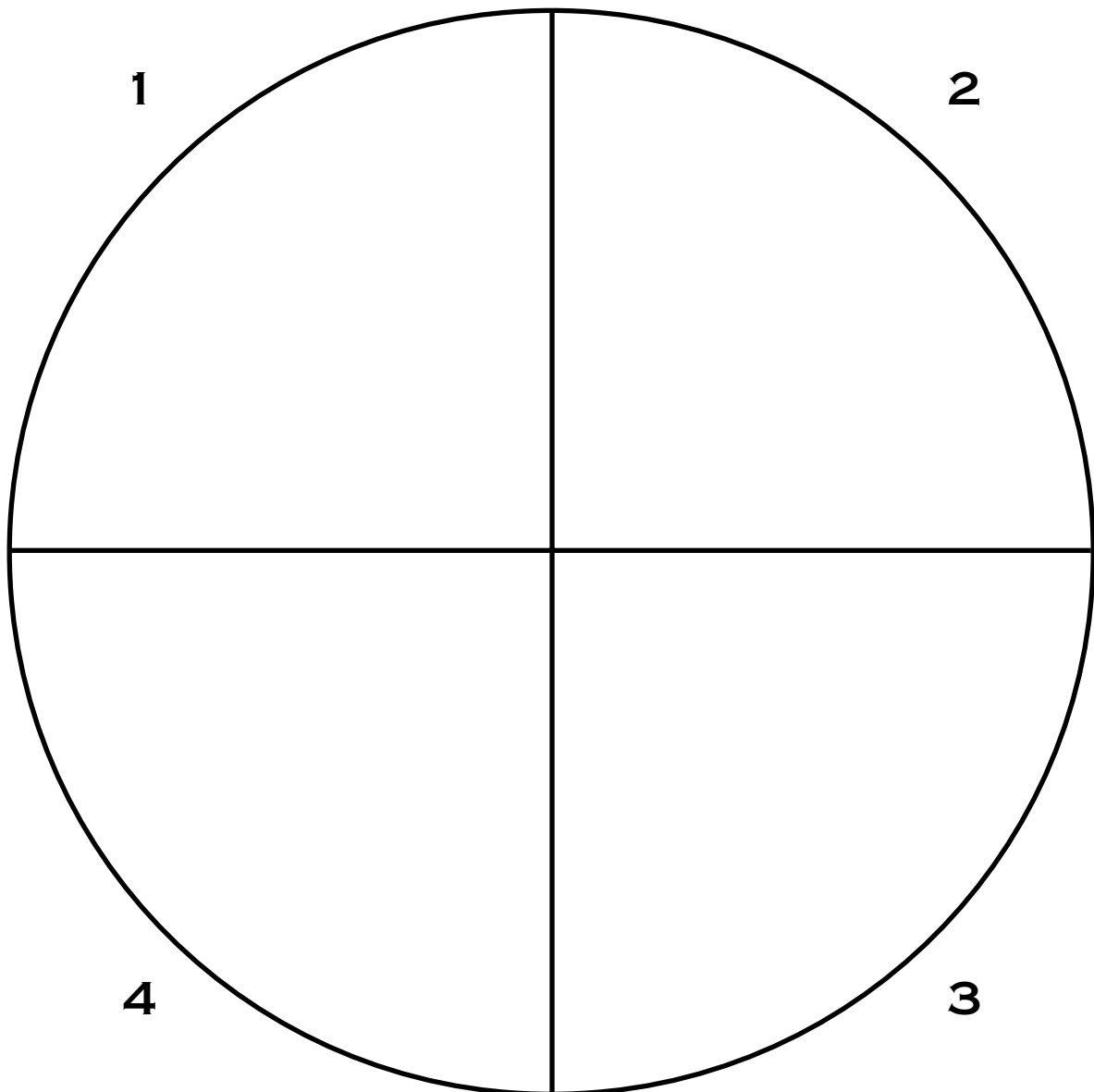
On a separate sheet of paper, answer these questions:

- What have you learned from this discussion?
- Does your written definition of love include the points brought up in class?
- How might you change your definition?

THE WHEEL THEORY OF LOVE

For this exercise, you will need a copy of *The Wheel Theory of Love* (Fact Sheet 3). The wheel describes four general cycles of how love begins and grows. Looking at the wheel of love, think about your ideal relationship. (It may or may not be a relationship that is currently happening in your life today.) In your relationship, what would you like to see happening in each of the wheel segments?

Use the blank wheel below to describe how you would like to see your relationship progress. You may use words to fill in each segment, or you may draw pictures that symbolize what you hope will happen.



CHOOSING FOR MYSELF

Often we have so many people telling us what to do that we don't get a chance to decide how we feel, or what we want. For this exercise, there is no pressure on you to react to anyone else's expectations. No friends, no dating partners, no parents. It is just you and your own beliefs. It's time to make a list of your personal choices.

This is how I feel about my body, and my right to privacy:

This is how I feel about physical intimacy with another person:

These are the conditions that would have to be met before I would have sex with someone:

This is my plan of action if I were pressured to go further than I wanted:

This is what I would do if I felt I were ready to become sexually active:

WHO IS EVERYONE?

You've probably been hearing about peer pressure your whole life. But sometimes it can be hard to define what goes on in your life as peer pressure. You may feel like you want to be sexually active because it seems like everyone else is trying it and you wonder what it's about. You may feel like your friends are leaving you behind if they're doing something you're not doing. But as the poet e.e. cummings once wrote, "It takes courage to grow up and be who you really are."

What are some things that "everyone" else does that you also do?

e.g. I really love that show that everyone else watches on Thursday nights.

What are some things that "everyone" else does that you don't do?

e.g. I just don't like chocolate. I know it's weird but I don't.

What are some things you do that "no one" else does?

e.g. I like to go horseback riding. I'm the only one in my class who does.

What are some things about yourself that you're proud of? Why?

e.g. I'm proud that I scored 97 on my last science test. I had to study really hard.

Do you think that it's okay to be sexually active because "everyone" else is having sex? Why or why not?

THE OLD DAYS

Use the questions below to interview three people. You may want to photocopy this page, or write your answers on a separate sheet of paper. Interview one person in each of the following age groups:

	25-40 years old	40-55 years old	55-75 years old
When you were 15, what percentage of your peers do you think were sexually active?	_____	_____	_____
How did your parents and your community treat teenage pregnancy in your town?	_____	_____	_____
Where would a teen go for help if he/she found out that he/she had a sexually transmitted infection?	_____	_____	_____
Were you able to discuss sex with your parents? How does that compare to the discussions that people have with their children today?	_____	_____	_____

Below, invent two additional questions to ask your interview subjects.

Question 1: _____

Question 2: _____

After you have completed your interviews, write a brief report summarizing what you have learned. Have teens' sexual habits changed? What behaviors are different today? What has improved? What has grown worse? What has remained the same?

WRITE A LETTER

Pretend that you are an advice columnist for a magazine. These are the letters that you received in this week's bag of mail. Choose one and write a response on a separate sheet of paper.

1

Dear You,
I've been dating Mandi, this incredibly beautiful girl, for more than a month. Last night we were at a party when my friends Kathy and Scott disappeared into a bedroom. Mandi saw them and suggested that we do the same. So we found an empty bedroom and fooled around for a while. Then she told me she wanted me to make love to her. It was like, whoa! The fact is I'm still a virgin, and I don't want my first sexual experience to be like this, at a party, with lots of people around. Did I screw up?

Mad for Mandi**2**

Dear You,
I am a 17-year-old virgin. I'm so tired of always saying "no" when my boyfriend tries to coax me into having sex. Why doesn't he realize that I want it just as much as he does? Lately I am thinking that it's stupid for me to keep holding onto my virginity this way. After all, I'm just as human as everyone else—and they are all having sex! Should I give in?

Tempted**3**

Dear You,
I can't believe I'm writing this letter. I am a 16-year-old guy, and I think I'm pretty normal. The truth is that although I've had sex a few times already, I'm starting to feel like it isn't worth risking so much. First, there's AIDS and all that stuff. And then I have to worry about getting some girl pregnant. Plus, my parents would probably freak out if they knew I was sexually active. I'm beginning to think that sex isn't worth all these worries. Is that normal?

Doubting Thomas**4**

Dear You,
Would you please tell me how I'm supposed to resist the temptation to have sex, when it's the only thing I can think of?

Trying to Be Good

SPREAD THE WORD

Whether or not you realize it, you are a role model to younger kids. Your day-to-day behavior sends out certain messages to children. Now is your chance to positively influence their lives.

For this assignment, each member of your class should create an abstinence message which can be presented to younger students at your school. You can choose from these ideas, or invent one of your own:

- a story**
- a fairy tale**
- a poem**
- a cartoon**
- a song**
- a puppet show**

Although you may want to use humor in your presentation, make sure that young children will understand that you are very serious about your “Respect Yourself” abstinence message.

Use the space below to plan your idea:



COLLAGE OF AFFECTION

Below you'll see other teens' suggestions for how two people can show their love or affection without having sex. You can use these ideas—or invent ideas of your own—to create a poster or photographic collage. When you are done with your art piece, see if you can get permission to display your poster in your school, in order to show other teens that there are many ways to show affection.

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Be best friends | Meet each other's family |
| Be faithful | Meet each other's friends |
| Choose a special song together | Play footsie |
| Cook each other's favorite foods | Prepare a meal together |
| Dedicate a song on the radio | Read and discuss a book together |
| Do homework together | Rent a video together |
| Eat dinner by candlelight | Say "I love you" |
| Flirt with each other | Send a funny card |
| Give a hug | Send flowers |
| Give each other compliments | Share private jokes |
| Go dancing | Share your dreams |
| Go for a moonlight walk | Show mutual respect for each other |
| Have your picture taken together | Talk openly about your feelings |
| Hide a love note for the other to find | Throw a party together |
| Hold hands | Trust each other |
| Hold one another close | Kiss |
| Make a special tape of love songs | Walk arm in arm |
| Make each other gifts | Watch a sunset together |
| Make sacrifices for each other | Write letters to each other |

ROLE PLAY 1

If you have been chosen to act out the role play, work with your partner to prepare a scene based on this scenario:

Kevin is very popular at school. When he invites Hannah to a party with him, she is thrilled. Kevin has plans for his future; he is not ready to invest in a serious relationship right now—especially on the first date. Hannah, instead, believes that she needs to show Kevin that she is a liberated woman. She worries that this is her only chance with Kevin. If she has sex with him, she thinks he will become her steady boyfriend. She can then brag to her friends that she is going out with one of the most popular guys in school. She makes up her mind to be very sexy during their date.

If you are in the audience of the role play, be prepared to determine if the two actors have done a good job of avoiding sexual pressure. Here are some pointers for your consideration:

- Hannah and Kevin are going to need to clarify their dating relationship and discuss how they feel about each other.
- For the relationship to continue and grow, Hannah will have to respect Kevin’s concerns and his plans for the future.
- Hannah should think further about what being “liberated” really means. If she feels she must be sexually active to demonstrate that she is liberated, then she doesn’t have a clear understanding of the concept.
- Hannah also needs to think further about how to feel good about herself. She needs to understand that dating the most popular people in her school is not the best way to be liked by others.

ROLE PLAY 2

If you have been chosen to act out the role play, work with your partner to prepare a scene based on this scenario:

Nicola and Owen have been going steady for about six months. They have a lot of fun together. They have not become sexually involved, although they have talked about it. Recently, Owen has started pressuring Nicola to have sex with him. His friends have been teasing him about not being able to “make it” with Nicola. One night Owen tells Nicola that if she won’t have sex with him, he doesn’t want to see her anymore. Nicola wants to keep going out with Owen, but she is not ready for sex.

If you are in the audience of the role play, be prepared to determine if the two actors have done a good job of avoiding sexual pressure. Here are some pointers for your consideration:

- If Owen really cares for Nicola, he should respect her feelings that she is not ready, and he should not pressure her to have sex.
- If someone says he will break off the relationship if there is no sex, that might be a sign that the relationship is not a very good one. Relationships depend on caring and respect for the other person—not on sex.
- Owen should think about whether he really wants to have sex with Nicola, or if he is only trying to avoid his friends’ teasing by boasting about his sexual experiences. Using someone you care about is a sign that you are not ready for the responsibilities of a relationship.
- Bragging to friends about a sexual experience is not a very adult way to behave, and it is also very hurtful to others. If he were to have sex just to shut his friends up, what would that suggest about Owen?

ASSERTIVENESS

There are many ways to say no assertively. Learning to say no assertively allows you to...

...express your feelings in a direct and honest way without hurting the other person's feelings.

...stand up for your rights and for the rights of others.

...state your opinion without abusing or taking advantage of others.

For this exercise, create your own assertive answers to the following pressure lines. If you need more information on how to say no effectively, take a look at *Your Right to Refuse* (Fact Sheet 1).

Everybody's doing it.

If you get pregnant, I'll marry you.

If you won't have sex with me, I don't want to see you anymore.

If you love me, why won't you prove it?

I know you want to do it. You're just afraid of what people will say.

Come on, have a drink. It'll get you in the mood.

It's a normal part of growing up. Don't you want to see what it's like?

A lot of your friends are doing it. You're just not with it.

If you don't, someone else will.

We had sex once before, so what's the problem now?

FACT SHEETS

YOUR RIGHT TO REFUSE

When it comes to personal intimacy, you have the right to make your own choices. Remember, you always have the right to say no without making excuses. If a person respects you, then he or she must respect your decision. Anything less is not acceptable. Here are some strategies you can use:

1. Say no firmly and matter-of-factly. You'll feel stronger knowing that you are being clear about your position.
2. Don't offer reasons or excuses for saying no. You don't owe anyone an explanation. If someone is pressuring you, he or she probably won't respect your reasons, and will only try to talk you out of your decision.
3. If the person keeps asking you, just keep repeating the same response as necessary, like a broken record. "I said no, I'm not ready."
4. You may agree with some of the things the person is saying, but keep repeating your position: NO.
5. Your facial expressions, body movements, and hand gestures should all reflect your verbal "no." Avoid gestures that might send the nonverbal message that you are insecure. For example, shrugging, wringing your hands, shuffling your feet, or looking away are nonverbal cues to be avoided.
6. Make eye contact. Don't stare at the floor or the ceiling. Say "no" directly to the other person.
7. If the pressure continues, turn the tables—take the offensive. Explain that the pressure is annoying you, not persuading you. "Nothing is going to change my mind," or "All you're doing is making me feel angry," or "What part of NO don't you understand?"
8. Do not allow yourself to be made to feel guilty or intimidated by threats. Ask questions: "Why do you feel you have to keep pressuring me? Why don't you accept the fact that I've made my own decision?"
9. Don't feel obliged to continue the discussion indefinitely. Say, "I'm not going to talk about this anymore." And change the subject.
10. If you continue to feel pressured, say, "I'm not going to stay here and listen to this." And walk away. Don't apologize or make excuses. You've been clear and reasonable.

JUST FRIENDS

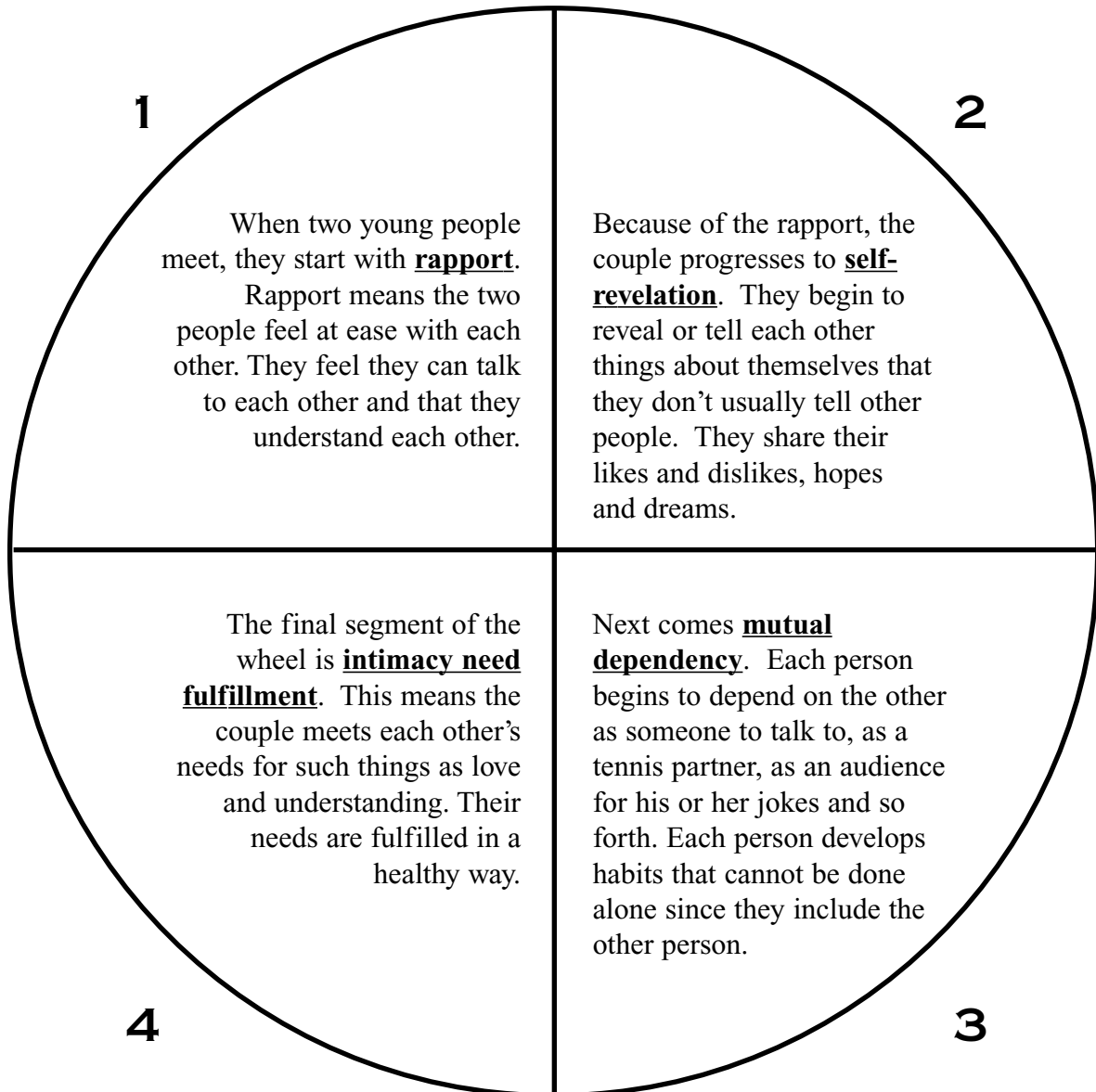
One thing you've probably noticed as a teenager is that it's harder to be "just friends" with a member of the opposite sex than it was when you were younger. When you were younger, it was no big deal if a boy and a girl were best friends, played together, or had lunch together. It can be more difficult now, however. Other people begin to assume the two of you are "boyfriend and girlfriend" and that you must be in love with each other. They also may begin to tease you.

This is regrettable. Members of the opposite sex can and should be great friends. If people are making it difficult for you to be just friends with a member of the opposite sex, consider the following suggestions:

- Try to ignore the teasing and rumors.
- Explain to people that you really are just friends.
- Talk to your friend about it so the teasing or rumors don't make you feel uncomfortable around each other or affect your friendship.
- Turn things around and act like the people who are teasing you are the ones who are weird for not being able to be friends with someone of the opposite sex.
- Take a "so what" attitude. Who cares if they think you're madly in love with your friend?
- Tell them why you think it's fun to be just friends. Explain what you get out of being close friends with someone of the opposite sex.
- Realize they may be envious because they'd really like to have an opposite-sex friend.

THE WHEEL THEORY OF LOVE

Visualizing love as a wheel divided into four pie-shaped segments may help you think about what happens as love grows.



Love grows as you go clock-wise around the wheel. Love does not stop growing after you go around the wheel once—it keeps turning. When needs are fulfilled, even greater rapport develops. That leads to more self-revelation, mutual dependency, and more intimacy. On the other hand, love declines or weakens as you go around the wheel in a counter-clockwise direction.

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