

11. Standing up for yourself



Objective

By the end of this session, group members will be able to:

- Express their thoughts and feelings with confidence.



Background notes

Being able to stand up for yourself can help you to get along with others and feel good about yourself. It is good to be honest with yourself and others about what you need and want. This can help you protect yourself from dangerous situations and can help you say no to things that you are uncomfortable doing.

How to stand up for yourself

- Decide what you feel or want and say it. Do not be afraid to be honest about your feelings. Being confident about your own feelings will encourage others to respect them as well. Someone who truly loves you will not want to do things that make you feel bad or unhappy.
- Maintain eye contact. Looking someone in the eye tells the other person that you are serious about what you are saying and that you are paying close attention to whether or not they are listening to you.
- Do not make excuses. Your feelings are the best reasons; avoid using other people as excuses. Say what you really feel.
- Do not try to please others. If you do not want to do something, say so clearly and do not ask if it is okay. Show other people that you know your own mind.
- Do not get confused by the other person's argument. Keep repeating what you want or do not want. Stand your ground and do not give in.
- Remember you have a right to change your mind. Perhaps you and your boyfriend talked about sex a few days ago and you told him that you would have sex with him. But now you feel sure that the time is not right – you are not ready and the relationship is not ready. He says: "But you agreed that we could have sex." Tell him: "I've changed my mind; I've decided I don't feel ready." If he truly loves you, he will respect your right to change your mind, and he will wait until you feel ready.



Session guide

1. Facilitate a discussion by asking group members the following questions:
 - Was there a time in your life when you stood up for yourself? Can you tell us about it?
 - What you would say to someone who wanted to have sex with you before you were ready?
 - What would you say to someone who offered you alcohol?
2. After discussing all of the questions, share the information from the Background Notes section.



Main points

- Be honest with yourself and others about what you need and want. Do not be afraid to say what you think and feel.
- You have a right to your feelings and other people should respect them.



Activity: Role play

1. Ask group members to volunteer to act out how they would say no in the following situations in a role play for the group.
 - Teacher and a student: Teacher offers a better grade in exchange for sex.
 - Two friends: One friend wants the other friend to steal something from the market while the vendor is distracted with a sale.
 - Two friends: As they are walking to school, one friend suggests skipping school and going to a video den.
2. After the volunteers have acted out the situation, ask group members to talk about the role play.
 - Do they agree with what the character decided to do?
 - Would they have done anything differently?
 - How could the relationship be improved?
 - Is what happened similar to what would happen in real life?
3. After talking about the first role play, repeat the steps above with the other situations.

12. Making decisions



Objective

By the end of this session, group members will be able to:

- List the steps for good decision making.



Background notes

A decision is a choice that we make between two or more options. We all make decisions every day. We will need to make more and more decisions as we become older and some of these decisions will affect us the rest of our lives.

One of the most important parts of decision making is looking ahead to imagine what might happen if you do something. The better you are at thinking about what could happen, the better you will be at making decisions that will turn out how you want.

Steps for good decision-making include:

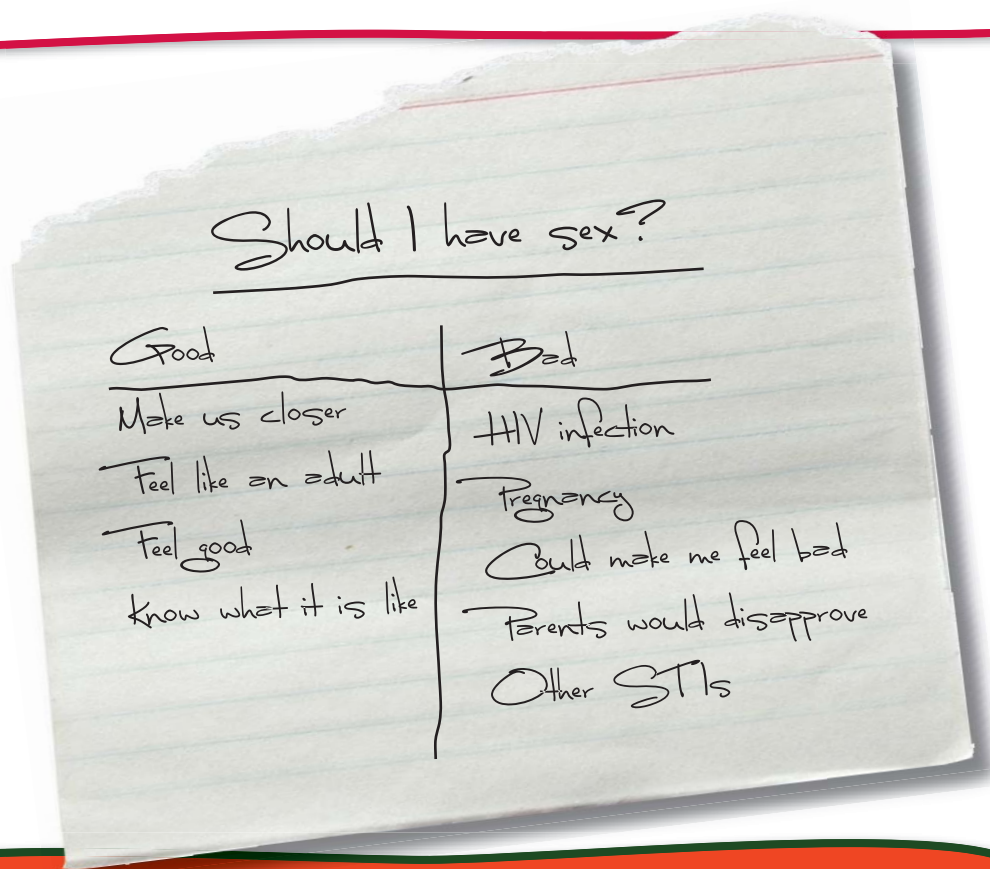
1. Describe the problem or situation that needs a decision.
2. Get more information if you have questions about the situation.
3. Think about what might happen if you make a decision.
4. Think about your personal and family values.
5. Think about how your decision may affect other people.
6. Choose the decision that seems right based on your knowledge, values, morals, religious upbringing, and present and future goals.
7. Re-think the decision and how you feel about it. Be sure you carefully considered all the alternatives and feel comfortable with the choice you made.

Talking with a friend, family member, or trusted adult can also help you to make a good decision.



Session guide

1. **Ask:** Does anyone have a decision that you are facing now and would like to share with the group? It can be big or small.
2. After he or she has explained the situation ask the other group members to give them advice. Remind them to think about how the different decisions could affect the future.
3. Allow several different group members to give advice.
4. Explain that sometimes making a list of the good things that will happen if you make a certain choice and comparing it to a list of the bad things that will happen if you make a certain choice can also be helpful.
5. Allow other group members to share other decisions that they have to make and are struggling with and help them to make their good and bad lists.



Main points

- A decision is a choice that we make between two or more options.
- When making a decision, it can help to imagine what will happen in the future if you decide to do each of the different options.
- Talking with other people can also help you make a good decision.