

Building Healthy Relationships Across Virginia:

A Facilitator's Guide for Teen Dating Violence Prevention

Unit 5:

Exploring Gender, Sexuality, and Power



Exploring Gender, Sexuality, and Power

Introduction



The activities in this unit illuminate American societal norms about gender, sexuality, and power, and how these norms are tied to dating violence. For example, the socialization of males in many segments of American culture says that it is normal (even cool and desirable) for boys/men to take what they want when they want it even if they have to use force. This “boys will be boys” behavior is a well-established risk factor for perpetration of dating violence, particularly sexual violence. Another risk factor is the widely-held beliefs amongst men and women that sexuality is a “thing” – an adversarial phenomenon that pits men against women – instead of a natural part of everyone’s humanity shared between people. All of the activities seek to expose these harmful norms, and some also attempt to encourage students to articulate positive alternatives.

Traditionally, the concepts of gender, sex and, sexuality (including sexual orientation) have been thought of and discussed in absolute, binary (either/or) terms. In order to better reflect the experience of all individuals, the activities in this unit challenge participants and facilitators to rethink these concepts in different, perhaps more fluid ways. While an in-depth discussion of these issues – in all their varied and complicated forms – is beyond the scope of this guide, it is important to share common definitions and language for the purposes of using this resource.

Often, the terms “gender” and “sex” are used interchangeably, when in fact they are very different. “Sex” refers to an individual’s biological or anatomical identity as “male”, “female” – or intersexed, if a person has both male and female biological or anatomical characteristics. It is important to note that 1 in 2000 people are born with some degree of intersexed features. “Gender” refers to the collection of characteristics that are culturally associated with maleness or femaleness. Jamison Green of the Policy Institute of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force writes, “The specific characteristics that are socially defined as ‘masculine’ or ‘feminine’ vary across cultures and over time within any given culture. For example for centuries, standard Greek military attire was a type of skirt. As another example, in many American cities, just a few decades ago, women were forbidden (often by statutory law) to wear trousers or pants.”

Often, as a society, we learn that breaking from culturally prescribed gender roles or characteristics is a bad thing. It is much more common than acknowledged, however, that people exhibit gender characteristics generally associated with the opposite sex; that is, men will have “feminine” gender characteristics and women will have “masculine” gender characteristics. Broadly defined, “transgendered” people are individuals



of any age or sex whose appearance, personal characteristics or behaviors differ from stereotypes about how men and women are “supposed” to be. This could describe almost any person at a given time. What makes “trans” individuals unique is simply a preponderance of these characteristics. Again, we challenge participants to begin to view gender, sex and sexuality through a lens that allows for shades of gray, rather than rigid, black and white thinking that creates an oppressive world for those who understand themselves in ways outside of a societal norm.

For more activities that foster positive skills to buffer these norms, please refer to the Positive Personal Development and Promoting Healthy Relationships units of this guide. Some of the activities in this unit deal frankly with issues of sexuality and sexual violence. Such candor is vital to generating honest consideration of these important issues, but may create challenges for use in some settings.



Unit 5:

Exploring Gender, Sexuality, and Power

Activities and Corresponding Handouts

Gender Stereotypes

- Gender Stereotypes Cards

Gender Roles: Making the Pressure Visible

Real Man/Strong Man

Who Defines Gender?

- Domestic Disputes: Time Magazine Article Handout

What is Sexuality?

A Closer Look at Safety Tips

Is It Harmful?

- Continuum Cards

Activities and Corresponding Handouts-- Page 2

Words to Describe Sex

Range of Acceptable Behavior

● **Behavior Cards**

(NOTE To Facilitator: In order to reflect the experience of teens who may not identify as “male” or “female”, and are transgendered, you may want to alter the language in step one to read, “Traits Associated with Masculinity” and “Traits Associated with Femininity”. This associates the trait cards with gender rather than biological sex.)

Age: Middle or High School

Level: Introductory

Objective:

Examine and discuss gender stereotypes and explore connections with power and control.

Time: 15 Minutes

Materials:

Gender Stereotype Cards (6 sets)

Instructions:

- 1.a. Hand out sets of shuffled cards to groups of 4 to 6 participants. Instruct them to sort into two piles: “Describes males” and “Describes females”.
- 1.b. To save time, or if the group would benefit from not being divided into groups, make two columns on the board, read cards aloud to group, and have a discussion about where each card should be placed.
2. After reading all the cards out loud, point out that any card could describe any person. Be sure to note that in the male pile there are words like: powerful, strong, aggressive; while in the female pile, there are words like: weak, passive, indecisive. Discuss power and control implications for relationships.
3. Ask, “What traits are more valued in our society: being strong and athletic, or kind and good with children?” Recognize that participants might not agree with the two piles.
4. Challenge the group to think about where they learned information about gender and how it affects the way we treat each other (especially in terms of how we expect males and females to act, and how we regard them if they violate that expectation).
5. Ask participants to think of someone they admire or respect most. Have them pick out cards that would describe that person (perhaps positive and negative traits). Have them share with the group the traits and any others they might use to describe the person they admire. Note that most of these traits are not the ones strongly related to one gender or the other.
6. (Optional) Ask participants to pick out cards that they would like to describe themselves and share other traits that they strive to have.



Powerful

Good Leader

Aggressive

Tough

Athletic

Religious

Smart

Strong-willed

Polite

Loving

Nurturing

Moody

Indecisive

Passive

Weak

Gender Roles

Making the Pressure Visible

Facilitator's Notes

(NOTE to Facilitator: This activity should be done with all male or all female audiences whenever possible)

Age: High School

Level: Intermediate

Objective:

To illustrate how rigid gender roles support Interpersonal Violence and Sexual Violence.

Time: 25 minutes, but flexible

Materials:

Flipchart or Chalkboard and markers/chalk

Instructions:

Method #1 (“Act like a man...”):

1. Ask participants to articulate the difference between gender and sex.

- Often, the terms “gender” and “sex” are used interchangeably, when in fact they are very different. “Sex” refers to an individual’s biological or anatomical identity as “male”, “female” – or intersexed, if a person has both male and female biological or anatomical characteristics. It is important to note that 1 in 2000 people are born with some degree of intersexed features. “Gender” refers to the collection of characteristics that are culturally associated with maleness or femaleness. Jamison Green of the *Policy Institute of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force* writes, “The specific characteristics that are socially defined as ‘masculine’ or ‘feminine’ vary across cultures and over time within any given culture. For example for centuries, standard Greek military attire was a type of skirt. As another example, in many American cities, just a few decades ago, women were forbidden (often by statutory law) to wear trousers or pants.”

2. Ask participants how we learn to “act like men” (i.e., parents, peers, teachers, pop culture, and other aspects of what we commonly refer to as “society”).

3. Draw a large box on the board and write, “To be a man...” just above it.

Ask participants, “What does our society tell us it means to be a man?

What is masculine?” Write their responses in the box.

4. Point out any patterns that emerge, positive, negative, or somewhere in between.

(Some responses could be positive or negative depending on the circumstances.)



5. Ask, “What names would a boy or man be called if he behaves in a manner that puts him outside the box?” Tell participants that it’s OK to provide examples that are typically offensive (e.g., fag, pussy, bitch, girly men, etc.). If they are not allowed to use such words in class, tell them to say “p-word” or “b-word,” etc.
6. Facilitate further discussion using the following guidelines:
- What is the purpose of these words? (to keep men behaving “inside the box”; to make males constantly PROVE their manhood)
 - What do almost all of the phrases/words outside of the box have in common? (demeaning/insulting context, associations with femininity, etc.)
 - What message do men receive about feminine qualities when these words are used? (girls, women, and gay men are inferior/weak/worthless in comparison to straight men.)
 - How might these impact men’s attitudes and behavior towards women and gay men?
7. Ask, “What things do men and boys do to stay in – or get back in – the box?” You will get some examples that are harmless or positive, but mostly students will correctly identify behaviors that are meant to PROVE they are NOT the things on the outside of the box. This constant PROVING of manhood includes harmful things like committing violence, taking needlessly dangerous risks, one-upsmanship, etc. Two of the strongest messages men get are that overpowering and/or disrespecting another person is an acceptable way to resolve conflict, and that men should always be in control; women shouldn’t question a man’s decision. It is not difficult to see how a man wanting to “PROVE IT” can quickly become interpersonal or sexual violence. If he doesn’t think she has a right to question his desire to have sex, how do you think he will respond?
8. Ask, “According to the box, is it ever possible to reach a point where you’ve proven your manhood once and for all, and you never have to prove it again?”
9. Ask, “How could each of you address or resist the constant pressure of “staying in the box?”
10. The most important points of the box exercises are:
- The problem with rigid gender roles is twofold:
 - The pressure itself;
 - The manner in which pressure is exerted through devaluing others.
 - Define your own identity (It’s OK to have some of the qualities that are “in the box” as long as it’s your decision and not a response to a socially prescribed



gender norm). Most men don't commit interpersonal and/or sexual violence because most realize on some level that rigid gender pressure is hurtful to themselves and others.

- Try to support those individuals who exhibit qualities "outside of the box"

Method #2 ("Act like a woman...")

1. Ask participants to articulate the difference between gender and sex.

- Often, the terms "gender" and "sex" are used interchangeably, when in fact they are very different. "Sex" refers to an individual's biological or anatomical identity as "male", "female" – or intersexed, if a person has both male and female biological or anatomical characteristics. It is important to note that 1 in 2000 people are born with some degree of intersexed features. "Gender" refers to the collection of characteristics that are culturally associated with maleness or femaleness. Jamison Green of the *Policy Institute of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force* writes, "The specific characteristics that are socially defined as 'masculine' or 'feminine' vary across cultures and over time within any given culture. For example for centuries, standard Greek military attire was a type of skirt. As another example, in many American cities, just a few decades ago, women were forbidden (often by statutory law) to wear trousers or pants."

2. Ask participants how we learn to "act like women/girls" (parents, peers, teachers, pop culture, and other aspects of what we commonly refer to as "society").

3. Draw a large box on the board and write, "To be a woman..." just above it. Ask participants, "What does our society tell us it means to be a lady/girl? What is feminine?" Write their responses in the box.

4. Point out any patterns that emerge, positive, negative, and in between. (Some responses could be negative or positive depending on the circumstances.)

5. Ask, "What names would a girl/woman be called if she behaves in a manner that puts her outside the box?" Tell participants that it's OK to provide examples that are typically offensive (e.g., bitch, whore, dyke, cunt, ho, etc.). If they are not allowed to use such words in class, tell them to say "c-word" or "b-word," etc.

6. Facilitate further discussion using the following guidelines:

- What is the purpose of these words? (to keep women behaving "inside the box"; to make females constantly prove that they are a desirable-but-nice girl or a sophisticated girl/woman)



- What do almost all of the phrases/words outside of the box have in common? (demeaning/insulting context especially if she is engaging in aggressive or assertive - typically male – behavior; often there will be contradictions, such as both “prude” and “slut”, which shows that female sexual autonomy - the right to determine her own decisions about sexuality - is a particularly significant target for behavior outside the box.)
- What message do women receive about their worth according to the words on both the inside and outside of the box? (girls/women are only as good as their ability to be both simultaneously virtuous and desirable.)

7. Ask, “What things do women and girls do to stay in – or get back in – the box?”

You will get some examples that are harmless or positive, but mostly students will correctly identify behaviors that are meant to demonstrate they are NOT the things on the outside of the box, and are capable of balancing the competing demands of femininity, (i.e. being a “good/nice girl” with the pressures of being a “sophisticated woman”). The behaviors might include negative/distorted body image, eating disorders, always needing a boyfriend to validate self-worth, high-risk sexual activity, substance abuse, refraining from speaking-up in class, avoiding athletics, etc.

8. Ask, “How do you think this constant pressure affects girls/women’s attitudes and behavior towards themselves and other girls/women?”

9. Ask, “How could each of you address or resist the constant pressure of “staying in the box?”

10. The most important points of the box exercises are:

- The problem with rigid gender roles is twofold:
 - The pressure itself,
 - The manner in which pressure is exerted through devaluing others.
- Define your own identity (It’s OK to have some of the qualities that are “in the box” as long as it’s your decision and not a response to a socially prescribed gender norm).
- Try to support those individuals who exhibit qualities “outside of the box”.

Real Man/Strong Man

Facilitator's Notes

Age: High School (boys only, but does not have to be a male facilitator)

Level: Intermediate

Objective:

To identify dominant traits that are associated with traditional notions of masculinity, and begin to evaluate the pressure exerted to be considered a “real man.” Also, to illustrate how these traditional notions and their rigidity are linked to violence, and how we can reframe these ideas into something positive and strong.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

Five pairs of recognizable male images from various niches of popular culture (go to mtv.com, spin.com, rollingstone.com, cnn.com, premiere.com to download photos). When you're creating the cards of paired men for this exercise, develop a diverse array of high profile men and male characters so that cultural and social differences are represented, and so that you can use male public figures that the young men will recognize.

Flip chart/Chalkboard and markers or chalk

Instructions:

1. Introduce the exercise by saying:

“We believe that men have to get involved with women in ending dating and sexual violence – because it affects men’s lives as well as women’s lives. But why have so few men found the strength to stand up alongside women and work to prevent dating and sexual violence? To get at the answer to this question, we need to take a look at the messages we get about what it means to be a man in our society and, more specifically, what it means to be a REAL MAN. For example (transition right into REAL MAN exercise), “I have pictures of these two men here. Who would society say is the real man, and why would society say that?”

2. Hold up pictures of pairs of men and generate from discussion a list of characteristics that describe a REAL MAN. Below are some examples of pairs you might choose:

- Tiger Woods AND The Rock (a pro wrestler)
- Arnold Schwarzenegger the Terminator AND Arnold Schwarzenegger the Governor
- Toby Keith AND Andre 3000
- 50 Cent AND George Bush
- Darth Vader AND Yoda



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- Bill Clinton AND Bill Gates
- Eminem AND Dave Chappelle

3. Ask the group to come up with a list of things that our society says that “real men” do or are or don’t do or aren’t. Feel free to ask follow-up questions based on participants’ responses (i.e., if someone says that real men are not emotional, ask about anger; if someone says that real men don’t cry, ask about what emotions men can show, etc.). You should be able to generate at least 15 or 20 statements (real men win, are in control, know what a woman wants, don’t admit they are wrong, don’t ask for directions, don’t take no for an answer, etc). The point here is to show that there are, in fact, numerous ways in which men are confined by gender stereotypes.

4. Continue by saying:

“Okay, I’ve asked you about the messages we all get about what it means to be a real man in this society. Now, let me ask you all another question. Who is the strongest man in your life, who you personally know? Give that some thought. When you come up with someone, raise your hand and tell me who that person is and what makes him so strong.”

5. Write a list of men on the board/flipchart and a second list of characteristics that describe why these men are strong. Many of the boys will talk about their fathers, coaches, uncles, and so on, but occasionally you’ll have someone say his mom is the strongest man he knows, or Jesus, or no one, or he himself is the strongest man he knows. Don’t try to have them name someone else; validate whoever they choose. This is especially important since you might be speaking to some young men who don’t have positive male role models in their lives.

6. Continue by saying:

“What’s interesting about the list you came up with is that even though these are all qualities of real strength, many of them are not qualities that society typically uses to describe a ‘real man.’ Often, what it means to be a REAL MAN is very different.”

7. Take a moment to review the characteristics listed under REAL MAN and point out that many of the qualities are contradictory and/or impossible to live up to. (For example, how can we all be expected to “make it on our own,” “have power and money,” “play with pain,” and “be funny” all at the same time?)

8. Ask the group to compare the qualities of the “strongest man I know” with the qualities of “The Real Man.”

9. Emphasize the differences, such as:

- One list talks about what you have on the outside (i.e., money, fancy car, girls hanging off you) and the other talks about the value of what you have on the



inside (i.e., caring, determination, gentleness, pride).

- One list promotes self-destructiveness (i.e., play with pain) and harm to others (i.e., win at all costs; always be in control) while the other list is about caring for, protecting, and valuing others as equals.
- One list is about 'using power over' someone else (i.e., "conquering" many women) while the other is about 'sharing power' (i.e., being a family man; looking out for someone else's best interests; being affectionate).
- One list promotes sexual assault and violence, in general (i.e., never take 'no' for an answer; be a bad ass; sexual prowess); the other prevents it (i.e., concern for others; warm; supportive; good listener).

10. Conclude by summarizing the activity with the following points:

- First, being a Real Man does not equate to being a Strong Man.
- Second, strength is about valuing and building others up, not tearing them down or being violent in order to boost yourself up.
- If we just pay attention, men who represent a different way of being strong are all around us in our everyday lives. We can draw strength from them and see them as role models. We don't even need to create something new, but highlight the alternatives already around us!
- If we, as men, are to become like the strongest men we know, we must resist the traps of manhood that lure us into hurting and putting others down in order to prove we're man enough.

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Who Defines Gender?

Facilitator's Notes

Age: High School

Level: Advanced

Objective:

To explore the complexities between gender and sex, and to introduce the concept of transgendered persons.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

“Domestic disputes” article from Time Magazine
Flip chart/Chalkboard and markers or chalk

Instructions:

1. Split audience into groups of 4 or 5
2. Hand out “Domestic Disputes” article (Time Magazine – March 4, 2002)
3. Briefly summarize each court case described in the article
 - The first case is from Kansas and involves a person named J’Noel who was born a man and then had sexual reassignment surgery and now has the genitalia of a woman. In this case, J’Noel married a man who passed away. The judge has been asked to decide whether or not J’Noel is legally a woman, and therefore legally due her husband’s inheritance, or if she is still legally a man, which would make her marriage “same sex” and therefore illegal in Kansas – making her husband’s inheritance legally due all to his family, leaving J’Noel with nothing.
 - The second case comes from Florida and involves a man named Michael, who was born a female who then underwent hormonal treatment and surgery to live as a man. In this case, Michael had married a woman named Linda, became the adoptive father of Linda’s son, and eventually divorced Linda. Michael and Linda then went through a custody battle for the son. Linda argued that Michael was not truly a male and consequently was an unsuitable father.
4. Ask each member of the audience to first read through the article. Then, in their small groups, they are to act as the judge in each of the cases. As a group, they have to come to a consensus and prepare to explain to the rest of the class why they made the decision they did. In so doing, they have to explain why Michael and J’Noel are either



male/man or female/woman, and consequently who would win each court case.

5. At this point in the activity it is helpful to point out that you don't want this to turn in to a discussion about "same sex marriage" (unless of course you DO want to). This article and this activity very readily gets students thinking about that issue, and it is helpful if you want to focus solely on gender to preempt that discussion by steering students away from it. It may be helpful to say something to the effect of, "I don't want this to be a discussion about same sex marriage. We may all have our opinions about that issue, but for this exercise we are acting as the judge, and in each of the states where this took place, same-sex marriages are illegal, which the judge would have to follow. So, don't 'legislate from the bench,' and please focus on the issue of gender."

6. After giving students time to work in small groups, bring the class back together as a whole and have each group explain their decision, asking what made each person a man or woman. As the discussions unfold, be sure to point out the fluidity of gender, the difference between gender and sex, whose right it is to define what gender means, and the significance of gender in relationships.

7. A final interesting question you might want to ask is what the students thought the actual courts decided. In both cases after the appeals were settled the courts decided AGAINST both Michael and J'Noel.



Domestic Disputes

TIME Magazine--March 4, 2002

AS LOVE AFFAIRS GO, THE UNION OF Marshall Gardiner and J'Noel Ball seemed familiar in its contours. He was a lively 85-year-old widower and former Kansas state legislator who made a pile in the stock market. She was half his age, an assistant professor of finance at his alma mater, Park College. Four months after they met they wed.

Just 11 months later Marshall succumbed to a heart attack, leaving behind no will and an estate worth nearly \$3 million. Under Kansas law it should simply be split evenly among his spouse and heirs. But a private eye hired by Marshall's estranged son Joseph to investigate the stepmother he hardly knew uncovered something surprising: before surgeries in 1994 and 1995, J'Noel was known as Jay Noel, a man. Joe Gardiner sued for control of the entire estate, claiming that the marriage was same-sex and illegal. J'Noel says their marriage was "more loving than any relationship I have ever experienced or seen," and argued in a case heard by the Kansas Supreme Court recently that, as his widow, 'Noel is entitled to half Marshall's assets.

A similar case is now working its way through a Florida court. In 1987 Margo Kantaras underwent hormonal treatment and surgery, emerging as Michael Kantaras. Michael later married and became an adoptive father to wife Linda's son from a previous relationship, and together the couple had a daughter, who was artificially conceived using sperm provided by Michael's brother. Linda says she was aware Michael was a transsexual when they married, but is now divorced and suing for sole custody of the children because, she says, her ex-husband is not truly male and is therefore unsuitable as a father. Michael, who is also fighting for custody, works three jobs to support Linda and the kids and says, "I love my children. I would never ever want [them] to feel that I would abandon them."

The Gardiner and Kantaras cases underscore how quickly recent changes in American family life have outpaced the law, confronting courts with questions that were scarcely imagined just a few years ago. "Ozzie and Harriet and their kids exist, but they aren't in the majority anymore," observes University of Miami law professor Mary Coombs. "That is no longer the form in which most people live. The family structure has opened up."

That broadened definition now includes not only divorced and single heterosexual parents raising their own biological children but also same-sex couples, adopted children and transgender partners and parents. Although no one keeps a precise count, at least 30,000 people have undergone "sex reassignment" surgery since it became widely available in the late 1970s. The law is trying to keep up. Most states now permit transgender persons to change their driver's license and birth certificate to conform to their new status. And 39 cities—beginning with Minneapolis, Minn., in 1975 and now including Denver; Atlanta; Grand Rapids, Mich.; and Rochester, N.Y.—have passed non-discrimination ordinances protecting transsexuals in schools, jobs and housing.

But legislating transsexuals' personal relationships is completely new territory for American courts. Nearly every state still forbids same-sex marriage, but that's where most lawmakers stop when it comes to answering the many sticky questions involving transsexuals. For instance, if everyone has a right to marry, then who are transsexuals entitled to wed legally? Persons who are opposite their old genders or their new ones? Who defines gender anyway, and can it be "changed"? For that matter, what is it that makes a man a man and a woman a woman-the physical equipment or something deeper? And how does that sense of identity affect their role as parents?

The courts will almost surely have to rule on the gender question in the Gardiner and Kantaras cases before they can decide who gets the estate or who gets custody of the children. Advocates have lined up on both sides. People with "gender-identity confusion have received a weird civil rights status, but it has nothing to do with civil rights," says the Rev. Lou Shelton of the Traditional Values Coalition. "It's not like the color of skin." Responds Shannon Minter, an attorney and co-author of Transgender Equality: "When someone has undergone medical transition, there's no reason not to recognize their new legal gender."

The Kansas court is expected to rule in March, and the Florida court shortly after. For now, J'Noel Gardiner and Michael Kantaras have both gone back to their jobs, quietly hoping, no doubt, that the law will recognize who they are. -With reporting by Steve Korris/St. Louis

What is Sexuality?

Facilitator's Notes

(NOTE to Facilitator: Be sure that the sponsoring organization is comfortable with an open discussion of sexuality. The exercise may bring up issues related to relationships, abuse, assault, harassment, sexual development (puberty), specific sexual activities, etc. The facilitator needs to be very comfortable discussing any aspect of sexuality including “sensitive” issues such as sexual orientation, masturbation, oral sex, abortion, etc. as any issue may be on the students’ list. Also, because youth use a number of slang terms, the facilitator must also be comfortable with repeating the slang terms and providing the correct terminology. The facilitator may also have to ask the students what a particular slang term means as the terms tend to change frequently or may be known only to a specific peer group.)

Age: Middle School or High School (age group, but typically not a school activity)

Level: Introductory

Objective:

To assess participants’ knowledge, areas of misinformation, areas of interest, etc. regarding sexuality.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

Flipchart paper
Markers
Tape

Instructions:

It is a great “ice-breaker” to let the students know that they may talk with this facilitator about any sexuality topic that interests them without judgment or condemnation. This activity would typically be used in an opening session of a multi-session series, but may be used as a single-session activity.

1. Divide the participants into small groups (about 4-6 per group.) Provide each group with a sheet of flipchart paper with the word “Sexuality” at the top of the paper and several markers.
2. Instruct the participants to write down EVERYTHING they know about sexuality. Give them approximately ten minutes to complete the assignment.



3. Post the sheets and review them with the full group. During the review, you have the opportunity to ask more specific questions about the items that are listed. This provides the opportunity to discuss/elaborate on a number of concepts, provide correct terminology, address misinformation versus facts, etc.

4. The facilitator needs to be flexible in addressing the topics and should be willing to follow the students' questions and comments in order to assist the students in being comfortable with the topics. The following provides a framework for discussing the lists, but this may be varied to suit the group needs.

- Review the lists that each group has developed. The facilitator or a student from each group may read the lists aloud. Part of the purpose for reading the lists is to normalize the terms and to allow the facilitator to provide correct terminology. Note that the correct terms will be used in upcoming classes and/or activities.
- Ask the students to identify themes or frequently mentioned topics on the lists. Discuss why these particular topics were prevalent in the small group lists.
- Ask the students about the “tone” of the lists. Is sexuality generally seen as positive or negative? Why do the students think it is seen that way?
- Ask the students if some of the terms are used to insult or embarrass people. Why is sexuality sometimes seen as insulting or embarrassing?
- Ask the students to consider which terms they think are part of healthy/positive sexuality and which are part of unhealthy/negative sexuality. Do they sometimes overlap? For example, becoming pregnant can be positive or negative.
- Ask the students if they have any questions about the lists. Ask them which topics they would like to learn more about.
- Discuss with the students which topics will be the focus of upcoming classes/sessions. Encourage them to be open to the topics and willing to ask questions.
- Let the students know they may speak to the facilitator, or other designated persons, about any personal questions they may have about sexuality.



A Closer Look at Safety Tips

Facilitator's Notes

Age: High School (mixed gender room)

Level: Introductory

Objective:

To highlight men's responsibility in sexual violence prevention.

Time: 25 minutes

Materials:

Flipchart or Chalkboard and markers/chalk

Instructions:

1. Draw a vertical line dividing the board/flipchart in half so that there are 2 columns. Write "Men" at the top of the left column, and "Women" at the top of the right column.
2. Ask the males in the room, "What are some the things you do on a daily basis to protect yourselves from being raped or sexual assaulted?" Very few, if any, responses will result.
3. Ask the females in the room, "What are some the things you do on a daily basis to protect yourselves from being raped or sexual assaulted?" You will get numerous examples of "risk reduction and safety techniques, such as: having keys ready, always parking in lighted areas, always checking in and around a car before getting in, carrying mace, maintaining an assertive stance when walking alone (e.g., head up, shoulders squared, etc.), always trying to travel with a group of friends when going out at night, "keeping an eye on" your drink, taking care not to drink too much, always having enough money for a cab ride, etc.
4. Ask the men in the room if they knew that women do all of these things on a regular basis. They will mostly likely answer no. Ask several men to comment on how they feel about women feeling the need to take these measures to stay safe.
5. Select 3-5 examples of safety tips from the women's column – try to pick examples that many people agreed with, and try to have one example relate to alcohol consumption. Break the group into 3-5 groups (being sure to have a mix of men and women in each group). Ask each group to select a scribe/spokesperson who will record the thoughts of the group and share those with the larger group.
6. Assign one of the "safety tips" to each group and write the following questions on the board:
 - How might this tip be helpful? Harmful?
 - What kinds of underlying messages does this tip send to women? (Does it limit



behavior? Does it place blame on women if they are sexual assaulted?)

- Does this tip apply to sexual violence committed by an acquaintance or by a stranger assault?
- How realistic/practical is this tip? Is it easy to follow in real life – why or why not?

The small groups will then discuss each of the questions as it pertains to their assigned “safety tip” (should take 5-8 minutes). If you have to, remind the groups that the women have the most experience with these tips, so they should be the leaders of the discussion.

7. Reconvene the large group, and then get answers to each question from all the groups. Then, ask, “Who is responsible for stopping sexual violence in each of the tips? Does this perpetuate victim blaming? What responsibility should men have in preventing sexual assault?”

8. Conclude by asking a few participants to share what they learned from this activity.

*Adapted from Mentors in Violence Prevention, Long Beach, CA. <http://www.sportinsociety.org/vpd/mvp.php>
OR <http://www.jacksonkatz>*



Is This Harmful?

Facilitator's Notes

(NOTE to Facilitator: Be sure to spend some time looking over the continuum cards before using this activity. Participants might ask for definitions for some of the technical terms (e.g., “exhibitionism”, “forcible object penetration,” etc.), so be ready to provide legal and/or agency-based definitions.)

Age: High School

Level: Introductory

Objective:

Introduce a variety of behaviors as Sexual Violence in order to broaden and solidify the definition of sexual violence

Time: 15 minutes (but flexible)

Materials:

Chalkboard/chalk
Continuum Cards

Instructions:

1. Using the chalkboard (or you can just tape signs), create a continuum at the front of the class. The far left should be labeled, “Least/Not Harmful” and the far right should be labeled, “Most Harmful”.
2. Ask for volunteers to take a continuum card (see handouts) and place themselves on the continuum. Stress that this is their opinion and they only have to tell us why they put themselves where they did. There are no wrong answers. Also, encourage them to ask the facilitator if they don't understand the card or have questions about its meaning. Be sure to note that some of these words might be new, so they shouldn't feel bad if they don't know them.
3. As each volunteer takes the card and places him/herself on the continuum, be sure to remind them to read their card, give a brief explanation of what the card means (facilitator will help if the volunteer has a hard time), and explain why they put themselves (and their card) where they did on the continuum.
4. Give candy or some reward for being volunteers. Discuss further using the following talking points:
 - All of the examples are a form of sexual violence, from “cat-calls” to rape. 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 = violence.

- Many times when we talk about sexual violence we only think about the more extreme forms of violence like incest or rape. We need to acknowledge those forms of violence, but we also need to discuss behaviors that seem “normal” because we see them so much (ie. cat-calls, harassment, some forms of fondling, etc.).
- While cat-calls and harassment do not directly cause rape or other violence on the “Most Harmful” end of the spectrum, they do support the same way of thinking. For example, if I'm in a group of guys that make cat-calls or degrading sexual comments toward a girl everyday, (e.g., saying how I'm going to have sex with her or talking about her as an “object” - something sexual to consume not a person to relate to) doesn't this send the message that it's not that big a deal if I just reach out and grab her in a sexual way? Now I'm guilty of fondling. And how long does it take with that line of thinking before I say to my group of friends, “Hey, I found out where that girl from school lives. What if we went out and tried to get a look at her from her window and maybe took some pictures, you know?” So, now I'm a voyeur, a stalker. Some of the behaviors on the least harmful side set the stage for the most harmful side.
- Different people will attribute a different level of harm to the examples. This is because we all have different reactions to these behaviors. Although we may all agree that, in general, rape is more harmful than cat calls, it is NOT black and white as to how someone will experience any of these things. Most of us will have someone close to us in our lives experience these harmful behaviors / violence, and to be a supportive friend we should understand that some people might be deeply affected by (for instance) voyeurism and need a lot of support. Other people may be extremely resilient and bounce back from an incident quickly. The important thing as a supportive friend is that we let them decide how their healing is going, not to pressure or scold them when they haven't “gotten over it” or “moved on” like we think they should.



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”**

Words to Describe Sex

Facilitator's Notes

Age: High School

Level: Intermediate

Objectives:

To illustrate the connections between some men's everyday language and men's violence against women (particularly rape and sexual assault). To illustrate how men objectify women by using sexist language.

Time: 15 minutes

Materials:

Chalkboard/chalk

Instructions:

1. Introduce the exercise with a brief discussion on the power of language guided by the following questions:

- How do people communicate? (List responses on the board: Body language, talking/language, writing, touching, etc.)
- What is the most obvious form of communication? (Circle the response: Talking/language)

Make the point that this is an exercise to illustrate how language both shapes and reflects our attitudes and behaviors.

2. Write "SEX" at the top of an empty board. Ask participants:

- What words do men use to describe sex?
Responses will include such phrases as "hit it, flip it, split it, kill it, bang it," etc. Write all responses on the board.
- Then ask the participants, "What are some common themes among these phrases?"

3.a. If participants respond that they all include the word "it," discuss the sexual objectification of women guided by asking the following questions:

- What does "it" refer to? (just one part of a woman, dehumanizing her and reducing her to only her genitalia)
- How do you treat people differently than you treat objects? (don't consider their thoughts, feelings, ideas, needs, etc.)
- How would you like another man to reduce a woman you love to a body part? (Point out that by objectifying one woman you give other men permission to objectify a woman you care about such as your sister, mother, daughter, etc.)



3.b. If participants respond that all of the action verbs are violent, ask the following questions:

- What are these violent verbs referring to? (they refer to sex, the most intimate and loving act between two people)
- Do you think these violent terms reflect the reality of how some men treat women in our society?
- Where do we learn to talk like this? (older men, peers)
- Why do we talk like this? (to impress our peers, it is how we were taught)

4. Conclusion - Referring back to the introductory discussion about the power of language, ask participants and discuss the questions:

- Do you think that language is a powerful tool in shaping our everyday attitudes and behaviors? - How does violent language that sexually objectifies women contribute to men's violence against women?

Used with permission from Mentors in Violence Prevention, Long Beach, CA. <http://www.sportinsociety.org/vpd/mvp.php> OR <http://www.jacksonkatz.com/mvp.html>



Range of “Acceptable” Behavior

Facilitator’s Notes

Age: High School

Level: Advanced

Objective:

To illustrate how unhealthy, disrespectful, or even violent sexual behaviors are normalized, and how that normalization leads to a society that tolerates or even supports sexual violence.

Time: 35-45 minutes

Materials:

Behavior Cards

Tape

Chalkboard / chalk

Instructions:

1. On the longest chalk board in the room, write the word “Harmless” on the far left, “Disrespectful” in the center, and “Sexual Assault” on the far right. This will be the continuum for the activity.
2. Tell participants that you will be giving each of them a card with a specific behavior printed on it. Be sure to hand them the cards in a random order (they are listed below in what is typically considered “escalating” order). After you hand them the card, they should read it aloud, tape it on the continuum, and state in which of the three categories they think it belongs (e.g., “Harmless” or “Disrespectful” or “Sexual Assault”). They should be encouraged to ask for input from their fellow participants in the categorization of their card, but be sure to keep order so that everyone is heard while input is being gathered.
3. Once all of the cards have been placed, ask the class how some of the behaviors categorized as “Disrespectful” could set the stage for some of the behaviors categorized as “Sexual Assault”. [“Spiking a drink” is obvious. “Repeatedly touching without asking and despite discomfort” could be a sign that the person doing the touching does not care about the participation or feedback from the being touched. This could easily translate into a similar sentiment during a more overt sexual encounter.]
4. Ask for a handful of volunteers to re-group the behaviors into one of these two categories:
“This behavior is acceptable to most people – it’s just part of hooking up.” OR
“This behavior is not acceptable to most people – it is not an acceptable part of hooking up.”



Building Healthy Relationships Across Virginia: A Facilitator’s Guide to Teen Dating Violence Prevention
Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Action Alliance

www.vsdvalliance.org

6. Note which behaviors from the “Disrespectful” or “Sexual Assault” categories ended-up in the “Acceptable” group, and ask participants:

- What do these behaviors have in common with all of the behaviors in the “Sexual assault” category? (i.e., sexuality is seen as an objective and/or sexual interaction is seen as adversarial)
- What are some ways that we make disrespectful behaviors acceptable? If they need more explanation, then say, “We all just agreed that a bunch of behaviors we initially categorized as “disrespectful” (or even “sexual assault”) are accepted, so what are some things we all do everyday to make ourselves forget (or not care) that this stuff is disrespectful (or even sexual assault)?”
- How do you think normalizing/glorifying/ignoring disrespectful behavior helps perpetuate sexual assault? If they need more explanation, introduce the concept that disrespect can plant the seed for further action. In order to commit sexual assault/misconduct against someone, there first has to be some level of disregard for them as a person.

6. Emphasize that the particular categories into which these behaviors are placed in a given run of this exercise isn’t the point. Rather, the goal is for participants to recognize how we often accept and normalize behaviors that are the product of the same conditions that promote sexual assault/misconduct.

7. (Optional) Tie this activity into other activities addressing “active bystanders”. That is, knowing when to intervene at the “disrespectful” level will hopefully prevent the behavior from escalating, and will certainly help create an environment where respect is the norm.



**Flirting
with someone
you've just met.**

**Telling
an acquaintance,
“You look
hot tonight.”**

**Insisting that
an acquaintance
accept drinks
you're buying/
getting for them.**

**Commenting to
a friend (about an
acquaintance),
“She/he looks
hot. I’m gonna hit
that tonight.”**

**Telling an
acquaintance
a joke that puts
down overweight
people as
undeserving of
sex.**

**Telling an
acquaintance a
joke that puts
down gay/lesbian
people.**

**Intentionally
standing/sitting
very close to
an acquaintance
to test his/her
reaction.**

**Touching an
acquaintance
on the arm, leg,
or waist several
times to test his/
her reaction.**

**Spiking
the drink of
an acquaintance
with harder
alcohol.**

**Creating excuses
to get
an acquaintance
alone in a
private place.**

**Initiating
a kiss with
an acquaintance
to test his/her
reaction.**

**Touching an
acquaintance on the
arm, leg, or waist
despite obvious
discomfort on the part
of the person
being touched
(e.g., he/she pulls away,
tenses up, states
discomfort, etc.)**

**Continuing
to attempt to kiss
an acquaintance
despite a lack
of interest
from him/her
(e.g., he/she does not
kiss back, does not
lean in, etc.)**

**Continuing
to attempt to kiss
an acquaintance
even though
he/she resists
(e.g., says no, pulls
away, puts hands up,
turns head, etc.)**

**Removing
clothing from
an acquaintance
without first
asking.**

**Removing clothing
from an acquaintance
even though he/she
resists (e.g., says no,
pulls away,
puts hands up,
doesn't cooperate,
etc.)**

**Touching
an acquaintance's
genitalia without
first asking.**

**Touching
an acquaintance's
genitalia even though
he/she resists
(e.g., says no, blocks
hands, pushes, tries
to move away, etc.)**

**Forcing
an acquaintance
to touch your
genitalia.**

**Engaging in a
sexual act with
an acquaintance
without first asking,
and continuing unless
the acquaintance
verbally says, “stop.”**

**Engaging in a
sexual act
with an acquaintance
even though he/she
resists (e.g., says no,
pushes, puts hands
up, tries to move
away, etc.)**