THSCA

TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL COACHES ASSOCIATION & COACHES EDUCATION FOUNDATION

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EDUCATION FOUNDATION

STARTING THE CONVERSATION

Lesson 1:
Recognizing the Issue

"Starting the Conversation"
Lesson 1: Recognizing the Issue

Overview: Students examine the scope and impact of sexual bullying, harassment, and assault.

TEKS Standards and Student Expectations:

115.32 (B)(5)(C) discuss the legal implications regarding sexual activity as it relates to minor persons

115.32 (B)(8)(A) evaluate positive and negative effects of various relationships on physical and emotional health such as peers, family, and friends

115.32 (B)(14)(B) examine the legal and ethical ramifications of unacceptable behaviors such as harassment, acquaintance rape, and sexual abuse

115.33 (B)(13)(C) investigate and summarize current laws relating to unacceptable behaviors such as harassment, acquaintance and statutory rape, and sexual abuse

115.33 (B)(14)(C) explain the detrimental effects of inconsiderate and disrespectful behavior

Learning Objectives:
- Identify behaviors that constitute sexual bullying, sexual harassment, and sexual assault
- Distinguish between acceptable behaviors and unacceptable behaviors—ranging from sexual harassment, sexual bullying, name-calling, objectifying others, and using guilt, manipulation, pressure, or force of any kind
- Develop skills to discuss challenges related to relationship violence and sexual bullying

Essential Questions:
- What are sexual bullying, sexual harassment, and sexual assault? What makes them different from appropriate relationship behaviors?
- To what extent are sexual bullying, sexual harassment, and sexual assault problems at our school?

Key Vocabulary/Concepts:
- Sexual bullying
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual assault

ELICIT

"As a team, we will be participating in a conversation that is occurring among athletes throughout Texas. We're doing this because we want to be part of the solution in eliminating the relationship and sexual harassment, bullying, and assault that occurs in many schools and communities. Let's take a minute to brainstorm the different kinds of relationships we have in our daily lives."

Elicit students' responses and create a concept web.

Example:
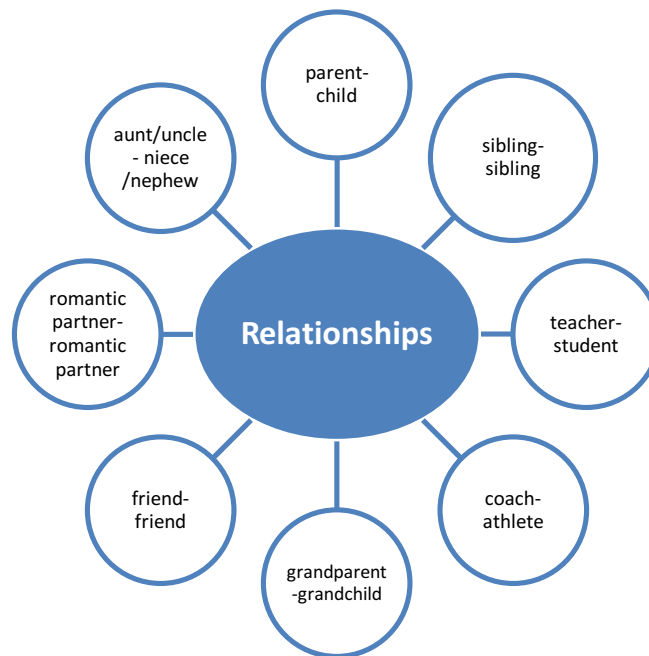
"Regardless of the type of relationship, there are behaviors that are acceptable and behaviors that are unacceptable. Today we are going to learn about appropriate and inappropriate dating relationship behaviors. Much of what we discuss today will relate to relationships between romantic partners, but you'll notice that there are some universal standards and expectations that apply to all relationships. Before we explore some very serious topics, I'd like to get a sense of how much you already know about relationship violence and dating behaviors."

Print, cut, and distribute an Anticipation Guide to each student.

"Read the Anticipation Guide statements and decide whether you agree or disagree. Respond in the 'PRE' column only. We are going to come back to this Anticipation Guide at the end of our lesson to see if your thinking has changed as a result of what you learn."

ENGAGE

"To engage in this conversation or series of conversations, we need to be open and honest with each other. In this first lesson, we will investigate the extent to which sexual bullying, harassment, and assault are problems in our school and society and examine how our own attitudes and behaviors can contribute to the problem or can contribute to the solutions. We will talk about the most extreme types of behavior—assault and abuse—as well as a range of behaviors that are harmful and can create problems in all schools. Some examples may include the following:
- *Ranking other students based on their appearance*

- *Treating someone like an object instead of a person*
- *Sharing private details or photos*
- *Making unwanted sexual comments or pressuring someone to do things they may be uncomfortable with—whether in person or online."*

"To be clear, this is not about blaming or pointing fingers at individuals or groups. It is about understanding the dynamics that lead to pressure and sexual bullying and providing a safe place to have a discussion and to make our school better."

"Let's take a few minutes to establish ground rules and norms for our discussion. How can we encourage open, honest, and respectful conversation? How can we ensure that no one is made fun of or criticized for what they might share? What are some rules or expectations that we can set to make sure each person feels safe, respected, and free to contribute?"

Elicit students' responses and, if possible, record students' suggestions on chart paper.

"*This is a conversation about how we treat each other; how we to talk about dating and intimacy; how we contribute to our fellow athletes' and classmates' sense of safety, security, and wellbeing; and how we view and treat members of the opposite gender and our own gender based on our perspectives and attitudes."*

ENGAGE

"*Let's take a few minutes to explore some terms and vocabulary that will help us have a better understanding as we have these important conversations. Turn to a partner and define the following terms:*
- *Sexual bullying*
- *Sexual harassment*
- *Sexual assault"*

Invite students to share their definitions.

Pass out Handout 1. (If copies are not available, this document can also be projected on the board.)

"With your partner, take a few minutes to review the definitions on this handout."

Allow a few minutes for students to review the definitions.

"How aligned were the definitions that you developed with the definitions provided on the handout? In what ways were your definitions similar? In what ways were your definitions different?"

Elicit students' responses and facilitate discussion.

"Now I am going to ask you four questions. You can respond to each question by indicating your agreement or disagreement with a thumbs up or thumbs down signal. Alternatively, you can respond to each question verbally:
- *Is sexual bullying and relationship violence a problem in Texas?*
- *Is sexual bullying and relationship violence a problem in our school?*
- *How many of you have witnessed sexual bullying or harassment in school this year?*
- *How many of you have seen sexual bullying or harassment in school or at a school activity in the past week?"*

Elicit students' responses and facilitate discussion.

"Let me show you why I think this conversation is so important."

Pass out Handout 2 to each student and read the statistics in the section titled "Understanding the Problem." (If copies are not available, this document can also be projected on the board.) Tell students that they will return to this document later in the lesson. At this point, they should only focus on the statistics.

"What are your reactions to these statistics?"

Elicit students' responses and facilitate discussion.

"What information surprised you the most?"

Elicit students' responses and facilitate discussion.

"How does this information affect your interest in having this conversation?

Elicit students' responses and facilitate discussion.

EXPLORE

"*We are going to view a short video. The video features four athletes who come together to engage in an open conversation about their experiences with relationships. As you view the video, pay attention to the characters' stories and their motivations."*

Play Video 1. Elicit students' initial responses to the video.

Ask students to reflect on the video with a partner. Write the following questions on the board:
- *Which character's story resonated the most with you?*
- *In what ways was this person's actions influenced by the desire to be kind and courageous? To what extent was he or she motivated by the desire for improved social status?*
- *What are some ways your actions or behaviors are influenced by your teammates, classmates, or friends?*
- *List different kinds of pressures that can influence our actions.*
- *List some kinds of actions that make us proud of who we are.*

After pairs have discussed the prompts and questions, invite the whole group to share key points from their discussions.

"Based on what you have discussed, what are some aspects of our school culture would you like to see changed and why?"

Elicit students' responses and facilitate discussion.

EXPLAIN

"*Think about a dating relationship. What might be the key differences between acceptable behaviors and unacceptable behaviors? Please turn to a partner and discuss."*

Elicit students' responses and facilitate discussion. Ensure that students understand key differences between acceptable behaviors (e.g., wanted romantic and sexual attention) and unacceptable behaviors (e.g., unwanted romantic and sexual attention, including sexual bullying, sexual assault, and sexual harassment).

Organize students into groups of 3–4 students and refer them to Handout 2: Step 1.

As described in the handout, ask each group to make a list of three acceptable and three unacceptable behaviors that might be demonstrated by two people who are dating or interested in each other.

Elicit students' responses and facilitate discussion.

"*In one instance, a behavior may be seen as a flirtation, but in another, it could be seen as bullying or harassment. What is the difference?*"

Elicit students' responses and facilitate discussion. The goal is to highlight the difference between acceptable behaviors and sexual bullying or harassment. The difference is based on whether the recipient of the behavior wants it or not (consent) and the motivation behind the behavior (e.g., to shame, put down, or intimidate the other person).

ELABORATE

In small groups, students discuss the questions on Handout 2: Step 2.

Elicit students' responses and facilitate discussion.

EVALUATE

"*Let's revisit our Anticipation Guide. Go back and review the statements. Based on the new information you have learned, indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statements in the 'POST' column. Consider how your new knowledge and perspective may have influenced a change in thinking.*"

Each student completes an exit ticket by writing one action or behavior that is an example of each the following:
- Sexual bullying
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual assault

EXTEND

Have students reflect on their new learning and respond to the following question:

"*What would be important information to share with other students to make our school safer and healthier?*"

ANTICIPATION GUIDE

Directions: Read the statements below and indicate whether you agree or disagree with them. Respond in the "**PRE**" column at the beginning of the lesson and respond in the "**POST**" column at the end of the lesson.

PRE		STATEMENTS	POST	
Agree	Disagree		Agree	Disagree
		1. Relationship violence and assault is not common among high school-aged students.		
		2. Asking a partner to send an inappropriate picture is unacceptable; however, it is not considered sexual harassment.		
		3. Ranking other students based on their appearance is considered an unhealthy behavior.		
		4. Relationship violence consists only of physical abuse.		
		5. Sexual bullying does not exist.		

Lesson 1: Recognizing the Issue
Handout 1

Definitions of Sexual Misconduct

Sexual bullying is "any bullying behavior, whether physical or non-physical, that is based on a person's sexuality or gender. It is when sexuality or gender is used as a weapon by boys or girls towards other boys or girls—although it is more commonly directed at girls. It can be carried out to a person's face, behind their back or through the use of technology." (Source: http://www.beyondbullying.com/sexual-bullying.html)

Sexual harassment involves sexual rumor spreading, comments, or groping. (Source: www.cdc.gov)

Examples:
- Writing online that a student is "gay" for not wanting to play football
- Spreading rumors that a student cheated on his girlfriend because she wouldn't sleep with him
- Sharing a nude photo with someone when it wasn't asked for
- Unwelcome touching of a sexual nature
- Distributing sexually explicit drawings, pictures, or notes
- Making sexual gestures
- Pressuring others for sexual favors
- Spreading rumors about or rating other students based on sexual activity or performance

Harassment is "threatening to cause harm or bodily injury to another student, engaging in sexually intimidating conduct, causing physical damage to the property of another student, subjecting another student to physical confinement or restraint, or maliciously taking any action that substantially harms another student's physical or emotional health or safety." (Source: http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.37.htm)

Sexual assault is "any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs without the explicit consent of the recipient. Falling under the definition of sexual assault are sexual activities such as forced sexual intercourse." (Source: https://www.justice.gov/ovw/sexual-assault)

Lesson 1: Recognizing the Issue
Handout 2

Understanding the problem:
- 12–19-year-olds experience the highest rates of rape and sexual assault. (1)
- Approximately 1 in 3 teenage girls in the U.S. is a victim of physical, emotional, or verbal abuse from a dating partner. (2)
- Nearly 1 in 10 high school students have been intentionally hit, slapped, or physically hurt by a boyfriend or girlfriend. (3)
- Among high school students nationwide, 11.8% of females and 4.5% of males have been forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to. (3)
- 1 in 4 teens in a relationship say they have been called names, harassed, or put down by their partner through cell phones and texting. (4)
- Nearly half of students in grades 7–12 reported experiencing sexual harassment in the previous year, and 87% of those students describe negative effects such as absenteeism and poor sleep. (5)

References:
1. *Truman, J. & Rand, M. (2010). Criminal Victimization, 2009. U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics.*
2. *Futures Without Violence. (2014). The Facts on Tweens and Teens and Dating Violence.*
3. *The National Council on Crime and Delinquency Focus. (2008). Interpersonal and Physical Dating Violence among Teens.*
4. *Liz Claiborne & TRU. (2007). Tech Abuse in Teen Relationships Study.*
5. *AAUW Educational Foundation. (2011). Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School.*

Small Group Discussion:

Step 1: List three **acceptable** and three **unacceptable behaviors** related to romance or male and female communication.

Acceptable Behaviors	Unacceptable Behaviors
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

Step 2: Discuss the following questions:
- What makes something an acceptable versus an unacceptable behavior?
- What is the school policy for consequences if someone commits unacceptable behaviors at school or at a school function?
- To what extent are sexual bullying and harassment a problem in our school?
- In what ways do we have different expectations for how females and males should act in romantic or intimate relationships?
- How do these expectations create problems at our school? Are these expectations fair?
- How can we, as a team, have an impact on how people at our school treat one another?