

Talking about Sexual Health

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PURPOSE

Many people—adults and teens alike—are uncomfortable talking about sexuality. Before embarking on the lessons in *Best Practices*, take the time to build a safe, trusting class environment so that students are open to learning. This includes: setting common expectations for individual and group behavior, having a common understanding of sexuality terms and introducing the *Best Practices* content in a fun, interactive way that also helps the facilitator assess their students' base knowledge.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

1. Understand their rights, responsibilities and expected behaviors in setting a safe and comfortable environment for learning about sexual health.
2. Identify key content areas addressed in *Best Practices*.
3. Identify the different aspects of sexuality and definitions of sex that will be used during the course of the curriculum.

LESSON SUMMARY

Activities	Minutes	Materials and Preparation Checklist
A Getting to Know You	8	<input type="checkbox"/> Select an Icebreaker activity from those suggested or use one of your own.
B Class Rights & Responsibilities	7	<input type="checkbox"/> Label a piece of easel paper Group Agreements . <input type="checkbox"/> Read through the Facilitator Key for setting and maintaining group agreements.
C Understanding Sexuality	15	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy the Sexuality Terms & Definitions on cardstock. <input type="checkbox"/> Cut the terms & definitions so each is on a separate card. Make copies of the full set for each small group. <input type="checkbox"/> If using, make one copy of the Assess Your Knowledge worksheet for each student to complete in class or as homework.
D Who Wants to be Sexually Healthy?	25	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy, cut out and divide into categories Who Wants to be Sexually Healthy? Sex Trivia Game Cards. <input type="checkbox"/> Create a scoreboard on easel paper or white board for recording team scores for the Sex Trivia game.
E Anonymous Question Box	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare a box and have notecards available for Anonymous Questions.

LESSON



INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Say,

Today we are starting a new unit called *Best Practices*. The lessons include information about how to access health services, prevent sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy and communicate effectively with partners. This information is important to know even if you are not sexually active now. Most people will need this information at some time in the future or to help friends or family, so please do your best to participate fully.



ACTIVITY 1A: GETTING TO KNOW YOU



CHOOSE AN ICEBREAKER

There are two suggested icebreakers. Choose the one that is most appropriate for your classroom setting and students. Select the icebreaker [or choose one of your favorites] that you think will help ease any tension around discussing sexual health in an interactive and non-threatening way. Make sure to leave time to debrief!

FACILITATOR NOTE

Even if your students are familiar with each other, taking the time to start your sexuality lessons with an icebreaker helps to lay the foundation for working together and building comfort. An icebreaker can help set the stage for talking about difficult topics. It also allows students to learn something about each other they may not already know, acknowledging that we shouldn't make assumptions about others.

DEBRIEF THE ACTIVITY

After the icebreaker, ask the following questions:

1. What was it like to move based on those statements?
2. Were some statements harder or more uncomfortable to respond to than others?
3. Did you find that most people had different or similar responses?
4. Was there anything that surprised you about where people ended up?

SUMMARIZE

In summarizing the activity, include these key points:

- This icebreaker gave everyone a chance to interact and move around. You'll be doing a lot more of this in the upcoming *Best Practices* lessons.
- In some cases the subject and activities may seem easy and comfortable; in other cases, they might be challenging or awkward.
- The goal is not to make people feel uncomfortable but to normalize a topic and give you a chance to share and learn information that can help you be healthy.

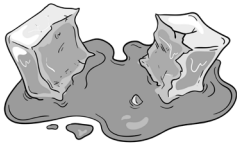


ICE BREAKER OPTION #1 -- Would you rather...?

- Find a way to divide the room into two sides (for example, put tape on the floor, move chairs around, assign different ends/sides of the room, etc.).
- Use the **Would you rather...** statements below or **create your own**.
- Read one statement from the list. Tell students to move to the side of the room you designate which corresponds to each answer. Tell your students not to overthink their decision, but to go with their gut response. There are no right or wrong answers!
- Continue by asking each question, having students move to one side or the other, based on their response. If time allows, you can ask for volunteers to share why they chose the answer they did. Or you may tell the students on each side to **briefly** discuss their responses with each other. Select as many questions as appropriate in the time allotted. When finished, ask students to return to their seats.
- Debrief (see Activity 1A)

Would you rather...

- ✓ ...get up really early or stay up really late?
- ✓ ...have 2 close friends or many acquaintances?
- ✓ ...play a hero or a villain in a movie?
- ✓ ...always be cold or always be hot?
- ✓ ...go without a computer or a cell phone for a week?
- ✓ ...play board games inside or lawn games outside?
- ✓ ...live on another planet or beneath the sea?
- ✓ ...be able to read people's minds or be able to see into the future?
- ✓ ...make headlines for saving someone's life or for scoring the winning goal?
- ✓ ...eliminate hunger and disease or be able to bring lasting world peace?
- ✓ ...travel 100 years into the future or 100 years into the past.



ICEBREAKER OPTION #2 -- Stand up if....

- This activity might be more effective for a group that has established trust and comfort with each other. It is also a helpful way for an educator/facilitator to gauge the range of awareness and experience of the group related to sexual health. For a more confidential process, use an online platform like polleverywhere.com.
- Clear an area large enough for everyone to stand in a circle facing one another with a few feet between each person. Read each statement and instruct the students to step into the circle if the statement is true for them.
- This icebreaker is designed to get students to think about some of their knowledge and experiences related to sex and relationships. This activity and debrief can help promote understanding that in any given class or group of people, there is a range of experiences related to sex education and different starting points for this curriculum.
- You may use all the statements on this list, or select a variety of statements to fit your group of students and time available.

Say, **Step forward into the circle if the statement is true for you...**

- If you have received some sex education previously.
- If you have someone you go to for trusted advice.
- If you know where to get information about sexual health.
- If you have ever talked to friends about a crush.
- If you have ever asked someone if you could hug them before hugging them.
- If you know someone who is gay, lesbian, trans, bisexual, asexual, or questioning.
- If you ever felt like you couldn't or shouldn't do something because of your gender.
- If you have done something you didn't want to do because your friends were doing it.
- If you ever tried to change your appearance or behavior to avoid being judged or teased.
- If you have ever posted a selfie online when you felt like you looked good.
- If you have ever told someone you thought they looked good.
- If you have goals and plans for your future education or career.
- If sexual health is a topic you are comfortable discussing.
- If you are excited about our sex education unit.



ACTIVITY 1B: CLASS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES



SET GROUP AGREEMENTS

Refer to the tips on Using Group Agreements Effectively, below.

Say:

In the lessons ahead, we'll be talking about sensitive topics we often don't talk about in public settings like school. Some people may have already experienced some of what we are going to be talking about, including pregnancy and parenting, STIs, sexual violence or dating abuse. There are many kinds of experiences that can affect someone's comfort level when discussing and engaging with these topics.

That's why it's important for us to take the time to create a safe learning environment. Throughout the curriculum, I will also offer resources for anyone who may need additional support and help. We'll start by setting some expectations for how we want our group to interact with each other during the *Best Practices* lessons. What agreements or ground rules do you think we need so everyone feels comfortable to talk and participate?

Students can offer their ideas for group agreements. The following is a recommended list of agreements you can use and adapt. The Facilitator Key on Setting and Maintaining Group Agreements provides a more detailed description of individual group agreements.

- ✓ Participate and share your ideas
- ✓ It's okay to feel embarrassed or uncomfortable
- ✓ It's okay to pass
- ✓ Listen to others
- ✓ Be respectful
- ✓ Notice your assumptions
- ✓ Use inclusive language
- ✓ Maintain privacy (don't share personal stories)

FACILITATOR NOTE

While setting group agreements, you may also want to discuss pronouns. Especially for trans and nonbinary youth, using their correct pronouns can be an important way to make them feel safe and respected. You can say, **pronouns are words we use in place of someone's name. Most boys/men use he/him pronouns, most girls/women use she/her, some people use they/them or other, less common pronouns.**

Scenarios in this curriculum will use different pronouns including they/them. Having a conversation with students about pronouns may help alleviate confusion in later activities. Some teachers have students introduce themselves with their name and pronouns at the beginning of the year or put their name and pronouns on a table tent or name-tag. Other teachers may have students fill out a "getting to know you" form that includes a space for the name they go by, their pronouns and an ice breaker question for the educator to get to know them better. For more support on discussing pronouns in the classroom reach out to education@mainefamilyplanning.org. A good resource on pronouns for use in your classroom can be found at: <http://www.transstudent.org/pronouns101>.

If someone tells you their pronoun, it is important to use it when referring to them. If you make a mistake, acknowledge it and let them know you are working at using the correct pronoun. If they feel comfortable, they can correct you.

Using Group Agreements Effectively:

- Once your list of group agreements is complete, ask students to show a "thumbs up" if they agree to the list. Discuss and clarify any changes.
- Post the group agreements in a location where everyone can see them clearly. If you are not always in the same space or classroom, make sure you bring the agreements with you for each lesson.
- Let students know you will call attention to any of the group agreements that are not being followed during the course of the lessons. Ask students to do the same to help ensure the class is working together in a respectful way.
- Refer to the group agreements at the beginning of each lesson and during the activities, as needed, to manage classroom behavior.
- Amend or add to the group agreements during the course of the unit as issues arise.

If you already have established group agreements or expectations for classroom behavior:

- Take time to revisit these with your students before beginning the *Best Practices* lessons.
- Review or redefine them as they relate to discussing sexual health.
- Add new ones you think will be important, as needed throughout the lessons.

Whether you call them agreements, rules or norms, it is important to set the foundation for how the *Best Practices* lessons will be conducted and expectations for classroom behavior. This list of agreements will help you facilitate activities, avoid heated or off-track discussions and deter students from sharing or asking personal information. As a facilitator, group agreements are an important tool for you to manage the discussion and keep the lessons and activities moving along.

Recommended Group Agreements

These recommended group agreements can help ensure that you and your students get the most out of *Best Practices*. Add to or reword the following group agreements as appropriate for your classroom.

- **Participate and share your ideas**

Remind students that sexuality varies by individual. The more voices we hear, the better understanding everyone will have of this wide-ranging subject. Sometimes, in group settings, one or a few people dominate the discussion or volunteer for tasks. This can cause quieter students to check out or disengage from the information presented. Point out this agreement throughout the lessons and change up your activities so that quieter students participate in ways that are comfortable for them. If needed, talk to stronger-voiced students individually and ask them to take a step back sometimes and help engage others. In small group activities, you can ask students to rotate the role of reporter so that more students have this role, rather than the same few.

- **It's okay to feel embarrassed or uncomfortable**

Because many people don't talk openly about these topics, especially in a classroom, it's normal to feel embarrassed or uncomfortable. In fact, there will be times when even you, as a facilitator, may feel embarrassed or unprepared to answer a question or discuss a topic. Be a good role model when this happens. Let students know being embarrassed is common, but doesn't mean we should stop talking altogether. It's okay to take some time before jumping in with a response when you're feeling uncomfortable. Laughing can help ease tension as well, as long as it's not at the expense of others.

- **It's okay to pass**

Remember that everyone has their own perspective and comfort level when it comes to sexual health. Students may have past experiences that make them sensitive, defensive or even triggered by certain topics. Tell students if they are uncomfortable with an activity or discussion, they can pass or sit that one out. If a student is always passing and not participating, check in with that student privately to see how they are doing. A student may need additional encouragement or support from a nurse or school counselor. As a facilitator, you can also pass when there's a question you don't know the answer to; but be sure to come back to it when you get more information. Tell students that you also get to pass when someone asks you a personal question.

- **Listen to others**

Practicing good listening skills is a great trait to have in all aspects of one's life. There will be a wide range of opinions and experiences in the room. Tell students that this is a good opportunity for them to learn from others. Let students know that when they feel the urge to interrupt or share their own perspective, they can jot down their idea until the person talking is finished. Let students know when big feelings come up for them, it can be a helpful practice to pause and write down what they are feeling, rather than jumping in right away. You want to hear all voices.

- **Be respectful**

Students may hear perspectives that they don't agree with and that's okay. Remind them that everyone has their own experiences, values and opinions. While it's okay to offer a counter-perspective or ask someone to share their rationale, it's not okay to call people names, tell them their ideas are stupid or disregard their feelings or perspective. This is not a space to debate or argue over different values. We want to respond to different views and experiences with empathy and curiosity. Give students the words and skills to treat others with respect when situations arise.

- **Notice your assumptions**

Most people make assumptions, which we then believe are facts. It is important to help students recognize how their assumptions can affect others. For example, it is common to make assumptions about someone's gender, sexual orientation, religion or cultural beliefs without actually knowing how that person feels or identifies. We might also make assumptions about someone's behaviors and attitudes, based on comments they make. That is why it's important to ask someone to clarify what they mean, or share more about their perspectives or beliefs. While we can't stop students from making assumptions, we can ask them to notice the assumptions they might be making, and teach them to ask questions in a respectful way to help them understand the facts and learn from other's experiences and perspectives.

- **Use inclusive language**

When it comes to sexual behaviors, we also don't want to assume everyone is having, or is interested in having, sex. We should be inclusive of a wide range of diversity among people, and not assume that someone is attracted to certain people or genders, or that they engage in certain types of behaviors based on their identity or sexual orientation. Inclusivity also respects differences in how people think and behave based on their religious beliefs or cultural backgrounds. We can model using inclusive language with each other, so that no one feels left out or labeled. We can start by avoiding stereotypes and not using terms like *all, always or never* to describe the actions or beliefs of individuals or a group of people.

- **Maintain privacy—no personal questions or stories**

Let students know that while it is important to think about their own values, beliefs, goals and experiences related to sexual health, we are not sharing specific personal experiences with the class. Confidentiality is very important, for your students and yourself. Students should also not share other peoples' information in your discussions. If they have a personal story to share, ask them to frame it as: "I've heard that..." or "I know a person who..." Also, remind students that you will not be sharing your personal information and beliefs about sex and sexuality. You won't ask them to share their own sexual decisions and behaviors and you'd appreciate it if they didn't ask you those personal questions as well.

While we'd like to believe that "what is shared in the room, stays in the room," that rarely happens, so students shouldn't share personal information they don't want the rest of their peers to know since it can easily turn into gossip and misinformation!

It is also important for students to know that you are bound by law to report any disclosures of harm to oneself or others. So while you want students to be open and participate freely, it's also your job to make sure they are safe. Sometimes that means getting others involved when a serious situation is presented that involves safety, the law or child welfare.



ACTIVITY 1C: UNDERSTANDING SEXUALITY



Say,

In this activity we will define some common sexuality terms that you may, or may not, know. We want to be sure that we have a common understanding of these terms before we continue with our sexual health unit. We don't want to assume that everyone has the same definitions or understanding of terms like affirmative consent, or the terms related to gender identity and sexual orientation. The list of sexuality terms and definitions keeps evolving. What we will go over now is just an introduction.

In this curriculum we will use the acronym LGBTQ to represent the diversity of people who are gender and sexual minorities. Some people use variations of this acronym to represent people who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and the many more identities not listed such as Asexual, Intersex, Genderqueer, Two-Spirit, etc.

FACILITATOR NOTE

The terms and definitions in this activity include those related to sexual orientation and gender identity. Including these terms is important since they are relevant to what young people are using and experiencing. Language can be very personal and can be different across cultures and generations. It is important to not assume someone's identity and to use terms that they are comfortable with. People's gender and sexual orientation may change over time. Some people are sure of their identities and other people may feel confused or question their gender or sexual orientation. It is always important to respect people by using language that feels right for them in the moment.

Check out the following web resources that include: more terms and definitions, lesson plans and background information around making sexual health education more inclusive of gender identity and sexual orientation.

- Graphics made by Trans Student Educational Resources can help explain some of the terms related to gender identity and sexual orientation. <http://www.transstudent.org/>
- Gender Spectrum: <https://www.genderspectrum.org/resources/education-2/>
- Healthy Teen Network Tip Sheet: Gender, Sexuality, and Inclusive Sex Education <https://www.healthyteennetwork.org/resources/tip-sheet-gender-sexuality-inclusive-sex-education/>

Sexuality Terms & Definitions Matching Game

After cutting up the term cards and definition cards, choose one of the two options.

Option 1

- Divide students into small groups of 3-4. Give each small group a set of terms and definitions (or divide and pass out a subset of 4-5 matching term/definition cards among the small groups). Ask them to match the terms with their respective definitions.
- You can also divide the cards among individual students and ask them to move around the room, sharing their cards with others, until they find the person with the term card that matches the correct definition card.

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- Give each group (or individuals) time to match each term with what they think is the best definition.
 - When completed, have each small group take turns sharing their matched term and definition cards aloud to the class.
 - Continue with each small group sharing, until all of the term and definition cards are read aloud. Use the **Facilitator Key** to confirm responses, facilitating discussion and making corrections if needed.
 - If you would like students to have a copy of the terms and definitions for future reference, provide each student with a copy of the Sexuality Terms & Definitions handout.

Option 2

- Post all of the term cards on the wall or white board.
- Pass out the definition cards to either individual or pairs of students.
- Ask students to match their definition to the terms posted on the wall/board.
- Encourage students to work together if they are unsure of which definition goes with which term.
- When all terms and definitions are posted, read each matching pair, or ask individual students to read them. Make corrections as needed, asking all students for their input.

Assess Your Knowledge -- Sexuality Terms & Definitions



For more in-depth review of the terms and definitions, pass out the *Assess Your Knowledge: Sexuality Terms & Definitions* to each student. Either in class or as homework, ask students to complete the questions on the worksheet. Take time to review the responses together to ensure that your students have common understanding of the terms and respond to questions.

DEBRIEF THE ACTIVITY

Ask students:

1. **Were most of these terms familiar?**
2. **Which terms were new to you, or you still have questions about?**
3. **Would you define any of these terms differently?**
4. **Are there any additional terms you think are important for the group to know and understand?**

SUMMARIZE

In summarizing the activity, include these key points:

- **Sexuality includes physical and emotional health, intimacy, sexual behaviors, relationships, gender identity and sexual orientation.**
- **People have many different identities and experiences. Whether someone is similar or different from you, it is always important to be respectful.**
- **A positive view of sexuality, including the importance of affirmative consent, can lead to healthy choices to prevent teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and sexual coercion and harassment.**



HANDOUT

SEXUALITY TERMS & DEFINITIONS

Terms	Definitions
Abstinence	Choosing to not have sex. For some, this means not having vaginal, oral or anal sex. For others it may mean not engaging in any kind of sexual activity.
Affirmative Consent	When people fully agree to engage in sexual activity without feeling pressured, manipulated, threatened or coerced. This includes being able to make a choice without being drunk or high.
Romantic Attraction	A feeling or desire to be emotionally intimate with another person, not necessarily including physical intimacy.
Sex	Specific sexual activities, including oral, anal and vaginal sex.
Sex Assigned at Birth	The label of male or female most babies are given when they are born. People may or may not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth.
Sexual Attraction	Physical feelings a person may have for someone else, that may not necessarily involve wanting to be emotionally close.
Sexual Behavior	Actions that allow someone to express their sexual desires in a physical way. Examples include kissing, touching, oral, anal and vaginal sex.
Sexual Health	Taking care of one's body, physically and emotionally. Usually involves preventing sexually transmitted infections, HIV and unintended pregnancy, practicing affirmative consent, and making informed decisions around sexual activity.
Safer Sex	Sexual behaviors that may reduce the risk for pregnancy, STIs and HIV, for example, using condoms or not exchanging semen, vaginal fluids or blood.
Sexuality	A natural, lifelong part of who you are as a sexual being. How you think about yourself, how you express yourself and how you interact with others in the sexual aspects of your life.
Sexual Orientation	A person's sexual identity referring to who they may be emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to. Examples include bisexual, gay, lesbian, straight, pansexual or asexual.
Straight	Individuals who are primarily attracted emotionally, physically and/or sexually to members of the opposite sex. Also known as heterosexual.



HANDOUT

SEXUALITY TERMS & DEFINITIONS

Terms	Definitions
Gay/Lesbian	Individuals who are primarily attracted emotionally, physically and/or sexually to members of the same sex and/or gender. Gay often refers to male-identified folks attracted to other men, and lesbian referring to women attracted to women. Both are also known as homosexual.
Bisexual	A person who is attracted emotionally, physically and/or sexually to both men and women.
Queer	This is a word some people use who do not identify as straight or cisgender. Some people use this word because they may not feel like the other labels fit. Historically this word has been used as a slur against LGBT people and should only be used respectfully when someone self-identifies with it.
Pansexual	A person who is attracted emotionally, sexually and/or physically to members of all gender identities/expressions.
Asexual	A person who feels little or no sexual attraction to others and/or a lack of interest in sexual relations, but can still feel romantic/emotional attraction.
Coming Out	The process of a person confirming their gender identity, sexual orientation, or any part of their personal identity to those around them. Coming out to the different people in someone's life can be stressful, and is their personal choice alone.
Cisgender	This term describes someone who identifies with their sex assigned at birth. Example: A person who identifies as a man and was assigned male at birth.
Transgender	This term describes someone who does not identify with their sex assigned at birth. Example: A person who identifies as a man and was assigned female at birth.
Genderfluid	A term to describe someone experiencing their gender as something dynamic and changing, rather than something that stays the same.
Nonbinary	A person who identifies with or expresses a gender identity that is outside of the gender binary of male or female.
Gender Expression	The way a person outwardly or publicly expresses their gender to the world. This could be the clothing they wear, their haircut, how someone talks, etc.



HANDOUT

SEXUALITY TERMS & DEFINITIONS

Terms	Definitions
Gender Role	How society expects a person to behave and look, and the types of interests or jobs they are expected to have, based on their assigned sex as a male or female.
Gender Identity	This is someone's internal sense of if they are a boy/man, girl/woman or something outside of the gender binary.
Gender Binary	This is a system of understanding that there are two distinct and opposite genders, and includes societal expectations and norms for how each gender should look, act and relate in the world.
Intersex	Individuals whose sex characteristics such as genitals, reproductive organs, chromosomes, hormones, or secondary sex characteristics don't fit in the male/female gender binary.
Two-spirit	This is an umbrella term used by some indigenous people in North America to describe another gender in their culture that combines a masculine and feminine spirit. Many indigenous nations have their own, specific terms for this concept.



Abstinence

Choosing to not have sex. For some, this means not having vaginal, oral or anal sex. For others it may mean not engaging in any kind of sexual activity.

Affirmative Consent

When people fully agree to engage in sexual activity without feeling pressured, manipulated, threatened or coerced. This includes being able to make a choice without being drunk or high.

Romantic Attraction

A feeling or desire to be emotionally intimate with another person, not necessarily including physical intimacy.



Sex

Specific sexual activities, including oral, anal and vaginal sex.

Sex Assigned at Birth

The label of *male* or *female* most babies are given when they are born. People may or may not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Sexual Attraction

Physical feelings a person may have for someone else, that may not necessarily involve wanting to be emotionally close.



Sexual Behavior

Actions that allow someone to express their sexual desires in a physical way. Examples include kissing, touching, oral, anal and vaginal sex.

Sexual Health

Taking care of one's body, physically and emotionally. Usually involves preventing sexually transmitted infections, HIV and unintended pregnancy, practicing affirmative consent, and making informed decisions around sexual activity.

Safer Sex

Sexual behaviors that may reduce the risk for pregnancy, STIs and HIV, for example, using condoms or not exchanging semen, vaginal fluids or blood.



Sexuality

A natural, lifelong part of who you are as a sexual being. How you think about yourself, how you express yourself and how you interact with others in the sexual aspects of your life.

Sexual Orientation

A person's sexual identity referring to who they may be emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to. Examples include bisexual, gay, lesbian, straight, pansexual or asexual.

Straight

Individuals who are primarily attracted emotionally, physically and/or sexually to members of the opposite sex. Also known as heterosexual.



Gay/Lesbian

Individuals who are primarily attracted emotionally, physically and/or sexually to members of the same sex and/or gender. Gay often refers to male-identified folks attracted to other men, and lesbian referring to women attracted to women. Both are also known as homosexual.

Bisexual

A person who is attracted emotionally, physically and/or sexually to both men and women.

Queer

This is a word some people use who do not identify as straight or cisgender. Some people use this word because they may not feel like the other labels fit. Historically this word has been used as a slur against LGBT people and should only be used respectfully when someone self-identifies with it.



Pansexual

A person who is attracted emotionally, sexually and/or physically to members of all gender identities/expressions.

Asexual

A person who feels little or no sexual attraction to others and/or a lack of interest in sexual relations, but can still feel romantic/emotional attraction.

Coming Out

The process of a person confirming their gender identity, sexual orientation, or any part of their personal identity to those around them. Coming out to the different people in someone's life can be stressful, and is their personal choice alone.



Cisgender

This term describes someone who identifies with their sex assigned at birth. Example: A person who identifies as a man and was assigned male at birth.

Transgender

This term describes someone who does not identify with their sex assigned at birth. Example: A person who identifies as a man and was assigned female at birth.

Genderfluid

A term to describe someone experiencing their gender as something dynamic and changing, rather than something that stays the same.



Nonbinary

A person who identifies with or expresses a gender identity that is outside of the gender binary of male or female.

Gender Expression

The way a person outwardly or publicly expresses their gender to the world. This could be the clothing they wear, their haircut, how someone talks, etc.

Gender Role

How society expects a person to behave and look, and the types of interests or jobs they are expected to have, based on their assigned sex as a male or female.



Gender Identity

This is someone's internal sense of if they are a boy/man, girl/woman or something outside of the gender binary.

Gender Binary

This is a system of understanding that there are two distinct and opposite genders, and includes societal expectations and norms for how each gender should look, act and relate in the world.

Intersex

Individuals whose sex characteristics such as genitals, reproductive organs, chromosomes, hormones, or secondary sex characteristics don't fit in the male/female gender binary.



Two-spirit

This is an umbrella term used by some indigenous people in North America to describe another gender in their culture that combines a masculine and feminine spirit. Many indigenous nations have their own, specific terms for this concept.



ASSESS YOUR KNOWLEDGE

As a result of learning a variety of sexuality terms and definitions, answer the following questions.



1 Why is it important to understand the different terms related to sexual health?

2 Name at least two characteristics of affirmative consent.

3 Why is it important that people take care of their sexual health?


4 What are some examples of practicing safer sex?


5 What might happen if people in a relationship have different definitions of abstinence or sex?

6 What is one term you learned in this activity that you didn't already know?
Are there any terms you would add?

7 What is the difference between a person's sexual orientation and gender identity?

8 Define:

 gender identity _____

 sex assigned at birth _____

 gender expression _____

9 List and define four different gender identities.

10 List and define four different ways that people might identify their sexual orientation.

As a result of learning a variety of sexuality terms and definitions, answer the following questions.



1 Why is it important to understand the different terms related to sexual health?

Possible answers: Understanding vocabulary better prepares you to communicate and engage with the topics; without a common language it is hard to discuss the topics; understanding the different aspects of sexual health can help someone make healthy decisions.

2 Name at least two characteristics of affirmative consent.

Possible answers: Freely given, reversible, informed, enthusiastic, and specific.

3 Why is it important that people take care of their sexual health?

Possible answers: to prevent sexually transmitted infections, to prevent unintended pregnancies, to achieve their goals, to feel good in their body, to have healthy relationships.

4 What are some examples of practicing safer sex?

Possible answers: using barrier methods every time you have vaginal, anal or oral sex; using hormonal birth control to prevent unintended pregnancies; understanding risk and engaging in less risky sexual behaviors; using assertive communication to express your wants and boundaries and respect the other person; practicing affirmative consent.

5 What might happen if people in a relationship have different definitions of abstinence or sex?

Possible answers: One person might think having sex means something different than the other person, which would make it difficult to get/give consent if you ask “do you want to have sex?”; if people have different definitions of abstinence it may be challenging to make decisions around how to express intimacy in a way that respects both people’s boundaries.

6 What is one term you learned in this activity that you didn’t already know? Are there any terms you would add?

Answers may vary

7 What is the difference between a person's sexual orientation and gender identity?

Possible answers: gender identity is how you identify while sexual orientation is about who you are attracted to; gender identity is who you go to bed as, while sexual orientation is who you go to bed with.

8 Define:



Gender Identity – someone's internal sense of whether they are a boy/man, girl/woman or something outside of the gender binary.



Sex Assigned at Birth – the label of male or female most babies are given when they are born.

Gender Expression – the way a person outwardly expresses their gender to the world, which can include clothing, hair etc.

9 List and define four different gender identities.

Possible answers:

Cisgender (man or woman) – someone who identifies with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Transgender (man, woman, or a nonbinary identity) – someone who does not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Genderfluid – someone who experiences their gender as something dynamic and changing, rather than something that stays the same.

Nonbinary – someone who identifies with or expresses a gender identity that is outside of the gender binary of male or female.

Two-spirit – someone from an indigenous community who has both a masculine and feminine spirit and serves a specific role in their culture.

Students may know additional gender identity terms not included in this lesson.



10 List and define four different ways that people might identify their sexual orientation.

Possible answers:

Straight – someone who is primarily attracted to people of the "opposite" gender.

Gay/lesbian – someone who is primary attracted to people of their same gender.

Bisexual – someone who is attracted to both men and women.

Queer – someone who does not identify as straight.

Pansexual – someone who is attracted to all gender identities/expressions.

Asexual – someone who feels little or no sexual attraction to others.

Students may know additional sexual orientation terms not included in this lesson.



ACTIVITY 1D: WHO WANTS TO BE SEXUALLY HEALTHY?



INTRODUCE THE ACTIVITY

Say,

In addition to defining sexuality terms, we're going to take a sneak peek at some of the topics related to sexual health by playing a sexual health trivia game. It's okay if you don't know all the answers—it's just a way for us to get familiar with what we'll be covering in the next lessons.

Online and Powerpoint versions of this game are available at mainefamilyplanning.org/for-educators

PLAY *WHO WANTS TO BE SEXUALLY HEALTHY?* SEX TRIVIA GAME

- In advance, divide up the questions and arrange them by category and point value. There are a total of five questions with increasing difficulty and point value in each category. There is also a bonus question included—which you can use to break a tie or for extra points if you have time. You can add the bonus questions in any way you see fit, or use them in place of other questions, if desired. The categories are:
 1. COVER IT UP: Barrier Methods
 2. SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS
 3. BIRTH CONTROL
 4. WHERE YA GONNA GO? Access to information and services
 5. FACTS & FIGURES
- List the categories on the board along with a scoreboard to record points for each team.
- Select a student or ask for a volunteer ahead of time to keep score and manage the order in which teams select and answer questions. Even though this student is not on a team, they will be participating and learning from the questions and answers.
- Divide students into 3 or 4 teams with 3-5 students on each team, depending on your class size. The teams should sit in a group facing each other so they can work together to discuss the best answer to each question.
- Give each group a team number and list the team numbers on the scoreboard (see the example below, but use any system that works best for you). Randomly select the team that will begin the game (think of a number from 1-10, ask teams to guess the number and whoever is closest goes first, or have the teams draw straws, etc.).
- In succession, each team will select a category and the point value of their choosing. You can decide whether teams must select questions in order of point value starting with 100 or if they are allowed to select any question available on the board—it's up to you.
- Read the question the team has selected. They have 15 seconds to come up with an answer.

If they answer correctly: the team wins the corresponding points for that question. Have the student volunteer record the points on the scoreboard.

If they do not answer correctly: the next highest numbered team gets a chance to answer. (You only want to do this for the multiple choice questions, not for the T/F questions). They have 15 seconds (or whatever time limit you choose) to come up with an answer.

If correct, that team gets the points.

If incorrect, no team will get the points.

In each case, read aloud *all* possible responses listed so everyone hears the correct answer(s).

- The next team now gets to select a question. Go in numerical order to the next team, even if they were awarded points from a question missed by the previous team. Have the student volunteer help keep track of the order.
- Continue in this manner, making sure to keep track of the order in which teams select a question to answer and awarding points to the appropriate team on the scoreboard. This is a fast-paced game so limit discussion to stay on time.
- Continue until all the questions have been selected (or you run out of time). The team with the highest score is the winner. Hand out prizes, if available.

Example scoreboard

Team	Score	Cover It Up	STIs	Birth Control	Where Ya Gonna Go?	Facts & Figures
# 1		100	100	100	100	100
# 2		200	200	200	200	200
# 3		300	300	300	300	300
# 4		400	400	400	400	400
		500	500	500	500	500

Tips for the student running the scoreboard:

1. Cross off/erase the point values for questions each time they are chosen so other teams know which questions are remaining.
2. Keep a running tally of the points earned by each team.

DEBRIEF THE ACTIVITY

After the game is finished, debrief by asking the following questions:

1. In general, were the questions easy or difficult to answer?
2. Did anything surprise you during the game? If so, what?



COVER IT UP**100 Points**

Question: **Name 2 places where someone can get barrier methods, such as condoms.**

- Possible answers:*
- Drug store (Walmart, Walgreens, Target)
 - Grocery or convenience store
 - Family Planning Clinic
 - Purchasing them Online
 - Doctor's office

COVER IT UP**200 Points**

Question: **In addition to condoms, name one other barrier method used to protect someone from sexually transmitted infections.**

- Possible answers:*
- Oral dam (might also be referred to as a dental dam).
 - Plastic food wrap (such as Cling Wrap or Saran Wrap)
 - Latex/non-latex glove.

COVER IT UP**300 Points**

Question: **How old does someone need to be to buy condoms or oral dams?**

Answer: There is no age requirement for buying condoms or oral dams. Maine law also gives minors' (people under the age of 18) the right to access all sexual health services without permission from a parent or guardian.

**COVER IT UP****400 Points**

Question: **What type of lubrication should be used with a condom or oral dam -- water-based or oil-based, and why?**

Answer: Only water-base (or silicone-based) lube. Why? Petroleum or oil-based products (i.e. Vaseline, cooking oil, or lotion) can break down the material that condoms and oral dams are made of and may cause them to rip or tear.

COVER IT UP**500 Points**

Question: **Name 3 reasons for using lube with a condom or oral dam.**

- Possible Answers:*
- *Reduces friction*
 - *Prevents rips or tears*
 - *Feels better on the skin*
 - *Enhances pleasure*

COVER IT UP**BONUS**

Question: **Name 3 reasons why condoms and oral dams are used as a method of protection?**

- Possible Answers:*
- *Easy to get/no prescription is needed*
 - *Affordable (especially at family planning where they are free)*
 - *Few side effects (Some people may have allergies to latex, scents, or flavors)*
 - *Effective at preventing both STIs and pregnancy*
 - *May help intercourse last longer*
 - *Can be used for oral, anal, and vaginal sex to prevent STIs*

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIs) SEX TRIVIA GAME CARDS



SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIs)

100 Points

Question: TRUE or FALSE: You can tell someone has an STI by the way they look.

Answer: FALSE

While some STIs have rashes or other external/visible symptoms, most do not. In fact, many people have no symptoms at all, so they may not even know if they are infected.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIs)

200 Points

Question: What age group is most likely to get an STI?

- a. 12-15 year olds
- b. 15-24 year olds
- c. 25-30 year olds
- d. people over 30

Answer: b. 15-24 year olds.

In fact, 1 in 4 people in this age group will get an STI every year. This is why it is important for sexually active teens and young adults to use condoms every time they have sex and get tested regularly!

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIs)

300 Points

Question: Name 2 possible ways to avoid getting an STI.

Possible answers:

- *Abstinence (not having oral, anal or vaginal sex)*
- *Using a condom or other barrier method every time someone has oral, anal or vaginal sex*
- *Not sharing needles*
- *Getting vaccinated (from some types of HPV and Hepatitis B)*

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIs) SEX TRIVIA GAME CARDS



SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIs)

400 Points

Question: **How are people tested for STIs? Name two possible methods.**

Possible answers:

- *Urine testing (peeing in a cup)*
- *Taking a blood test*
- *Taking a swab (from vagina, mouth or throat, anus or a visible sore)*

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIs)

500 Points

Question: **Name 3 ways STIs can be transmitted.**

Possible answers:

- *By having unprotected sex (oral, anal or vaginal)*
- *Sharing needles (for Hepatitis, HIV)*
- *Skin-to-skin contact (for HPV/genital warts)*
- *HIV can also be transmitted to a baby during childbirth or through breast milk.*

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIs)

BONUS

Question: **TRUE or FALSE: HIV can be transmitted by mosquitoes.**

Answer: FALSE

Research shows that HIV cannot be transmitted by mosquitoes because they do not inject blood from the last person they bite into the next person. HIV is also unable to replicate in insects, as it does in humans.



BIRTH CONTROL**100 Points**

Question: **Name 2 birth control methods that use hormones to prevent pregnancy.**

Possible answers: Introduce students to the correct terms if they provide different names for the methods.

- *The pill (oral contraceptive pill)*
- *The shot (Depo-provera)*
- *The patch (Xulane)*
- *The ring (Nuva Ring)*
- *Some IUDs (Mirena, Skyla, Liletta, Kyleena)*
- *The implant (Nexplanon)*

BIRTH CONTROL**200 Points**

Question: **Why don't hormonal birth control methods protect against STIs?**

Answer: They do not create a physical barrier to prevent bodily fluids containing STI viruses and bacteria from being shared or transmitted from one person to another.

This is why it is important for people using hormonal birth control to also use a barrier method when having oral, anal or vaginal sex.

BIRTH CONTROL**300 Points**

Question: **List the following methods of birth control in order of effectiveness for preventing pregnancy: birth control pills, condoms, abstinence.**

Remind students that effectiveness depends on perfect use vs. typical use.

Answer: If used perfectly every time:

1. Abstinence (100%)
2. The pill
3. Condoms

Dual use of the pill and condoms is great protection from both pregnancy and STIs!



BIRTH CONTROL**400 Points**

Question: **Name two reasons withdrawal (pulling out) is less reliable for preventing pregnancy and STIs.**

Possible answers:

- *It takes self-control to stop in the heat of the moment*
- *Sperm can be present in pre-ejaculate*
- *Does not provide a barrier to protect from STIs*

BIRTH CONTROL**500 Points**

Question: **What are 2 things that can help someone decide which method of protection they should use?**

Possible answers:

- *Effectiveness at pregnancy or STI prevention*
- *Cost (insurances now cover most methods)*
- *Confidentiality (some methods are less noticeable)*
- *Religious or personal beliefs*
- *A person's health history, reaction to possible side effects, etc.*

BIRTH CONTROL**BONUS**

Question: **In the U.S., a person with a uterus is fertile for approximately how many years during a typical life span?**

- a. 25 years b. 35 years c. 50 years

Answer: b. 35 years

The average age of menarche (when the period starts) is between 12-13 years old and the average age of menopause (when periods stop) is around 50 years old. That is a long period of time in a person's life when they might use birth control.

WHERE YA GONNA GO?
Access to information and services

SEX TRIVIA GAME CARDS



WHERE YA GONNA GO?

100 Points

Question: Name 2 places where a teen could get answers to questions about sexual health.

Possible answers:

- Ask a family member
- School nurse or guidance counselor
- Visit a reliable Internet site
- Ask a doctor or other medical provider
- Ask a reliable friend

WHERE YA GONNA GO?

200 Points

Question: TRUE or FALSE. In order to get a hormonal birth control method a teen must first have a physical examination.

Answer: FALSE. In most cases teens can get on a birth control method without having an exam or undressing. Though they do need to see a health care provider and fill out medical forms about their health and their birth family's health history.

WHERE YA GONNA GO?

300 Points

Question: TRUE or FALSE. In Maine someone under 18 can get birth control or STI testing without parental/guardian permission.

Answer: TRUE. Maine teens can get confidential sexual health information and services without parent/guardian permission. Healthcare providers may encourage teens to talk to their parent/guardian about important decisions, but not all teens feel comfortable with this.

WHERE YA GONNA GO?
Access to information and services

SEX TRIVIA GAME CARDS



WHERE YA GONNA GO?

400 Points

Question: **Where are 2 places someone can get Emergency Contraception?**

Possible answers:

- *At family planning or a doctor's office*
- *At the pharmacy*

EC is available without a prescription but with no insurance it can be expensive at the pharmacy. Family planning makes EC available at much lower cost. Most insurance plans cover EC.

WHERE YA GONNA GO?

500 Points

Question: **Name 2 reasons why teens don't get sexual health information and services.**

Possible answers:

- *Aren't in a relationship or having sex yet*
- *Don't want their parents/guardians to know*
- *Live too far away/don't have a way to get to a clinic*
- *Think it may be too expensive*
- *Think their partner should be the one responsible*
- *Don't know where to go or afraid to call/make an appointment*

WHERE YA GONNA GO?

BONUS

Question: **Where is the closest clinic/health care provider where you or your peers can receive sexual health services?**

The answer will depend on your location. Educators should be aware of local services available to youth.

**FACTS & FIGURES****200 Points**

Question: A person with a uterus who has intercourse without using contraception has what % chance of becoming pregnant in a year?

- a. 55%
- b. 85%
- c. 100%
- d. 70%

Answer: b. 85%

FACTS & FIGURES**100 Points**

Question: TRUE OR FALSE: More than half of Maine high school teens report they have ever had sexual intercourse.

Answer: FALSE 38% of Maine teens report having ever had sexual intercourse. This means that most high school teens are choosing abstinence. The percentage of students who report that they have ever had sexual intercourse is much lower in 9th grade (19%) than in 12th grade (58%). Source: 2019 MIYHS Survey.

FACTS & FIGURES**300 Points**

Question: TRUE or FALSE: Emergency Contraception (EC or Plan B) only works to prevent pregnancy if used up to 24 hours (one day) after unprotected sex.

Answer: FALSE

While EC is most effective when taken as soon as possible after unprotected sex, it can prevent a pregnancy up to 5 days.

**FACTS & FIGURES****400 Points**

Question: **What percent of sexually active Maine teens reported using a condom the last time they had sex?**

- a. 20%
- b. 60%
- c. 75%
- d. 95%

Answer: b. 60%. On the 2019 Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey, 60% of sexually active high school teens report they used a condom the last time they had sex. This is good news, but still leaves many sexually active teens at risk for STIs.

FACTS & FIGURES**500 Points**

Question: **What percent of Maine high school teens identify as LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender).**

- a. 7%
- b. 14%
- c. 20%

Answer: b. 14% Although many young people choose not to identify in these categories, on the 2019 MIYHS Survey, 2.8% reported they identified as gay or lesbian; 9.6% identified as bisexual; and 1.6% identified as transgender.

FACTS & FIGURES**BONUS**

Question: **How long after someone is exposed to HIV can it take before an HIV test reads positive?**

- a. 2 weeks
- b. 3 months
- c. 9 months
- d. 5 years

Answer: b. 3 months While it depends on the person and method of testing, most bodies can detect HIV virus 13-42 days after infection.



ACTIVITY 1E: ANONYMOUS QUESTION BOX



Say,

In the upcoming lessons, you may have questions that we don't cover. We will use an anonymous question box to make sure your questions are answered. If I don't know the answer to a question, we'll find it! You can also go to the following resources iwannaknow.org, sexetc.org or teenshealth.org to look up answers to questions others have asked or submit a question of your own.

Hand out notecards at the beginning of each class for students to write down questions about any of the topics covered that day or about sexual health in general. Make sure they don't put names on their cards—remind them, they're anonymous.

OPTIONAL WAYS TO USE YOUR ANONYMOUS QUESTION BOX:

- **Option 1:** Invite students to put a question in the box whenever they have one. Make time throughout the curriculum to go through the questions and answer them during class. We recommend reviewing the questions ahead of time in case you need to search for the answer or come up with the most appropriate response.
- **Option 2:** You can have all students put a question in the box at set times during the curriculum. Even if students don't have a specific question, ask them to write down their answer to a question prompt, such as "What's your favorite movie?" "What did you have for breakfast/lunch?" or "What's one thing you learned today?" Having everyone hand in a notecard will ensure that those students who do have a question will remain anonymous.

SUMMARIZE

In summarizing, include these key points:

- **Now you've been introduced to some of the material we will cover in the upcoming lessons. Some of this information may be familiar, some may be new.**
- **Whether or not this is relevant to your life now or in the future, it's important that you have the facts to make decisions that can keep you sexually healthy.**

CLOSURE

Tell students: **Today we will end the class by trying out the anonymous question box. Write on a notecard your responses to the following questions. Don't include your names and drop the cards in the box as you leave class.** If helpful, write the three questions on the board.

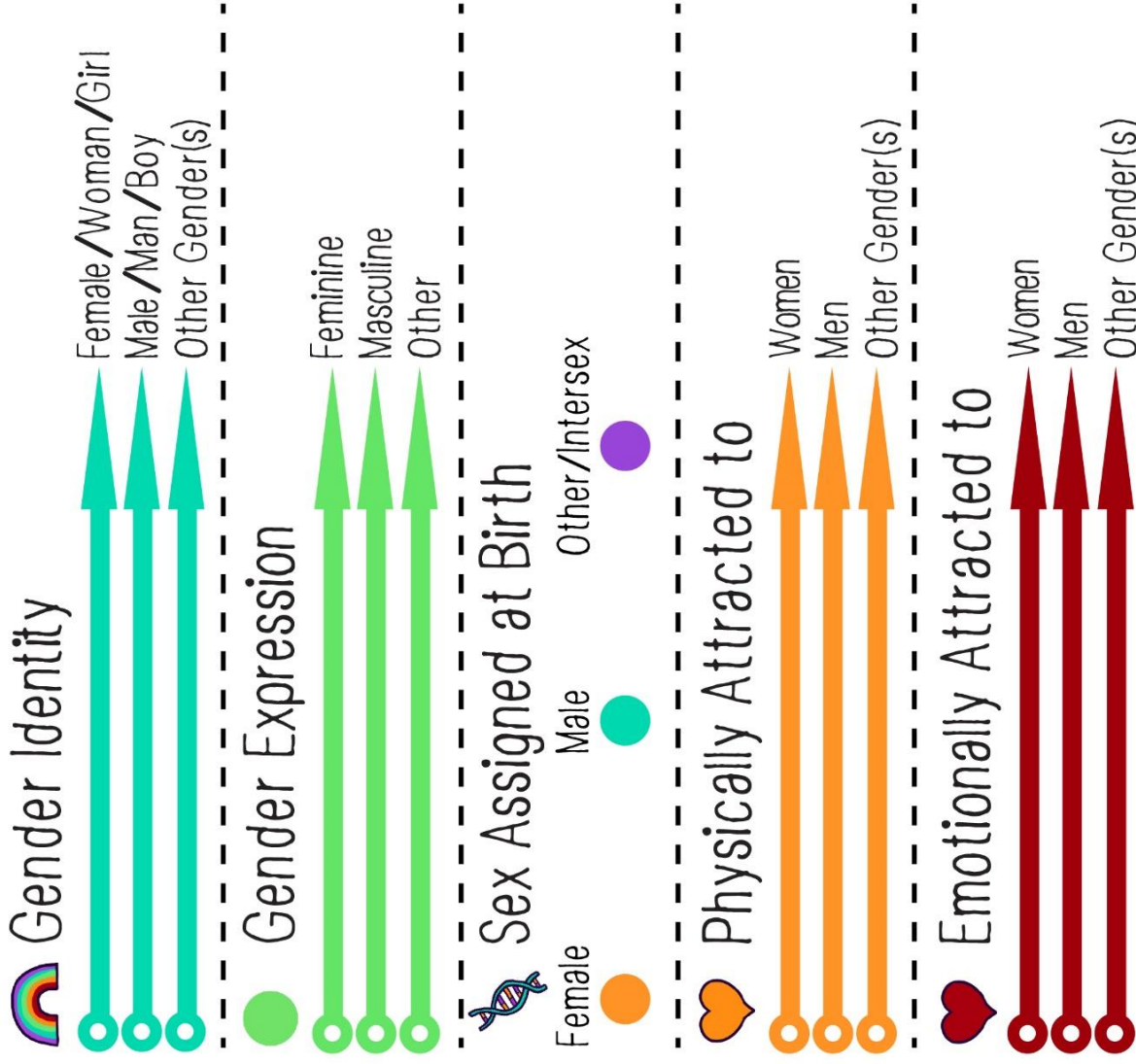
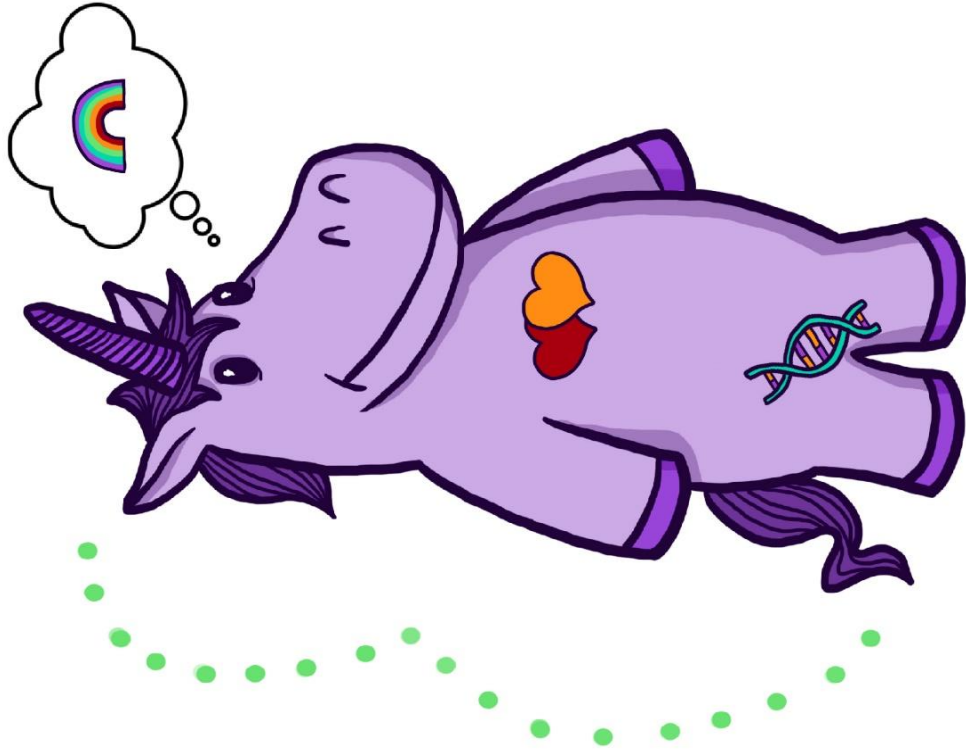
Based on today's lesson/class:

1. What is one thing you already **KNOW** about **sexual health**?
2. What is one thing you **WANT** to know or learn more about?
3. What is one thing you **LEARNED** today?

The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:

TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources






To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore

Gender Pronouns

Please note that these are not the only pronouns. There are an infinite number of pronouns as new ones emerge in our language. Always ask someone for their pronouns.

Subjective	Objective	Possessive	Reflexive	Example
She	Her	Hers	Herself	She is speaking. I listened to her. The backpack is hers.
He	Him	His	Himself	He is speaking. I listened to him. The backpack is his.
They	Them	Theirs	Themselves	They are speaking. I listened to them. The backpack is theirs.
Ze	Hir/Zir	Hirs/Zirs	Hirself/ Zirself	Ze is speaking. I listened to hir. The backpack is zirs.

 transstudent.tumblr.com
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For more information,
go to transstudent.org/graphics

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