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Appropriate for Children Ages 9 to 12 Years Old

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Activity 2.1 Anatomy, Sex and AIDS

Materials: Flip chart, magic markers, large sheets of white paper, tape

Note: This activity may be too sophisticated for some groups of 9-12 year olds. Modify the activity to make it relevant and appropriate.

1. Have the children sit in a circle on the floor or in chairs.
2. Mention that today's discussion on nurturing self will focus on our bodies, sex and AIDS. Mention that when it comes to talking about our bodies, people have a lot of anxiety.
3. Write the words **PENIS, VAGINA, INTERCOURSE, BREASTS, BUTTOCKS**, and, **MASTURBATION** on large sheets of paper and tape them to the wall. Ask the group to brainstorm all the various "slang" names used to refer to these terms. Write the words on the paper and leave them hanging on the wall.
4. Process the activity with the following questions:
 - a. Why are slang words used to describe sexual functions and reproductive anatomy?
 - b. Why are we anxious when we try to discuss sex?
 - c. What does it mean to talk about body parts and about people in this way?
5. Discuss the differences between **LOVE** and **SEX**. Process the discussion by encouraging the group to respond to the following:

The difference between love and sex is _____ .
6. Inform the group that you will read a series of value statements. They are to indicate how they feel about each statement by 1) thumbs up (agree); 2) thumbs down (disagree); 3) shake flat hand back and forth (don't know); or 4) arms folded (no comment). After each statement, give individuals an opportunity to defend their position. Make sure that a variety of values are represented.
 - a. Birth control should be the girl's responsibility.
 - b. Children should be able to get birth control without notifying their parents.
 - c. Our government should pay for birth control methods for everyone who wants them.
 - d. Parents should be the only ones allowed to give sex information to their children.
 - e. Birth control information should be available to all high school students.
 - f. Men and women should share household duties.
 - g. Women should stay at home to raise their children.
 - h. Girls should not ask boys on dates.

This activity is continued on the following page ...

7. After the group has discussed the above value statements, divide one side of the group as representing the opinion “strongly agree” and the other as “strongly disagree.” Present the following position and ask the “strongly agree” side to defend the statements; the “strongly disagree” side to challenge the statement: “Children with AIDS should be kept out of school.”
8. Next, reverse sides. The “strongly agree” side becomes the “strongly disagree” side. Once again, have both sides of the room argue the following statement: “Because of AIDS, sex should be reserved for marriage only.”

FACTS ABOUT AIDS

AIDS can be transmitted by:

- Sharing needles (for drugs or tattoos) with someone who has AIDS.
- Having sex with someone who has the AIDS virus. (Some people have the virus without the symptoms).
- Nursing from a mother who has the AIDS virus.
- Being born to a mother who has the AIDS virus. (About 15-45% of those babies will have AIDS) Taking medication for HIV/AIDS almost eliminates this risk).
- Through artificial insemination from a donor with the AIDS virus.

Unless blood is exchanged, AIDS cannot be transmitted by:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| • Sharing food | • Doorknobs or banisters | • Insect bites |
| • Sharing earphones | • Jacuzzis, saunas,
swimming pools | • Toilet seats |
| • Sharing deodorant | • Getting your hair done | • Sweat |
| • Sharing cosmetics | • Sneezing or coughing | • Sharing towels |
| • Sharing drinking
glasses | • Holding hands | • Exchanging money |
| • Sharing hair brushes | • Getting a manicure | • Kissing |
| • Sharing soap | • Contact sports | • Telephones |

How can people avoid getting AIDS?

- When having sex, follow “safer sex” guidelines:
 - Know the partner’s health status and whether or not they’ve had other sex partners.
 - Do not exchange certain bodily fluids (blood and semen).
 - Limit the number of sex partners (preferably to one person who has done the same).
 - Use condoms.
- Never share needles to inject drugs. (Boiling does not guarantee sterility).
- Do not share toothbrushes, razors, or other personal items that could be contaminated with blood.

To help stay healthy, maintain a strong immune system by:

- Eat well.
- Get enough rest and exercise.
- Avoid recreational illicit drugs.
- Avoid use of alcohol and tobacco.
- Have regular medical checkups.

Activity 2.2 Building My Self-Concept and Self-Esteem

Materials: Flip chart, magic markers, crayons, paper

1. Have the children sit in a circle on the floor or in chairs.
2. Write the words **SELF-CONCEPT** and **SELF-ESTEEM** on the flip chart.
3. Brainstorm with the group the meanings of both terms:

SELF-CONCEPT **The image or thoughts we have about our self.**

SELF-ESTEEM **The feelings we have about our self.**

4. Mention that the thoughts and feelings we have about our self form our overall self-image. Get examples from the group of how a person can think good thoughts but feel lousy about themselves.
5. Inside each person are four personality traits that determine how we treat ourselves and others.

The Victim: The person inside us who has been purposefully hurt by another person. The Victim attempts to justify the hurt they received often by stating that they “deserve it.”

The Perpetrator: The person inside us who purposefully wants to hurt others. The Perpetrator often hurts others and justifies it by saying the hurt is “for their own good.”

The Nurtured: The person inside us who is cared for and treated with respect. The Nurtured part of our personality seeks comfort, love, and trust.

The Nurturer: The person inside us who treats others with respect, cares for the needs of others, and views violence as unnecessary and destructive.

6. Ask each child to draw on paper a picture of the Victim, Perpetrator, Nurtured, and Nurturer traits of their personality. Let the drawing represent the feelings inside when the trait is present. Hand out four sheets of paper to each child, one for each trait.
7. When completed, ask each child to hold up their traits and describe how they feel.
8. Relate all four traits to a positive and negative self-worth.

Activity 2.3 Choices and Consequences

Materials: Flip chart, magic markers, crayons, paper

1. Have the children sit in a circle on the floor or in chairs.
2. Explain that **CHOICES** are decisions we make to do something or not to do something. **CONSEQUENCES** are things that happen to us after we have made a choice. There are two kinds of consequences: Good ones and bad ones. Have the children give examples of a choice and of a consequence.
3. The following examples are provided to help illustrate the concept. You may choose to have the children role play the choices and consequences. Ask the children to brainstorm what could happen if they choose to perform one behavior or the other.
 - a. To shoplift an item or to pay for an item.
 - b. To drink alcohol as a child or as an adult.
 - c. To hit or not to hit someone when you are angry.
 - d. To smoke cigarettes or not.
 - e. To disobey mom/dad or to obey them.
 - f. To be in a car with a drunk driver or find another way home.
 - g. To practice “safer” sex or to be reckless.
4. To illustrate the concept of choices and consequences, try role playing the following situations. In some situations, you may want to try having the child become the “parent” and the facilitator becomes the “child.” Use pretend play to create situations. Stress to the children that they are to role play two responses to each situation: acceptable and unacceptable. Have each child share what they think the consequences should be to both situations. Check the consequences for appropriateness.

Reinforce the concept of using personal power in a positive or negative way.

- a. Child chooses to break curfew.
 - b. One child wants another to take drugs.
 - c. An older child wants a smaller child to steal something from a store.
5. After each situation, ask the children how the person used their personal power in a positive or negative way. Also highlight the concept of choices and consequences.
 - a. What choices did _____ have?
 - b. What happened when they did _____ and _____?

Activity 2.4 Discipline and Personal Power

Materials: Flip chart, magic markers, towels

1. Have the children sit in a circle on the floor or in chairs.
2. Explain that the discussion will focus on two concepts: **DISCIPLINE** and **PERSONAL POWER**.
3. Begin by writing the word **DISCIPLINE** on the flip chart. Ask the children to brainstorm what the word discipline means. Write the responses on the flip chart.

The word “discipline means to guide; to lead; to set boundaries; to teach right from wrong.

4. Explain that families who get along with each other have fun and cooperate in maintaining specific standards are families with discipline. Discipline strategies encourage positive behaviors.
5. Mention that one way to encourage appropriate behavior is by encouraging children as well as adults to use their Personal Power in positive ways.
6. Write the following statements on the flip chart and ask each child to respond to the following questions:

Within my family, one area that I use my Personal Power in a positive way is _____ .

Within my family, one area that I use my Personal Power in a negative way is _____ .

7. Ask children to sit together in pairs. Provide each pair with a towel. Mention that they are going to role play being a mom and dad. Have each pair decide who is the “child” and who is the “parent.”
8. Have every “child” sit across from a “parent.” Each parent and child will get a chance to participate in the activity.
9. Ask the child and the “parent” to sit across from each other and hold opposite ends of the towel. Have them sit on the floor with their legs outstretched, the soles of their shoes butted up against each other.
10. Give the instructions:

Parents, this is your towel. You own this towel. Your child wants to take it away from you, but you own it. When your child tries to pull the towel away from you, you hang onto the towel, don’t let go. You own it. It’s yours. You tell your child, “You can’t have it. The towel is mine” and pull the towel toward you. Child, don’t let go. Don’t give in and don’t give up. You tell your parent, “You can’t have it. I want it. Give it to me” and pull the towel back toward you.

11. Tell the group that the towel is only symbolic of an issue over which the child and parents are in conflict.

Example: The child wants to stay out later than curfew. The parent says, “no.” The towel represents the issue. Have each pair identify the issue they have a power struggle over.

This activity is continued on the following page ...

Child: I want to stay out later. (Pull towel).

Parent: No, you can't stay out later because I said so! (Pull towel).

Child: I want to stay out later. Give it to me now! (Pull towel).

Parent: No, you can't have it. (Pull towel). I said no!

You may want to demonstrate the exercise with another facilitator.

12. On the count of three, let them begin. Keep it going for about 30 seconds.

13. Now, reverse roles. The child owns something that the parent wants. The issue is control. The parent wants control; the child tries to hold onto it. Example:

Parent: I want control. (Pull).

Child: You can't have it. I own it. (Pull).

Parent: Give me control, it's mine. Give it to me! (Pull).

Child: You can't have it. I own it. Give it to me! (Pull).

14. Process the experience in the group with the following:

- a. Were you stronger when you "owned" it or when you "wanted" it?
- b. Would you feel any differently doing the activity with one parent or the other?
- c. Did you give in and give the towel up?

15. Mention that the goal of power struggles is for both parties to have power and to negotiate and problem solve. Encourage the group to use their personal power to cooperate with their parents as they try their new skills.