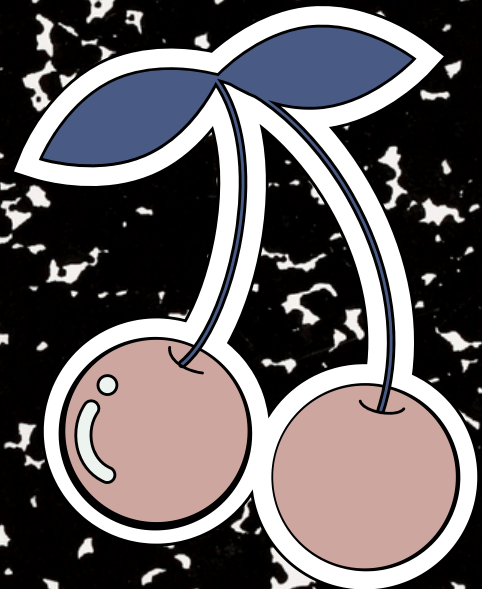


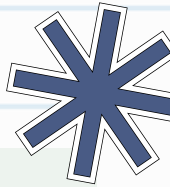
MANY WAYS OF BEING

Facilitator & Youth Support Sheet

Session 2: Gender & Identity



WHAT THIS SESSION IS ABOUT



In this session, we explore who we are and how society shapes the way we think about gender and identity. We start by looking at the “boxes” that people get placed in – like what’s expected of boys, girls, or people who don’t fit either category. You’ll get to talk about your own identity and hear from others, too. We also break down important ideas like sex assigned at birth, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation – and what all of these mean for your life and your choices.

This isn’t about memorizing definitions. It’s about understanding how gender shows up in your life, in your relationships, and in the way you’re treated – and how you want to show up for yourself and others.

WHY THIS SESSION IS DIFFERENT

from other sex ed !

Most sex ed programs stick to “just the facts” about bodies, risks, and reproduction. But they often leave out identity – especially for anyone who’s not straight or cisgender. MWB does the opposite. It centers youth of *all* genders and orientations, including queer, trans, and questioning young people. It also recognizes how culture, race, and community shape your experiences.

You won’t just learn *about* gender – you’ll get to reflect on how expectations and stereotypes affect your real life. You’ll get to name the pressures, question them, and imagine freer, healthier ways of being.

WHAT YOU SHOULD WALK AWAY KNOWING



Here are some of the most important things to keep with you:

- Sex, gender, and sexual orientation are different things. Knowing the difference helps you talk about yourself and respect others.
- Gender is not binary. It’s a spectrum, and people experience and express it in many ways. There’s no “normal” or “wrong” way to be.
- Society puts pressure on us based on gender – but we don’t have to follow all those rules.
- You are allowed to define yourself. And your identity might grow or change over time – and that’s okay.
- Everyone deserves to be treated with respect – no matter their gender identity or expression.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS YOU MIGHT HEAR

(or believe)

"You can tell someone's gender or sexuality just by how they look or dress."

Not true. Gender expression isn't the same as gender identity, and assumptions can be harmful or just plain wrong.

"People choose to be gay or trans."

Being LGBTQ+ isn't a choice – it's about who you are. What *is* a choice is whether people respect you, and whether you treat others with respect.

"You're either a boy or a girl - there's no in-between."

That's a binary idea that leaves out lots of people. Many people are nonbinary or genderfluid, and that's valid, too.

"This conversation is only for queer or trans people."

Everyone is affected by gender norms – no matter your identity. These conversations are for everyone.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE - AND REAL ANSWERS

Q: What's the difference between sex, gender, and gender identity?

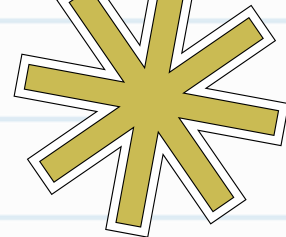
A:

- **Sex assigned at birth** is about the label (like male or female) a doctor gives based on your body.
- **Gender identity** is how you feel inside – man, woman, nonbinary, or something else.
- **Gender expression** is how you show that to the world – like through clothes, hair, or behavior.
 - These can all match, or they might not – and all of that is okay.

Q: Can your gender identity change over time?

A: Yes. Some people know their gender from a young age. Others explore, question, and figure it out as they grow. All of that is normal.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE - AND REAL ANSWERS (continued)



What if I don't want to label my identity?

A: That's totally fine. Labels can help some people feel seen, but they're not required. You get to define yourself in the way that feels best to you – or not define yourself at all.

Q: What should I do if people don't respect my identity?

A: First, know that you deserve respect – always. If you're in a space that feels unsafe, talk to someone you trust (like a facilitator, counselor, or friend). You also have the right to correct people, set boundaries, or choose not to share parts of your identity. You don't have to do this alone.

Q: I'm still figuring myself out. Is that okay?

A: 100%. Everyone is on their own journey. You don't need to have everything figured out. MWB is a space where it's okay to question, explore, and change.



HELPFUL RESOURCES

*if you want
to learn more
or get
support*

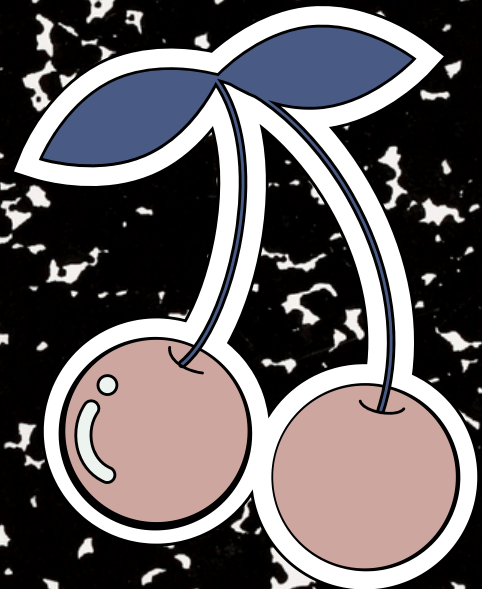
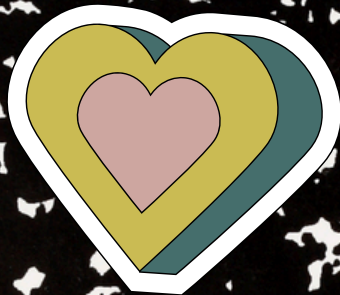


- [Gender Spectrum](#) – Helps you understand gender and offers tools for youth and families.
- [The Trevor Project](#) – Crisis support, community, and resources for LGBTQ+ youth.
- [Scarleteen](#) – Inclusive, real-talk sex ed that includes tons of articles on gender, identity, and relationships.
- [It Gets Better Project](#) – Uplifting stories and community for LGBTQ+ youth.
- [Your local LGBTQ+ youth center](#) or school counselor – Sometimes support is closer than you think.

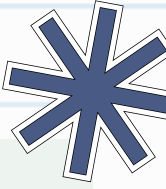
MANY WAYS OF BEING

Facilitator & Youth Support Sheet

Session 3: Understanding & Expressing My Emotions



WHAT THIS SESSION IS ABOUT



This session is all about feelings – how we experience them, express them, and deal with the tough ones. We talk about what makes it easier or harder to show emotions and how gender norms often tell us to hide or “mask” them. We also look at what happens when emotions get bottled up – and how to find healthier ways to cope.

In the second half, we build tools for communicating in conflict: how to speak up for ourselves, listen to others, and deal with tension in respectful, caring ways. Whether you talk about feelings all the time or rarely share them at all, this session builds confidence and emotional skills that matter in every part of life.

WHY THIS SESSION IS DIFFERENT

from other sex ed!

Most sex ed programs focus only on physical stuff – like bodies and birth control – but skip over the emotional side. MWB includes emotions because healthy relationships, decision-making, and self-care *depend* on how we deal with feelings.

And unlike other programs, MWB looks at how **gender norms** affect how we’re “allowed” to show feelings. For example, boys might be told to “man up” and not cry. Girls might be called “too emotional.” MWB says: Everyone has emotions, and expressing them is a strength, not a weakness.

This session helps break down harmful messages about feelings and shows you that it’s okay – and powerful – to feel.

WHAT YOU SHOULD WALK AWAY KNOWING



Here are some of the most important things to keep with you:

- Everyone feels emotions – even the ones we’re told we “shouldn’t.”
- Expressing emotions isn’t weak – it’s a powerful way to care for yourself and connect with others.
- Gender expectations often tell us to hide or hold in feelings – but that can lead to stress, confusion, or even harm.
- There are healthy ways to handle emotions like anger, sadness, and anxiety – and it’s okay to ask for help when you need it.
- You have the right to set emotional boundaries, and you can learn to handle conflict in ways that are respectful and real.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS YOU MIGHT HEAR

(or believe)

"Real men don't cry."

- Actually, real humans cry.
- Everyone has emotions, and crying is a natural way to release them.

"Anger is bad."

- Anger isn't bad – it's information. It can tell you something isn't right. It's what you do with anger that matters.

"Being emotional means you're out of control."

- Emotions are normal! What matters is how you express them and take care of yourself.

"There's only one right way to express emotions."

- Everyone processes feelings differently. There are lots of healthy ways to express yourself.

"If I show I'm hurt or sad, people will think I'm weak."

- Vulnerability is a strength. It takes more courage to show how you feel than to pretend you're fine.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE - AND REAL ANSWERS

Q: Why do I sometimes feel like I have to hide how I feel?

A: It could be because of what you've been taught. Messages like "boys shouldn't cry" or "girls shouldn't be angry" are all around us. But those messages aren't facts – they're social expectations. You get to decide what's right for *you*.

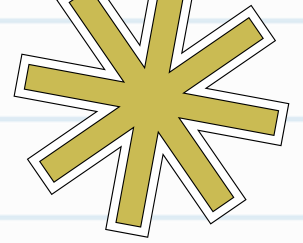
Q: What's a healthy way to deal with anger?

A: Some options are: taking deep breaths, going for a walk, journaling, talking to someone you trust, or putting your energy into movement or music. What's not healthy: hurting yourself or others, holding it in until it explodes, or using substances to avoid the feeling.

Q: How do I talk to someone when I'm upset without starting a fight?

A: Try using "I" statements, like: "I feel hurt when..." instead of blaming. Stay calm, listen as much as you talk, and take a break if it's getting too heated. This session gives you practice with those tools.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE - AND REAL ANSWERS (continued)



Q: What if I shut down when I'm feeling overwhelmed?

A: That's a normal response, too. Some people freeze or go quiet when emotions get big. It helps to learn grounding techniques, like breathing deeply, naming five things you can see, or holding something cold or textured. And if you're not ready to talk yet, it's okay to say that.

Q: How can I support a friend who's struggling with their emotions?

A: You don't have to "fix" them. Just *listen* without judgment, ask what they need, and remind them they're not alone. Sometimes, just being there is the most powerful thing you can do.



HELPFUL RESOURCES

if you want
to learn more
or get
support

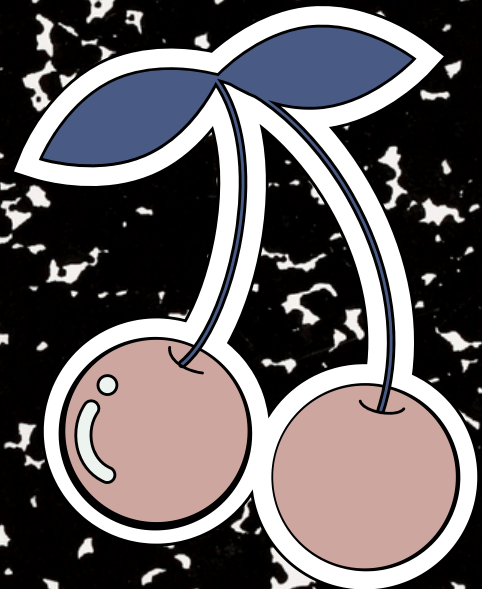
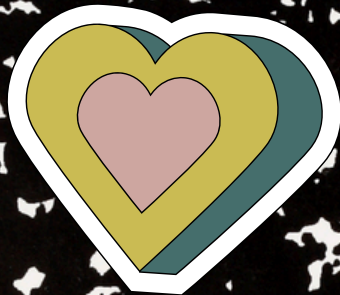


- [Mental Health Literacy Toolbox](#) - Tools to understand and manage emotions, anxiety, and depression.
- [The Jed Foundation](#) - Support for emotional health and preventing self-harm.
- [Love is Respect](#) - Info on communicating in relationships, handling conflict, and recognizing emotional abuse.
- [Mindfulness for Teens](#) - Guided meditations and videos for stress, sadness, and focus.
- [YouTube Channel: Therapy in a Nutshell](#) - Short, helpful videos on managing tough emotions in real life.

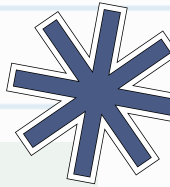
MANY WAYS OF BEING

Facilitator & Youth Support Sheet

Session 4: Exploring Power & Relationships



WHAT THIS SESSION IS ABOUT



This session focuses on what makes relationships healthy or unhealthy – and how power shows up in those relationships. We talk about different types of relationships, including friendships, romantic and sexual relationships, and family connections.

You'll learn how to recognize warning signs of harmful dynamics (like controlling behavior or manipulation) and how to name and set boundaries that keep you safe and respected. You'll also look at how society's messages about gender can make power in relationships feel one-sided – and how to push back against that.

Whether you're in a relationship now, hope to be in one, or just want to support others better, this session helps you figure out what kind of relationships you want – and deserve.

WHY THIS SESSION IS DIFFERENT

from other
sex ed

Other programs might tell you to “say no” or “avoid bad relationships,” but they don't always teach you how to spot the signs – or how gender, power, and control are connected. MWB goes deeper. It helps you understand:

- Why some people have more power in a relationship – and how that power can be used in harmful or healthy ways.
- How *gender expectations* (like “boys should lead” or “girls should be submissive”) shape how people act in relationships.
- What violence and coercion look like – *beyond just physical abuse*.

MWB makes space for real conversations, personal reflection, and practical tools to create relationships that are based on equality, care, and consent.



WHAT YOU SHOULD WALK AWAY KNOWING

Here are some of the most important things to keep with you:

- Every relationship – friendship, romantic, family – has power in it, and power can be used in healthy or harmful ways.
- Healthy relationships are built on trust, respect, communication, and mutual care.
- There are red flags that can help you spot when a relationship is becoming controlling or unsafe.
- You can set and express boundaries – and you deserve to have them respected.
- You don't have to stay in a relationship that hurts you. Support is available, and you're not alone.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS YOU MIGHT HEAR

(or believe)

"If someone gets jealous or checks your phone, it means they care."

Not necessarily. That's often a sign of controlling behavior, not love. Trust is a key part of a healthy relationship.

"Fighting means the relationship is passionate."

- Disagreements happen, but constant fighting, name-calling, or emotional manipulation isn't passion – it's a problem.

"Only guys have power in relationships."

- Anyone can hold or misuse power – no matter their gender. MWB helps you explore all angles.

"You have to stay in a relationship to be loyal or not hurt the other person."

You always have the right to leave a relationship that doesn't feel right or safe. Your well-being comes first.

"Boundaries are about keeping people out."

Boundaries are actually about building *better* relationships. They help others know how to treat you with respect.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE – AND REAL ANSWERS

Q: What makes a relationship healthy?

A: Look for respect, trust, honest communication, mutual support, shared decision-making, and the ability to say no without fear. No relationship is perfect, but those are the foundations.

Q: What does power mean in a relationship?

A: Power can mean who makes decisions, who has more control, or whose voice is heard more. It becomes a problem when it's one-sided or used to manipulate or pressure someone. Healthy relationships share power and make space for both people's needs.

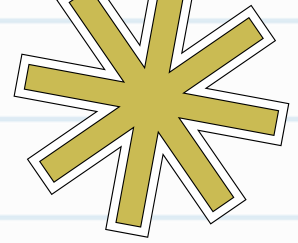
Q: How do I set a boundary?

A: Boundaries can sound like:

- "I need some space right now."
- "I'm not comfortable with that."
- "I don't want to talk about this over text."

The key is being honest, direct, and clear. And a healthy partner will respect that.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE - AND REAL ANSWERS *(continued)*



Q: What if someone pushes or ignores my boundaries?

A: That's a red flag. You have a right to feel safe and heard. If someone keeps disrespecting your boundaries, it may not be a healthy relationship – and you deserve support.

Q: How can I support a friend who's in an unhealthy or violent relationship?

A: Let them know you're there for them. Don't judge or pressure them to "just leave" – that can be hard. Help them see red flags, listen, and connect them to support if they're ready.



HELPFUL RESOURCES

*if you want
to learn more
or get
support*

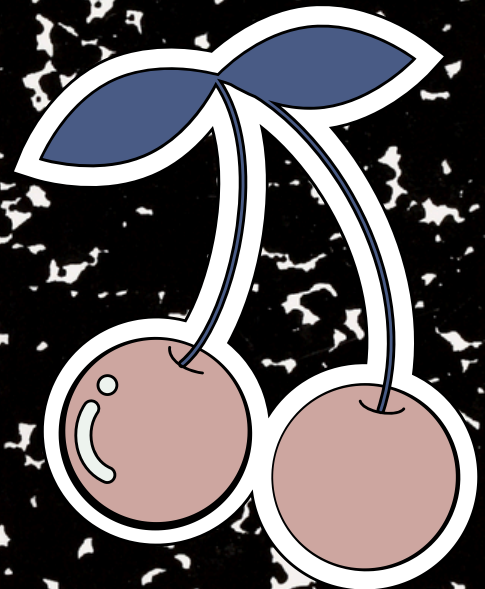


- [love is respect](#) – Support for young people in relationships, including quizzes, info, and phone, text, and chat hotlines.
- [Break the Cycle](#) – Site empowering youth to build healthy relationships and recognize abuse.
- [One Love Foundation](#) – Real stories and tools to spot the signs of unhealthy relationships.
- [Youth.gov Teen Dating Violence](#) – Information and support for youth experiencing dating violence.
- [Local or school-based counselor or social worker](#) – There are caring adults nearby who can help if you're feeling unsafe in a relationship.

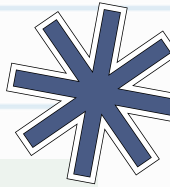
MANY WAYS OF BEING

Facilitator & Youth Support Sheet

Session 5: Sex & Sexuality in Media Today



WHAT THIS SESSION IS ABOUT



This session is about how media – like TV shows, music, social media, and porn – influences what we think sex, bodies, and relationships are supposed to look like. You'll explore the messages you've picked up (sometimes without even realizing it) and how those messages affect your confidence, decisions, and expectations in relationships.

We also talk about pleasure – what it means, who gets to experience it, and how gender shapes which kinds of pleasure are talked about or prioritized. You'll leave with tools to think more critically about the media you consume – and more power to decide what feels right and real for you.

WHY THIS SESSION IS DIFFERENT

from other sex ed !

Most sex ed programs ignore media completely – or act like porn and sexting don't exist. MWB doesn't pretend. It knows you're getting a lot of information (and misinformation) from the internet, music, influencers, and more. Instead of shaming or scaring you, this session helps you:

- Look critically at what media says about sex, gender, and relationships.
- Talk honestly about pleasure, desire, and boundaries.
- Reflect on how your identities shape how you're represented – or erased – in media.
- Learn to make decisions based on your values, not just what you see online.

MWB knows that media doesn't just entertain – it shapes culture, confidence, and choices.

WHAT YOU SHOULD WALK AWAY KNOWING

Here are some of the most important things to keep with you:

- Media – especially social media and porn – sends a lot of messages about sex, bodies, and gender, and not all of them are healthy or real.
- You get to decide what messages to take in and what to reject.
- Everyone deserves to experience pleasure in safe, respectful, and consensual ways.
- It's normal to be curious, to ask questions, and to explore – without shame.
- Talking openly about sex and desire doesn't make you “bad” – it makes you informed and empowered.



COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS YOU MIGHT HEAR

(or believe)

“What I see in porn is how sex is supposed to be.”

Porn is made to entertain, not to teach. It often leaves out communication, consent, protection, and care – and can show violence or pressure as normal.

“If someone’s posting sexy pics or talking about sex, they must want attention or be ‘easy.’”

People express themselves in different ways. No one owes you anything based on how they dress, post, or act.

“Talking about pleasure is inappropriate or dirty.”

It’s not. Talking about pleasure helps people make healthy, respectful, and safe choices.

“Girls shouldn’t want sex as much as guys.”

- That’s a stereotype.
- Everyone experiences desire differently, and all experiences are valid.

“Liking certain kinds of media means something is wrong with me.”

- Curiosity is normal. The key is learning how to think critically and choose what aligns with your values.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE – AND REAL ANSWERS

Q: Is it bad to watch porn?

A: It’s normal to be curious. But porn often gives a very unrealistic version of sex – no communication, no protection, no boundaries. It’s important to remember that porn is a performance, not real life. If you’re watching it, be critical. Ask: Is this healthy? Respectful? Safe? And check in with how it makes you feel.

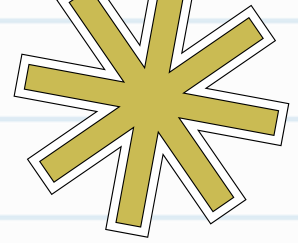
Q: What is “pleasure,” and why are we talking about it?

A: Pleasure means experiencing enjoyment and feeling good – in your body, mind, or emotions. Sexual pleasure is one kind, but it’s also about feeling safe, respected, and cared for. Talking about it helps make sure sex is about mutual consent and joy, not pressure, fear, or confusion.

Q: How can I tell if media is influencing how I think about sex?

A: Pay attention to what you expect from yourself or others. Do you feel like you “should” look a certain way? Act a certain way? If media makes you feel ashamed, confused, or pressured, it’s okay to take a step back and talk about it.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE - AND REAL ANSWERS *(continued)*



Q: Is it okay to send nudes or sext?

A: It's your choice – but it comes with risks. Think about consent, trust, and what could happen if the image is shared. In some places, it can even be illegal. If you don't feel 100% safe and confident, don't do it. You always have the right to say no, even if you've said yes before.

Q: Why aren't people like me represented in media?

A: That's a big problem. Many identities – especially LGBTQ+, Black, brown, disabled, and fat bodies – are underrepresented or shown in harmful ways. MWB creates space to challenge those narratives and see your value beyond what the media shows.



HELPFUL RESOURCES

*if you want
to learn more
or get
support*

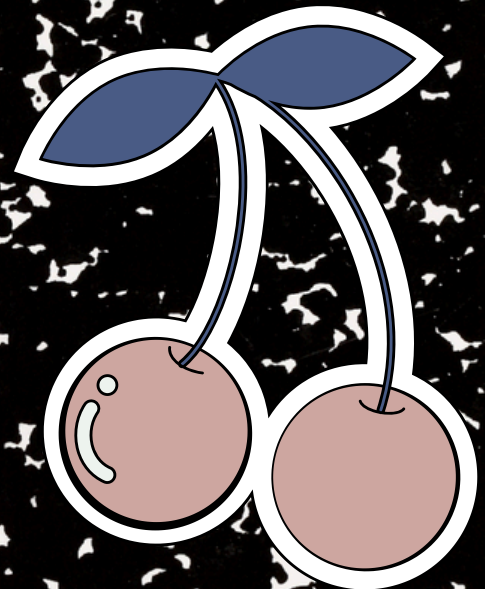
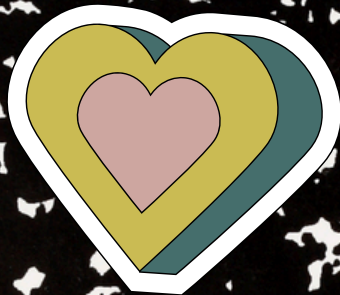


- [Scarleteen – Media](#) – Honest, inclusive guides on media literacy, porn, sexting, and pleasure.
- [Amaze.org](#) – Short, fun videos that explain topics like porn, sexting, and body image in ways that make sense.
- [Sex, Etc.](#) – Articles written by and for teens on real-life questions, including how media shapes expectations.
- [Culture Reframed](#) – Resources for understanding the impact of porn and media on youth.
- [Common Sense Media](#) – Reviews and tools to help you assess the messages in shows, movies, and social media.

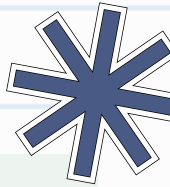
MANY WAYS OF BEING

Facilitator & Youth Support Sheet

Session 6: Keeping Yourself & Others Healthy & Safe



WHAT THIS SESSION IS ABOUT



This session focuses on how to take care of your sexual health and your partners' health – emotionally and physically. That means understanding what consent really looks like, how to talk openly about sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and how to use condoms correctly.

You'll learn how to have honest, respectful conversations about safety before anything sexual happens – because being safe isn't just about using protection; it's about making sure everyone is informed, comfortable, and on board. This session builds the confidence to make choices that protect your body, your values, and your peace of mind.

WHY THIS SESSION IS DIFFERENT

from other sex ed

Most sex ed is either too clinical or too fear-based. It might scare you about STIs without actually teaching you how to talk to a partner or use a condom properly. MWB takes a **sex-positive, shame-free, and gender-inclusive** approach.

This session:

- Teaches you *how* to talk about consent, not just that you “should.”
- Uses real language that respects all genders and bodies (like “people with penises” or “external condoms”).
- Focuses on building skills, not just giving info.
- Recognizes that you deserve healthy, consensual, and pleasurable experiences – **when and if** you choose to have them.

WHAT YOU SHOULD WALK AWAY KNOWING

Here are some of the most important things to keep with you:

- Consent is about respect, communication, and choice – before and during any sexual activity.
- Safer sex means protecting yourself and your partner(s) from harm – physically and emotionally.
- STIs are common and treatable, and getting tested is a smart, caring thing to do.
- Condoms and other barriers are tools of care – and using them can actually build trust, not kill the mood.
- You have the right to speak up about what you want or don't want – and that includes protection.



COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS YOU MIGHT HEAR

(or believe)

"Consent is just about saying yes or no once."

Consent is ongoing. It should be enthusiastic and clear, and it can be changed at any time.

"Using two condoms is safer than one."

Actually, using two can cause friction and make them break. One is enough – if used correctly.

"You can tell if someone has an STI by looking."

Not true. Many STIs have no visible symptoms. Testing is the only way to know.

"If someone doesn't say no, that means yes."

Silence isn't consent. Only a clear, freely given "yes" counts.

"Condoms ruin the moment."

Communicating about protection *builds* trust and respect. That's a huge turn-on when you're with the right person.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE – AND REAL ANSWERS

Q: How do I ask for consent without making it awkward?

A: Try things like: "Are you into this?" "Is this still okay?" or "Do you want to keep going?" It's not awkward when you're both being honest and respectful. Consent doesn't kill the mood – it creates one based on trust.

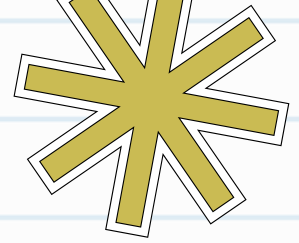
Q: What do I do if a partner doesn't want to use a condom?

A: You always have the right to insist on protection. You can say, "This is something I need to feel safe." If someone refuses to respect that, they may not be a safe or caring partner.

Q: How often should I get tested for STIs?

A: If you're sexually active, it's recommended to test at least once a year, or more often if you have multiple partners or new partners. Testing is free or low-cost at many clinics – and it's smart, not shameful.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE - AND REAL ANSWERS *(continued)*



Q: How do I actually use a condom correctly?

A: You'll practice in this session, but key steps for external condoms include:

1. Check the expiration date and for any tears.
2. Open it carefully (not with your teeth).
3. Pinch the tip and roll it on all the way.
4. Hold the base when pulling out.
5. Dispose in the trash, not the toilet.

(And yes, there's also a right way to use internal condoms!)

Q: What if I'm too nervous to talk about STIs or protection?

A: That's normal. Start with "Can we talk about something important?" Practice what you want to say ahead of time. Respectful partners will appreciate your honesty – and you deserve that care.



HELPFUL RESOURCES

*if you want
to learn more
or get
support*

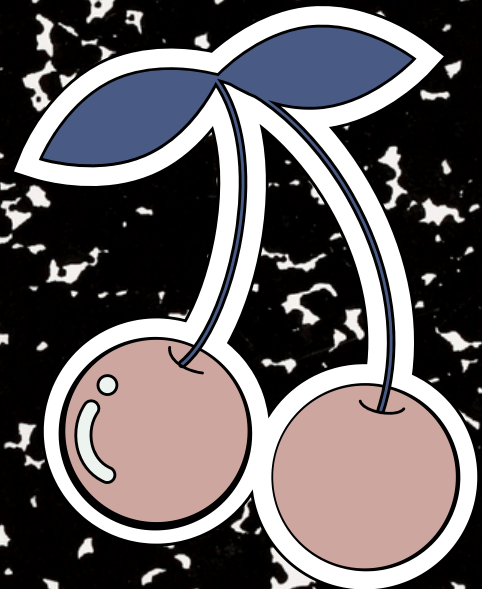
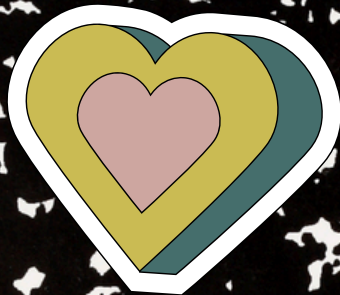


- [Bedsider.org](https://www.bedsider.org) – Tools, tips, and info on condoms, consent, STIs, and more.
- [Planned Parenthood](https://www.plannedparenthood.org) – Explainers and videos on safer sex, testing, and communication.
- [Amaze.org](https://www.amaze.org) – Short videos breaking down STIs, condoms, and consent in youth-friendly ways.
- [Your local teen health clinic](#) – Most offer free or low-cost testing, condoms, and nonjudgmental support.

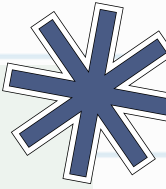
MANY WAYS OF BEING

Facilitator & Youth Support Sheet

Session 7: Contraceptives & Seeking Services



WHAT THIS SESSION IS ABOUT



This session covers the basics of birth control (contraceptives) – what the options are, how they work, how to get them, and how to decide what’s right for you. It also helps you understand where and how to access sexual and reproductive health services, especially if you’re nervous, unsure, or don’t have supportive adults around.

We talk about different types of contraceptives, how to use them correctly, and what to do if something goes wrong (like a condom breaks or a pill is missed). We also discuss how to advocate for yourself in a clinic or pharmacy and what your rights are when seeking care.

This session is about knowledge, access, and confidence – so you can take care of your sexual health without shame or confusion.

WHY THIS SESSION IS DIFFERENT

from other sex ed !

Some sex ed programs avoid talking about birth control completely, or they only teach “abstinence-only” messages. Others might mention a few methods but don’t explain how to actually access them or deal with real-life concerns (like side effects, cost, or talking to a doctor). MWB is different because:

- It gives you complete, medically accurate info without pushing fear or judgment.
- It centers youth empowerment and access, especially for LGBTQ+ youth, youth of color, and youth who face healthcare discrimination.
- It teaches you how to use your voice when talking to providers and how to make informed choices based on your needs – not anyone else’s.

This isn’t just about knowing birth control exists – it’s about feeling confident using it and getting the care you deserve.

WHAT YOU SHOULD WALK AWAY KNOWING



Here are some of the most important things to keep with you:

- There are many types of birth control, and you have options based on what works best for your body and your life.
- You don’t have to be a certain age or have anyone’s permission to care for your health.
- You can talk to providers and pharmacists about sexual health – and you have the right to ask questions and be respected.
- Emergency contraception is safe and effective, and it’s different from abortion.
- Getting support – like birth control, testing, or health care – is responsible, not shameful. You deserve access to it.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS YOU MIGHT HEAR

(or believe)

"You have to be a certain age to get birth control."

Not true in most places. Many clinics let youth get contraception without parental permission.

"Birth control is only for people having 'penis-in-vagina' sex."

People of all genders and orientations may need birth control for many reasons – including hormone regulation, pregnancy prevention, or other health needs.

"Birth control is only for girls."

Nope. Everyone should understand contraceptives – even if you don't use them yourself. Condoms and shared decision-making matter for all genders.

"If I miss one pill, I'll definitely get pregnant."

It depends on how many you missed and when. There are ways to stay protected – emergency contraception is also an option.

"I'd have to tell my parents or use their insurance."

Many clinics offer confidential services, including for minors, and sliding scale or free birth control.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE – AND REAL ANSWERS

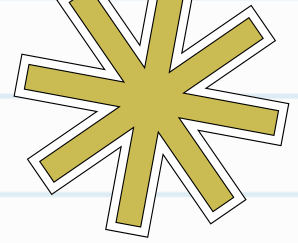
Q: What's the most effective birth control method?

A: Long-acting methods like the IUD (intrauterine device) or implant are super-effective (over 99%) and last for years. But the best method is one you can stick with, feel comfortable using, and have access to. Condoms plus a second method is also a strong combo!

Q: What if I can't afford birth control?

A: Many clinics (like Planned Parenthood or public health centers) offer free or low-cost birth control. You can ask for a "sliding scale" fee, or even apply for programs that cover all costs.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE - AND REAL ANSWERS *(continued)*



Q: What's emergency contraception, and how does it work?

A: Emergency contraception (EC), like Plan B or Ella, helps prevent pregnancy after unprotected sex. It works best the sooner it's taken (ideally within three to five days). It's not the same as an abortion pill – it doesn't end a pregnancy; it prevents one from starting.

Q: Can I get birth control without anyone finding out?

A: In many places, yes. Youth often have the right to confidential care. Some clinics won't bill insurance if you ask, and some use programs that don't require ID or a parent's permission. Ask what your options are when you call or arrive.

Q: What if I feel uncomfortable talking to a provider or pharmacist?

A: That's totally normal. You can write down what you want to ask ahead of time, bring a friend, or say, "I'm looking for confidential care." If someone treats you with disrespect, know that you deserve better – and it's okay to switch providers or ask for a different staff member.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

*if you want
to learn more
or get
support*



- [Bedsider.org](https://www.bedsider.org) – A site to compare birth control options, set reminders, and learn what's right for you.
- [Planned Parenthood](https://www.plannedparenthood.org) – A way to find nearby clinics for free or low-cost care.
- [TeenSource.org](https://www.teen-source.org) – California-based site with lots of youth-friendly info on access and rights.
- [Your school nurse or local health department](#) – You can ask about teen-friendly, confidential services in your area.

