

# Introductory Lesson – Setting Ground Rules for Class Discussion and Sexual Health Classes

## Introduction

This lesson will introduce students to the sexual health education program, describe its content and intended learning outcomes, explain how students can ask questions and other related activities.

## Grade Level

Grades 7-9

## Learning Outcomes

Students will be familiar with the content of the sexual health education unit and how they can participate appropriately in the class discussions. They will be able to:

1. Explain three of the five ground rules;
2. Contribute to a serious, considerate class climate;
3. Distinguish appropriate from excessively personal facts for public disclosure;
4. Express that using standard terms are more appropriate in class than slang and baby-talk.

## Prerequisites/Prior Learning

Prior to this class, determine if students have already had session on setting ground rules for discussions.

## Materials

Summary of the official curriculum from your provincial/territorial education ministry that describes the mandatory sexual health education outcomes

List of suggested reading materials and web sites for students and parents

Student Health Journal

Sample of an evaluation rubric

Letter to parents

Ground rules for class discussions about sexual health

Chart for recording their observations about group and individual participation

Procedures for submitting anonymously to the question box

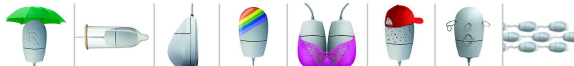
Sources of help and support for personal health problems (online and local)

## Time Required

One class period

## Lesson Procedure (With Suggested Discussion Points/Content)

<p>1. Describe your sexual health program, and review class requirements.</p> <p>It may help to post a calendar. Some teachers assign homework, reading, or special projects. Some classes have speakers or field trips. Make sure your students know what is required of them, what the due dates are (if any), and how to</p>	<p>Hand out a summary of the learning outcomes required in your province as well as summaries of any relevant school board policies. These documents should be attached to your <a href="#">Letter to Parents</a> explaining the goals of your program. (You should look over the <a href="#">Sexual Health Communication Kit</a> that is available on the <a href="http://www.sexualityandu.ca">www.sexualityandu.ca</a></p>
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get excused if they, or their parents, prefer that they not participate.

One way to motivate students is by offering points for participation, homework, and a unit test. For example: A student could earn up to five points a day for participating and following the ground rules (five points x 20 classes = 100 total possible participation points). A student could also earn five points per homework assignment. Since there is an introduction and 14 other topics, you will make about 30 assignments (approximately half are family assignments), so a student could do any 15 of those for credit (five points x 15 assignments = 75 total possible homework points). A final test could be worth up to another 25 points. Thus, a perfect score for the whole unit would be 100 + 75 + 25 200 points for an A+.

2. Discuss the rationale for the unit

That people make healthier decisions when they have thought about what they believe and when they have correct information.

That it is important to learn how to talk about sexual health. Then a person can talk with their family, their doctor, and even help a friend.

3. Establish ground rules for class discussions

You can use *Introduction Transparency 1 (Used with permission from the FLASH program in Seattle)* or blow it up into a poster but the key issues (shown in the right hand column) should be explained and discussed.

web site for more ideas on how to ensure support for your program.

Hand out the materials that you have prepared for your program, including a list of suggested articles. (You can start your list at the [teen FAQ pages](#) on the [www.sexualityandu.ca](http://www.sexualityandu.ca) web site or [this article](#) on the Canadian Health Network web site.

Read suggestions on Assessment in Sexual Health Education and use teacher tools.

**ASKING** questions is critical to learning.

Students may ask questions aloud, in writing or in private. They may think of questions or issues they want to discuss with their parents, their doctors, their clergy or others. Any question is a good question, even if they cannot think of the medical/standard term for something. Students should try to use medical/standard words, but it is better to ask a question using slang or baby-talk than not to ask it at all.

**PASSING** (choosing not to respond or participate) is every person's essential right. Acknowledge that sexuality is a personal issue, and that discussing it can feel awkward and embarrassing. Admit that you may occasionally decline to answer a personal or embarrassing question. This models the important skill of limit-setting. Assure students that they also have permission to abstain.

**PROTECTING** peoples' feelings is critical to the building of trust. This means not laughing at classmates, not trying to figure out who authored an anonymous question, not putting people or groups down. It means respecting others' rights to disagree. Protecting one's own and other peoples' privacy means not sharing very personal issues in the large group, not using names or relationships when you talk about personal issues, and not quoting classmates outside of class.

**LISTENING** respectfully is essential. You deserve it, students deserve it and guest speakers deserve it.

**ENCOURAGING** others to follow these rules means positive peer pressure. Students can remind one another of the ground rules.

4. Examine and discuss the concept of privacy.

Privacy means different things to each of us, and for everyone there is a degree or level of privacy.

Start by asking students to read the worksheet and be prepared to discuss it.

Get the class to add examples, and to recognize that we all make different choices about what we want to share on which level.

Share some personal anecdote about your own sexuality education to indicate that some sharing is alright then point out that your sharing was only from Level 2 or 3. You might share, for example, where you used to think babies came from, or how old you were when you learned that the doctor isn't always knowledgeable about sexuality.

Emphasize that it is not appropriate to share the most personal things in a class. Refer back to the second "P" in "APPLE" (*Transparency 1*).

5. Mention that, if there are any very personal concerns someone wants to discuss with you, you will be available for private consultation.

You can then refer them to the appropriate professional (doctor, psychologist, etc.). Tell them when and how they can set up a meeting with you, and that Lesson 15 will introduce additional people to whom they can go.

6. Introduce the anonymous question envelope.

Explain that after each lesson, students will write an anonymous question (or a comment) and put it in an envelope. Explain that they should NOT write their name on the slip, unless they would prefer to talk with you privately about their question.

You may want to assist them by jotting some question roots on the blackboard:

<p>“Is it true that ...?”  “What do they mean by ...?”  “What causes ...?”  “How do you know if ...?”  “Is it a problem if ...?”  “What should you do if ...?”  “Should you worry if ...?”</p> <p>7. Have students start (or continue) a Student Health Journal where they can keep all their assignments, personal notes and health education materials.</p> <p>Explain how the Student Health Journal will be used in your classes. Note that there are some sections of the Journal that students will never be asked to share with anyone.</p> <p>8. Explain how student projects or group work in health education will be evaluated, in part, by the use of rubrics.</p> <p>Use the sample Rubric on a <a href="#">Sexual Health Information Poster</a> to explain how rubrics will be used to assess student project work.</p> <p>9. Explain how students will be asked to assess their individual and group work.</p> <p>Explain how you will be using the <a href="#">Criteria for Assessing Individual or Group Participation</a> in your program.</p>	
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### Closure

Finish the lesson with reminders about taking the materials home to their parents, visiting excellent web sites such as [www.sexualityandu.ca](http://www.sexualityandu.ca) and encouraging them to ask questions anonymously at the end of each class.

Finish the lesson by asking for such questions and comments. Pass around blank sheets of paper and ask students to write down a question or comment for the question box. (If they do not have a question or comment, ask them to simply write down a brief sentence on what they learned (so that everyone hands in a sheet of paper with some writing on it.)

### Follow-up/Enrichment

1. Students can be asked to work in groups on one of these two webquests prepared for the [www.sexualityandu.ca](http://www.sexualityandu.ca) web site:

- **It's OK to Ask Questions (1): Prepare a Report** (WQ)
- **It's OK to Ask Questions (2): Prepare a Brochure** (WQ)

### Assessment/Evaluation Criteria/Tools

Ask the students to complete the [Individual/Group Participation Sheet](#) and keep it in their [Student Health Journal](#). As the teacher, you should take notes on the participation of students and record them in your [Student Evaluation Tracker](#).

## Ground Rules for Class Discussions

**A Ask** questions! In class, after class, at home. Any question is a good question.

**P Pass** if a question or activity feels too private.

**P Protect** other people's feelings and protect your own and other people's **privacy**.

**L Listen** respectfully when other people are speaking.

**E Encourage** other people to do the same.

### Levels of Privacy

## Student Worksheet

### Questions about Privacy

1. How private is your address? Which of the people above could you tell where you live?
2. How private is your family's cultural heritage? Who could you tell what countries your ancestors came from?
3. How private is your family's income? Who could you share that with?
4. How private is the color of your kitchen? Who could you share that with?
5. How private is your phone number? Who could you share that with?
6. How private are your family's beliefs about marijuana?
7. How private is the cost of your furniture?
8. How private are your family's beliefs about dating?
9. How private is your pet's age?
10. How private is your mother's age?
11. Are there other privacy issues you want to talk about?