

Session 16

ABSTINENCE



Objectives

At the completion of this session, youth will:

1. Explain the benefits of abstaining from sexual activity,
2. Identify and explain personal reasons to remain abstinent, and
3. Identify the factors (people, situations, and environment) that will help them remain abstinent.



Time

One hour



Materials

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> sign-in sheet | <input type="checkbox"/> snacks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> flipchart paper | <input type="checkbox"/> tape |
| <input type="checkbox"/> markers | <input type="checkbox"/> pencils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> “Choosing Abstinence” worksheet | <input type="checkbox"/> Abstinence Family Activity worksheet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> small prizes | |



Preparation

1. Gather the materials listed for this session.
2. Write session learning objectives on flipchart paper.
3. Make a copy of the “Choosing Abstinence” worksheet and the Abstinence Family Activity worksheet for each youth.



Procedure

Introduction (5 minutes)

1. Welcome the youth to the session. Ask them to remind you about the decision-making steps they learned about last week. Ask them

to tell you about each step of STAR. Take a few responses. Remind the youth what STAR stands for if necessary.

2. Tell the youth the topic for today's session is abstinence. Tell them that they will have an opportunity to discuss the benefits of choosing abstinence. They will also examine their personal reasons for abstaining from sexual intercourse and who can support them to remain abstinent. Review the learning objectives (written on flipchart paper) for this session with youth.

Energizer: Word Search (10 minutes)

1. Divide the group into two teams. Ask each team to choose a recorder. Give a piece of paper and pencil to each recorder.
2. Ask each recorder to write the word "abstinence" on the top of his or her paper using big and clear letters.
3. Tell the group that each team will have three minutes to come up with as many words as they can using the letters found in the word "abstinence." Give the group one example — "can." Show the group where you found the letters to make the word "can" in "abstinence." Remind the group that they can also make plural words like "cans."
4. After three minutes, ask the teams to stop writing. Check to make sure each team found "real" words. Count the number of words found by each team and announce the winning team. Below is a list of some of the words that can be made with the letters found in "abstinence."

a	ante	ban	bat	bats	beast
beat	beet	bent	best	bins	bit
bites	bits	cab	cabin	cabs	can
cane	cans	cant	cast	cat	cats
cent	ease	east	eaten	in	inn
insect	is	it	neat	nest	nine
nit	nits	saint	sane	sat	satin
scent	seat	seen	sent	sin	sit
site	stab	stain	tab	tan	tin

5. The facilitator may want to give a small prize to the winning team and a consolation prize to the other team.

Defining Abstinence (5 minutes)

1. Write the word “abstinence” on flipchart paper, and then ask the youth to tell you what abstinence means to them. Take a few responses.
2. Ask the youth if people their age think about sex. Tell them that thinking about sex, having curiosity about sex, and learning about sex from their parents, school and books is normal and healthy. Explain the difference between thinking about sex and actually having sex. Tell the group that most young people their age think about sex, yet most are not having sex.
3. Write down a working definition for abstinence on flipchart paper.

ABSTINENCE is avoiding sexual intercourse with another person. Sexual intercourse can be vaginal, oral, and anal.

Tell the youth that we are not including kissing or touching in this definition of abstinence.

Sex or Abstinence (10 minutes)

1. Ask the youth to tell you some reasons why somebody their age might have sex. Write their answers on flipchart paper. Encourage youth to explain their answers. Some reasons might be:
 - feels good
 - prove manhood/womanhood
 - curious
 - in love
 - bored
 - feel pressured
 - not lose boyfriend/girlfriend
 - want to feel close
2. Ask the youth to tell you some reasons why somebody their age would choose **NOT** to have sex. Write their answers on flipchart paper. Encourage youth to explain their answers. Some reasons might be:
 - avoid pregnancy
 - develop deeper friendship
 - religious reasons
 - avoid STIs and HIV
 - not ready
 - not to upset parents

Separate their answers into two columns. If the group does not come up with many reasons, the facilitator may want to add some of the reasons listed above.

3. Tell the youth that we are now going to work on an activity that will show us the benefits of being abstinent from sexual intercourse.

Choosing Abstinence Worksheet (25 minutes)

1. Distribute the “Choosing Abstinence” worksheet. Use the directions below to explain how to complete the worksheet.
 - Inside the body, ask the youth to write a personal goal. Remind them of the goals they set in a previous session.
 - Above the head, ask them to write reasons why they don’t want to have sex.
 - Above the left arm, ask them to write things that help them stay abstinent.
 - Above the right arm, ask them to write things that might make them want to have sex now or in the next few years.
 - Below the left foot, ask them to write the names of people who support them in remaining abstinent.
 - Below the right foot, ask them to write the names of people who might pressure them to have sex now or in the future.
2. Ask the youth to complete the worksheet individually. Tell them that they will share only the things they feel comfortable discussing later with a partner.
3. After five to ten minutes, ask everyone to find a partner. Tell pairs to only share answers that they feel comfortable sharing. They will have three to five minutes to share with their partners.
4. Reconvene the group and facilitate a discussion using the following questions:
 - Did you and your partner have similar answers? Which ones were the same?
 - Were there any items that you did not feel comfortable discussing with your partner? Which ones?
 - How would having sex affect the accomplishment of your goals?
 - What are some ways to show affection to someone you may have romantic feelings for?
 - If somebody your age wanted to have sex, what would you tell him or her?
 - Do you think abstinence is a realistic option for young people?
5. Pass out the Abstinence Family Activity worksheet and ask the youth to complete it with their parents.



Summary (5 minutes)

1. Ask each youth to tell you what he/she thinks is the most important reason for people their age to choose abstinence. Write their responses on flipchart paper. Acknowledge the importance of their reasons.
2. Summarize by saying that there are good reasons for young people to abstain from sex. Many young people believe in and practice abstinence. Abstinence can be a sign of real emotional maturity. Abstinence reduces the risk of unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and HIV — the virus that causes AIDS. In fact, abstinence from vaginal, anal and oral sex is the only 100% effective means of preventing pregnancy and STDs. A couple may find that abstaining from sexual intercourse contributes in a positive way to their relationship. It is important to remember that there are people who can support your decision to practice abstinence.
3. Tell the youth that next week we are going to start talking about communicating with friends and family.
4. Thank the youth for their participation.

◆ Choosing to be Abstinent ◆

I don't want to have sex because:

Things that help me stay abstinent:

Things that might make me want to have sex now or in the next few years:

Personal Goal:

People who help me stay abstinent:

People who might pressure me to have sex now or in the future:

◆ Family Activity ◆

Abstinence

1. Show your parent the “Choosing to be Abstinent” worksheet you completed during the last *Wait for Sex* session.

Explain what you wrote on your worksheet to your parent. Ask your parent what he or she thinks of the worksheet. Write what your parent says here:

2. Ask your parent to tell you three good things about waiting to have to sex. Write what your parent says here:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3. Ask your parent to give you three suggestions on how you can remain abstinent. Write what your parent says here:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____