A 4-H/CRD Video Discussion Guide

A TIME TO TELL — TEEN SEXUAL ABUSE

The subjects of acquaintance rape and incest cause confusion and fear for a great number of people, including teenagers. Many people believe that if sexual abuse occurs, the victim is to be blamed for a multiple of reasons such as implied interest or simply being a "bad" person. The facts, however, are quite different. One in three girls and one in ten boys are sexually abused before the age of eighteen. Moreover, teens are sexually abused most often by someone they know and not a stranger.

A TIME TO TELL - Teen Sexual Abuse is a sensitive and supportive film designed to elicit discussion from teenagers about acquaintance rape and incest. In the film, adolescents share their own experiences in a peer support group. Important concerns such as - how acquaintance rape might occur, the importance of communication, setting limits in the face of pressure, self-esteem, and consent in dating relationships - are presented in easy-to-understand and honest ways. Viewers are encouraged to gain both self-respect and respect for others.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

For students in grades seven through twelve.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- gain a greater awareness about acquaintance rape and incest.
- realize the importance of telling someone if they are sexually victimized.
- learn more about communicating limits to friends and acquaintances.
- learn to reject force, threats, or secrecy in being tricked or coerced into sexual activity.
- realize that abuse is not their fault and that there is help if they tell.

SYNOPSIS

In A TIME TO TELL, young people with adult guidance share important feelings about having self-esteem and coping with sexual pressures in a supportive peer group situation. Two main storylines focusing on acquaintance rape and incest are revealed as teenagers talk about difficult experiences they have had.

In the first part of the film, a young woman named Chris shares some angry and confused feelings with the groups as she talks about an unhappy dating experience she had with a classmate. As she recounts the series of events, viewers learn about Chris's own lack of self-esteem along with her date's insensitive behavior.
The second vignette presents the story of 13-year-old Jennifer, who for six years had to deal with an incest problem with her father. As the two talk about their situations, the peer group conversation provides desired responses and suggests more appropriate ways to deal with emotional situations that cause sexual pressures. In addition, viewers are encouraged by the growth and development exhibited by the young teenagers in the peer group.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What could Chris or Jennifer have done differently? What would have been difficult for them to do?
2. Was Jennifer responsible for her father’s behavior? Do you think Rob cared what Chris wanted?
3. Do you think Chris put Rob’s wishes before her own? What are some reasons Chris might put Rob’s wishes before her own?
4. What clues did Chris’s girlfriend see that led her to mistrust Rob?
5. Why did Chris have such a difficult time deciding how to dress?
6. How did Chris become isolated with Rob?
7. Do you think Rob knew what Chris wanted when she said she just wanted to be close?
8. Do you think Rob cared what Chris wanted?
9. Do you know any boys who would respect and listen to a girl who said, “no”?
10. Jennifer said sometimes “no” isn’t easy to say. What did she mean?
11. Was Jennifer at fault?
12. Who could you tell if something like this was happening to you?

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Help students learn how to say “no” with the following activity. Students should divide up into pairs, boy-girl, if possible. One person will make a request and the other person must deny his/her request. The following are possible requests that can be made:
   - May I borrow your notes? Your car? Your sweater?
   - Would you like to go out with me?
   - Let’s go to the party instead of the movie.
   - Let’s go over to your house because your parents aren’t home.
Those asking can be given permission to pressure and plead in whatever way they can, short of using physical force. Students saying “no” can practice just saying, “no,” or they might use the following statements:

- No, I would rather not.
- I like you, but I don’t like the way you are pressuring me.
- Thanks, but no.

Discuss how difficult it is to say “no” even with practice.

2. As a homework assignment, have students use the telephone book to find agencies in their community that help victims of acquaintance rape or incest.

3. Have students name three friends or acquaintances to whom they could turn for help?

4. Ask students to identify some ways people behave when they don’t care about what the other person wants or feels. If they are stuck, ask them to think about how Rob behaved. Make a list of these behaviors.
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