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1989

A 4-H/CRD Video Discussion Guide

CAN A GUY SAY NO?

CAN A GUY SAY NO? investigates adolescent sexuality from a guy's point of view. The film dramatizes the battle between brains and hormones as it encourages teenagers to consider sex as an emotional, special experience that should be cherished.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

Middle school and high school students.

OBJECTIVES

- Realize that many teenage boys feel social and physiological pressures to have sex.
- Understand that sex is an intimate experience that is much better, especially the first time, if it's with someone special and loved.
- Recognize that people can wait until marriage before having sex.
- Reinforce different levels of boy/girl relationships.
- Learn that it's okay to like someone and not "go all the way."



SYNOPSIS

CAN A GUY SAY NO? opens at a country club with a group of teenage guys flirting with a carload of girls on their way to an afternoon at the swimming pool. Alex, a cute blond girl, pulls up in her own car, and her boyfriend Scott rushes out to kiss her, only to be hounded by the guys who are all watching.

In the next scene, Scott and his parents watch as a suspected burglar climbs out the bedroom window of the young teenage girl, Paula, who lives next door. As Scott's dad goes to call the police, Scott recognizes the "burglar" as Eddie O'Connor. Scott and his parents quickly understand why Eddie was visiting Paula.

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Believing that other teenagers are having sex makes it that much harder for Scott to hold back with Alex. The couple is parked late one night, and we hear Alex telling Scott “don’t” before she rushes out of the car. “I’m just not ready to go all the way,” she says. Angry and upset, Alex tells Scott she doesn’t want to see him anymore.

Sitting with his buddies in a restaurant, Scott sulks over the breakup. At that moment, in walks Paula, Scott’s next-door neighbor. Word has spread fast about her sexual exploits. Scott’s buddies egg him on. Now that he’s a free man, why doesn’t he make it with Paula?

Feeling pressure from his friends, Scott visits Paula one afternoon as she sits by the family swimming pool. Paula tries to entice Scott, but he is obviously not comfortable with her advances and ends up diving into the pool with all his clothes on.

Later, Scott’s dad wants to talk. He tells his son that since the breakup with Alex he seems different. Scott’s dad discusses the importance of waiting to have sex until Scott finds someone he loves, maybe, even until he gets married, and urges Scott to try using his brains instead of his hormones.

Scott and Paula begin to spend time getting to know one another better. It is clear that Paula is a sensitive girl whose life has been torn apart by the divorce of her parents and her mother’s drinking problem.

While the friendship between Scott and Paula grows, so does the pressure to have a sexual relationship. Paula is ready and willing; Scott isn’t so sure. Although he is attracted to Paula, he admits that he’s not in love. The story ends with Paula recognizing Scott as a friend and Scott realizing that a guy can say no.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do many teenage guys feel pressure to have sex? Do you feel the pressure is greater for guys than for girls? Why or why not?
2. In the program, Scott pressures Alex to have sex by telling her that he can’t help the way he feels. What are some other common reasons guys use to convince their girlfriends to “go all the way”?
3. What do you think about Scott’s dad’s comment that sex is very emotional and very special?
4. How realistic do you feel the conversations were between Scott and his dad? Can you talk openly to one or both of your parents about sex? If not, to whom do you talk? Where do you get your information?
5. What role do your friends play in your sexual attitudes and habits?



SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss the problems related to teenage sex and the difficulty of saying “no.”
2. Our society makes it difficult to say “no” to sex. Ask students to cut out magazine ads, identify TV ads, and list movies that encourage sexuality.
3. Role-playing: Have students play Scott and his buddies talking in the restaurant the day after Alex and Scott break up. How could the situation have been handled differently?
4. In the program, Paula says that making love made her feel “important, special.” Ask the students to expand on that idea. Are there other ways to feel loved and appreciated?

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