

Discussion Questions

How can abstinence keep you Healthy and Wise?

How could peer pressure influence a person who chooses abstinence?

Activities

1. In groups, discuss the concept of group dating. Could this be a strategy that supports a person's desire to be abstinent and, if so, how? Share your opinions with other groups.
2. When a person chooses abstinence, what kinds of friends might he/she choose to hang around with, and what factors might influence his/her decision to go to a party? Have your teacher write these responses on a whiteboard, and discuss them as a class.
3. As a group, discuss how drinking alcohol or using drugs might put someone's choice to be abstinent in jeopardy. Give some hypothetical scenarios or examples. Share your thoughts with the other groups.
4. If you ever feel pressure to have sex, make a list of people or resources that can offer you additional support and guidance. As a class, compile the list of people or resources that you identified.



Home Connection As a family, discuss the term "abstinence." Talk about what you learned in this lesson. Identify other family members or friends that have chosen abstinence.

About ABSTINENCE

Abstinence is the act of abstaining from all sexual activity. Choosing abstinence until marriage can be a challenge at times. Many adolescents will experience peer pressure to begin engaging in sex. However, there are refusal strategies and ways to help a young person fulfill his or her choice to be abstinent.

When young people do not engage in any kind of sexual activity, the chances of acquiring a sexually transmitted disease (STD) or becoming pregnant drops to 0. Therefore, abstinence is 100% effective.

WHY IS Abstinence EFFECTIVE?

Abstinence works because it prevents the transmission of STDs and the possibility of a young woman becoming pregnant. Abstinence is the only birth control and STD prevention method that is 100% effective. You may have seen advertisements for other birth control methods that promote the idea of safe sex. Other birth control methods do have certain failure rates and cannot give the same protection as abstinence. Sex is not safe when there is still a chance of getting pregnant or acquiring a sexually transmitted disease. Young people can still have a dating relationship without having sex. In fact, the relationship can be better because the couple doesn't have to worry about the transmission of diseases or the possibility of an unintended pregnancy.



HOW TO Practice ABSTINENCE

You might think abstinence is an easy choice because it means simply not doing something. Abstaining from sex doesn't mean not dating or having a close relationship with a person. Relationships that exclude sexual activity tend to be even more fulfilling. However, at some point in your life you may feel peer pressure to engage in sexual activity. Others might make fun of you or tease you about choosing abstinence. Don't let other people influence your decision. Remember, one reason you have chosen abstinence is to reduce health risks and the chance of getting pregnant. In the long run, you will fare much better than a person who doesn't choose abstinence. You are in control of your body and your health and can make the right decisions that keep you Healthy and Wise.

ABSTINENCE and RELATIONSHIPS

There are many ways for people who choose abstinence to become close other than having sex.

- Talking about common interests
- Listening to each other's goals
- Sharing your thoughts and aspirations
- Being honest with each other
- Respecting each other's values and morals
- Just spending time together and having fun without the pressure of having sex

