You now have a new tool in your tool kit!

Love Notes EBP is included in the Evidence Based Program list based on statistically significant decreases in sexual activity, increases in contraceptive use, and avoidance of pregnancy.

Love Notes EBP, a comprehensive healthy relationship education curriculum written by Marline E. Pearson, teaches young people how to build healthy romantic relationships as well as how to preventing dating violence and avoid unprotected sex.

Love Notes v2.1 (classic), condensed to 12 hours of key instruction and evaluated in CHAMPS (Creating Healthy Adolescents through Meaningful Prevention Services), was evaluated in a 5-year $4.8 million study through the Kent School of Social Work, University of Louisville. Anita Barbee, Ph.D. was the Principal Investigator.

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Is It a Healthy Relationship?

Overview

This lesson offers guidance on how to tell if a relationship is healthy. Utilizing a clear, three-question framework that defines six types of relationships, participants will create sculptures to analyze what healthy and unhealthy relationships look like in the real world. The goal is for participants to develop a deeper understanding of the differences and be able to develop communication skills for discussing healthy and unhealthy relationships. A self-assessment exercise helps participants examine their own relationships.

Goals

1. To analyze the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships.
2. To demonstrate using a three-question guide in assessing a relationship.

Lesson at a Glance

6.1 How Can You Tell?
Activities: Relationship Sculptures; Assessing Relationships

6.2 Having Fun—It’s Important! (Not included in the EBP Model)

6.3 Breaking Up (This concept is taught in Section 13.7 of this Manual)
Lesson 6

Materials Checklist

Resources:

Materials:
- Lesson 6 PowerPoint slideshow is a digital download that comes with the curriculum. Easy-to-follow download directions are found at DibbleInstitute.org/LNEBP3.
- Sculpting Materials:
  - Play Doh
  - Pipe cleaners
  - Toothpicks
  - Popsicle/craft sticks
  - Gumdrops
  - Mini-marshmallows
  - Rolling eyes, etc.
  - Heavy cardboard/8.5x11 card stock for sculpture platform

Workbook Application:
- *Is It a Healthy Relationship?* (pgs. 19–20)

Preparation

✓ Locate colored *Six Types of Relationships* activity cards (Resource 6a). **Colored activity cards in the back of the LN 3.0 manual.** Cut.

✓ Gather sculpting materials. (Materials are reusable.)
SECTION 6.1
How Can You Tell?

(PP 1) List lesson goals:

In Lesson 6, we want to achieve the following goals:

1. To analyze the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships.
2. To demonstrate using a three-question guide in assessing a relationship.

(PP 2) In the last lesson, we talked about principles for smart relationships. Now we’re going to go deeper and look for signs of a healthy versus unhealthy relationship.

There are three essential questions you can ask to determine if a relationship is healthy or unhealthy… these can even apply to friendships. These three questions are simple, but if you answer them honestly you can get a good sense of if the relationship you are in is healthy or not.

- “Is this relationship conditional or unconditional?”
- “Is this relationship controlling/disrespectful or is it respectful, equal, and supportive?”
- “Is this relationship mostly about sex, material things, or selfish or attraction on many levels and giving?”

We’re going to do a fun activity to explore what those types of relationships look like.
Activity: Relationship Sculptures

(PP 3) Refer back to Goals 1 and 2:

1. To analyze the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships.
2. To demonstrate using a three-question guide in assessing a relationship.

Ask one participant to read one card (Resource 6a, Six Types of Relationships activity cards) aloud to the group to demonstrate this activity.

Discuss it:

• Have you seen any relationships like this in real life?
• What specific behaviors would be seen in that type of relationship?
• How would it feel to be in this type of relationship?
• If you made a sculpture to represent this kind of relationship, what symbols, images, or scenes would you use?

Sculpting Activity: Divide into groups of 2–3 participants. You can have them count off or assign groups where they sit.

Each group gets a sculpting bag that contains Play Doh, pipe cleaners, toothpicks, popsicle sticks, gum drops, marshmallows, etc. as well as Activity Card 6a describing one of the six types of relationships.

Announce that each group is going to read their card aloud to their group, discuss what that kind of relationship might look and feel like, and then come up with symbols or images to represent that kind of relationship and make a sculpture.

You’ll have 10 minutes to complete your sculpture.
Here are a couple of examples: show and discuss slides 4–5 as examples. After viewing and discussing the slides, go back to slide 3 and leave it up with the instructions. Then give them time to create their sculptures.

Encourage everyone to participate in their group. Play music while they work. Give them a 2-minute warning before they share their sculptures!

Have everyone walk around to each sculpture and allow each group to describe it. As time permits, discuss each one.

(PP 4) Read slide.

Is this healthy or unhealthy?

- Healthy
- Same interests
- Same goals, values “worth the effort”
- Willing to work hard together
- Must communicate as they navigate down the river to actually make it

(PP 5) Read slide.

Is this healthy or unhealthy?

Ask the group how a mostly sexual/material things relationship might look or feel to either partner.

(Note to Instructor: If you feel like this scenario will bring out an immature response, you may choose to not include this one.)
(PP 6) Poll: Ask the group if they agree or disagree with this statement: “Feeling safe in a relationship is the ultimate test of a healthy relationship.”

There are three types of safety we will talk about with regards to healthy relationships:

**Physical Safety**—Can you think of any examples? It can be easy to come up with examples of what it means to be physically unsafe and most would agree on the line between physically safe and physically unsafe. What about emotional safety?

**Emotional Safety**—Can you think of any examples? This kind of safety comes from being accepted and free to be yourself. You feel safe to say what’s on your mind and in your heart. The ability to be honest and open brings a sense of emotional connection that we’ve already discussed is important to developing a strong relationship.

**Trust & Commitment Safety** means knowing your partner/friend will be there for you. They’ve got your back and are reliable. There is a belief that you can have a future with this person. Not every relationship does or even should get to this level; but like our other pyramids, these levels of safety build on each other to create strong, healthy, and safe relationships.

With that in mind, remember that you cannot truly have trust and commitment without physical and emotional safety. And don’t assume that because there is no physical violence and you can talk freely with each other that it’s safe to trust the other person. As we’ve discussed, there are a lot of important factors that go into building a relationship and **time** is one of them. **Trust & Commitment Safety** come with time.
(PP 7) Workbook Exercise: Is It a Healthy Relationship? (pgs. 19–20)

Examine your current or past relationship (or a friend’s relationship). Put a check on the line where it falls/fell on the three categories.

Identify behaviors that would move a relationship closer to the healthy/safe side. Write down a few.

(Encourage them to assess their own relationship if they are in one.)

SECTION 6.2 Having Fun—It’s Important! (Not included in the EBP Model)

SECTION 6.3 Breaking Up (This concept is taught in section 13.7 of this Manual)

Trusted Adult Connection

(PP 8) Read slide.
Anyone can have doubts about his or her relationship. Is it worth it? Should I stay?

The answers to these questions below can help you know. They may help you decide if you should end it or identify what needs to change to continue. If you are not in a relationship, use them to understand the problems of a past relationship or to analyze a close friend’s relationship. This exercise will help you know what to pay attention to when you start a new relationship.

Place an “X” on the line to indicate where the relationship is/was.

**Does it feel conditional?**
- I worry about not being good enough. I don’t feel free to be the real me.
- I feel I need to act, talk, or look a certain way or have money to get his or her love.
- I’m afraid that my partner might leave if I don’t do everything he or she wants me to do.

**Or, unconditional?**
- My partner admires and appreciates the real me. I don’t have to pretend to be perfect.
- I can rely on my partner to be faithful.
- My partner shows that he or she really wants to be with me.
Does it feel controlling?
- He or she puts me down and shows little interest in my opinions or feelings.
- My partner makes me feel stupid. I walk on eggshells.
- My partner seems super jealous or checks up on me 24/7. Fights get scary.

Or, equal and supportive?
- I can share my feelings and opinions and my partner seems to care about them.
- My partner supports me in my goals. We encourage each other to be better people.
- We’re friends. I feel respected by my partner.

Safety Note: If you put an “X” on the controlling end or are afraid in your relationship, talk to someone you trust. Check out LoveIsRespect.org website. Text “loveis” to 22522. In Spanish also.

Does it feel like it is mostly about sex or material things?
- My hunch is that without the sex, there would not be much interest.
- I know deep down inside that I am in this relationship because of the money or material things my partner gives me.
- Because I am with him or her, I look more attractive to other people, and that’s part of why I’m in it.

Or, like the attractions and interests are on many levels?
- I know it is more than my looks, body, or money that my partner likes about me.
- We talk about lots of stuff and have similar interests and values. We genuinely like each other’s personality and have fun together.
- We both want to do nice things for each other. It does not feel like one person is doing all the giving or all the work.

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Describe 3 behaviors you would like to see in a relationship that would help make it happy, healthy, and safe. (For example: Listen to me, show you care about what I say, be faithful to me)

1. 

2. 

3.