Unhealthy relationships, dating violence, and risky sexual behaviors are a serious threat to the well-being and futures of many young people. Love Notes Sexual Risk Avoidance Adaptation – Evidence Based addresses these issues by building skills and knowledge for healthy relationships of all kinds: romantic, friendship, family, school, and work in the context of the Healthy Youth Act of 2017 that set the stage for SRA funding.

In 13 lessons, youth learn more about themselves: how their past has shaped the present and how to make decisions on what they want for their own future. They learn what healthy relationships are and are not while building a set of skills for choosing friends and partners, and for developing and maintaining healthy relationships that do not involve sex, including evidence-based communication and conflict management skills. Parents and family connection activities offer conversation starters on healthy relationships and on the benefits of leaving sex out of their youthful relationships.

The original Love Notes 3.0 (classic) was condensed to 12 hours of key instruction and evaluated in CHAMPS (Creating Healthy Adolescents through Meaningful Prevention Services), 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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Let’s Talk About Sex

Overview

This curriculum, and in particular this lesson and Lessons 12 and 13, represent a unique approach to addressing sexual risk avoidance. Prevention programs often focus on reducing risky behaviors by providing sexual health knowledge of risks and protection, skills, and services. But, many youth lack the motivation to avoid STDs, HIV, and an unplanned pregnancy. They need bigger reasons that will stick even beyond their teen years to follow through on sexual delay and sexual risk avoidance.

*Love Notes* takes a holistic, positive, youth-development approach by helping youth to better understand and develop themselves, define their goals, and acquire essential healthy relationship and life skills. It helps teens think about their lives now and into the future. It is by intention that sex is addressed directly at this point in the curriculum, after the material on developing healthy selves and healthy relationship skills.

This holistic approach is extended to sexual matters and draws on what they have learned so far about healthy relationships. Before offering health information (Lesson 12), teens consider sexual meaning and contexts. Lesson 11 begins by offering a deeper look at intimacy and behavioral motivations. The exploration of intimacy speaks to young people’s desires for connection, affirmation, respect, and meaning. It helps teens ask some basic questions about whether two people are on the same page about emotions and intentions and desires. They discover the positives that sexual delay offers for ultimately achieving a fulfilling love life. It is not simply about waiting because of negative risks. Teens take ownership over defining a context for sex that is personally meaningful and protective of their aspirations and goals in life. It empowers them to identify their sexual values and intentions versus simply following the cues of the cultural scripts around them.
 Teens engage in personal decision-making on sexual boundaries and decide when, under what conditions, and with whom they’d move their line. They explore the risks and benefits of their sexual choices, and especially the benefits of waiting until they become adults or are married. Teens are introduced to some important testimonies from sexually experienced teens and young adults that do not normalize teen sexual activity but encourage sexual delay. Teens learn about risky situations for sex and strategies for avoiding them. They use their critical thinking and communication skills to analyze real-life situations and respond to pressure situations.

In the following Lesson 12, straightforward, medically accurate information is presented on anatomy, bio-reproduction, and STDs and HIV. Contraceptive and condom information is presented in a context of adult, married-couple family planning and does not normalize teen sexual activity. The lesson ends with teens creating their own personal policies and plans for staying true to their sexual decisions.

Lesson 13 will reinforce sexual risk avoidance by exploring the consequences of unplanned and nonmarital pregnancy through the eyes of a child.

**Goals**

1. To demonstrate a deeper understanding of intimacy and explore how it develops.
2. To encourage youth to reflect on physical intimacy, sexual values, and boundary setting.
3. To describe similarities and differences of hormones and sexual arousal processes for males and females.
4. To become aware of risky situations for sex.
5. To set one’s sexual boundary line and identify the benefits of staying in the green zone.
Lesson 11

Lesson at a Glance

11.1 Sex and Sliding
   Activities: Music video and discussion: S.E.X. (Lyfe Jennings); Real Experiences

11.2 The Six Parts of Intimacy
   Activity: How Connected — Annie and CJ

11.3 Understanding Sexual Regrets

11.4 Are We on the Same Page?
   Activity: Body Basics — Hormones and Sexual Arousal Patterns

11.5 Risky Situations for Sex
   Activity: Video and discussion: All Falls Down or Toothpaste

11.6 Set Your Personal Line
   Activity: Drawing My Line

Materials Checklist

Resources:
11a. Chart a Relationship worksheet (pg. 176, duplicate, one per person)

Materials:
- Lesson 11 PowerPoint slideshow is a digital download that comes with the curriculum. Easy-to-follow download directions are found at DibbleInstitute.org/LNEBPSRA.
- Purchase the music video S.E.X., by Lyfe Jennings ($1.99 from iTunes).
- Flip chart and markers
- Love Notes Question Box

Workbook Applications:
- Let’s Talk About Sex (pg. 31)
- Intimacy — It’s More than a Physical Thing (pg. 32)
- How Connected? (pg. 33)
- Setting Your Line (pgs. 34–35)
SECTION 11.1
Sex and Sliding

(PP 1) List lesson goals:

In Lesson 11, we want to achieve the following goals:

1. To demonstrate a deeper understanding of intimacy and explore how it develops.
2. To encourage youth to reflect on physical intimacy, sexual values, and boundary setting.
3. To describe similarities and differences of hormones and sexual arousal processes for males and females.
4. To become aware of risky situations for sex.
5. To set one’s sexual boundary line and identify the benefits of staying in the green zone.

Then introduce the lesson to the youth:

Refer to Goals 1 and 2: To demonstrate a deeper understanding of intimacy and explore how it develops. To encourage youth to reflect on physical intimacy, sexual values, and boundary setting.

Today, we’re going to talk more directly about sex. As we know, sliding can lead to some high-cost consequences, like a pregnancy, an STD, or emotional hurt from a relationship that turns out badly.

• But today, we are going to discuss sex from a different angle—what makes sex good.
• Married couples want to have a good sex life. It’s important for healthy marriages.
• But, what makes sex beautiful and affirming? Does it depend on physical attraction or techniques, or does it involve something much deeper?
• We’ll explore this question today to help us think about where we set our personal boundaries.

Music video: S.E.X., Lyfe Jennings
13 Minutes
Instructor Note: This music video is used to begin the discussion of meanings, values, expectations, and setting boundaries for sex. The link is only the lyrics. The visuals of the official music video are very important. Purchase the music video from the iTunes Store ($1.99).

The introduction to the lesson and song, playing the music video (3:21 minutes), and the discussion to follow should be limited to 8–10 minutes.

(PP 2, 3) Before showing, say:

- You’ll see the girl in the video is clearly attracted to the guy. Watch for how you think she is interpreting his desire to be physical with her. What is she thinking it means?
- As you watch him, imagine what he’s thinking.
- Make a note of any lines that stand out to you in the video. Show the video.

Note: There are several notable lines aside from the key one, “Think before you let it go.” Other notable ones: “Guys just want relations, not relationships;” “That’s just a line guys use to get in your pants;” “You’re worth waiting for.”

Debrief by asking: What do you think? Were the guy and the girl on the same page in terms of motivation? What having sex means to each of them? Listen.

Let’s talk about that line, “Think before you let it go.”

- How many people even talk to see if they’re on the same page about their values, about what getting sexual means before “they let it go”?
- How many talk about the risks of pregnancy or STDs?
- But putting aside health risks for the moment, how many people talk honestly about what’s in their heart?
• What are the emotional risks when two people aren’t on the same page about what they want getting physical to mean?

Remember the woman in the song saying, “Maybe she can hear it coming from me”?

• Surveys of teens consistently say, “Talk to us about relationships and emotions, not just the health risks of STDs and pregnancy.”

• Maybe it would help if teens had a parent or trusted adult to talk to about sex—and not just about health risks, but also about emotions, relationships, and love.

At one point, the female singer says, “Once you’ve given it away, you’ll never get it back.” We need to talk about that line.

• People sometimes do things they wish they hadn’t and want to do things differently.

• Anyone, male or female, who’s had sex can decide to stop. They can decide to leave sex out of their next teen relationship.

There’s more to sex than body parts. Sex is about the heart too. It involves using your brain and your heart to make your own sexual decisions.

Real Experiences

(PP 4) Open up your workbooks to page 31. Let’s look at these quotes about sex and intimacy from a few young people.

Read aloud these real experiences.

Cassie, a teen mom: “So many of my friends were pressured to have sex when they didn’t really want to. What I’ve noticed is that people who have sex at 13, 14, and 15 go on to have lots of casual sex. They don’t have any concept of sex as something special. It makes them feel worthless after a while. There’s no real pleasure. They aren’t enjoying it. I know; I’ve been there.”
Lesson 11

Melanie, 19: “On the topic of sex, I’m starting to understand it more as I get older. I have really changed my views and am quite different about how I choose to be with someone. I wasn’t really happy when I was involved with someone and we were sexually intimate, but I still did it. Now, I can’t even get close to doing that any more, knowing how unhappy it truly made me.”

Seth, 22: “When I was younger, I used to engage in casual sex all the time and found no real gratification in it. It was just a physical thing. Now things are totally different. It’s not just about me. I really care about my partner.”

Did you know? 60.5% of high-school-age teens have not had sex. And, of those who have, the majority of those teens wish they’d waited.

Note: There is a terrific MTV clip (2:30 minutes), Dominique’s Decision, in the LN SRA Manual on pg. 236 that you may want to preview. It portrays a beautiful, young, African American woman who has decided to wait on sex until marriage for some pretty positive reasons. You will need to receive permission from OAH to show it.

SECTION 11.2
The Six Parts of Intimacy

(PP 5) Refer to Goal 1: To demonstrate a deeper understanding of intimacy and explore how it develops.

Let’s examine what intimacy really means. It might shed light on the statements we just heard.

Brainstorm: What does the word intimacy mean to you?
People often think it refers to physical intimacy or sex, but intimacy is so much more. It’s about being truly close and connected to someone.

Turn to page 32 in your workbook. As you can see there, intimacy involves 6 areas of your life: Physical, Verbal, Emotional, Social, Spiritual, and Commitment.

Read aloud each description of the 6 parts of intimacy.

As we saw in the Relationship Pyramid, sex can be a shaky foundation to start a relationship on. Sex can fool people into believing they are close. For some, sex may be a substitute for true intimacy.

(PP 6) Read the slide.

Activity: How Connected—Annie and CJ?

(PP 7) This activity uses a six-part intimacy framework to analyze a young couple’s relationship. Pass out markers or colored pencils to use with the Chart a Relationship worksheet (Resource 11a, pg. 176). Announce that you are going to read a short description of a relationship between Annie and CJ. Ask participants to think about how connected the couple is on each of the six kinds of intimacy. Ask them to make a check mark with their markers between 0% (no connection) and 100% (very strongly connected). Pause for the group to mark the degree of connectedness on their sheets after you read each category.

Physical: Annie and CJ got sexually involved almost from the start. A lot of their time together is focused on sex.

Make a check mark on your chart indicating how connected they are physically.

Verbal: Annie and CJ hardly talk at length about anything important. She tries to bring up serious topics, but it goes nowhere. To her, he doesn’t seem interested in finding out much about her friends, what she likes to do, or her future plans. She has dreams of going to
college. School was never CJ’s strong suit and he doesn’t like talking about the future. When she asks him where he stands on the relationship, he usually just clams up and won’t talk about it. They argue a lot over little things.

Make a check mark indicating how connected they are verbally.

**Emotional:** Annie’s not close to her family. She wants this relationship with CJ to last forever, and she feels close when they’re together sexually. CJ likes her and thinks this is okay for now, but definitely doesn’t think much about the future or feel that she is the one. Because she’s afraid to lose him, she tries to keep tabs on where he is and whom he’s hanging out with. She gets very angry and jealous if he does things without her. CJ ends up giving in to Annie’s preferences a lot and keeps quiet so he doesn’t have to deal with her mood swings. In addition, he’s easygoing and would rather not rock the boat.

Make a check mark on your chart indicating how connected they are emotionally.

**Social:** His idea of spending time together is having her hang out with his friends or being alone with her getting it on sexually. She wants to do more things with him, but he’s not that into her interests or what she thinks is fun. Even so, they do both like watching movies. A lot of their time is spent inside the house.

Make a check mark on your chart indicating how connected are they socially.

**Spiritual:** Annie tends to think a lot about the meaning of things. She likes to talk about serious things like whether God exists, what happens when you die, or whether certain things are morally right or wrong. CJ makes fun of her serious side and her interest in talking about ideas and beliefs (and disagrees with most of it). He knows what he believes and would rather not have debates. CJ goes to church, especially on holidays, and believes that it’s important. He would have his children baptized and brought up in the church.

Make a check mark on your chart to indicate how connected they are spiritually.

**Commitment:** He hasn’t thought beyond next month. She’s hoping to talk him into staying in school and going to college with her so that they can stay together and make a go of it. She takes him to school, covers for him when he doesn’t go, and gets applications for him for the community college. She suspects (more than one person has told her) he’s
cheating on her, but he says he’s not and that she’s his main girl.

Make two check marks on your chart—one for Annie and one for CJ—to indicate each person’s level of commitment.

(PP 8) Discussion: Read the questions on the PowerPoint slide and ask for a call-out “yes” or “no.” Have the youth come to some conclusions about Annie and CJ.

Debrief: It appears that Annie and CJ are not very connected in some key areas.

Hopefully this scenario helps you think about what you want in a relationship. And it might help you make important decisions about sex.

Note to Instructor: Remember, according to a survey of sexually experienced teens, 73% of girls and 56% of boys wish they had waited longer to start having sex.

Activity: How Connected?

(PP 9) Now turn to page 33 of your workbook.

This chart can help a person look at his or her relationship reality. Maybe it will help you understand problems of a past relationship.

This framework might help you decide how to pace your involvement in a future relationship (or a first) and consider the importance of building connections of intimacy that don’t involve adding sex.

We encourage you to do this at home.
SECTION 11.3
Understanding Sexual Regrets

(PP 10) Refer to Goal 2: To encourage youth to reflect on physical intimacy, sexual values, and boundary setting.

You’ve all heard about the health risks of sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy. But there are also emotional risks from sex-too-soon.

1. **Hurt from unmatched expectations**—Sex always creates expectations. One person may expect or assume that sex means something while the other does not.

2. **Change a relationship**—Because of unmatched expectations over the meaning of sex, there is less honesty and less talking about true feelings. There may be more questioning, dishonesty, avoidance, second-guessing, and pressuring.

3. **Take over**—If there’s nothing else to your relationship then sex, it will become the way you spend your time and there’s no chance to develop a deeper connection.

4. **Keep a bad relationship going**—It can create the illusion of closeness and become a substitute for genuine intimacy, which can keep a couple together who really doesn’t belong together.

Emotional Risks of Sex-Too-Soon

1. Can lead to hurt from unmatched expectations.
2. Can change a relationship; keep it from growing in a healthy and honest way.
3. Can take over a relationship.
SECTION 11.4
Are We on the Same Page?

Refer to Goal 3: To describe similarities and differences of hormones and sexual arousal processes for males and females.

This section explores the question of being on the same page regarding expectations for the meaning of sex. It begins with a short presentation to understand some basics on hormones and sexual arousal patterns.

Body Basics: Hormones and Sexual Arousal Patterns

(PP 11) Let's talk a little about your body and why it does what it does and how that might affect your relationships.

This discussion of hormones is based on the research literature, which is mostly focused on those who conform biologically or socially to the more stereotypical expressions of male and female. Transgender, gender flexible, and questioning youth may not fit these data as neatly.

As a reminder, for whatever reason, LGBTQ youth are at a greater risk than the population of teens as a whole to engage in heterosexual behavior resulting in a pregnancy. They are also at higher risk for STIs. So, it is important for these youth to also listen up even though every description will not describe their experiences exactly. They are encouraged to help us all understand how their experiences differ.

What is true for everyone is that testosterone affects sex drive. Oxytocin affects bonding and feelings of closeness when it is released during sex.
Hormones:

- Males have higher levels of **testosterone**, which is the hormone for sexual drive (for both males and females) and aggression. Females have testosterone, but lower levels, on average.

- Another hormone related to sex is **oxytocin**, which is the hormone for bonding with another person. Females generally have higher levels of it than males. Females get a surge of oxytocin when nursing babies to increase the bond, but also after having sex. This may be one reason females have a harder time separating their emotions from sex than males do.

Sexual Arousal:

- There is a pattern to the changes in the body when you are sexually aroused, turned on, “horny,” etc. There are changes in heart rate, breathing, blood pressure, and lubrication. This process is very similar for males and females, but there are some key differences:

- **Time**—males get turned on fairly easily and the time from the start to the end for young males is from 30 seconds to 4 minutes…. For females, because arousal is not just physical but also emotional, it can take from 5 to 20 minutes.

- **Affection or an emotional connection and intimacy are considered very important for female sexual satisfaction. According to a national survey, less than 10% of American women said that casual sex was appealing.**

Sex in our culture is portrayed as no big deal and thus casual sex is no big deal. Well, is it?

- It’s important for you to define the meaning you attach to sex and to draw your own boundary line regarding physical intimacy.

- **It’s your heart and your body.** Put yourself in charge of making the best decisions to protect your aspirations and goals. Don’t just follow the pop culture.

- We want you to have good sex someday and the context in which it happens—like with whom and when—makes all the difference in the world.

Here are some insights about friends with benefits and hooking up:

- Often, females hook up in hopes of it evolving into a more serious relationship.

- Males and females—or partners of any gender, identity, or orientation—can, and often do, differ in their expectations about no-strings-attached sex.
(PP 12) You’ve all heard the phrase “safe sex” when it comes to protecting yourself from pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.

Safe sex can also mean that you feel emotionally safe and physically safe.

Safe sex also means two people are mature and old enough to really take on the implications and consequences of sex.

- The safest sex—emotionally, socially, and health-wise—takes place in the context of adulthood and a healthy marriage.

SECTION 11.5
Risky Situations for Sex

Refer to Goal 4: To become aware of risky situations for sex.

Choose either All Falls Down, in its entirety (12 minutes if stopped at the end of the film before the credits), or Toothpaste (see next page). Preview both and decide which one fits your audience better.

Important: As you are discussing the film, be sure to make the following points:
Respecting each other (like the couple that hasn’t had sex yet) and using a condom does not ensure you don’t end up with a pregnancy. Do you think they are ready to be parents? They are still in high school. The only 100% effective way for them to prevent a pregnancy is to continue to wait to have sex. As they continue to wait, they will be able to strengthen their relationship so that when they are ready to become parents after they have graduated high school—and better yet, college or additional training—have gotten jobs, and are married, they will be better able to provide their child with a stronger and more stable home environment than if they ended up getting pregnant before they were planning on it.
(PP 13) Show *All Falls Down* in its entirety.

Process using the following questions for the *All Falls Down* film:

1. *Do you think the girls intended to have sex with the guys when they went home with them?* (Neither girl seemed like she consciously chose to go home with the guy to have sex.)

2. *At what point could each of the girls have done something differently to prevent sliding into sex?* (Getting to know others in a group setting, like the mall, rather than alone playing video games; awareness of the “love chemicals;” the 7 Principles; etc.)

3. *What do you think of the other relationship (the one where the couple was moving slowly)? Do you think this kind of relationship is possible? Realistic? What is positive about this type of relationship?* (Here is an ideal place to add the important note above.)

Today, we are going to talk in great detail about how to set up a way for you to pace and plan, decide instead of slide, and take control of your love life and your future.

(PP 14, 15) Show *Toothpaste* in its entirety (14:40 minutes if you stop at the end of the film before the credits). Or, see the directions below for using a 9-minute segment.

**Important:** Whether you use the full or short version of *Toothpaste*, conclude by stating, “Loving and trusting each other (like Jennifer and Carlos) and using a condom does not ensure you don’t end up with a pregnancy. Do you think Jennifer and Carlos are ready to be parents? They are still in high school. The only 100% effective way for them to prevent a pregnancy is to continue to wait to have sex. As they continue to wait, they will be able to strengthen their relationship so that when they are ready to become parents after they have graduated high school—and better yet, college or additional training—have gotten jobs, and are married, then they will be able to provide their child with a stronger and more stable home environment than if they ended up getting pregnant before they were planning on it.”
Process after the film:

Both girls had second thoughts in the bedrooms. Jennifer and Carlos were able to talk and agree to continue waiting. Cristina, on the other hand, says to Bobby she’s not ready, but she is not prepared to resist Bobby’s pressures.

**Ask:** What have you learned from Love Notes so far that might have helped Cristina? What would have helped her better navigate her attraction to Bobby? Let’s brainstorm.

**Add if needed:** Knowing about the love chemicals, identifying qualities important to her in a partner and ingredients that build a good foundation, the 7 Principles, answering the 3 questions about healthy relationships, awareness of red flags, the 6 parts of intimacy—knowing that good sex is far more than a physical thing, and being able to communicate confidently about sexual values, boundaries, and relationship expectations.

**Ask:** What if she had gone downstairs and gotten the condom? Would all have been okay with her heart, even if it had prevented a pregnancy? Do you recall how he treated her afterwards?

**Ask:** Is it just a girl’s responsibility for how things go? What from Love Notes would have helped Bobby be a young man of character? What could he learn from Love Notes that would enable him to have a healthy, respectful relationship? Listen.

**Ask:** Sketch out how you think the pregnancy will affect each of their lives. Play out his subsequent life and hers. Ask for their hunches. Be sure to weave in the points from the important note above.

If you are short on time, you can play 9 minutes of the film. Start at 6:42 (they are getting ready for the party) and end at 15:00. Start by introducing the film as follows:

- We’re going to watch part of a short film written by teens. The film, Toothpaste, is set in Mission, Texas and involves two teen couples and their decisions about sex.
- Jennifer and Carlos have been in a healthy relationship for quite some time. Jennifer says they can talk about anything and that Carlos really listens to her. Jennifer isn’t quite sure but is thinking they may be ready to have sex.
• Cristina, Jennifer’s best friend, has been going with Bobby for three and a half weeks. Cristina thinks she’s ready to have sex.

• Jennifer lets Cristina know she doesn’t think it’s a good idea. She asks Cristina, “Do you talk to Bobby? Do you trust him? You know he has a reputation.”

• Cristina’s response is, “But he’s different with me.” “We’re in love.” She ignores her friend’s concern.

• With that, Jennifer insists they both go to the pharmacy to get condoms. We’ll pick up the film with Jennifer and Cristina getting ready to go to a party. We’ll see what happens.

Process the short version with the same prompts and concluding important points about Jennifer and Carlos.

SECTION 11.6
Set Your Personal Line

(PP 16) Refer to Goal 5: To set one’s sexual boundary line and identify the benefits of staying in the green zone.

We’ve spent some time exploring intimacy and we’ve expanded the definition of “safe sex” to include emotional safety that is protecting the heart and soul, not just the body.

We also discussed sexual arousal patterns and hormones that could have bearing on why two people may not be on the same page.

We examined some of the emotional risks of having sex too soon.
We also learned about what happens when you slide into a relationship.

Now you have the opportunity to set your own sexual boundary line. You can decide the meaning, pace, and timing for sex.

Activity: Drawing My Line

(PP 17) Drawing My Line Exercise:

Open your workbook to pages 34–35. Read the instructions.

- Where do you set your line and when, with whom, and under what condition would you move your line? Some people wait till marriage for sex and some do not. It can be hard to keep the line set where you intended. But without a clear boundary line, it is much easier to slide and to do sexual things you do not want to and may regret.

- This exercise is meant to help you think about your boundaries and what meaning you attach to different levels of physical intimacy. The questions on this page and the next can help you think about the benefits or the risks involved with your line. Staying in the green zone is optimal. Moving into the yellow and orange zones puts you in risky situations.

On page 34 (Setting Your Line): Look at the scale and think about the meaning you would attach to each deepening level of physical intimacy. Put an “X” on the scale to indicate where you draw your line, or where you would draw your line if you could do things over. If you are re-setting your line for the future, where will it be?

(PP 18) Refer to page 35 in the workbook (Your Sexual Values):
Consider the importance of making decisions on pacing and timing.

- What does sex mean to you? How does that relate to your values and sense of what is okay to do when and with whom? Under what conditions and when, would you consider moving your line?
Refer to page 35 in the workbook (Risks and Benefits):

As you consider the risks and benefits of where you set your line, remember what we learned about love chemicals. Consider the benefits of staying in the green zone and the risks of going beyond the green zone. Also know that…

- 8 out of 10 first-time sexual relationships last six months or less.
- People don’t tend to regret waiting on sex, but people often regret having it too soon.

Love Notes is not about telling you what to do.

- But, we want you to leave here with an understanding of the importance of being deliberate about your personal values, what you want, where you set your line—now or next time.
- And to be fully aware of the risks and benefits of where you set your line and how you pace your relationships.

**Trusted Adult Connection**

(PP 19) Have youth ask their trusted adult to read page 34 in the workbook about the scale of physical intimacy and then page 25 on sex and sliding.

After they have filled out page 35 of the Setting Your Line workbook application, they should talk to their trusted adult about where he or she draws their line (or will draw it in the future) and when and under what conditions he or she would move it.

Encourage them to have a frank discussion about the benefits or risks of where they draw their line and how they want to pace things in the future.
Chart a Relationship

Using the six-part intimacy framework, make a check mark to represent the level of connection in each category for the relationship between Annie and CJ. Zero percent is little to no connection, 100 percent is a super connection.

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<tr>
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Let’s Talk About Sex

Too often people slide into sex without having first defined their values and a context for sex that is meaningful and protective of their aspirations in life. Sex is a big deal emotionally, socially and health-wise. It’s important to consider the long-term consequences for you, your partner and, most importantly, for a child that could result from an unplanned pregnancy.

“On the topic of sex, I’m starting to understand it more as I get older. I have really changed my views and am quite different about how I choose to be with someone. I wasn’t really happy when I was involved with someone and we were intimate, but I still did it. Now, I can’t even get close to doing that any more, knowing how unhappy it truly made me. I want a real relationship.”

~ Melanie, 19

“When I was younger, I used to engage in casual sex all the time and found no real gratification in it. It was just a physical thing. Now things are totally different. It’s not just about me, I really care about my partner.”

~ Seth, 22

“So many of my friends were pressured to have sex when they didn’t really want to. What I’ve noticed is that people who have sex at 13, 14, and 15 go on to have lots of casual sex. They don’t have any concept of sex as something special. It makes them feel worthless after a while. There’s no real pleasure. They aren’t enjoying it. I know; I’ve been there.”

~ Cassie, 18, single mom of a two-year-old child

Did you know?

60.5% of high school age teens have not had sex.

Of those who have, the majority wish they’d waited longer.
It takes time to know who you really are, what you want, and to build trust and a healthy relationship. It usually doesn't happen until your twenties. Sex-too-soon can cloud a person’s ability to see the relationship or other person clearly.

Verbal: This connection is about being able to talk. When partners find each other interesting to talk to, when they can share thoughts and feelings freely, they feel close.

Emotional: This connection is about feelings for each other that are equally strong and genuine. It’s sharing what’s in your heart. If it feels controlling or conditional, it’s not an emotionally healthy connection. If insecurity or neediness is driving the connection, it’s not healthy.

Social: Partners that enjoy their time together doing things they both enjoy feel connected.

Spiritual: When couples talk about what’s really important—like their values, what’s influenced their life, or religious, philosophical, moral, and political beliefs—that is spiritual. Talking on this level can make two people feel like soul mates.

Commitment: It means putting a partner’s needs on the same level as your own. It’s about thinking like a team. And it’s about a promise of faithfulness and about being there even when it’s not easy or convenient.

Physical: Physical intimacy is not all or nothing, but a continuum from holding hands, hugging, kissing, embracing, caressing, and on to more intimate forms of sexual involvement.

*AJ and I started going together junior year. We had lots of fun and could talk about anything. Our relationship was not like the superficial ones around us. After graduation I got the opportunity to travel and work abroad, but AJ didn’t want me to go. I started realizing I wasn’t ready for that level of commitment. I wanted to go to college and travel. Am I ever glad I stuck to my boundaries in high school. It would’ve been so easy to think sex was okay because we had a good relationship. But what if I’d gotten pregnant? And what if we’d taken it to that level? Would I have been too emotionally involved to leave? As it turned out, we broke up two months later. I learned from that experience and left with no regrets.*
This chart can help a person look at their relationship reality. Maybe it will help you understand problems of a past relationship. This framework might help you decide how to pace your involvement in a future relationship (or a first) and consider the importance of building connections of intimacy that don’t involve adding sex.

Use a current or past relationship or a relationship of someone you know well. Place a mark in each category where the level of connection falls on the scale. Zero percent is little connection, 100 is a strong connection.

### How Connected?

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What insights did this charting exercise give you about the relationship?
Where do you set your line and when, with whom, and under what condition would you move your line? Some people wait till marriage for sex and some do not. It can be hard to keep the line set where you intended. But without a clear boundary line it is much easier to slide and to do sexual things you do not want to and may regret.

This section is meant to help you think about your boundaries, and what meaning you attach to different levels of physical intimacy. The questions on this page and the next can help you think about the benefits or the risks involved with your line. Staying in the green zone is optimal. Moving into the yellow and orange zones puts you in risky situations.

1. Drawing Lines:
   Put an "X" on the scale above to indicate where you draw your line, or where you would draw your line if you could do things over. If you are re-setting your line for the future where will it be? Setting a clear line makes it more likely you can hold to that line.
2. Your Sexual Values:
In thinking about your future, what do you want sex to mean? And what is the right context and timing for sex? How does that relate to your values?

3. Risks and Benefits:
Describe the benefits for you of staying in the green zone. Then describe the risks for someone moving beyond the green zone on the scale.

If you are in a relationship now, have you talked to your partner about your values and line?  

- Yes  
- No