

OVERVIEW

Gender harassment can cause serious peer conflicts and emotional harm to targeted students. This lesson helps students understand and identify gender harassment and think through effective ways to address it.

OBJECTIVE

Identify ways to help stop gender harassment

LESSON TIPS

- Gender harassment is a pervasive problem among middle school students that has serious consequences for the victims, but it can be difficult for students to talk about. Some students may be uncomfortable discussing sexual or gender identity. Others may not think gender harassment is a problem, or may even think it's acceptable behavior. All of these factors can make this lesson challenging to teach.
- Preview the lesson before teaching it. If you identify any aspects of the lesson that might be challenging for you or your students, reach out for support. Your school counseling staff, school or district LGBT support groups, or LGBT community organizations can help.
- Make sure students know you're available to talk and help them with safety issues, including gender harassment. Often, students fail to report harassment because they don't believe an adult can or will help them.
- The topics in this lesson may require more time and space for discussion with your students, so it's okay to skip the end of the lesson in order to focus on the discussion portion.

PREP

- Paper and pencil
- Partners
- Small groups

THEMES

- Bullying and Harassment
- Helping Others

WARM-UP (2 min.)	What's your definition of harassment?	<p>POSSIBLE ANSWERS Being made fun of. Being teased because of what you wear or how you act.</p> <p>FOLLOW-UP QUESTION Where have you heard this word before?</p>
CLASS DISCUSSION (3 min.)	<p>The <i>Second Step</i> Program defines gender harassment this way:</p> <p>Gender harassment is when boys or girls are bothered, teased, or bullied because they act differently from most boys or girls, or because they may be gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender.</p>	
	What do you think it means to harass someone because "they act differently from most boys or girls"?	<p>POSSIBLE ANSWERS Teasing a girl for being a tomboy. Messing with a boy because he doesn't like sports.</p> <p>FOLLOW-UP QUESTION Why do you think people might harass someone for this?</p>
	What do you think it means to harass someone because "they may be gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender"?	<p>POSSIBLE ANSWERS Making someone who's gay feel unwelcome. Threatening to beat up people who aren't straight.</p> <p>FOLLOW-UP QUESTION Why do you think people might harass someone for being this way?</p>
	<p>Does gender harassment happen here at school?</p> <p>Do you ever see it happen outside of school or online?</p>	<p>POSSIBLE ANSWERS Sometimes. Maybe. No.</p> <p>Yes, often. I don't really notice.</p> <p>FOLLOW-UP QUESTION Why is gender harassment so common online?</p>
VIDEO (3 min.)	What are the effects of gender harassment?	<p>VIDEO SUMMARY Students talk about their experiences with gender harassment, giving examples and saying what they felt and how it affected them.</p>

CLASS DISCUSSION (4 min.)	<p>How did gender harassment affect the students in the video?</p> <p>What other effects can gender harassment have?</p>	<p>POSSIBLE ANSWERS</p> <p>It made them feel bad. It made them feel alone.</p> <p>Bad thoughts. Suicide, if it gets bad enough.</p> <p>FOLLOW-UP QUESTION</p> <p>What would you say to someone being harassed?</p>
THINK, TURN, TELL (6 min.)	<p>When the word "gay" is used as an insult at school or online, how can it affect the person who's being insulted?</p> <p>Does it matter if that person is gay or not?</p>	<p>POSSIBLE ANSWERS</p> <p>It can make the person angry or depressed. It can make the person think the word is bad.</p> <p>No, it doesn't matter. Yes, it's worse if they are.</p> <p>FOLLOW-UP QUESTION</p> <p>Why do people use the word "gay" as an insult?</p>
	<p>How do you think it makes someone who may be gay feel to see or hear the word "gay" being used as an insult?</p>	<p>POSSIBLE ANSWERS</p> <p>It makes the person feel bad. It tells the person that others think being gay is bad.</p> <p>FOLLOW-UP QUESTION</p> <p>Has someone ever used a word that made you feel bad about yourself? What happened?</p>
	<p>Is it ever okay to use the word "gay" as an insult? Why or why not?</p>	<p>POSSIBLE ANSWERS</p> <p>No, because it's not bad to be gay. Because you shouldn't make fun of the way a person is.</p> <p>FOLLOW-UP QUESTION</p> <p>What can you do if you hear someone use the word "gay" as an insult?</p>
ACTIVITY (4 min.)	<p>ACTIVITY SUMMARY</p> <p>In small groups, students think of 3 things they can do to help stop gender harassment at school or online. Groups act out their best ideas for the class.</p>	<p>ACTIVITY EXTENSION</p> <p>Have each group think of a short song or a poem using their best idea.</p>
WRAP-UP (3 min.)	<p>Write an IF--THEN PLAN describing what you'll do if you witness gender harassment.</p>	<p>FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT</p> <p>Look for students to identify one practical strategy for helping someone who's being harassed at school or online.</p>

Name: _____

VOCABULARY AND WARM-UP Harassment (n.) My definition:

Second Step definition of **gender harassment**:

CLASS DISCUSSION

I think to harass someone because "they act differently from most boys or girls" means

I think to harass someone because "they may be gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender" means

VIDEO GUIDE

Effects of gender harassment:

THINK, TURN, TELL

PART 1: Using the word "gay" as an insult can _____

It matters if the person is gay or not. ☐ Yes ☐ No

PART 2: I think seeing or hearing the word "gay" used as an insult would make someone who may be gay feel

PART 3: It ☐ is ☐ isn't ever okay to use the word "gay" as an insult because

ACTIVITY

Things I can do to help stop gender harassment at school or online:

Name: _____

WRAP-UP

Write an IF-THEN PLAN describing what you'll do if you witness gender harassment.

IF-THEN PLAN

IF is a specific cue you can react to quickly.

THEN is a specific action or actions you can do immediately.

IF (OR WHEN) I witness gender harassment,

THEN

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OVERVIEW

Sexual harassment is common in middle school, and it can cause emotional harm and seriously impair students' ability to learn. This lesson helps students identify sexual harassment so they can work to stop it and create a safe and supportive school environment.

OBJECTIVE

Identify ways to help stop sexual harassment

PREP

- Paper and pencil
- Partners
- Small groups

THEMES

- Bullying and Harassment
- Helping Others

WARM-UP (3 min.)	What's your definition of sexual harassment?	<p>POSSIBLE ANSWERS</p> <p>Saying rude or inappropriate things to someone. Commenting on someone's body.</p> <p>FOLLOW-UP QUESTION</p> <p>Do you think it's okay to do things like this? Why or why not?</p>
	<p>The <i>Second Step</i> Program defines sexual harassment this way:</p> <p>Sexual harassment is when someone bothers someone else with words, actions, or pictures of a sexual nature.</p> <p>How does this compare to your definition?</p>	<p>POSSIBLE ANSWERS</p> <p>About the same. Very different.</p> <p>FOLLOW-UP QUESTION</p> <p>Which definition is better? Why?</p>
SURVEY (1 min.)	Raise your hand if you think sexual harassment happens here at school.	<p>FOLLOW-UP QUESTION</p> <p>Raise your hand if you've ever seen sexual harassment happening online.</p>
VIDEO (5 min.)	What is sexual harassment?	<p>VIDEO SUMMARY</p> <p>Sexual harassment can take many different forms, and can happen to boys as well as girls. Students talk about their experiences with sexual harassment, giving examples and saying what they felt and how it affected them.</p>
	<p>How did sexual harassment affect the students in the video?</p> <p>What other effects can sexual harassment have?</p>	<p>POSSIBLE ANSWERS</p> <p>It made them feel uncomfortable. It made them want to quit activities or leave school.</p> <p>Make someone depressed. Suicide, if it gets bad enough.</p> <p>FOLLOW-UP QUESTION</p> <p>Do you think people doing the harassing know how it affects people? Why or why not?</p>

THINK, TURN, TELL (4 min.)	<p>Sexual harassment is against the law.</p> <p>If you're being harassed, or you see someone being harassed, you can ask for help to make it stop.</p> <p>If you were being sexually harassed, who would you feel comfortable going to for help?</p>	<p>POSSIBLE ANSWERS</p> <p>The school counselor. A teacher. My coach.</p> <p>FOLLOW-UP QUESTION</p> <p>Have you ever reported something like this to an adult before?</p>
	<p>What can make it hard to ask for help?</p>	<p>POSSIBLE ANSWERS</p> <p>It's embarrassing. It might make it worse.</p> <p>FOLLOW-UP QUESTION</p> <p>Who are some students who could help?</p>
ACTIVITY (6 min.)	<p>ACTIVITY SUMMARY</p> <p>In small groups, students think of 3 things they can do to help stop sexual harassment at school or online. Groups act out their best ideas for the class.</p>	<p>ACTIVITY EXTENSION</p> <p>Have students choose an idea they heard in class or one of their own and create an anti-sexual-harassment mini-poster to hang in the school.</p>
CLASS DISCUSSION (3 min.)	<p>It's important to know the difference between flirting and sexual harassment.</p> <p>As a class, think of some differences between them.</p>	<p>POSSIBLE ANSWERS</p> <p>Flirting is when you don't mind the attention and can make it stop.</p> <p>Sexual harassment is when you don't like the attention and feel powerless to stop it.</p> <p>FOLLOW-UP QUESTION</p> <p>What would you say to someone who was sexually harassing someone else?</p>
WRAP-UP (3 min.)	<p>Write an IF-THEN PLAN describing what you'll do if you witness sexual harassment.</p>	<p>FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT</p> <p>Look for students to identify one practical strategy for helping stop sexual harassment at school or online.</p>



Sexual Harassment

Grade 8, Lesson 25

Handout

Name: _____

VOCABULARY AND WARM-UP Sexual harassment (n.) My definition:

Second Step definition of **sexual harassment**:

VIDEO GUIDE

Sexual harassment can be physical, _____, or _____.

Sexual harassment can happen to both girls and boys. ☐ True ☐ False

Effects of sexual harassment:

THINK, TURN, TELL

People I would feel comfortable going to for help: _____

Things that make it hard to ask for help:

ACTIVITY

Things I can do to help stop sexual harassment at school or online:

CLASS DISCUSSION

Flirting	Sexual Harassment

Name: _____

WRAP-UP

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IF-THEN PLAN

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WARM-UP (3 min.)	What's your definition of sexual harassment?	POSSIBLE ANSWERS Saying rude or inappropriate things to someone. Commenting on someone's body. FOLLOW-UP QUESTION Do you think it's okay to do things like this? Why or why not?
	The <i>Second Step</i> Program defines sexual harassment this way: Sexual harassment is when someone bothers someone else with words, actions, or pictures of a sexual nature. How does this compare to your definition?	POSSIBLE ANSWERS About the same. Very different. FOLLOW-UP QUESTION Which definition is better? Why?
SURVEY (1 min.)	Raise your hand if you think sexual harassment happens here at school.	FOLLOW-UP QUESTION Raise your hand if you've ever seen sexual harassment happening online.
VIDEO (5 min.)	What is sexual harassment?	VIDEO SUMMARY Sexual harassment can take many different forms, and can happen to boys as well as girls. Students talk about their experiences with sexual harassment, giving examples and saying what they felt and how it affected them.
	How did sexual harassment affect the students in the video? What other effects can sexual harassment have?	POSSIBLE ANSWERS It made them feel uncomfortable. It made them want to quit activities or leave school. Make someone depressed. Suicide, if it gets bad enough. FOLLOW-UP QUESTION Do you think people doing the harassing know how it affects people? Why or why not?

THINK, TURN, TELL (4 min.)	<p>Sexual harassment is against the law.</p> <p>If you're being harassed, or you see someone being harassed, you can ask for help to make it stop.</p> <p>If you were being sexually harassed, who would you feel comfortable going to for help?</p>	<p>POSSIBLE ANSWERS</p> <p>The school counselor. A teacher. My coach.</p> <p>FOLLOW-UP QUESTION</p> <p>Have you ever reported something like this to an adult before?</p>
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THINK, TURN, TELL

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Things that make it hard to ask for help:

ACTIVITY

Things I can do to help stop sexual harassment at school or online:

CLASS DISCUSSION

Flirting	Sexual Harassment

Name: _____

WRAP-UP

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IF-THEN PLAN

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Lesson 18.2

Sexual Feelings and Behavior

Middle School

Key Terms

growth spurt period of rapid physical growth that occurs during puberty

arousal sexual excitement

wet dreams ejaculations that occur during sleep in males

masturbation self-stimulation of the sex organ

sexual intercourse entry of the male's penis into the female's vagina

Learning Outcomes

After studying this lesson, you will be able to

- **identify** the physical changes that occur in puberty.
- **explain** what sexual intercourse is.
- **describe** the results of sexual activity.
- **explain** the benefits of abstinence.
- **develop** refusal skills that can help avoid sexual activity.

Graphic Organizer

Understanding Sexual Feelings

Before reading this lesson, divide a piece of paper into three columns. Use three different colors to label the columns *Puberty*, *Sexual Activity*, and *Abstinence*. An example is shown below. As you read this lesson, take notes in each column. Use the color you chose for each column. At the bottom of each column, write the two most important facts you learned.



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Puberty	Sexual Activity	Abstinence
<i>Period of time for reaching sexual maturity</i> <i>Triggered by hormones</i>		
Most important facts: 1. 2.	Most important facts: 1. 2.	Most important facts: 1. 2.

In this lesson, you will learn more about the changes that occur during puberty. Carter from the previous lesson has experienced these changes firsthand. His voice is deeper than it was last year, and hair has started growing under his arms. He is catching up to his friend Alia in height. This year, Alia confided in him that she feels sexually attracted to some of Carter's friends. Carter knows that Alia's feelings are normal and wonders if anyone is attracted to him. He also knows that sexual relationships carry risks that young people can find difficult to handle.

Puberty

Puberty, or the period of time in which the body reaches sexual maturity, plays a major role in people's sexual development. In Chapter 16, you read about the physical changes that occur as children go through puberty and adolescence. During puberty, hormones transform a child's body into that of an adult (**Figure 18.9**). These hormones also trigger powerful sexual feelings and drive the emotional changes of puberty.

The Importance of Sex Hormones

Hormones are specialized chemical messengers that glands produce and release into the blood. Because hormones travel through blood, they can carry messages to nearly every cell in the body. Each type of hormone affects only the activity of the body parts it targets. For example, *growth hormone* affects only bone, muscle, and connective tissue.

Some hormones target body parts related to sexual maturity and reproduction. These *sex hormones* are present in the body before puberty, but at low levels. Puberty begins when the brain releases *gonadotropin-releasing hormone*, which affects the pituitary gland in the brain. This hormone signals the pituitary gland to begin producing other hormones that affect the development of sex organs.



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Figure 18.9

During puberty, adolescents grow quickly. Some adolescents may feel embarrassed about growing faster or slower than most of their friends. It is normal for each person to grow at his or her own rate, however. **Which hormone affects bone, muscle, and connective tissue development?**

Hormones released by the pituitary gland affect the testes in males and the ovaries in females. The testes respond by increasing secretion of the hormone testosterone. *Testosterone* triggers growth and development of the testes, penis, and other male sexual characteristics. The ovaries respond by producing higher amounts of the hormone estrogen. *Estrogen* triggers growth and development of the ovaries, breasts, and other female sexual characteristics (Figure 18.10).

Physical Changes

As you know from Chapter 16, both males and females go through dramatic physical changes during puberty. Some changes occur abruptly, and others happen gradually. Some adolescents experience a **growth spurt**, in which they quickly grow taller. Adolescents may repeatedly outgrow their pants and shoes. The growth spurt is one of the most obvious external changes that occurs during puberty. Another physical change during puberty is weight gain. Males gain weight due to muscle development. Females gain weight due to the development of necessary body fat and muscle.

During puberty, males and females also develop primary and secondary sexual characteristics (Figure 18.11). *Primary sexual characteristics* relate to the sex organs. In males, the testes and penis grow. In females, the ovaries, vagina, and labia mature and grow.

Secondary sexual characteristics concern other parts of the body and are signs that the body is maturing. For example, in males, the shoulders broaden, muscles develop, and the voice deepens. Males also grow hair on their faces and other parts of their bodies, especially under the arms and around the genitals. Males may have *erections*, in which the penis lengthens and hardens. Erections can occur in response to sexual excitement or for no reason at all.

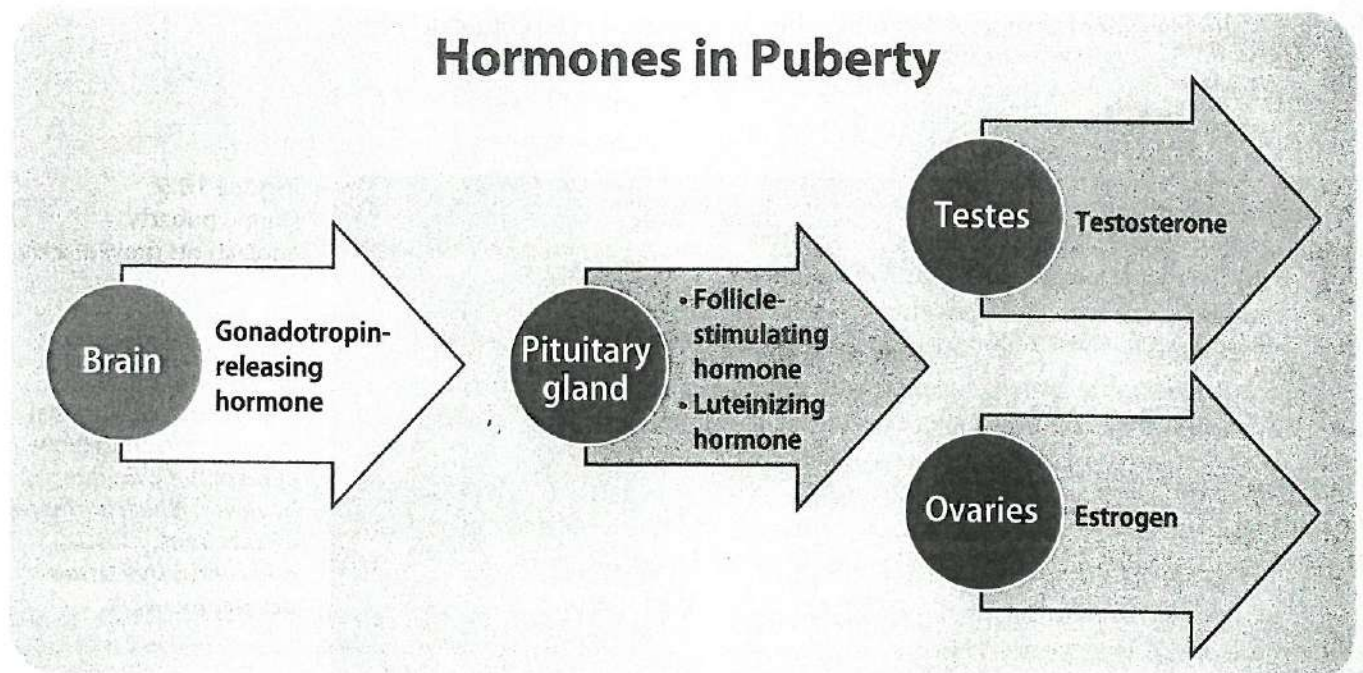


Figure 18.10 Puberty begins when the brain releases gonadotropin-releasing hormone. This hormone signals the pituitary gland to release follicle-stimulating hormone and luteinizing hormone. These hormones affect the testes in males and the ovaries in females. They cause the testes to release testosterone and the ovaries to release estrogen.

Primary Versus Secondary Sexual Characteristics

Males

Primary: The testes and penis grow.

Secondary: Shoulders broaden, muscles develop, voice deepens, and body hair grows.

Females

Primary: The ovaries, vagina, and labia mature and grow.

Secondary: Hips widen, body fat develops, breasts and nipples grow, and body hair grows.

Figure 18.11

Beyond growing in height and weight, puberty also involves the development of primary and secondary sexual characteristics.

Which sexual characteristics relate to the sex organs?

The bodies of females change shape, too. In females, the hips widen and body fat develops, especially at the hips and breasts. Breasts and nipples grow, sometimes unevenly and with feelings of soreness. *Menstruation*, or the monthly shedding of blood and tissue from the uterus, begins about two years after the breasts develop. This change signals that a female's body is releasing eggs, or female sex cells. Vaginal secretions increase, and females also develop hair under the arms, on the legs, and around the genitals.

Different Rates of Development

The physical changes of puberty take place at different times and rates for different people (**Figure 18.12**). Some adolescents notice the signs of puberty earlier than others. Adolescents who look more physically mature than others can stand out. These adolescents may feel uncomfortable about their differences. Adolescents who understand the changes of puberty are less likely to feel uncomfortable or tease classmates going through these changes.

To learn more about the changes of puberty, you need to seek reliable information. For example, you can talk to the school nurse or a trusted doctor for accurate medical information. You can also get helpful, factual information from some websites. Choose websites carefully, though. Only visit the websites of government health agencies or reputable health organizations.

Most females reach their adult height by age 14 or 15.

Most males reach their adult height by age 16.



iStock.com/ferrantraite

Figure 18.12 An adolescent's rate of growth depends on his or her genes and environment. It also depends on when puberty begins. **What is the term for a period in which a person quickly grows taller?**

Early Sexual Feelings

Elevated hormone levels affect adolescents emotionally. They can cause males or females to become sensitive, emotional, easily angered, and sexually attracted to others. Because these feelings are new, many adolescents ask themselves questions like “Am I normal?” and “Should I feel this way?” Like the physical changes of puberty, these emerging sexual feelings are expected and perfectly normal (**Figure 18.13**).

The physical and emotional changes of puberty lead to curiosity about sex in males and females. Sexual excitement, or **arousal**, is normal and can be caused by sexual thoughts, daydreams, or images. Many adolescents find themselves thinking about sex often or having sexual dreams and fantasies about celebrities or people they know. Males may also experience erections and **wet dreams**, or ejaculations that occur during sleep.

During adolescence, males and females might begin masturbating in response to sexual arousal. **Masturbation** is the self-stimulation of the sex organ. Masturbation is a sexual activity that allows people to safely release sexual tension.

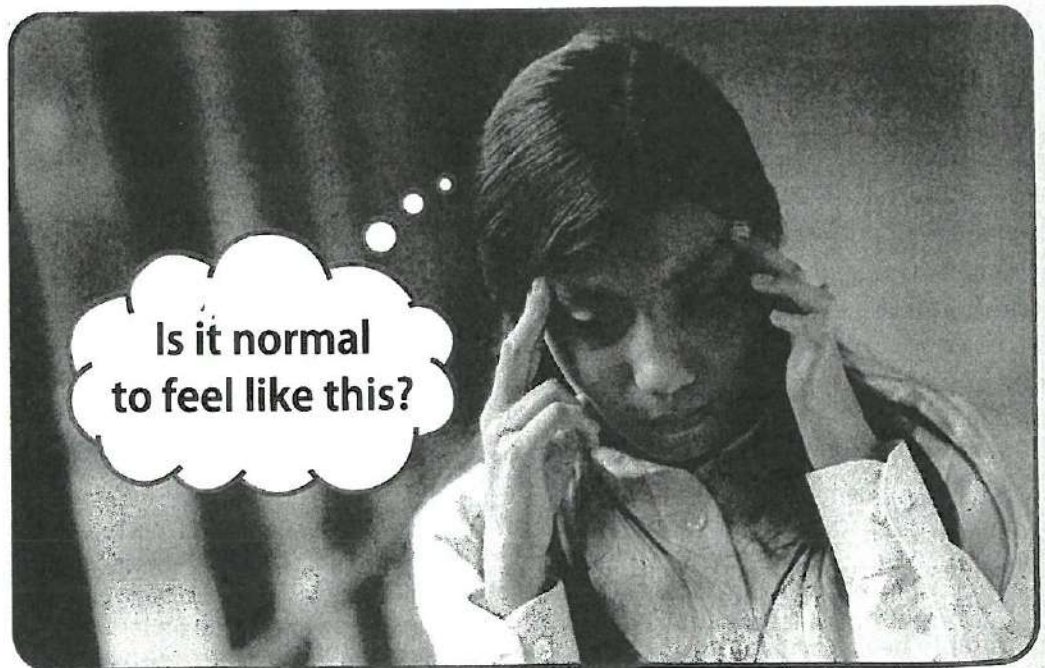
Some adolescents may feel embarrassed or guilty about masturbating because they have heard it is wrong or shameful. They may have heard that masturbation can cause acne, blindness, or other problems. These beliefs are myths. Masturbation does not cause these problems. Adolescents who are uncertain about how to respond to these impulses can talk about masturbation with a doctor, nurse, parent or guardian, or other trusted adult.

Sexual Activity

Feelings of physical attraction to others may arise during puberty. You may already be experiencing these feelings. If not, you probably will eventually. The combination of romantic and physical attraction can feel new, complicated, and intense. It is a normal part of human development.

Figure 18.13

Adolescents can be confused or scared about new situations such as arousal or body development during puberty. They are worried because they do not know if these changes are normal.



istock.com/andresr

Physical Consequences

Physical attraction often leads to sexual excitement. Some partners kiss or touch each other to express their attraction. Some choose **sexual intercourse**, which is the entry of the male's penis into the female's vagina. Intercourse can lead to *ejaculation*, when the penis releases a liquid called *semen*. This semen contains millions of sperm cells. One of those sperm can fertilize an egg released by the female's ovary (**Figure 18.14**). If that happens, pregnancy results. Pregnancy is a major risk of sexual activity.

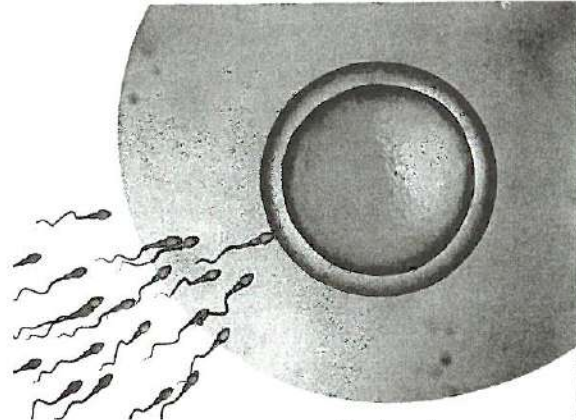
Intercourse and other sexual activity also carry the major risk of spreading *sexually transmitted infections (STIs)*, which you learned about in Chapter 11. If one partner has an STI, the other person can become infected. The risk of pregnancy and the risk of STIs are two important health reasons adolescents should avoid sexual activity.

Emotional and Social Consequences

For adults in committed relationships, sexual feelings can lead to sexual activity that strengthens the couple's bond. In these relationships, sexual activity can bring people closer. Sexual activity does not play the same role in relationships between adolescents, however. Sexual activity can bring intense emotions and stress to romantic relationships between adolescents. It can complicate adolescents' lives in ways for which they are unprepared.

Sexually active adolescents face emotional and social challenges that can have painful and unhappy consequences. Experts agree that adolescents generally are not emotionally mature enough to handle the consequences of sexual activity. Following are just a few of the problems that can occur:

- **Loss of trust.** If one partner in a sexually active couple tells friends about the sexual activity, the other partner may feel the trust between them has been broken. This type of breach in trust can end a relationship (**Figure 18.15**).
- **Less personal growth.** Some couples who become sexually active focus only on their relationship to the exclusion of other relationships and personal growth. Partners may neglect schoolwork, lose interest in other friends, and lose friendships. Sexual activity between adolescents can lead to intensity that makes it difficult to focus on growth.
- **Jealousy.** Sometimes sexually active partners feel possessive and jealous. One partner may get upset if the other person talks to someone of the opposite sex or goes out with friends. The more the jealous partner pushes, the more the other person will withdraw, weakening the relationship.
- **Feelings of guilt or shame.** Sometimes adolescents feel guilty or ashamed after engaging in sexual activity. Adolescents may feel they have gone against their values or betrayed the trust of their parents or guardians. These feelings are difficult and can hurt a person's relationships.



iStock.com/koya79

Figure 18.14 Fertilization occurs when a sperm enters an egg. Fertilization can result in pregnancy if the fertilized egg implants in the female's uterus.



iStock.com/MachineHeadz

Figure 18.15 One essential quality of a healthy relationship is trust. If trust is broken, the relationship may end. Sexual activity in a relationship can complicate trust, especially if one partner talks about the sexual activity with others.



SpeedKingz/Shutterstock.com

Figure 18.16

Choosing abstinence gives adolescents more time to focus on personal growth and the healthy deepening of the relationship. *How can a person express romantic feelings for another person without sexual activity?*

Abstinence

Many adolescents recognize the negative consequences of early sexual activity and choose abstinence. *Abstinence* is the decision not to engage in sexual activity. Abstinence is recommended for adolescents for many reasons. For example, abstinence is the only strategy that is 100 percent effective for preventing pregnancy.

Abstinence also protects people from STIs, including HIV/AIDS.

Because sexual activity can cause emotional problems, abstinence also promotes adolescents' emotional and social growth (Figure 18.16).

There are many ways to express romantic feelings for another person without sexual activity. The attention and support one partner gives another expresses caring in a deeply touching way. Giving thoughtful gifts is another way to express caring. Holding hands is a way of showing affection by touching without sexual activity. Choosing abstinence allows a romantic relationship to thrive without the risks of sexual activity.

Choosing Abstinence

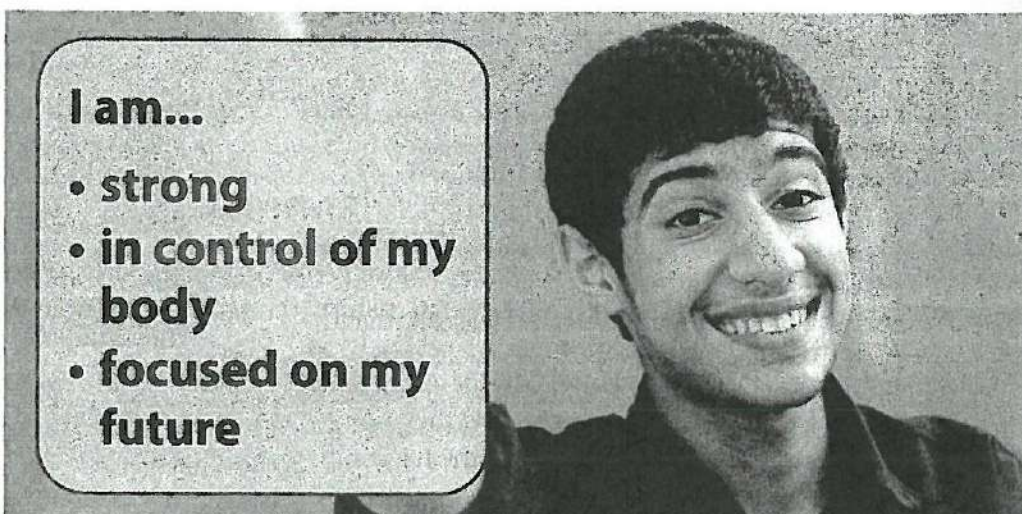
Abstinence is the best choice adolescents can make regarding sexual activity. It promotes adolescent health and helps a person grow socially and emotionally. Knowing the reasons you want to abstain from sexual activity will help you stick to your decision. Be clear in your own mind about the reasons you will abstain so that you can explain your decision to others.

To support your decision, avoid situations that will make abstinence difficult. For example, dating in groups can reduce the risk of sexual activity occurring. Avoiding alcohol and drugs, which can reduce good judgment, is another good approach. You can also stay away from unsupervised parties.

If you are not sure how to make a decision about a sexual relationship, talk to a trusted adult. For example, you could talk to a parent or guardian, adult sibling, doctor, religious leader, or teacher. These people can help you understand your concerns so that you can make a well-reasoned decision. Your decision to abstain from sexual activity is entirely your own. It is a sign that you are strong, in control of your body, and focused on your goals and future (Figure 18.17).

Figure 18.17

Abstinence from sexual activity is a sign of confidence and maturity.



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Talking to an adult about these matters might make some adolescents feel uncomfortable. The issue is too important to ignore, however. To talk effectively about these issues, choose an adult you trust. Set aside a quiet time and place to talk. Prepare for the talk in advance by thinking about what you want to ask. Speak clearly and honestly about your feelings and worries. Listen fully to what your advisor has to say. Bear in mind that you might need to have more than one talk about the subject.

Dealing with Sexual Pressure

Adolescents may encounter many outside pressures and conflicting messages about sexual activity. Romantic partners may pressure adolescents to have sex. Friends and peers may say that “everyone is doing it.” This is not true, however. In reality, most adolescents do not have sex.

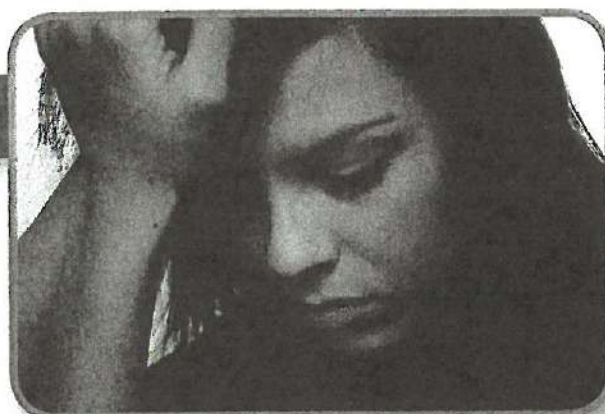
Many conflicting messages about sexual activity come from the media. Advertisements, films, and other media often portray young people in sexual relationships. The implied message is that sex is a common part of adolescent relationships. In reality, millions of young people choose abstinence.

CASE STUDY

Marla and Nathan: A Not-So-Magical Relationship

Marla always imagined that her first real relationship would be magical. Her boyfriend would treat her like a princess and love spending time with her family. Now, Marla is dating Nathan, and their relationship is good, but not great. After three months, the relationship does not feel magical. Marla wonders if she had an unrealistic image of a relationship.

Marla and Nathan enjoy going to the movies and playing soccer together. Nathan will hang out with Marla’s family, but only if she makes him. Generally, Marla enjoys Nathan’s company, but she does not feel like a princess. When Nathan tries to make Marla feel like a princess, he is normally trying to convince her to do something sexual with him. Marla has already done more sexually than she wanted to, but Nathan wants more. At times, Marla wishes she could take back the things she has done with Nathan. Marla wants to talk with her family about her feelings, but fears disappointing them.



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Thinking Critically

1. If you were Marla’s friend, what advice would you give her about dating Nathan?
2. Why do you think Marla continues to engage in sexual behaviors she does not want? How could this affect her future relationships and decision making?
3. If you were Marla, whom would you talk to about this situation? How would you start the conversation?
4. Is Marla in a healthy dating relationship? Why or why not?

In addition, media portrayals of sexual relationships often make them seem casual, with little or no risk or emotional problems. These portrayals ignore the responsibilities and difficulties of sexual relationships and can make people feel pressured to have sex.

To resist sexual pressure, remember that the actions of others are not what determine your health. Only *you* can make choices to promote your health and well-being. Also, practice the words and actions you would use if pressured to engage in sexual activity. Knowing what you will say or do will make dealing with sexual pressure easier (Figure 18.18). Sometimes, you may have to physically leave a situation or walk away from people who are pressuring you. Finding a group of supportive people who understand your decision to remain abstinent can also help you resist sexual pressure.

Using Refusal Skills

As you learned in Chapter 1, *refusal skills* can help you resist peer pressure without going against your own goals, values, and health. Refusal skills can help when you are being pressured to do something you think is wrong, unhealthy, or against your values. With these skills, you can make independent, informed decisions.

Words for Resisting Sexual Pressure

Not everyone is doing it, even if they say they are.

I want to wait until I am older.

I am not ready to have sex.

If you love me, you will not pressure me.

No, I do not want to do that.

Figure 18.18 A great way to resist sexual pressure is by practicing what you might say in certain situations. *When do you have the right to refuse sexual activity?*

Everyone has the right to refuse sexual activity at any time. The best way to refuse sexual activity is to clearly state you are not interested. Speak assertively and leave the situation, if needed. This can reduce the other person's ability to pressure you.

Partners have the responsibility to respect each other's decisions about sexual activity. If one partner does not want to engage in sexual activity, the other partner should not do or say anything that applies pressure. Partners should accept each other's decisions and avoid pressuring each other. This shows true caring and respect.

If you are being pressured to engage in sexual activity, talk to a trusted adult for help. Pressure is a sign of an unhealthy relationship. You might need to end the relationship to end the pressure.

Lesson 18.2 Review

1. Which of the following triggers the development of male sexual characteristics?
A. Insulin. C. Growth hormone.
B. Testosterone. D. Estrogen.
2. **True or false.** Masturbation can cause acne, blindness, and other problems.
3. Explain how early sexual activity can lead to less personal growth.
4. **True or false.** Abstinence promotes adolescents' social and emotional growth.
5. **Critical thinking.** Why are portrayals of sexual activity in the media not realistic?

Hands-On Activity

Consider the messages about sexual activity in your life. Create a three-column table on a separate sheet of paper. Include the following information in your table:

- Label the left column *Influences* and add rows for each of the following: television, social media, music, friends, family, and religious organizations.
- Label the middle column *Messages*. In this column, state the message you receive related to your sexual health or sexual activity.
- Label the right column *Positive or Negative*. Identify whether the messages you receive are positive or negative. Positive messages promote abstinence, and negative messages encourage risky sexual behaviors.

Choose one positive message and turn it into a text, tweet, or social media post that encourages abstinence. With teacher permission, hang your positive messages around the room or in the halls of your school.

Lesson 18.3

Unwanted Sexual Activity

Key Terms

sexual harassment

unwanted attention that includes suggestions of a sexual nature

sexual violence

sexual activity involving someone who did not give consent for that activity

rape sexual intercourse to which one person did not consent

consent direct, verbal agreement to a behavior

statutory rape crime that takes place when someone over the age of consent engages in sexual intercourse with someone under the age of consent

Learning Outcomes

After studying this lesson, you will be able to

- **define** sexual harassment.
- **describe** types of sexual violence.
- **identify** consequences of sexual violence.
- **develop** refusal skills that can help avoid unwanted sexual activity.
- **describe** steps for helping victims of sexual violence.

Graphic Organizer

Violence and Harassment

Before you read this lesson, fold a piece of paper into four sections. Cut along the folds to create four smaller pieces of paper. Label the smaller pieces *Sexual Harassment*, *Sexual Violence*, *Results of Sexual Violence*, and *Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence*. As you read the lesson, take notes on the front and back of the appropriate piece of paper. Flip through the four pieces after reading to review the lesson.



Sexual Harassment

Unwanted attention
of sexual nature

Verbal or nonverbal

Sexual Violence

Results of Sexual Violence

Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence

Lately, Carter from the previous lessons has noticed Alia acting sad and withdrawn. Alia tells Carter that some people in her theater club have been making sexual comments about her online. The comments make her uncomfortable and scared. Alia fears her friends will hear the sexual rumors being spread about her. Carter offers to go with Alia to tell a teacher about the behavior.

Sexual harassment and violence are serious problems. Although they can happen to anyone at any age, adolescents are especially vulnerable. This is partly because adolescents' physical, emotional, and sexual development are all at different levels. People who are more sexually experienced may take advantage of adolescents. Some adolescents may have poor judgment or decision-making skills, increasing their risk for violence. No matter the situation, sexual harassment and sexual violence are always harmful and are serious crimes.

Sexual Harassment

As adolescents grow curious about sexual activity, they may want to talk about sex and make sexual comments. If these comments are not wanted, however, they can be sexual harassment. **Sexual harassment** is unwanted attention that includes suggestions of a sexual nature. Most victims of sexual harassment are female, and most harassers are male. Both males and females, however, can commit and be the victims of such harassment (Figure 18.19).

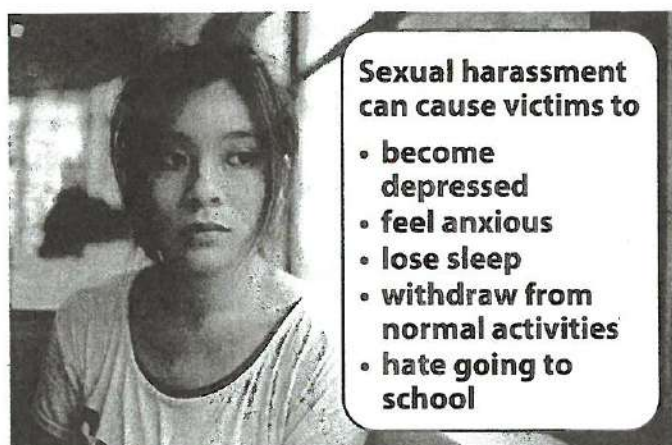
Recognizing Harassment

Sexual harassment can be verbal or nonverbal. *Verbal sexual harassment* includes the use of words, gossip, and threats. People who tell sexual jokes and make inappropriate or intimidating sexual comments are guilty of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment also occurs when sexual comments are spoken in the presence of someone who feels uncomfortable about them. Spreading rumors of a sexual nature, through word of mouth or social media, is also sexual harassment.

Nonverbal sexual harassment occurs when people make sexual gestures at or about someone. This type of sexual harassment includes pinching, rubbing, or brushing up against someone in an unwanted way.

If you are not sure whether a behavior counts as sexual harassment, ask yourself these questions: Does it make me feel uncomfortable? Do I want the behavior to stop? If the answers to these questions are *yes*, you are experiencing sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is never the victim's fault. Someone who says "you asked for it" is blaming the victim instead of taking responsibility for his or her own wrongful action.



Sexual harassment can cause victims to

- become depressed
- feel anxious
- lose sleep
- withdraw from normal activities
- hate going to school

iStock.com/LewisTsePuiLung

Figure 18.19 Unwanted sexual attention can cause negative health consequences for the victims, including depression, anxiety, and insomnia. *What are the two types of sexual harassment?*

Responding to Harassment

Victims of sexual harassment often feel powerless to stop the behavior. They can take some steps to try to get the person to stop, however. Sexual harassment is a crime, and harassers can be arrested, found guilty, and put in prison. Victims who take steps to stop harassment could be helping more than just themselves (Figure 18.20). Someone who harasses one person is likely to harass others.

Most schools have a sexual harassment policy. At school, people can speak with their teachers, counselors, or principal to ask for help. If you are ever sexually harassed and you are not sure what to do, talk to a trusted adult.

If you see someone else being sexually harassed, be careful. Challenging the harasser could cause worse behavior. Instead, try to get the victim away from the situation. If you feel unsafe or uncomfortable getting involved, tell a teacher or principal. Remember that harassment is wrong, harmful to the victim, and criminal. Notifying someone is the right thing to do.

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence involves threatening or forcing someone into sexual activity. In all cases, sexual violence is wrong and illegal. One crime of sexual violence is **rape**, or sexual intercourse that happens without the consent of one person. The following behaviors are also sexual violence if consent is not given:

- kissing
- sexual touching, including the touching or fondling of body parts through a person's clothing
- attempted sexual intercourse, even if penetration does not occur
- exposure of a person's genitals to another person
- sexual harassment
- photography of a person who is nude
- exposure of someone to pornography

Although more males than females carry out acts of sexual violence, both males and females can be victims of sexual attacks.

Stopping Sexual Harassment

If safe, ask the harasser to stop.

Write down details of events, dates, locations, and possible witnesses.

Print or save e-mails, pictures, videos, texts, social media posts, and other evidence.

Report the activity to a trusted adult using the evidence.

Figure 18.20 It can be intimidating to ask a harasser to stop his or her behavior. In these cases, try telling a trusted adult or asking a friend to accompany you. Only confront the harasser if you believe doing so is safe. Otherwise, talk to a trusted adult.

Lack of consent is central to the definition of sexual violence. **Consent** is direct, verbal agreement to a behavior (Figure 18.21).

For consent to occur, both people must clearly say *yes*. Consent does *not* occur if someone says *no* or does not say anything at all.

People cannot and should not assume a person is giving consent unless the person specifically, verbally states his or her agreement. Without mutual consent, or consent by both people, unwanted sexual activity is sexual abuse or rape.

Some people are not legally capable of giving consent to sexual activity. Only someone who fully understands what he or she is agreeing to can give consent. People cannot give consent to sexual activity if they are in the following conditions:

- being pressured or coerced by someone else
- under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- have certain types of disabilities or disorders, such as a cognitive disability
- asleep or unconscious
- younger than the age of consent, which is 16 in most states

Laws prohibit sexual activity between older people and adolescents considered incapable of giving consent. The crime of **statutory rape** occurs when someone over the age of consent has sex with someone under the age of consent. The older person can be charged with statutory rape even if the younger person agrees to have sex. If the age of consent in a state is 16, a 17-year-old who has sex with someone under the age of consent could be charged with statutory rape.

Some people believe that if two people are in a romantic relationship, any kind of sexual activity is consensual. This is false. No one, not even a dating partner, has the right to pressure someone else into sexual activity (Figure 18.22). More than one-half of sexual-violence victims know their attackers. The person who commits sexual violence is entirely to blame if sexual activity occurs. The victim is *never* to blame.

What Is Consent?

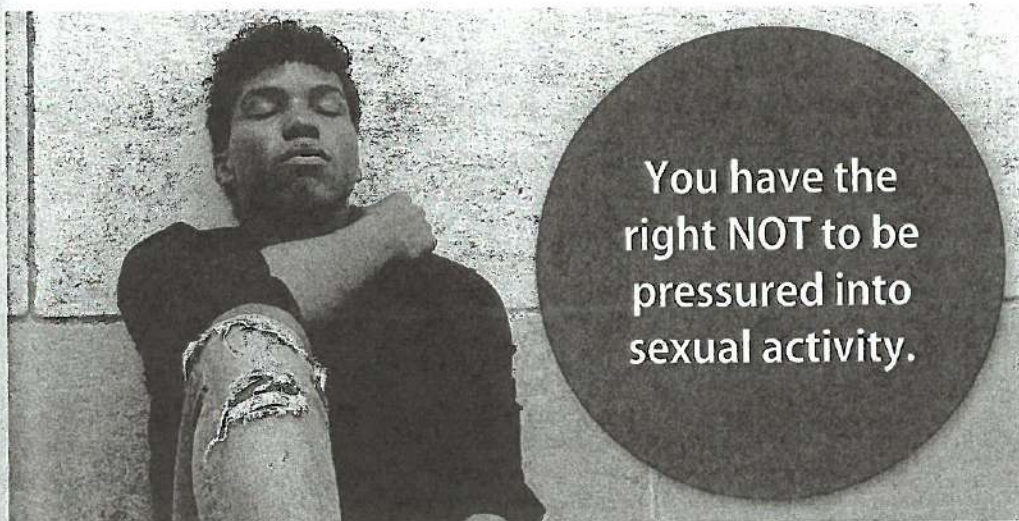
Consent Is

- direct
- verbal
- voluntary
- mutual

Consent Is Not

- coerced
- silent
- implied
- one-sided

Figure 18.21 Consent is the difference between sexual activity and sexual violence. Sexual activity without consent is sexual violence and is wrong and illegal. *What is the name of sexual intercourse without consent?*



iStock.com/RenysView

Figure 18.22

In any relationship, pressuring someone into sexual activity is wrong. In every case of sexual violence, the attacker is to blame, not the victim. *What percent of sexual-violence victims personally know their attacker?*

Results of Sexual Violence

Sexual violence can harm the health and well-being of victims, not just immediately but for years. Sexual violence can also have lasting and harmful effects on the victim's family, friends, and community.

Impact on Physical Health

Sexual violence can lead to physical health problems. Physical injuries can include bruises, broken bones, and pain in affected parts of the body. Victims might develop frequent headaches and have difficulty sleeping. Finally, sexual violence can lead to an unwanted pregnancy or an STI.

Impact on Emotional Health

Victims of sexual violence experience both short- and long-term emotional harm. Soon after the attack, many victims feel shock, denial, fear, anxiety, shame, guilt, and confusion. These symptoms may disappear or lessen with time. Some victims of sexual violence may develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or become depressed (**Figure 18.23**). Some victims of sexual violence attempt to cope with the trauma by engaging in risky behaviors. By doing so, they increase the risk of having further health problems.

Impact on Social Health

Sexual violence also harms a person's social health, especially if the person inflicting the violence was a trusted person. People can hesitate to trust others as a result of sexual violence. This hesitance can prevent them from forming healthy, intimate relationships. Some victims of sexual violence feel isolated from their family members and friends.

Though they are not to blame for sexual violence, some victims feel shame and guilt. Their self-esteem goes down, and they may withdraw from their friends and family. Many victims of sexual violence fear blame or punishment if they tell others. As a result, they do not report the violence to law-enforcement officials, friends, and family members.

Figure 18.23

Anxiety, depression, shame, confusion, and shock are all possible symptoms for a victim after an attack of sexual violence. In some cases, the victim may even develop PTSD. *What response to trauma can increase the risk of further health problems?*

PTSD Symptoms



- Repeated thoughts about the violence
- Nightmares and flashbacks
- Avoidance of anything related to the violence
- Difficulty sleeping
- Irritability and jumpiness

Tracy Whiteside/Shutterstock.com

Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence

You are in charge of your health and well-being and the decisions and actions that promote them. Others, however, can exert a powerful influence on your decisions and actions. To handle that pressure and stick to your decisions, you need good refusal skills and need to understand the risk of sexual violence (Figure 18.24).

Avoiding Risky Situations

Choosing to avoid some situations can help reduce the risk of sexual violence. Although no one can control another person's behavior, some factors can increase the risk of unwanted sexual activity. For example, being alone with another person, such as a dating partner, puts an adolescent at risk for sexual pressure. This is particularly true if pressure has been applied in the past.

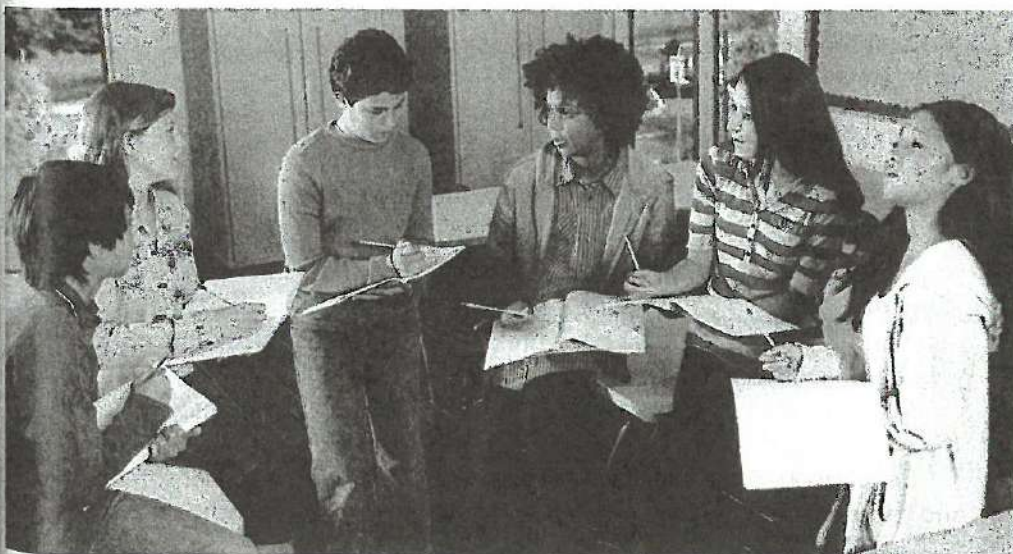
Another risky situation involves the use of alcohol or drugs. These substances weaken a person's ability to think clearly. They also weaken *inhibitions*, or the limits placed on behavior by one's values or conscience. Staying away from situations that involve alcohol and drugs is a good way to avoid this risk.

Responding to Sexual Violence

If people become victims of sexual violence, they should try to stay calm. If possible, they should stall the attacker and try to gain time to get help. They may be able to scare off their attacker by saying they have an STI. In some cases, they may need to passively submit to stay alive.

After a rape, the victim should immediately call 911 to get help. It is important to get medical attention right away at a hospital or clinic. Staff will examine the victim and treat him or her for physical injuries. They will also test for STIs. They may give the victim medications to decrease the chances of developing such an infection.

Rape is a crime and should be reported to the police. The police can only arrest the attacker if they know what occurred and can collect evidence. The victim should not change clothes or take a shower before going to the police station or hospital. This is because evidence can be gathered from clothes and hair.



iStock.com/kall9

Figure 18.24

Many schools have programs that educate students about sexual violence. These programs also teach about the importance of stepping in if you believe an assault might occur.

Talking to Survivors of Sexual Violence

I am glad
you are alive.

It is not
your fault.

I am sorry it
happened.

You did the
best you could.

Figure 18.25 Sometimes, it can be hard to know what to say to a survivor of sexual violence. The messages in this illustration can be helpful and can convey that you care.
Who is never to blame for an attack of sexual violence?

Many victims of sexual violence find it helpful to receive counseling. Some people who have been victims find support by talking to others who have been through this painful event. A school nurse, doctor, or local rape crisis center can provide information about counselors and local support groups. Victims might also find it useful to talk to other adults they trust. Parents or guardians, a family physician, religious leaders, and teachers are examples.

Supporting Survivors of Sexual Violence

If you know a victim of sexual violence, understand that he or she may or may not want to talk about the attack. Follow the victim's lead and do not ask too many questions. Try to be a good listener and do not judge or blame the victim for what happened (Figure 18.25). Remember, the victim is never to blame for an attack.

Lesson 18.3 Review

1. **True or false.** Spreading sexual rumors about a person is sexual harassment.
2. Which of the following is consent?
 - A. Lack of response.
 - B. Agreement under pressure.
 - C. Unconsciousness.
 - D. Direct, verbal agreement.
3. How does sexual violence impact physical health?
4. Why are situations that include drugs or alcohol risky?
5. **Critical thinking.** If someone asks to kiss your friend, and your friend looks away, is this consent? Why or why not?

Hands-On Activity

For this activity, imagine that you are in the scenarios below. On a separate sheet of paper, describe how you would respond to each scenario. Then, share your answers with a partner and discuss other ways to respond.

Scenario 1: At a party, your partner wants to escape together to a quiet room. Lately, your partner has been pressuring you to have sex. You care about your partner, but are not interested in having sex.

Scenario 2: At school, you receive a text message with a sexual undertone. The sender wants you to leave class and meet in the bathroom.

Scenario 3: In class, a student beside you starts to make sexual comments and compliments about you. The comments make you feel uncomfortable.

Review and Assessment

Summary

Lesson 18.1 What Is Sexuality?

- Sexuality is the expression of a person's gender through behavior and physical characteristics. It includes biological sex, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, and sexual experiences and thoughts.
- Biological sex is determined by sex chromosomes (XX or XY). Some babies are born intersex. Sometimes, rare conditions can cause people to develop sex organs that do not match the sex chromosomes.
- Gender refers to the characteristics a society associates with a particular biological sex. How a person feels about and expresses gender is gender identity. Gender identity is both taught and chosen, and some people may be transgender.
- Sexual orientation refers to the gender to which a person is romantically and physically attracted. Types of sexual orientations include heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, and asexual.

Lesson 18.2 Sexual Feelings and Behavior

- During puberty, hormones change a child's body into that of an adult. Sex hormones target parts of the body related to sexual maturity. Early sexual feelings also emerge during puberty and can cause arousal.
- Physical consequences of early sexual activity include pregnancy and STIs. Emotional and social consequences include loss of trust, less personal growth, jealousy, and feelings of guilt and shame.
- Abstinence is the best decision young people can make about sexual activity. It avoids negative consequences of sexual activity and allows a romantic relationship to thrive. Refusal skills can help young people remain abstinent.

Lesson 18.3 Unwanted Sexual Activity

- Sexual harassment is unwanted attention that includes suggestions of a sexual nature. Harassment can be verbal or nonverbal and is never the victim's fault. People can respond to sexual harassment by intervening or by documenting the harasser's actions.
- Sexual violence involves threatening or forcing someone into sexual activity. Central to the definition of sexual violence is lack of consent. Consent is a direct, verbal agreement.
- Sexual violence has serious consequences for physical, emotional, and social health. It can cause physical injuries and can lead to intense anxiety and depression.
- Sexual violence is never the victim's fault, but one way to help prevent sexual violence is to avoid risky situations. If a rape has occurred, the victim should call 911 immediately and seek medical help. People can support survivors of sexual violence by listening and being supportive.

Lesson 19.1

Pregnancy Prevention Middle School

Key Terms

contraception any method for preventing pregnancy; also called *birth control*

male condom object worn on the penis during sexual intercourse to prevent sperm from entering the vagina

female condom device similar to a pouch, which the female inserts into her vagina to prevent sperm from entering

oral contraceptives pills that contain hormones to reduce the likelihood of pregnancy

birth control patch thin, 2- to 3-inch, plastic patch applied to the skin that works like a birth control pill

vaginal ring small, flexible ring that releases hormones to stop ovulation

withdrawal natural birth control method based on the male pulling out of the female's vagina before ejaculation

sterilization permanent birth control method in which a medical doctor performs a procedure on either a male or female to prevent the sperm and egg from uniting

emergency contraception step taken within a few days after sex that can help prevent pregnancy

abortion surgical procedure to end a pregnancy

Learning Outcomes

After studying this lesson, you will be able to

- recognize pregnancy prevention facts and myths.
- identify the benefits of continuous abstinence.
- explain how effective barrier methods are in preventing pregnancy.
- identify hormonal birth control methods.
- describe natural birth control methods.
- summarize sterilization procedures.
- determine what options are available when contraception fails.

Graphic Organizer

Birth Control

Before reading this lesson, draw a rectangle on a separate piece of paper. Write the words *Birth Control* in the rectangle. As you read, list general facts about birth control above the rectangle. Take notes about different methods of birth control below the rectangle. An example is shown below.



Birth control is called contraception

Reliable information can come from healthcare professionals

Birth Control

Abstinence—refraining from sexual activity

Pregnancy and raising children can be among the most rewarding and meaningful experiences in a person's life. In fact, 13-year-old Esmeralda dreams of someday having her own family. She loves her baby brother and looks forward to someday being a mother. From watching her parents, however, she knows that pregnancy and parenting are permanent decisions that require much thought and careful planning. Esmeralda knows it is important to make responsible sexual decisions that help her future.

Sexual intercourse always carries with it the risk of pregnancy. During sexual intercourse, sperm can enter the female's vagina and reach an egg. The sperm may fertilize the egg, causing pregnancy (**Figure 19.1**). Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are also a risk of sexual intercourse. These physical consequences and other social and emotional consequences can significantly alter a person's life. To guard against these negative consequences, young people need to make responsible sexual decisions.

Part of making responsible sexual decisions is understanding pregnancy and contraception. **Contraception**, also called *birth control*, is a method for preventing pregnancy. Many birth control methods exist. They differ in how effective they are and in whether they also protect against STIs. Choosing a method is a matter of understanding pregnancy prevention and making a careful decision.

Myths and Facts About Pregnancy Prevention

Many myths exist about pregnancy and sexual intercourse. A good way to avoid falling for myths is to learn the facts about reproduction and pregnancy prevention. **Figure 19.2** on the next page lists some myths and facts about pregnancy.

Development of the Fetus

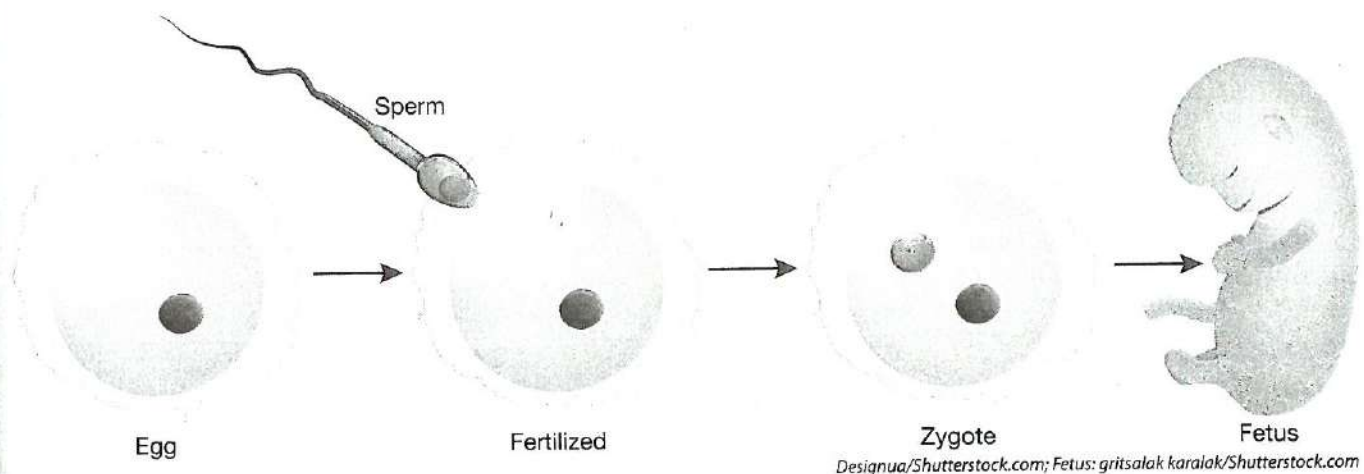


Figure 19.1 During pregnancy, a fertilized egg develops into a fetus. **What is the term for the various methods for preventing pregnancy?**

Myths and Facts

Myth

Females younger than 18 years of age cannot become pregnant.

Fact

Females younger than 18 years of age *can* and *do* become pregnant. After a female has begun menstruating, she can become pregnant no matter how old she is.

Myth

A female cannot become pregnant the first time she has sex.

Fact

A female *can* become pregnant anytime she has sex.

Myth

A female cannot become pregnant during her period.

Fact

A female *can* become pregnant during her period. It is unlikely, but possible.

Myth

A female cannot become pregnant if she or her partner uses a condom.

Fact

Using a condom reduces the risk of pregnancy. It does not completely eliminate that risk, however. Abstinence is the only method of pregnancy prevention that is 100 percent effective.

Myth

A female cannot become pregnant if her partner withdraws his penis before he ejaculates.

Fact

A female *can* become pregnant even if a male withdraws before ejaculation. The penis often releases some sperm before ejaculation.

Myth

A female cannot become pregnant if she stands up during sexual intercourse.

Facts

A female *can* become pregnant no matter what position she is in during sexual intercourse.

Myth

If a female urinates after having sex, she will not get pregnant.

Fact

Urinating after sex does *not* prevent pregnancy.

Myth

If a female *douches*, or cleans the inside of her vagina, after having sex, she will not get pregnant.

Fact

Douching after sex does *not* prevent pregnancy. In fact, douching can actually increase the likelihood of pregnancy by pushing semen deeper into the vagina.

Figure 19.2 Widespread myths about pregnancy can cause young people to be misinformed about their sexual health and can lead to unhealthy behaviors. *Who is the best person to speak to about the myths and facts of pregnancy?*

The best way to learn the facts about birth control is to talk to a healthcare professional. These trained specialists will be able to discuss different methods honestly and objectively. A family doctor or school nurse can also answer some of these questions. When using other sources of information, always assess each source's credibility (Figure 19.3). It is important to have accurate information about birth control.

Birth Control Methods

Birth control methods help prevent pregnancy, and some also protect against STIs. Each birth control method has its advantages and disadvantages, and a person should consider his or her goals when selecting a method. Cost and availability should also be considered. Some methods are inexpensive and can be obtained without a doctor's prescription. Other methods require a doctor's visit. Some people want to use a reversible method of birth control so they can choose to have children in the future. Others would prefer a permanent method.

Each method is effective only when used correctly every time. Because of this, ease of use is also an important factor. Some types of birth control include abstinence, barrier methods, hormonal methods and intrauterine devices (IUDs), natural methods, and sterilization. Only one of these methods is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy and STIs.

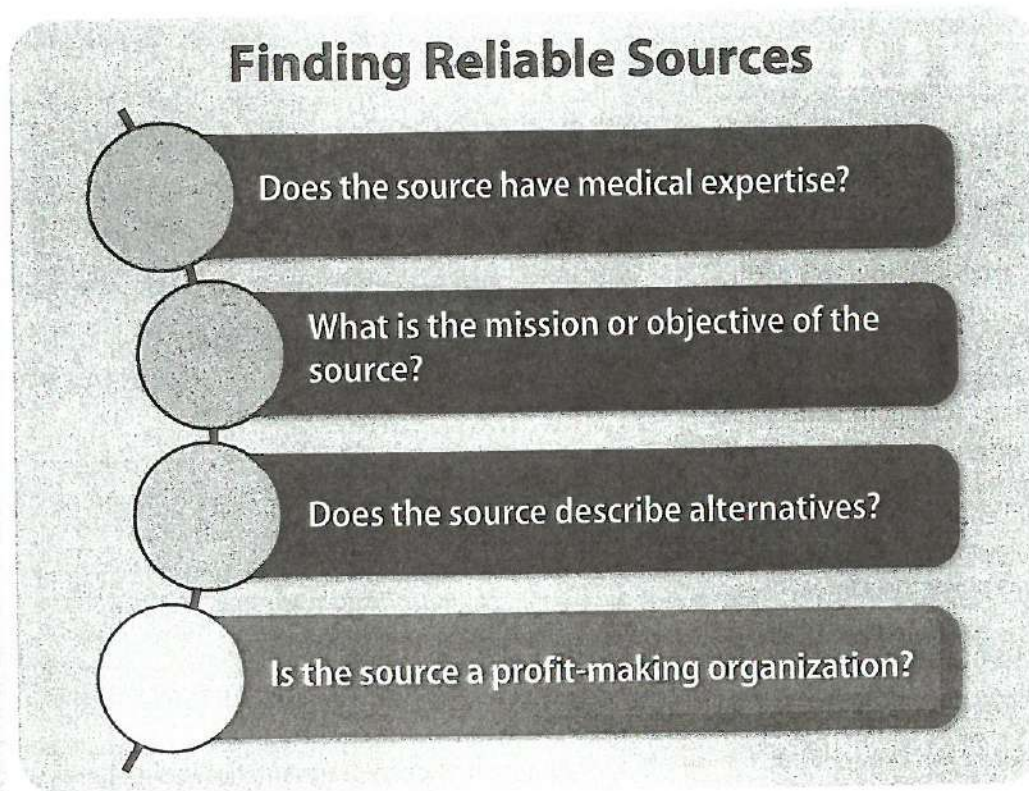


Figure 19.3

Illustrated here are some questions you can ask to assess the reliability of a source.

Benefits of Abstinence

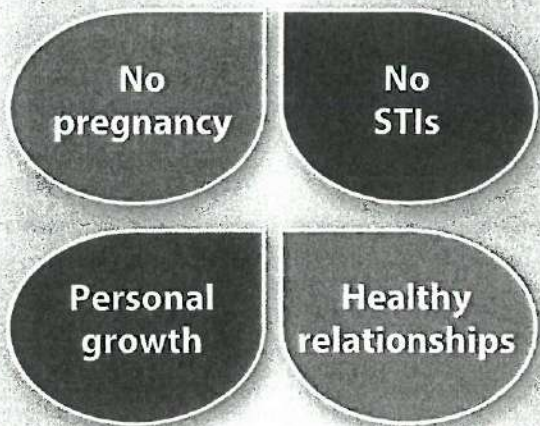


Figure 19.4 Abstinence is the most responsible sexual decision adolescents can make. Some of the benefits are listed here. *How effective is abstinence in preventing pregnancy?*

Abstinence

The only contraceptive method that is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy is *abstinence*, which is the commitment to refrain from sexual activity. Abstinence also prevents STI transmission and encourages young people's social and emotional growth. Abstinence allows young people to pursue their goals and grow personally. Unlike other methods of birth control, it is free, easy to use, and always available. There are no risks involved in using abstinence, and abstinence is reversible, meaning that people can choose to have children later in life.

Abstinence has many benefits, which you learned about in the previous chapter (Figure 19.4). It allows romantic relationships to thrive and helps young people focus on themselves and their futures. Continuous abstinence is guaranteed to prevent pregnancy and STIs. Abstinence is the most responsible sexual decision that young people can make. Other methods of birth control do not share these benefits.

CASE STUDY

Aparna Chooses Abstinence

Today, Aparna is choosing abstinence. She knows that her body is her own and is choosing not to have sex. Three months ago, Aparna was dating Juan. Aparna thought she and Juan were perfect in every way. They began having sex, however, and their relationship slowly started to change. Aparna expected more from Juan emotionally and was often disappointed. Then, Aparna missed her period. She was so nervous that she was pregnant. She began to blame Juan, and her feelings for him changed. Luckily, Aparna got her period, but her relationship with Juan was never the same. They broke up one week later.

Today, Aparna is choosing to focus on herself, school, friends, and family. She is sure she will eventually begin dating again, but she has decided to choose abstinence. Aparna has learned from her experience, has regrets, and plans to be more responsible in the future.



v.s.anandhakrishna/Shutterstock.com

Thinking Critically

1. Why is Aparna choosing abstinence? Do you think Aparna will succeed at staying abstinent in future relationships? Why or why not?
2. If you were Aparna's friend, what advice would you give her about remaining abstinent in future relationships?
3. How did having sex affect Aparna's relationship with Juan?
4. If Aparna had been pregnant, how could her life have changed? How could Juan's life have changed?

Benefits of Abstinence from Sexual Activity

Allows time to wait until a person is ready



Prevents pregnancy without creating risk for future pregnancies



Always available



Prevents STI transmission; has no medical side effects



Easy to use



Does not cost any money



Girl: Irina Strelnikova/Shutterstock.com; Boy: Olga1818/Shutterstock.com; Icons, clockwise from top: Francois Poirier/Shutterstock.com; Suphalak Rueksanthitiwong/Shutterstock.com; kosmofish/Shutterstock.com; 3D Vector/Shutterstock.com; CB studio/Shutterstock.com; A Aleksii/Shutterstock.com

Barrier Methods

Barrier methods of birth control physically block fertilization by preventing sperm from reaching the female's egg. Each barrier method has its advantages and disadvantages, and some methods are more effective than others. Also, some methods protect users from contracting STIs. Other methods do not. Barrier methods of birth control include male condoms, female condoms, the contraceptive sponge, the diaphragm, and the cervical cap.

The Male Condom

The **male condom** is worn on the penis during sexual intercourse to prevent sperm and microorganisms in semen from entering the vagina. These condoms reduce the risk of pregnancy and STIs. Male condoms can be made of latex or polyurethane. They can also be made of sheepskin or lambskin, but these condoms are not effective in reducing the risk of STIs.

The male condom fits over the erect penis (**Figure 19.5**). Condoms must be applied before the penis touches the sexual partner's genitals. This is important because the penis can release fluids prior to ejaculation. Those fluids can contain sperm and microorganisms that cause STIs. Some condoms are coated with *spermicide*, a substance that stops sperm from swimming and reaching the egg.

Condoms cannot be reused. A new condom must be used each time intercourse occurs. Over time, condoms become dry, brittle, and ineffective, even if stored in their wrapper. Because of this, each package comes with an expiration date. Damaged or expired condoms are not effective in reducing the risk of pregnancy or STIs.

Figure 19.5

People can practice applying the male condom by putting it over an object shaped like a penis.

What material makes a condom less effective in preventing the transmission of STIs?

Using the Male Condom

The following steps are used to apply and remove a male condom:

1. Gently tear open the package at its edge. Do not use teeth or scissors to do this. If the package is wet or sticky, throw it out.
2. Determine which way the condom unrolls.
3. Pinch the condom tip to remove air. This prevents breakage when the condom fills with semen.
4. Place the condom at the tip of the erect penis and roll it to the base of the penis.
5. Apply some water-based lubricant if the condom is not lubricated. Never use petroleum-based lubricants with a latex condom. These substances will break down the latex barrier.
6. After intercourse, the penis must be removed from the partner's genitals before it softens. Otherwise, the condom can fall off and spill semen. When removing from the penis, hold the base of the condom securely while withdrawing. This will keep the condom from coming off the penis.
7. Pull off the condom and dispose of it in the trash. Wash your hands. Never reuse a condom.

The Female Condom

A **female condom** is a device similar to a pouch that a female inserts into her vagina (Figure 19.6). Female condoms are made of plastic and must be inserted before the penis touches the female's genitals. The female condom reduces the risk of pregnancy by catching semen and preventing sperm from entering the vagina. The female condom also forms a barrier against STIs. The effectiveness of female condoms can be improved by using spermicide or by withdrawing the penis before ejaculation.

Contraceptive Sponge

The *contraceptive sponge* reduces the risk of pregnancy by blocking sperm from entering the uterus. The sponge contains spermicide, which stops sperm from swimming. The contraceptive sponge is less effective than condoms and does not protect against STIs.

The contraceptive sponge is made of plastic foam and is about 2 inches in diameter. The sponge is inserted into the vagina and covers the cervix. It can be inserted several hours before sexual intercourse and should be left in place at least six hours after intercourse. It can remain in the body for 30 hours.

Diaphragm

The *diaphragm* is a flexible, cup-shaped disk that covers the cervix and blocks sperm from entering the uterus. Unlike condoms and sponges, a diaphragm requires a prescription from a doctor. The diaphragm comes with directions for insertion, removal, and care. It must be inserted several hours before intercourse, and spermicide can increase its effectiveness.

Using the Female Condom

The following steps are used to insert and remove a female condom:

1. Apply spermicide to the end of the condom that will face the uterus.
2. Squeeze the inner ring at the closed end of the condom and push it into the vagina as deep as it will go. The outer ring should rest about 1 inch outside the vagina.
3. Hold the outer ring against the vaginal opening while the penis is inserted. Make sure the penis does not slide outside the female condom.
4. After intercourse, hold the outer ring against the vaginal opening as the male withdraws.
5. Twist the end of the condom to trap semen inside and prevent spillage.
6. Pull the condom out of the vagina and discard it in the trash. Never reuse a condom.

Figure 19.6

The female condom is the only female birth control method that prevents pregnancy and STIs.

Cervical Cap



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Figure 19.7

The cervical cap is made of silicone and works best for females who have never given birth.

What is the maximum amount of time a cervical cap should remain in the body?

The *cervical cap* is a flexible cup that covers the cervix (Figure 19.7). Like the diaphragm, the cervical cap blocks sperm from entering the uterus and requires a prescription from a doctor. The cervical cap comes with directions for insertion, removal, and care. It must be covered with spermicide and inserted six hours before intercourse. The cervical cap should stay in place at least six hours after intercourse, but should not remain in the body more than 48 hours.

Hormonal Methods and IUDs

Hormones are chemicals in the body that control many body functions, including reproduction. When used medically, the female hormones estrogen and progesterone can stop ovulation and help prevent pregnancy. These hormones can also treat some medical conditions, such as severe menstrual pain. Several birth control methods rely on female hormones. Only females can use these methods, although research is ongoing to identify options for male oral contraceptives.

Oral Contraceptives

Oral contraceptives are usually called the *birth control pill* or just *the pill*. Birth control pills contain hormones that reduce the risk of pregnancy by preventing ovulation. If ovulation does not occur, there is no egg for a sperm to fertilize.

The pill is taken by mouth, or *orally*, at about the same time every day. It is effective at preventing pregnancy if taken *exactly as prescribed by the doctor*. Skipping even one pill increases the chance of becoming pregnant. Oral contraceptives do not protect against STIs.

A female must have a medical exam before using the pill. This is because females with certain medical conditions should not take the pill. A prescription written by a doctor is needed to purchase the pill. The pill comes in two basic forms: the combination pill and the progesterone-only pill. The *combination pill* contains both estrogen and progesterone. It includes *active pills* that contain hormones and inactive pills. The *progesterone-only pill* contains just progesterone and only includes active pills (Figure 19.8).

Figure 19.8

In addition to stopping ovulation, birth control pills thicken cervical mucus, which slows down sperm. **How is birth control administered each day?**

Types of Birth Control Pills	
Type	Description
Combination pill (pack of 28)	A female using the 28-pill pack takes active pills for three weeks, then inactive pills for one week. The last seven pills have no effect. During the week a female takes inactive pills, she should menstruate.
Combination pill (pack of 21)	A female using the 21-pill pack takes active pills for three weeks and then no pills for one week. Her period should begin during that week. After that week, she starts a new 21-pill pack.
Combination pill (pack of 91)	A female using the 91-pill pack only menstruates once every three months. She takes active pills for 12 weeks and then takes inactive pills for one week.
Progesterone-only pill	The progesterone-only pill comes in a 28-pill pack. All the pills contain active hormones.

Birth Control Patch

The **birth control patch** (often called the *patch*) is a thin, 2- to 3-inch, plastic patch applied to the skin like a bandage. The patch uses the hormones estrogen and progesterone to prevent ovulation. It works like the birth control pill, except hormones are absorbed from the patch across the skin and into the blood. The patch comes with directions. A female typically wears one patch a week for three weeks. No patch is worn during the fourth week, and the female should menstruate.

Vaginal Ring

The **vaginal ring** is a small, flexible ring that releases estrogen and progesterone to stop ovulation (Figure 19.9). The ring is inserted into the vagina and left in place for three weeks. Three weeks after insertion, the ring should be removed, ideally at the same time as it was inserted. The ring is discarded, and no ring is used during the fourth week. During this fourth week, the female should menstruate. The vaginal ring comes with directions for storage, insertion, and removal.



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Figure 19.9

The vaginal ring releases hormones that stop ovulation and thicken cervical mucus. **What happens during the week that the vaginal ring is not used?**

Birth Control Shot

Females who receive the *birth control shot* get an injection of the hormone progesterone. This injection stops ovulation and reduces the risk of pregnancy. A female must see her doctor to receive a shot every three months. Depending on the type of shot, it can be given in the arm, in the buttocks, or under the skin.

Birth Control Implant

The *birth control implant* is a flexible, toothpick-sized rod that holds progesterone. A doctor inserts the implant under the skin of the upper arm. Once in place, the implant releases progesterone, which stops ovulation. The implant can be left in place for three years.

Intrauterine Device (IUD)

An *intrauterine device (IUD)* is a small, T-shaped device that is inserted into the uterus by a doctor (Figure 19.10). Two types of IUDs exist: copper IUDs and hormonal IUDs. The copper IUD is thought to interfere with sperm movement, fertilization, and implantation. Hormonal IUDs stop ovulation. IUDs last for years, and hormonal IUDs can reduce menstrual cramps and significantly lighten or even stop menstruation. Both copper and hormonal IUDs can be removed if a female wants to become pregnant.



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Figure 19.10 IUDs fit inside the female's uterus. The two types of IUDs are hormonal (on the left) and copper (on the right). **Who inserts an IUD into a female's uterus?**

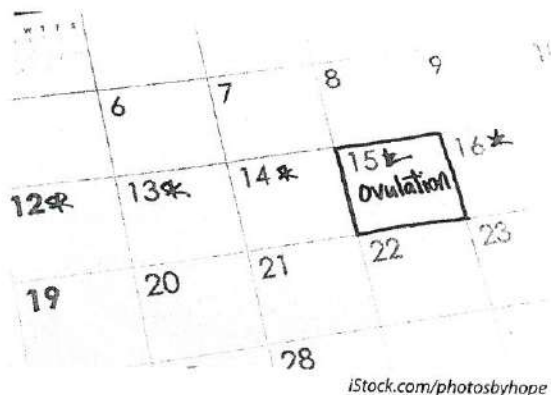


Figure 19.11 Typically, a female can become pregnant three to five days before ovulation and on the first and possibly second day after ovulation. To avoid pregnancy, she should not have intercourse on these days. **Which form of pregnancy prevention requires this knowledge of a woman's fertility?**

Natural Methods

Natural methods of birth control do not use barriers or hormones. Some people prefer these natural methods. Natural methods include the fertility awareness method (FAM) and withdrawal.

Fertility Awareness Method (FAM)

The *fertility awareness method (FAM)* relies on the natural rhythm of a female's fertility. Couples using FAM learn when the female ovulates and which days the egg can be fertilized. By not having intercourse on those days, they try to practice birth control.

The best way to determine which days a female can become pregnant is to identify which day she ovulates. A female can use several methods to know when she is ovulating. She can carefully track changes in her body temperature or the mucus in her vagina. She can also track her period on a calendar (Figure 19.11).

FAM is only somewhat helpful for preventing pregnancy. It requires females to pay careful attention to changes in their bodies. Many couples who use FAM do not use the methods regularly and correctly. As a result, about 25 out of 100 couples using FAM become pregnant. Furthermore, FAM does not prevent STIs.

Withdrawal

Withdrawal, or *pulling out*, is the most commonly used birth control method. A male using withdrawal pulls his penis out of the female's vagina before he ejaculates. This may keep sperm out of the vagina and reduce the risk of pregnancy.

Withdrawal is not an effective method of birth control, however. Withdrawal is difficult to time correctly and requires self-control. In addition, fluid containing sperm often leaks from the penis before ejaculation and can cause pregnancy (Figure 19.12). Withdrawal also does not protect people from STIs.

Figure 19.12

Rates of pregnancy using withdrawal are high compared to rates using other birth control methods.

Withdrawal is not always an effective method for preventing pregnancies.

Even when withdrawal is always used correctly, about

6 percent

of females become pregnant.

If withdrawal is *not* always used correctly, almost

30 percent

of females become pregnant.

Sterilization

Sterilization is the only permanent birth control method. It is a procedure performed by a doctor that prevents the sperm and egg from uniting. Sterilization prevents pregnancy, but not STIs. It is difficult to reverse, and attempts to reverse it often fail. As a result, people considering surgical sterilization must be sure they do not ever want children. Both males and females can receive sterilization.

Male Sterilization

Males can be sterilized through a surgical procedure called a *vasectomy*. During a vasectomy, the *vas deferens* are closed. This prevents any sperm from leaving the testes. Usually, a doctor performs a vasectomy in a hospital. The surgery involves a small incision or puncture in each side of the scrotum. A vasectomy is nearly 100 percent effective, making it the most effective and permanent method of birth control for males.

Most males recover quickly from a vasectomy with no side effects. Some men experience bruising, swelling, and discomfort after the procedure. After a vasectomy, the prostate and seminal vesicles continue to function. Males can ejaculate normally, and the testes continue to make testosterone. Males can have an erection and have sex as they did prior to the operation.

Female Sterilization

Women can be sterilized by cutting the fallopian tubes and sealing or removing part of them. This surgery is called *tubal ligation* and makes it impossible for sperm to reach an egg. Doctors may perform tubal ligation in a hospital or outpatient surgery clinic. Three months after surgery, doctors view an X-ray to confirm the tubes were successfully blocked.

Sterilization does not affect the function of the ovaries. A woman continues to make female hormones and ovulate after this procedure. Sterilization also does not affect a woman's sexual characteristics, sexual arousal, or ability to have sex.

When Contraception Fails

Even when partners agree to use birth control and try to use it correctly, mistakes can happen. In these cases, **emergency contraception** can help prevent pregnancy (Figure 19.13). This method of birth control can only be used for a few days after sex, however.



Emergency contraceptive pills can reduce the chance of pregnancy by up to **89 percent** when used within five days of a woman having sex.

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Figure 19.13 Emergency contraception can help prevent pregnancy if other forms of pregnancy prevention fail. **Can emergency contraception stop or interrupt a pregnancy that has already occurred?**

One type of emergency contraception is the *ParaGard* copper IUD. If inserted within five days of sex, it is the most effective method of emergency contraception. Several types of emergency contraceptive pills are also available, including *ella* and *Plan B*. These pills contain female hormones, which prevent ovulation. Emergency contraception is similar to other hormone-based birth control methods, but has a greater amount of the hormones. Emergency contraception pills prevent fertilization. They cannot stop or interrupt a pregnancy that has already occurred. Emergency contraception does not reduce the risk of STIs and should not be used regularly.

As you know, only one method of contraception is 100 percent effective—continuous abstinence. With any other contraceptive method, some females may still become pregnant. When faced with an unplanned pregnancy, a female has several options. Of course, she can decide to give birth and raise the child. She may give birth, but then give the child up for adoption. Some females decide to end the pregnancy with a surgical procedure called **abortion**.

Abortion is not a type of birth control. Birth control methods are designed to prevent pregnancy, while abortion ends a pregnancy that has already begun. A female who decides to have an abortion should do so at the earliest possible date to avoid risks to her health.

Many people are strongly opposed to abortion. Others believe it is a personal choice. If considering abortion, young people can benefit from a strong family support system. Counseling from doctors and spiritual advisors can also be helpful.

Lesson 19.1 Review

1. What is the most responsible sexual decision a young person can make?
2. Which of the following blocks sperm from entering the female's vagina?
 - A. Withdrawal.
 - B. Male condom.
 - C. Birth control patch.
 - D. Vaginal ring.
3. **True or false.** The birth control pill contains hormones that prevent ovulation.
4. Why is withdrawal not an effective method of birth control?
5. **Critical thinking.** Choose one source of information about contraception and explain why it is or is not reliable.

Hands-On Activity

Many school and community programs exist to promote sexual health. These programs encourage abstinence and help people make responsible sexual decisions. Working with a partner, research programs that advocate for the sexual health of young people. These programs may exist at the high school level or be run by the community. Identify one program and research it further. Create a blog post summarizing its mission, methods, and contact information. Share your blog post with the class.

