**Lesson Plan: Sexually Transmitted Infections and Safer Sex**

**Objective:**

* Increase participant knowledge of STI transmissibility, symptoms, consequences, and treatment
* Increase participant understanding of and confidence to protect themselves by practising safer sex

**Target audience:** 12+ years

**Total Estimated Time:** 60 minutes

**Materials:**

* Open space
* Chart paper
* Markers
* Condoms
* Kleenex (for wiping hands after using condoms)
* Small pieces of paper, enough for each participant. Mark 1 piece of paper with an “X” and 2-3 with an “C”
* “Safe is Sexy” pamphlet

**Preparation:**

* You may wish to contact a nurse to help you facilitate this lesson (optional).
* Write out the Group Agreement on a piece of chart paper.

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| Time | Slides | Topic | Key Points and Speaker’s Notes |
| 5 min | 1-5 | Introduction  Group agreement  Talking about our bodies | Introduce yourself and let the participants know that the group will be talking about sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and how people who are sexually active can protect themselves from STIs.  Establish a group agreement that students should respect while participating in the workshop. Some suggestions include:   * All questions are ok: At any time * Confidentiality: Personal information and stories shared in the group stays in the group. * Duty to report: There are limits to confidentiality. Facilitators must report any cases or suspected cases of child abuse of someone under 18 years old to the RCMP. * It’s ok to pass: Participants may choose not to participate in a specific activity or leave the room at any time. Some topics may be difficult for some participants to listen to and talk about, so do not force anyone to participate. * No judgement: Be respectful of each other, and do not laugh at other participants’ questions or stories.   **Speaker’s Note:** I know that talking about sexual health sometimes feels uncomfortable. Sometimes we just want to giggle – and that’s ok! The more we talk about it, the easier it gets. Maybe some of you are thinking that you’re not sexually active yet, so you don’t need this information. We want everyone to have this information before they start having sex, so they can take care of themselves! |
| 5 min | 6 | Icebreaker – Condom balloons | **Speaker’s Note:** Let’s get started by looking at one of the best ways to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted infections. Some people say “Oh, I don’t want to wear a condom because it’s too small”. Let’s check the expiry date on these condoms, open them up, and blow them into balloons! The person with the biggest condom balloon (that doesn’t break) will win a prize. |
| 5 min | 7-9 | Discussion: What are sexually transmitted infections? How do people get STIs? | **Speaker’s Note:** Can anyone name a sexually transmitted infection?  Possible responses may include: syphilis, chlamydia, gonorrhea, HIV/ AIDS, Hepatitis B, HPV, genital herpes pubic lice, scabies.  Infections are diseases that you get from germs (bacteria, viruses, and other living things) that harm the body. Sexually transmitted infections are diseases that you get from having sex with people who have that infection.  Sexually transmitted infections are passed between people when they have vaginal sex, anal sex, and oral sex. Some can be passed by sharing sex toys or mutual masturbation. Some can be passed from mothers to babies when they are pregnant or breastfeeding, and some are passed through infected blood when sharing needles or using unclean tattooing or piercing equipment.  We often say that one of the best ways to prevent sexually transmitted infections is to use condoms, but some STIs can be passed from person to person even if the people are using condoms. |
| 10 min | 10 | Activity: Virus Carrier Handshake | See instructions below. |
| 5 min | 12 | Discussion: Why do we want to avoid STIs? | **Speaker Notes:** I know you have probably heard from other people “Wear a condom, prevent STIs!” Does anyone know why we want to prevent STIs?  **Possible responses include:** STIs can make you unable to have a baby; they can cause damage to your heart, brain, ears and eyes; they can cause cancer; they can cause death. |
| 10 min | 13-18 | STI Symptoms  STI Prevention  STI Testing | **Speaker Notes:** What are symptoms of different STIs?  First of all, many people who have STIs have no symptoms at all! People who do have symptoms might see:   * Discharge from the penis, vagina, or anus * Pain in testicles, lower back, abdomen, or during sex * Burning feeling when peeing * Painless sore * Rash (often on feet or hands) * Blisters, warts, or itchiness around genitals   The only way to prevent STIs for sure is to not have sex.  The second best way is to have safer sex.   * Wear condoms * Get tested for STIs: if you have symptoms, before having sex with a new partner, and every 3-6 months if you or your partner are having sex with anyone else.   What happens when you get tested for STIs? (Review STI testing step-by-step)  Three ways of testing: urine sample, blood sample, or swabs (penis, vagina/ cervix, anus, throat) |
| 10 min (activity)  5 min (report back) | 19 | Activity: Gallery Walk | **See instructions below**  **Speaker’s Notes:** I’m going to break you into small groups. Each group will go to a piece of chart paper that’s on the wall. Each piece of chart paper has a question on it. You’ll have a few minutes in your group to talk about and write down your responses. All responses are good! After a few minutes, I’ll ask you to move to the next piece of chart paper. After you have a chance to answer a few different questions, we’ll end, and each group will read the responses that all the groups have contributed. |
| 5 minutes | 20-21 | Conclusion | Thanks very much for participating today! Any questions?  I’ll leave this question box here today, and I’ll come back tomorrow to pick it up. I’ll come back another day to answer any questions you have.  If you want more information about sexually transmitted infections and safer sex, you can speak to me or a nurse at the health centre. You can also go to websites like [www.irespectmyself.ca](http://www.irespectmyself.ca)  If you want condoms, you can get them (list locations in your community where condoms are available) |

**Activity 1: Virus Carrier Handshake**

**Preparation and Materials:**

* Cut and fold one piece of paper for each person.
* On three of the pieces of paper, write the letter “C.”
* On one piece of paper write the letter “X.”
* Leave all the other pieces of paper blank.

**Play:**

* Fold the pieces of paper, mix them up, and give one to each person.
* Ask participants to look at their paper without letting anyone else see it.
* Ask everyone to stand, shake hands with three other people, then sit down.
* Ask the person with the “X” on his or her piece of paper to stand up.
* Ask everyone who shook hands with this person to stand up.
* Ask everyone who shook hands with someone who is standing to stand up as well.
* Continue until everyone in the group is standing.
* Ask the group to pretend that the person with the paper marked “X” was infected with an STI. Ask them to pretend they had sexual intercourse with the three people they shook hands with. (Remind the group that this is pretend, and that they do not really have an infection).
* Ask the group to check if they had a “C” on their paper. These people used condoms, and they were not at a major risk of getting HIV or another STI.
* Everyone else who had a blank piece of paper had unprotected sex and is at risk of getting an STI from the person they had sex with.

**Discussion:**

* How does this relate to real life?
* If you had really been infected with HIV or another STI, how serious would that be?
* What do other STIs have in common with HIV? How are they different?
* How did the first person standing (the one with the “X”) feel when s/he learned that the X meant they had HIV?
* How did the others feel when they had to stand?

**Activity 2: Gallery Walk**

1. Write the questions below on pieces of chart paper (one question on each piece of chart paper), and paste them around the room.
2. Separate the participants into small groups (2-5 people) and ask them to answer the question in their small group.
3. After 2-3 minutes, have each group move to the next piece of chart paper to their right.
4. When everyone has visited all the questions, come together as a big group. Each group reads out the best 1-2 responses for the question that they finished at.

**Gallery Walk Questions**

* You want to use condoms, but your partner says “I don’t want to use condoms because I don’t like the way they feel.” What do you say?
* You want to get tested for STIs, but your partner says “What, do you think I’m sleeping around?” What do you say?
* You are starting a new relationship, and want you and your partner to get tested for STIs. What do you say to your partner?
* You want to use condoms, but your partner says “But we love each other!” What do you say?

**Follow-up this lesson by:**

* Arranging a field trip to the health centre to de-mystify the process of getting tested for STIs