**Lesson Plan: Helping parents and caregivers talk to children and youth about sexuality**

**Objectives:**

* Participants will understand that children of different ages require different information about sexual health and sexuality.
* Participants will understand that sexual health/ sexuality includes body parts, communication, relationships, self-esteem, and values.
* Participants will feel more confident starting and continuing discussions about sexuality with the children and youth in their lives.

**Target Audience:** Parents and caregivers of children and youth

**Total estimated time:** 60 minutes

**Materials:**

* Open space
* Chart paper
* Post-it notes
* Markers
* Tape
* “Talking to our children about sexuality” tear away sheets
* Facilitator’s Guide for Activity 1: Common Questions Kids Ask (pages 4-7 of this document) or Activity 2: Teachable Moments (pages 8-14 of this document)

**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.
* Decide whether you will do Activity 1 (Gallery Walk – Common Questions Kids Ask) or Activity 2 (Teachable Moments).
* **Gallery Walk Preparation:** Choose 3-4 common questions that children ask and write each question on a separate piece of chart paper.
* **Teachable Moment Preparation:** Print out and separate each teachable moment scenario.

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| Time | Slides | Topic | Key Points and Speaker’s Notes |
| 5 min | 1-3 | Introduction  Group Agreement | Introduce yourself and let the participants know that the group will be talking about how parents and caregivers can talk to children and youth about sexuality.  Establish a group agreement that the group 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. |
| 5 min | 4-5 | Icebreaker | * Make a face on a post-it note – how do you feel about talking to the children and youth in your life about sexual health? * Place your post it on a line (from not important to very important) – how important is it to talk about sexual health with the children and youth in your life? |
| 15 min | 6-17 | Discussion: What is sexual health?  Discussion: What do we want for our children as adults?  What do they need to know? When? | What do we mean when we say the words: “sexual health” or “sexuality”?   * Values – what is important to us * Communication * Anatomy – body parts * Sexual orientation, gender roles, identity * Body image and self esteem * Relationships * Physical expression   What do we want for our children when they become adults?   * All adults want children to grow up to be happy, healthy, and safe. Talking about sexuality form the time that children are young can help with this. |
| 25 min | 18 OR 19 | Activity 1: Gallery Walk  OR  Activity 2: Teachable Moments | Speaker’s Note: Traditionally, parents and Elders use to talk to their children and youth about sexual health topics including relationships, respecting your partner, how to be healthy, family planning and pregnancy. Today many youth say they want to talk to their parents about sexual health. They want to talk to someone they trust and who has experience. The following activity will help prepare you to start those conversations with your child.  See instructions and facilitator’s guides for activities below. |
| 10 min | 20-22 | Conclusion and questions | **Key messages:**   * Sexuality is not just about sex! * Talking about sexuality helps young people make decisions. * Kids of different ages need different information. * It’s important to talk to both boys and girls. * It might feel awkward at first, but it gets easier! |

**Activity 1 Gallery Walk: Common Questions Kids Ask**

**Instructions**:

1. Break into smaller groups (2-3 people per group).
2. Assign each group one question from below. Write each question and the age of child who might ask it on a separate piece of chart paper.
3. Give groups 3-5 minutes to answer the question on a chart paper, then ask them to move to another group’s chart paper. After 3-5 minutes, have the groups again move to a new chart paper. Continue until the groups have all had a chance to go to each chart paper, or until you run out of time.
4. Once all the groups have had a chance to answer all of the questions, the last group will read all the responses from previous groups. They will decide on the best response to use and explain their decision to the bigger group.

**Common Questions Kids Ask**

Young children (4-7 years old):

* Where do babies come from?
* How does the baby get in the uterus?
* Why do boys stand up to pee?

Older children (7-12 years old):

* How does the baby get out?
* What is sex?
* What is masturbation?
* What is a period?
* What is a condom?
* When a boy gets older, does he have wet stuff that comes from his penis?

Teenagers

* Is it good to be sexy?
* What is an orgasm?
* What is the best position?
* Can you get diseases from oral sex?
* Is it ok if my friend dates someone who is older than she is?

Common Questions Kids Ask: Facilitator Guide

This guide is meant to highlight some key messages. Specific responses will depend on individual caregivers and families.

**Young Children (4-7 years old)**

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| **Question** | **Simple Answer** | **More Detailed Answer** |
| Where do babies come from? | Babies grow from an egg in the woman’s belly, and come out of a special place called the vagina. | When a man and a woman trust each other, they like to be close to one another. A man’s sperm comes together with a woman’s egg to make a baby. The baby grows inside a place in the woman’s body called the uterus, and comes out of the vagina. |
| How does the baby get in the uterus? | When a man and a woman get close to one another, the seed from the man joins with the egg inside the woman’s body to make a baby. The baby grows in a special place inside the woman’s belly. | When a man and a woman decide to make a baby, the man puts his penis inside the mother’s vagina, and that’s where his seed comes out. |
| Why do boys stand up to pee? | It is easier for boys to pee standing up, because the body part they use to pee is different than girls. | Boys use their penis to pee. The penis is located on the outside of the body, and sitting on the toilet makes it harder for boys to pee. |

**Older Children (7-12 years old)**

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| **Question** | **Simple Answer** | **More Detailed Answer** |
| How does the baby get out? | The woman pushes the baby out of her uterus through special place between her legs, called the vagina. Some women have surgery to bring the baby out of her belly. | The vagina gets wider during childbirth to allow the baby to pass through. Sometimes, doctors will make a small cut next to the woman’s belly button to take the baby out. |
| What is sex? | When two people trust each other, they may decide to have sex which includes activities like kissing, touching each other’s sexual parts, or having sexual intercourse. Sex is something that adults do to make each other feel good, and to show they care about each other. | Sex does not only happen between a man and a woman, and it does not only mean when a penis goes into the vagina. Sex can happen between any two adults, as long as they both agree to it. Sex also means the body parts and DNA that a person is born with. When the doctor says “It’s a boy!” or “It’s a girl!” in the delivery room, they are stating the sex of the baby. |
| What is masturbation? | Masturbation is when people touch their own genitals to feel sexual pleasure. | Masturbation is a natural and healthy way for both girls and guys to learn what feels good and what doesn’t. It does not cause physical or mental harm, but it should be done in a private place. |
| What is a period? | Period or menstruation is one sign of puberty in girls (when a child becomes an adult). About once a month, girls will bleed from her vagina and this is a natural part of growing up. | Period blood is the same as blood from a nosebleed or a cut. This is a sign that a girl can get pregnant, but it doesn’t mean that she needs to get pregnant. |
| What is a condom? | People can spread germs when they are having sex. Condoms are protective material, worn by men or women to prevent them from getting sexual infections. | Male condoms are worn on the penis to stop fluids from touching their partner, which is how some sexual diseases are spread. Female condoms are worn inside the vagina to prevent fluids from getting inside the woman’s body. These sexual diseases are very harmful to the body, so it is important to use protection during sex.  For women, condoms can also protect against unplanned pregnancies. |
| When a boy gets older, does he have wet stuff that comes from his penis? | Yes, this wet stuff is called semen and it is a natural sign of puberty. Semen usually comes out of the penis after an erection, which is when the penis gets hard. | Semen contains sperm, which is what joins the female egg to make babies. Erections usually happen when boys have sexual thoughts, but can also happen at other times too. Some boys may see wet stuff in their underwear when they wake up in the morning. |

**Teenagers (ages 13+)**

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| **Question** | **Simple Answer** | **More Detailed Answer** |
| Is it good to be sexy? | Being sexy means feeling confident in yourself and loving who you are inside and out. You should want to be sexy to make yourself feel good, and not to impress other people. | As children go through puberty, it is natural for them to start having sexual feelings. They may also want to be more independent and make their own decisions about how to dress, talk and act. They may want to be “sexy” to get other people to like them or because they want to be like people they see on TV/movies/music videos. Sexiness is not about what other people think of you, but what you think about yourself. |
| What is an orgasm? | Orgasms are sexual feelings in the genital area. | Men and women can have orgasms. They can happen during sex with other people or with masturbation (touching your own genitals for sexual pleasure). It is a feeling of buildup and then a release – sort of like when you sneeze. During an orgasm, men and women release fluids from their genitals. |
| What is the best position? | There is no best position or way to have sex. Good sexual experiences mean both partners are comfortable, willing and having fun. | Consent is an important part of healthy relationships. This means both partners freely agree to a specific type of sexual activity. The “best” position is one where both partners are consenting to the sexual activity, and both partners are feeling good. |
| Can you get diseases from oral sex? | Yes. To be safe, people use protection like condoms and dental dams. | Bodily fluids, like saliva and sperm, can be exchanged during sexual activity. These fluids contain bacteria and viruses, some of which are harmful. Using protection can lessen the chance of getting a sexually transmitted infection (STI), but it does not protect you 100%. If you are sexually active, you and your partner should get tested at the Health Centre regularly. Many STIs can be treated with medication. |
| Is it ok if my friend dates someone who is older than she is? | It depends on how old your friend is, and how old her partner is. If they are too far apart in age, it could be illegal. | In Canada, people who are age 12 or younger cannot consent to sexual activity with anyone. People who are 12 or 13 years old can consent to someone less than 2 years older (but not in a position of trust, power, or authority). People who are 14 or 15 years old can consent to someone who is less than 5 years older (but not in a position of trust, power, or authority). People who are 16 years and older can consent to anyone older than them (but not someone who is in a position of trust, power, or authority). People who are in positions of trust, power, or authority cannot have sex with anyone under the age of 16. Sexual activity when someone cannot consent is against the law. |

**Activity 2: Teachable Moments**

Speaker note: Sometimes children, and especially teenagers, are embarrassed to ask questions about their sexual health. This does not mean they don’t have questions. You can use TV, newspapers, movies, songs or real-life situations to start conversations about sexual health with your child.

EchEach EdfdfWEfdfff **Instructions**:

1. Break participants into groups of two people.
2. Assign each group 1-2 “Teachable Moments” scenarios. Groups will read their scenario and discuss how they would respond to the scenario to start a conversation about sexual health with their child based on each scenario. They will have 5 minutes to prepare a “role play” and then each group will act out their scenario and response for the larger group, pretending that one person is the parent and one person the child.
3. The facilitator can use the facilitator guide to point out some things the small group does well in their role play. The large group can discuss if anyone else would choose to respond differently.

**Teachable moment scenarios:**

1. Your 4 year old child hugs and kisses his best friend, even though his best friend says “No!” and pushes him away.
2. Your 12 year old daughter tells you she has a crush on a 19 year old boy in the community.
3. While doing the laundry, you find a condom in your 15 year old son’s pocket.
4. You find links to pornography on your son’s computer. You know that people who watch pornography are more likely to have riskier sex (for example: not use condoms, have more partners)
5. You are walking home with your 16 year old son, and you see an RCMP car outside your neighbour’s house. You later learn that your neighbour was arrested for domestic violence.
6. Your 14 year old daughter has started dieting.
7. Your sister visits your home with her newborn baby boy. Your 12 year old daughter sees the baby and says “He is so cute. I want a baby too!”
8. You and your 6 year old son are at the Quickstop, and at one point you notice your son with his hands in his pants.
9. You overhear your 13 year old son talking to his friend about a girl he knows. He is talking about the size of her breasts and says that he wants to “screw” her.
10. You are listening to the radio with your 15 year old child, and you hear a message about the importance of using protection (condoms and birth control) before having sex.
11. You and your 12 year old child are watching a TV show/movie. There is a scene where two women are kissing.

Teachable Moments: Facilitator Guide

This guide is meant to highlight some key messages. Specific responses will depend on individual caregivers and families.

1. Your 4 year old child hugs his best friend, even though his best friend says “No!” and pushes him away.

* Remind your child that “no” and “stop” are important words, and we need to respect them. If someone tells us “no”, we should stop what we’re doing right away, no matter what.
* Teach your child to ask permission before touching or hugging playmates. If their playmate says “no”, we can do something else instead – wave, high five, or blow kisses.
* Be a role model by asking for permission before hugging and kissing your child and others. Never force your child to touch, hug, or kiss anyone – even grandparents, aunts, uncles, or yourself.

1. Your 12 year old daughter tells you she has a crush on a 19 year old boy in the community.

* Let her know you are happy that she is talking to you about this, and that liking someone is a natural part of growing up
* Explain that there are laws to help protect young people when it comes to sexual relationships (this includes hugging, kissing and having sex). The law says if you are under 16, you cannot have sex with someone older. If you still feel the same way when you are an adult, that’s ok. But right now, I don’t want you to act on your feelings.
* Emphasize that you are not mad, and that you love her and want to protect her
* Discussion: consent, healthy relationships
* Refer to the Consent K-card or visit irespectmyself.ca for more information.

1. While doing the laundry, you find a condom in your 15 year old son’s pocket.

* Calmly ask him about the condom. Do not assume that he is sexually active.
* Let him know that you are glad to know that he knows where to get condoms if he decides to be sexually active.
* Remind him that boys and girls are equally responsible for birth control, using condoms, getting tested for STIs, and asking for consent.
* Ask him if he has any questions about healthy relationships, consent, safer sex, sexually transmitted infections, or proper condom use.

1. You find links to pornography on your son’s computer.

* Ask: What do you think about that poster? Have you heard of syphilis or sexually transmitted infections (STIs)? How do you think people get syphilis? Do your friends know what syphilis is? Do you and your friends ever talk about sex? Do you know what sex is? How can someone protect themselves from STIs?
* Discussion: consent, sexual violence, reality vs porn, intimacy friendship and love; risk of becoming immune to anything but graphic and extreme sexual experiences, your expectations.
* Remind your child that if they ever have questions about sex, they can come to you.

1. You are walking home with your 16 year old son, and you see an RCMP car outside your neighbour’s house. You later learn that your neighbour is arrested for domestic violence.

* Ask: How do you feel about what happened to our neighbour? Some people say men are allowed to hit their wives/girlfriend/partner – what do you think? Have you witnessed violence in your own relationships or in your friends’ relationships?
* Let your child know that any type of violence is not ok. If they or someone they know is in an abusive situation, tell your child they can talk to you about it. Remind your son of your expectations – that he be kind and respectful to women in his life.
* Discussion: different types of abuse (physical, emotional, financial, digital, sexual), resources for victims, healthy relationships.

1. Your 14 year old daughter mentions that her friend has started dieting.

* Ask: Why do you think your friend has started dieting? What do you think about that? What do you like about your friend?
* Point out that your daughter likes her friend for reasons other than her looks. Remind her that anyone who is really interested in someone romantically likes them for many different reasons, not just because of how they look.
* Build your own child’s self-esteem. Remind her how great she is, and not just because of how she looks. Talk about her talents, skills, and kindness.

1. Your sister visits your home with her newborn baby boy. Your 12 year old daughter sees the baby and says “He is so cute. I want a baby too!”

* Tell your child that pregnancy can be a wonderful experience, but there are many things to consider before deciding to get pregnant
* Ask: Why do you want a baby? What are the good things about having a baby at a young age? What are the challenges?
* Discussion: responsibilities, family planning, parenthood, single parents, schooling and graduation, basic needs (money, shelter, food)

1. You and your 6 year old son are at the Quickstop, and at one point you notice your son with his hands in his pants.

* Calmly tell your child that it is not appropriate to do that in public
* Explain that it is OK and natural for children to touch themselves and be naked but only in private spaces (bedroom, bathroom)
* Discussion: private and public spaces and body parts, safe touch and unsafe touch

1. You overhear your 13 year old son talking to his friend about a girl he knows. He is talking about the size of her breasts and says that he wants to “screw” her.

* Talk to your son about respect. Reinforce that people are more than just looks, and that you expect him to respect women. Ask him if there’s anything else he likes about her.
* Discuss consent, and that consent is the law.
* Discuss your family values and expectations.
* Discussion: consent, healthy relationships,

1. You are listening to the radio with your 15 year old child, and you hear a message about the importance of using protection (condoms and birth control) before having sex.

* Ask: How do you feel about sex being talked about on the radio? Do your friends talk about sex?
* Let your child know that they can talk to you about sex, and that you will not be mad. If they do decide to have sex, you want to make sure they are safe.
* Discussion: safer sex, STIs, access to contraceptives, consent

1. You and your 12 year old child are watching a TV show/movie. There is a scene where two women are kissing.

* Watch your child’s reaction to the scene (Are they disgusted? Happy? Curious? Confused?)
* Ask: What do you think about what you saw? Why do you think the two women are kissing?
* Discussion topics: love, acceptance, sexual orientation, healthy relationships

**Teachable Moment Scenarios for Handing Out to Participants**

1. Your 4 year old child hugs and kisses his best friend, even though his best friend says “No!” and pushes him away.
2. Your 12 year old daughter tells you she has a crush on a 19 year old boy in the community.
3. While doing the laundry, you find a condom in your 15 year old son’s pocket.
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