



Relationships with Peers

10-WEEK FACILITATOR ACTIVITY GUIDE

For Ages 13 – 18

By Beth Hossfeld, LMFT
& Giovanna Taormina

Written: 8-16-05, Revised January 2010

A special thank you to Sheryl Cardoza, M.S., and Janet Lawson, MFTI, for their important contributions to this guide. Their thought, efforts, and encouragement have helped bring this guide new life. Their service to girls' health is greatly appreciated.





Week Eight Theme: **ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS – HOW MUCH IS IT WORTH TO YOU?**

By exploring the myths and assumptions, as well as the healthy and unhealthy qualities of relationships, the girls identify their own values and expectations for a lasting relationship.

ACTIVITY

- Identifying Relationship Values, Myth Busting, Healthy/Unhealthy Relationships Checklist, “Looking at Past Relationships” Worksheet

MATERIALS

- Three cardboard signs saying “AGREE”, “DISAGREE”, “NOT SURE”
- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- “Looking at Past Relationships” worksheet

PURPOSE

- To learn that self-respect in a relationship comes first.
- To explore the connection between self-esteem and healthy relationships.
- To identify and explore the “myths” and “illusions” about love and romance.
- To explore the values of being in a relationship.
- To examine “healthy” versus “unhealthy” relationships.
- To understand the importance of girls sticking together to empower and support each other in regard to relationships.

FACILITATOR PREPARATION

- Create three signs. One will say AGREE, the second one will say UNSURE, and the third will say DISAGREE. Put the signs up in separate parts of the room.



Week Eight



OPENING RITUAL

Do the same opening ritual each time.



THEME INTRODUCTION

Introduce the theme of the week, “Romantic Relationships: How Much Is It Worth to You?”



CHECK-IN

Go around the circle and have each girl “check-in” as to what is going on in her life.



ACTIVITY 1

Identifying Values in Relationships

- 1 Read the following statements about values in relationships and ask them to move to the section of the room where the sign agrees with how they feel about that value statement. Encourage the girls to stay true to their own thoughts and values as opposed to going where other girls go. Tell them that all thoughts/feelings/opinions will be respected.
 - Love is a feeling.
 - It’s normal for boyfriends or partners to be jealous and get mad, even if the reason for jealousy is not real.
 - Relationships should be free of conflict.
 - If someone is attracted to me, they will want to be in a relationship with me.
 - If I am really attracted to someone, the relationship will most likely work out.
 - I come first in a relationship.
 - Being with the “right” person makes me a complete and a whole person.
 - The more together I am, and the more love I have for myself, the better chance I have of having a successful relationship.
 - Physical violence (hitting) in relationships is pretty normal. If my partner feels bad and apologizes, things will work out okay.
 - I am in control of whether my relationships are healthy or unhealthy.
 - It’s okay if my boyfriend or partner really wants to have sex, even if I’m not ready.
 - If I keep trying to change my partner, I’m using my energy on something I can’t really control, and that can drain me.
 - Making my boyfriend or partner happy is what is most important in a relationship.
 - It’s okay if my boyfriend or partner puts me down and wants to change me.
 - Romance is one of the most important parts of a relationship.



Week Eight

- 2 After reading each statement, ask for a few volunteers to describe how they feel about the statement and tell the others about it. Tell the girls that there are no right or wrong answers – only opinions. Encourage discussion by asking:
 - Why do you feel that way?
 - What makes you believe in that value?
 - How do you stand up for that value?
 - How do you support that value in others?
- 3 Let the girls know that they can change their mind about a value if someone else makes a good case for agreeing or disagreeing with that value. If so, they can move under a different sign.
- 4 Continue in this manner, reading one statement at a time, inviting a discussion and a chance to move under different signs, etc. until each value is discussed. As the facilitator, refrain from giving your own thoughts; rather, encourage the girls to think through these values with each other.



ACTIVITY 2

Busting Myths About Relationships

Invite the girls to discuss and explore the myths about love and romance found in novels, movies, magazines, soap operas and music videos. Ask:

- How do novels, movies, magazines, soap operas and music videos portray love and romance?
- What is realistic about it? What is unrealistic?
- Can someone's desire for love and romance get in the way of having a healthy relationship? If so, how?
- How does a romantic relationship affect other relationships? Do you have less time for your other friends? Leave old friends for new friends?



Week Eight



ACTIVITY 3

Exploring “Healthy versus Unhealthy Relationships”

- 1 Divide the girls into groups of 2 – 3 and pass out the flip chart paper. Instruct the girls to draw a line down the middle of the paper – one side labeled HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS and the other side UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS.
- 2 Ask the girls to imagine themselves as older and the parent of a teenage daughter. Ask them to think about what type of relationship they would want for their daughter. In this role, invite them to fill in the qualities of a “healthy” versus “unhealthy” relationship on the piece of flip chart paper. Explain that they can write the types of qualities or things that would happen in a healthy relationship versus the types of qualities or things that would happen in an unhealthy relationship. Allow about 5 –10 minutes for the exercise. Encourage them to work together and respect each other’s thoughts and opinions. Remind the girls to stay in the role of a parent wanting a healthy relationship for her daughter.
- 3 Post all of the charts. Have each group introduce its chart to the rest of the larger group.



ACTIVITY 4

Activity 4: “Looking at Past Relationships”

- 1 Pass out the “Looking at Past Relationships” Chart. Tell the girls that even if they have not had serious past relationships, they can think about someone they have “liked” in the past.
- 2 Explain to them that they have now explored values and myths that are common in relationships. They have looked at qualities of both healthy and unhealthy relationships. Using what has been discussed, ask the girls to fill in the Looking at Past Relationships Chart. Say:
 - We can look at our actions and behaviors critically without being judgmental.
 - If we understand our past actions we can learn from them.
 - If we learn from our mistakes we are less likely to repeat them.
 - The only bad mistake is the one we do not learn from.
- 3 Ask the girls to answer the questions on the chart to the best of their ability.



Week Eight



SHARING OF ACTIVITY

- 1 Ask the girls to think about the relationship activities. Give them time to address the feelings that may have arisen due to the emotional content of the exercises they have done.
- 2 Ask the following questions:
 - What have you done well in relationships?
 - What might you do differently in relationships?
 - Will what you know now change how you enter a new relationship? If so, how?
 - Will it change your expectations and assumptions about relationships? If so, how?
- 3 Go around the circle and have each girl answer the following question:
 - What is one thing you've noticed about your relationship patterns, and what is one healthy relationship goal you want to focus on in a current or upcoming relationship?



CLOSING RITUAL

Bring the girls together for the closing ritual.



Looking At Past Relationships

ACTIVITY HANDOUT

LOOKING AT PAST RELATIONSHIPS OR PEOPLE YOU HAVE LIKED

Name of Partners in Past Relationships

<i>Questions</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Patterns</i>
1 How did you feel at the beginning of the relationship?				
2 How did you feel when it ended?				
3 How much "in love" were you?				
4 Did the relationship cause your self-esteem to go up, down, or remain the same?				
5 Could you really be yourself in the relationship?				
6 Was jealousy involved in a big way?				
7 Who had the "power" in the relationship?				
8 Did your partner try to change you?				
9 How were you respected or disrespected?				

Source: *Working with Women's Groups*, Louise Yolton Eberhardt