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**(UN)HEALTHY
ADOLESCENT
RELATIONSHIPS**

SOURCES

Podcast:

How Disney ruined us

Manuals:

The Expert Respect Healthy Relationships Toolkit

Why and how to tackle the topic of gender-based violence in the high schools' curriculum

Video:

What Makes A Relationship Healthy

12 Signs You're in an Unhealthy Relationship

The Line – LOVE is RESPECT

Unhealthy youth relationships in the context of sexual violence

PODCAST

How Disney ruined us

In the podcast, mental health experts discuss gender roles, norms and stereotypes that we learn through the process of socialization. They raise questions about their justification and impact on the quality of life, emotional relationships and the expression of authentic needs. This program can be used to discuss with young people how books, movies, media and the culture in which they live have influenced (and continue to influence) their perception of themselves and others, their own needs and desires, and to reflect on the consequences of (in)equality on them as individuals, but also members of certain social groups.

MANUALS

The Expert Respect Healthy Relationships Toolkit

The manual provides examples of workshops, which can be used in classwork, as part of some of the teaching units in Psychology, Sociology and Civic Education.

The texts (Annex 1) given as examples are in English, so they can also be used in English classes as a reading / translating exercise, or conversation.

Annex 2 consists of cards with different actions that students should group according to whether they are encouraging or controlling / violent.

Unhealthy youth relationships in the context of sexual violence

Incentive to talk: short videos ON HEALTHY AND UNHEALTHY ADOLESCENT RELATIONSHIPS

What Makes A Relationship Healthy

This animated video illustrates what a healthy emotional relationship means and how it differs from an unhealthy one (instead of the term healthy / unhealthy relationship, the terms equal and unequal relationship can be used). It talks about communication, trust, physical and emotional security, respect and other qualities of a healthy relationship. Take a look at this article with the students, and discuss all aspects of a healthy and unhealthy relationship - do they agree with the authors of the animation; if they disagree, in what way; do they have any dilemmas, which; how they resolve these issues in their relationships; what advice do you give to your friends?

12 Signs You're in an Unhealthy Relationship

This animated video illustrates the signs of unhealthy relationships, which are more common than we think, but are “entangled” in emotions, so that sometimes we “do not see” them. You can talk to young people about what bad / unhealthy / unequal relationships mean to them, and then watch a video to compare opinions.

The Line – LOVE is RESPECT

This short video problematizes the question of the boundary between love, care, jealousy and control in the emotional partnership of young people. Watch the video with the students and discuss boundaries with them; what is their experience; how to behave in order for a partnership to imply respect for the partner; how to protect yourself from a relationship that exceeds the boundaries of respect.

UNHEALTHY YOUTH RELATIONSHIPS IN THE CONTEXT OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Link

This video was prepared by the students of the First Zagreb High School. It problematizes misconceptions about love in young people's partnerships, which lead to unhealthy emotional relationships in which control, coercion, blackmail, sexual and other forms of violence occur. The video can be a stimulus to talk about prejudices about romantic love, jealousy, consent to sexual intercourse and sexual violence in the emotional relationships of young people.

Workshop: BREAKUP IS LOOMING

Vesna Ilić, Paraćin High School

Healthy ending of a relationship

The teacher gives an introduction: What we are talking about today was sung by many songs, conveyed by numerous emoticons and stickers, painted with graffiti on the walls of schools (“Ceca, I will always love you”; “Andrija, I remember our May 30th”) - farewell, breaking an emotional connection! It is a risky moment for partners, so I would like to talk about what is a healthy (acceptable) and what is a threatening (dangerous, risky) parting. Couples, as you know, break up because their relationship comes to an end. While at times it may seem that true love is forever, it is still true that people can leave their partners and find new ones, at any age.

Question for students: what kind of breakup do you rate as “normal”, safe, “healthy”? What does it look like when partners do not cool down emotionally at the same time, so one still cares about the relationship continuing, and the other would like to leave, start a new partnership ...?

Students share their views

The teacher points out important indicators: assertive behavior, self-esteem, respect for other people’s feelings and personalities, grief, acceptance of the end, symbols and memories, forgiveness and rituals, support and comfort from friends ...

Question for students: and now please describe a breakup that you would not want; what is it that would worry or frighten you in your partner’s behavior when the relationship breaks down? Maybe you know such examples?

Students share their views

The teacher points out important indicators: insistence, blackmailing, stalking, insulting, phone calls, sending messages, gossiping, threats, spreading lies, distribution of intimate messages, pictures ...

Teacher: Thank you, I’m glad you made it clear that you see the difference between a threatening and an acceptable breakup. It is especially important that in such cases you yourself contribute to the favorable development of the situation:

- make it clear if you want the relationship to end without underestimating the other party’s needs,
- allow yourself and your partner some time for the separation to be accepted and realized,
- do not send ambiguous messages (I will - I will not) when the parting is inevitable,
- don’t blame your partner for the breakup, it will only make the solution harder.

But be sure to seek help from your family or school if your partner:

- persistently forces you to continue a relationship you do not want (blackmail, threats, coercion),
- harasses you by phone calls and posts, annoying behavior, stalking,
- threatens to hurt himself/herself, you or others because he/she is desperate,
- is aggressive or violent in any way.

Remember: some relationships have ended in serious harmful consequences for one or both partners, because the violence was not recognized and stopped in time. Coercion is a pathological way of tying someone to oneself. Only free people can maintain healthy emotional relationships. No one has to make a sacrifice for a relationship to last, nor to make sacrifice when it ends.

Workshop: I NEED AIR

Vesna Ilić, Paraćin High School

When does a partner relationship suffocate you?

The teacher gives an introduction: today we are dealing with suffocating relationships between people. You will quickly recognize these types of relationships since we will do one exercise right at the beginning.

Exercise for students, the teacher gives instructions: I have prepared statement made by some boys and girls who turned to psychological counseling because of difficulties with their partners. Read them and then we'll talk.

- This relationship with him is holding me back. I can't breathe because of his "rules", he doesn't like me wearing make-up, he buttons up my blouse, draws my skirt to cover my knees...
- My girlfriend is not the only person in my life, I also want to train, to go out with friends.
- I also have some obligations and interests, not just a boyfriend.
- Ever since we started dating, we have cut off all ties with our peers, we are always isolated.
- I wanted her to meet my friends, to see what else I was interested in, but she thinks I'm neglecting her that way.
- I told her: I love you even when I'm away from you!
- I have to move because of my studies but my boyfriend thinks it will mean the end of our relationship.
- I can't take a step without him, he's always after me, asking me to send him photos of where I am, who I'm with.
- My girlfriend wants me to miss a football match because she wants to go to the swimming pool.

Questions for students: What did you notice in these statements? What problems are we talking about here? Students' report: pests, drags, creeps, controllers, turnkeys...

The teacher points out important indicators of a restraining relationship: you are right, this was a restraining relationship, and the statements contain different types of "suffocation". It is not always easy to recognize when restraint begins, because some relationships slowly sink into a trap: disguised as loyalty, it actually develops - restricting freedom of choice, which leads to control, isolation, and from there it is only a step away from violence.

That is why I encourage you to react when an emotional connection "swallows" all your time and displaces all your other interests or obligations. A demanding partner who constantly asks you to dedicate yourself only to him or her impoverishes your life. For proper development and a healthy emotional connection, it is necessary for partners to have satisfied various interests, inclinations, to experience different opportunities and environments, to try out in numerous roles, maintain family ties, develop friendships.

Regular classes: TEACHING UNITS IN PSYCHOLOGY

In Psychology classes, where the regular curriculum covers the teaching units **Development of Emotions, Emotionality in Puberty and Adolescence and Interpersonal Affection and Dislike, Love, Empathy**, with the help of guidelines given in the manual *Why and how to go about the topic of gender based violence in the high school curriculum*, introduce the topic of healthy and unhealthy adolescent relationships, articulation of feelings, acceptance, respect, and nonviolent relationships.