



Changing Relationships – Grade 12

75 minutes in length

Overall Expectations:

C1. Demonstrate an understanding of factors that contribute to healthy development

C2. Demonstrate the ability to apply health knowledge and living skills to make reasoned decisions and take appropriate actions relating to their personal health and well-being

C3. Demonstrate the ability to make connections that relate to health and well-being – how their choices and behaviours affect both themselves and others, and how factors in the world around them affect their own and others' health and well-being.

Specific Expectations:

C1.3 Demonstrate an understanding of how relationships develop through various stages, and describe the skills and strategies needed to maintain a satisfactory relationship as the relationship evolves (*e.g., communication and interpersonal skills, adaptive and coping skills, conflict resolution strategies*).

Learner Outcome:

Examine attitudes, values and behaviours for developing meaningful interpersonal relationships. Explain our need for relationships. Identify positive elements of relationships; i.e. trust, integrity, respect, and responsibility. Describe the skills, attitudes and behaviours for building, maintaining and enhancing healthy, positive relationships. Describe how roles and role expectations change with age, growth and changes in life. Examine the relationship between commitment and intimacy in all its levels. Identify expectations and commitments in various relationships. Explain the role of trust and ways to establish trust in a relationship.

Introduction:

Relationships do not remain static. As a couple gets to know one another, new feelings, ideas and issues can evolve and develop. This lesson encourages students to consider how relationships progress from the first meeting, through dating, and eventually, if a couple chooses sexual activity. Students will have differing opinions about dating, falling

in love or beginning sexual activity based on their personal values and/or cultural and religious backgrounds.

Materials:

1. **Handout:**
 1. Relationship Progression cards
 2. Healthy Relationship Checklist

Approaches/Strategies:

A. Ground Rules (5 minutes)

Ensure ground rules are established before beginning this lesson. For classes that have already established ground rules, quickly reviewing them can promote a successful lesson. Some suggestion for ground rules include:

- We have personal boundaries that must be respected
- We have the right to “pass”
- We have a right to our own beliefs and opinions
- We are responsible for our own learning
- Our questions or comments will be respected and taken seriously

B. Question Box (optional) (5 minutes)

Have students fill out anonymous questions and address them next class.

C. Relationship Progression Activity (20-25 minutes)

Students question how relationships progress from the first feelings of attraction, to dating and perhaps sexual activity.

1. Introduce the activity by explaining that we will be building a relationship, step by step. We will be looking at the components of relationships and putting them in what we think is the correct order.
2. There are several ways in which you may want to divide your class. With groups of 15-20 students, prepare for one group. With larger classes you may have two groups.
3. Hand out the **Relationship Progression Cards**, giving one or two to each student. Ask the students to hold their cards so everyone can see them and line up in order as quickly as possible. Cards can be placed on the table or students can physically stand in line if the room is big enough. Be sure to tell the group where the starting point is of the relationship for each group.

D. Relationship Progression Activity: Feedback and Discussion (20-25 minutes)

Students discuss relationship progression and personal values. You can lead the group discussion using the following questions as a guide:

1. Does everyone agree that this is the “right” order? If not, what should be changed?

There is no “right” way for a relationship to develop, everyone is different. Not everyone in the group will agree with the order the group has placed the stages. It is most important that the people in the relationship are happy with the speed the relationship is progressing. Communication and honesty enable couples to go at their own pace, and to make changes in the relationship when necessary.

2. Will all relationships progress in this way?

Many couples choose abstinence in their relationship and it is important that you make it clear that this is a choice.

Thinking about marriage or long-term commitment may be difficult for teens to contemplate, however this is an opportunity for them to experiment with what qualities they would look for in a person, and what qualities they do not like.

Addressing abstinence and decision-making may provide students with skills and information that help with their relationship choices. Some students may feel uncomfortable with this activity. Be sure to emphasize that all relationships may progress differently and intimate relationships may start and end at different times throughout their lives.

3. (If there are two groups). How do the progressions compare with each other? Are they dramatically different? If the groups were split male/female, do you think this would have an impact?

It is important to address gender stereotypes that may come up at this point in the discussion. Not all males want sex in a relationship and some females will pressure males.

Students with differing abilities may experience different types of relationships and may need to spend extra time exploring boundary setting

4. Where does/should love be placed in the progression? (You may want to leave this card out until this point in the discussion). Can people fall in love at first sight? Does there need to be love before sexual activity?

5. Have we built a “real” relationship or an “ideal” relationship? Do most teen relationships look like this?

6. Is there a “point of no return” in this progression?

It is important to emphasize that if a couple chooses to be sexually active they can return to abstinence at any point.

7. What happens if we take the intercourse card and put it near the beginning of the relationship?

This idea may have been raised when you addressed question 5 above. Some relationships may be “one-night stands” and involve little more than the act of intercourse. What does your group think about this from an emotional standpoint and a safety perspective?

8. How long does each step take?

Everyone is different; there is certainly no timeline that must be followed.

9. Are the birth control cards in the right place?

Chances are the group will have put these cards near the end of the relationship. Challenge them to put “thinking about” and “talking about” cards earlier. If one or both people in the relationship want to choose abstinence it is important they have this conversation early in the relationship.

E. Intimate Relationships Discussion (15-20 minutes)

Students think about how relationships progress and change from just dating for fun to a more serious relationship.

1. Ask students what we mean by “Mature” and “Immature” love.

- Often, people feel that they are in love, but sometimes it turns out to be infatuation rather than mature love.
- Immature love may involve one person taking more than giving, jealousy, one person “calling all the shots”, broken promises, and possibly violence.

2. Using the Healthy Relationship Checklist PowerPoint, summarize the lesson with the following:

- Show that you care for the other person: There are many ways to show that you care for someone. This means “being there” when your partner needs you for support.
- Have a sense of humour: Laughter can help us to not take ourselves so seriously and can smooth out the rough times.
- Communicate: Listen to each other and talk openly and honestly about your feelings and what matters most to both of you. Many relationships fail because partners do not let the other know how they are feeling or what their needs are.
- Do meaningful things together: Joining clubs or societies, doing sports or hobbies together can strengthen a relationship.
- Maintain relationships with other people: Ensure you have time for yourself to spend with your friends and family. Your partner should never control what you do, where you go or who you spend time with.
- Understand your partner’s decisions: You may not agree with your partner’s choices but it is important to show respect and support for them.

- Need to tolerate each other's weaker moments: This is a true sign of acceptance for the other person. Always respect each other and say good things about each other.
- Accept each other's style: Chances are the reason you chose to date your partner is because you found their style attractive (e.g. attitude toward life, sense of humour). If these things become problematic in the relationship they need to be addressed through communication.
- Never use violence or threats.
- Sexual fulfilment: Not necessarily sexual intercourse. Accept limits about sexual activity, every time. A couple may choose not to be sexually active but enjoy being close to one another in other ways.

Self-Reflection

During the lesson, were:

- Ground rules being followed?
- Good practices established regarding group work and discussion?

What will you change for future classes with this group?

What will you change for future use of this lesson?

Grade 12 Relationship Progression Activity Cards

Eye Contact

Talking On the Phone

Flirting

Talking About Shared Interests

Texting/Messaging

“Steady” Dating
(Dating only one person)

Touching
(Hugging and long embraces)

Petting
(Touching below the neck)

Dating

Trust
(Being able to tell and keep secrets)

Kissing

Touching
(Holding hands, arm around)

Intimacy
(Loving personal relationship, warmth, affection,
closeness)

Making Out

Intercourse

Love

Getting and using birth control and STI protection

Talking about birth control and STI protection

Pregnancy

Thinking about having children

Long-term commitment/marriage

Talking about having children

Sharing goals
(Having similar dreams and ideas about life)

Unconditional Regard
(Knowing someone's strengths and
weaknesses and still liking them)

Thinking about birth control and STI protection

Mutual sex play

Healthy Relationship Checklist

Healthy relationships have the following characteristics:

- Listen to you and take your feelings and ideas seriously
- Talk openly and honestly with you about what matters to them
- Never use threats of harm, violence or suicide to get his/her own way
- Never hit, punch, kick, bite, slap, push or otherwise strike out in anger or jealousy
- Not try to control what you do, where you go or who you talk to respect you, and say good things to you and about you enjoy spending time with you, and show it whether alone with you or in a group
- Trust you, and earn your trust by keeping your confidences
- Allow you to enjoy the activities and people that matter to you
- Accepts your limits about sexual activity, every time