

Corridor Session Plan

Learning Intentions:

To recognise abuse within relationships

To consider the role of bystanders and ways in which bystanders can intervene

Key Learning Outcomes:

HWB 1/2/3/4-04a

I understand that my feelings and reactions can change depending upon what is happening within and around me. This helps me to understand my own behaviour and the way others behave.

HWB 0/1/2/3/4-16a

I am learning to assess and manage risk, to protect myself and others, and to reduce the potential for harm when possible.

HWB 1/2/3/4-45b

I am aware of the need to respect personal space and boundaries and can recognise and respond appropriately to verbal and non-verbal communication.

HWB 3/4-49b

I know where to get support and help with situations involving abuse and I understand that there are laws which protect me from different kinds of abuse.

Success Criteria

I can speak about the impacts of partnership abuse.

I understand how language can be used to blame victims for their abuse and for staying in an abusive relationship.

I know different ways I can safely intervene and support if I see this abuse.

UNCRC Children's Rights:

Article 19 states that children have the right to protection against violence.

Article 29 states that children have the right to an education which encourages them to respect other people's rights and values.

GIRFEC Wellbeing Indicators:

Safe, Healthy, Respected, Responsible, Included.

RSHP: Second, Third/Fourth level

<https://rshp.scot/second-level/#protectingme>

<https://rshp.scot/third-fourth-level/#abuseandrelationships>

Preparation:

- Prepare 5 min icebreaker activity (you can develop your own, or see session plan below for an example)
- PowerPoint slides or handout sheet of scenario / train of thought / options (ppt download available)
- Slides or flipchart with Agree Disagree Unsure statement (ppt download available)
- Agree and Disagree signs
- A link to the 'Corridor' animation. (download available) ****Optional****
- Current relevant statistics from <http://www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk>

Resources:

- Projector & PowerPoint (if being used)
- Flipchart / whiteboard
- Marker pens
- Your Group Agreement (pin/tack this up in the room)
- Gender Box flipcharts (pin/tack these up in the room)

Other Useful resources:

[A summary of Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood \(RSHP\) resources | Resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

[Safeguarding: Domestic abuse information for educators | Resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

[Domestic Abuse - Essentials - Wakelet](#)

Introduction (2 minutes)

Welcome the group and inform them that **this session will explore physical abuse within relationships.**

Refer to group agreement and ask if pupils would like to add / change anything.

Share the learning intentions and children's rights for this session (above).

Remind the group that the issues raised in the lesson can be difficult and there might be people in the class with personal experiences. The group agreement is there so that everyone feels safe, included and supported.

If anyone needs support during the lesson they can ask a mentor or speak to the teacher who is nearby.

At the end of the lesson, mentors will put up a list of places in and out of school that can offer support if anyone needs it. They can also get these at any time from mentors or staff.

Icebreaker Activity (5 minutes)

Example Icebreaker: HUMAN KNOT

Invite the group to stand in a circle. Ask each person to hold out their right hand and grab the hand of the person cross from them (as if they were meeting for the first time.) Then ask each person to use their left hand to join with person standing next to them.

Challenge the group to keep their hands joined, but to untangle themselves and get back to the circle they originally started in.

If after 4/5 minutes this hasn't happened, ask the group to let go of each other and return to being a circle. Explain that the human knot activity shows how difficult it is at times to move if there are a lot of people and they all have different ideas about how to get out. Inform them that today's session will be about being in a corridor in school, where things can often happen when lots of people are moving.

Scenario (5 minutes)

Remind the class that for this session they will be bystanders to an incident involving a friend, classmate or someone they know.

Show slide/ flipchart or share copy of scenario and ask for a volunteer to read the scenario (If, after asking twice, no one volunteers then read it yourself)

You're in the corridor between classes. You see a couple you know arguing, then you see the boy push his girlfriend against the wall. Neither of them are close friends of yours but they are in the same year. Nobody else is doing anything.

After reading the scenario, you can also show the group the 'Corridor' animation. **This is optional**

Ask the group:

1. Is this realistic; is it the kind of thing that could happen?

2. Put your hand up if you feel there is something wrong with what is happening in this scenario...

If most of the group raise their hand, before they are lowered ask them to look around the room and see how their friends/classmates have responded. If most don't put their hand up at this point – return to this question after the discussion part of the session.

3. As we've identified there is something wrong here, what are the red flags? What are the key words or phrases in this which make you think something is wrong?

Train of Thought (5 minutes)

Ask the group:

As a bystander, when you see this what questions might you have?

This can be briefly discussed in pairs or groups and then shared or called out individually.

Ask for a volunteer to read the following train of thought (if after asking twice no one volunteers then read it yourself)

What's going on? Why is he pushing her? ... Should I say something? If nobody else is doing anything, why should I? ... If I get involved he might turn on me ... Am I ready for that?... Besides if he treats her like that and she stays with him is it any of my business? ... But if I don't do something am I saying it's okay for him to treat her like this? ... What should I do?

Ask the group:

1. What reasons might someone give for not getting involved in this situation?

Suggestions may include: fear, think it's nothing to do with me, don't want to get into an argument, don't want to get into a fight etc.

Agree Disagree Unsure (10 minutes)

AGREE/DISAGREE/UNSURE

Place your agree and disagree signs at opposite sides of the room.

Tell the group you are going to show them a statement (on ppt/flipchart) and they should decide whether they agree or disagree with the statement, then to the relevant side of the room. If they are unsure, they can stand in the middle.

Statement 1

There is a serious problem of some boys being abusive to their girlfriends

Give a short amount of time for group to make their choice then ask 2-3 people in each group: **Why did you agree/disagree/Why are you unsure?**

Ask the group:

1. Would there ever be a reason for a boy to be abusive to his girlfriend?

Take responses and conclude by highlighting that no matter what has happened, abuse in relationships is never right and never justified.

2. What makes a problem serious?

Prompt:

-If it happens once, is it serious?

-If it happened to your friend, would that make it serious?

Statement 2

Just as many girls as boys are physically abusive to their partners

Give a short amount of time for group to make their choice then ask 2-3

People in each group: **Why did you agree/disagree/Why are you unsure?**

Use current statistics from Scottish Government, or Scottish Women's Aid websites to give key facts about relationship violence rates and to reinforce that the vast majority of relationship violence is perpetrated by males against females. At this point also acknowledge that abuse can and does also happen with same sex relationships.

Ask the group:

1. Think about the Gender Box activity we did in an earlier MVP session, why might it be that more boys than girls are prone to violence within relationships?

If required prompt the group: Does the way society and the media expects boys to behave make violence more acceptable, than it would be from girls? Power, control and dominance are traits encouraged more in males encourages. Within relationships this can be harmful.

Discussion (10 minutes)

Ask group to sit down and again show the scenario.

DISCUSSION STARTERS:

Ask the group:

1. Why might the boy be pushing his girlfriend in this scenario?

Responses may include: he is angry with her, maybe she pushed him first, maybe she has cheated on him, he lost his temper, he thinks he should be in charge of her etc.

2. Could these reasons ever be used to excuse the abuse?

No, there is no excuse for abusive behaviour. We can understand why someone does something, without condoning the behaviour.

3. Where might the boy have got the message that it is ok to do this?

If required, prompt:

Do you think he might have learnt this from other male role models?

Think about the gender box activity, might he have learnt it from the media?

4. Where does this scenario take place?

You want the group to identify that this is happening in a public place, then ask:

If this is happening in public, what might be happening in private?

It may be even worse in private.

5. In the train of thought it says 'if no one else is doing anything, why should I?' So why should you?

Suggestions may include: what's happening is not fair, she might be afraid, she might get hurt, abuse is wrong etc.

6. The train of thought also includes the statement 'If I get involved he might turn on me'. Might this fear put people off doing something?

-Who else might turn on you if you say something?

You want the group to recognise that the girlfriend might also turn on you.

-Why might the girl turn on you if you were trying to help her?

Take ideas and then suggest to the group that there are many reasons this might happen, including that she loves him or that she is afraid if she doesn't stick up for him, he might be angry with her and become more abusive. Remind the group that this does not mean she is happy with the way she is being treated, or that they shouldn't do anything.

7. It also says ‘Besides if he treats her like that and she stays with him, is it any of my business?’ Why do some girls stay with boys who treat them like this?

Responses should include (if these don’t come up, be sure to share these reasons with the group): she likes/loves him, she thinks he will change, she might feel to blame, she might not think or recognise that what he’s doing is wrong, he might be pressuring her to stay with him, she might be afraid to leave him etc.

- Given all these reasons, is it fair that some people might say it’s a girls own fault if she stays with a boy who is abusive to her?

You want the group to recognise that the reasons some girls will stay in abusive relationships are varied and complex. Ultimately it’s a power and control issue and the girl should not be blamed for remaining in an abusive relationship she feels unable to get out of. The only person at fault is the abusive partner.

Responsibility

Refer to scenario, and **ask the group:**

1. Do we have a responsibility to do something here?

2. Who do we have a responsibility to?

You may need to prompt group –

3. Do we have a responsibility to the girl? Why?

She may be scared or hurt. Abuse is wrong and she needs to know others support her and that this isn’t a healthy relationship.

4. Do we have a responsibility to the boy? Why?

He needs to know his behaviour is unacceptable.

5. Do we have a responsibility to ourselves?

We have a responsibility to keep ourselves safe, and to be able to say if we don’t agree with something.

Explain to the group we are now going to explore some of the things we could do in this situation.

Options (10 minutes)

If you have time you might ask the group to consider the pros and cons of these options in small groups first, before you discuss as a larger group. Alternatively go through together as a whole group.

When discussing options, consider the following:

Option 1: Do nothing. It's none of your business.

Ask the group:

1. Is this an option that some might consider using?

We have already identified some of the reasons people might give for not getting involved.

2. What might happen if you do nothing?

Responses may include: It could get worse, the girl might feel isolated and unsupported etc.

3. What does doing nothing say to the boy and girl in this scenario?

That his behaviour is acceptable.

Option 2: Distract the couple somehow to defuse the situation.

Ask the group:

1. What might you do to cause a distraction here?

Come up with a couple of your ways ahead of the session in case you need to prompt the group. Suggestions may include: shout something about a teacher coming, or about something happening in another part of school etc.

2. Can anyone think of any possible consequences of using a distraction here?

Examples: You may draw more attention to the couple; he could turn his anger on you for being the cause of that etc.

3. What doesn't happen if you choose this option?

The behaviour hasn't been challenged so it may happen again or in private.

Option 3: Shout at him to leave her alone and wait to make sure things have calmed down.

Ask the group:

1. How do you feel about this option? Is this safe?

This option potentially puts the bystander at risk.

2. Who might start to argue with you if you choose this option?

Both the boy and the girl might.

Prompt: **Why do you think the girl might defend the boy even after he has pushed her?**

Suggest that some girls might be scared, and that potentially arguing back with the bystander to protect her boyfriend means she is less likely to be hurt / abused by him later in private.

Option 4: Talk to the girl at some point to offer her support.

Ask the group:

1. Why might this help the situation?

Replies may include: maybe she needs to know others don't think what's happening is right, maybe she needs to know others can support her, maybe she needs help to figure out what to do etc.

2. What could you say to the girl?

Take suggestions. Telling the girl that what he is doing to her is wrong, and isn't her fault may be enough to help her begin to think about what she can do to get out of the situation.

3. What doesn't this do?

Let the boy know his behaviour is abusive.

Option 5: Talk to the boy at some point about his behaviour.

Ask the group:

1. Why might someone not choose this option?

Prompt: **Is it an easy thing to do?**

This option clearly presents possible consequences for the bystander, which might put him/her at risk. It is important to choose the right time to have a conversation like this.

2. What could you say to the boy to make this a safer / easier option?

Prompt: Could you ask if he is okay? Could you say you saw what happened and wondered if their relationship is ok? Could you offer to help him sort out issues without resorting to violence?

3. Why is it important to challenge the boy about his behaviour?

By challenging it, you are both saying you don't agree with his behaviour and also looking out for him as he might get into trouble for that sort of thing.

Option 6: Talk about this with a parent/carer, a teacher/adult you trust or an MVP mentor, and ask their advice on what to do.

Ask the group:

1. What might stop someone from talking to a teacher or someone at home?

Suggestions may include: don't want to get involved; don't want to be a 'grass'; don't want to be targeted etc. Remind the group that telling an adult about a behaviour which potentially puts someone else at harm (in this case the girl might get hurt and the boy might get into trouble) is about being a good friend.

2. Might speaking to an MVP mentor be an option here? Why?

It might be easier to speak to a mentor about it. They might be more comfortable talking to the boy about his behaviour etc.

Option 7: Personal Option

Ask the group:

1. Is there anything else you could do?

Remember to explore the possible consequences for any additional options.

Thank the group for their answers and ideas.

Accessing support (1 minutes)

The last slide highlights places and organisations in which learners can access support if they have been impacted by the lesson in any way or are worried about a friend.

Ensure that in-schools supports are discussed, but make the mentees aware of where they can get support outside of school, so that they have a range of options.

You can add local supports to the slide, alongside the national ones already included, that you feel are relevant to your community/area. You can also discuss this with your supports in school and also partners.

Conclusion (1 minute)

Let the group know that as leaders, they have the opportunity to make sure their school and community are safe, respectful and supportive.

Ask the group:

What have you learnt from today's session?

You might want to note responses on flipchart.

Reinforce key messages from discussion to include:

- ✓ Any form of abuse in a relationship is unacceptable.
- ✓ We should never blame a person because s/he stays with an abusive partner.
- ✓ There are a number of options we can choose from to challenge behaviour when we don't agree with it.
- ✓ We have a responsibility to help our friends and keep ourselves safe.

Accessing Support

Leave this slide up as the lesson finishes and the Mentees leave.