

Assertively Saying “No” To Sex Learning Experiences 25

([Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#))

Grade Level Range: Middle School - Adult

To Teachers:

If you have not already done so, please review the [Introduction to Teaching Healthy Relationships and Relationship Skills](#) ([Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#)) for suggestions on teaching SEL Skills, processing learning experiences, applying skills in real-life situations, and assessing, evaluating, and grading SEL Skills.

The purpose of these learning experiences is to provide opportunities for students to become skillful in assertively saying “no” when pressured to have sex. It is a follow-up learning experience after students have completed the [Assertively Saying No Learning Experiences](#) ([Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#)) and are proficient at assertively saying no.

Materials/Readings/Skill Cards Needed For This Learning Experience

1. [Assertively Saying No Skill Card](#) ([Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#))
2. [Assertively Saying No To Sex Skill Card](#) ([Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#))
3. [Saying No To Sex Role-Playing Situations](#) below.

Procedure/Directions For Teaching Assertively Saying “No”

1. Begin by distributing and discussing the importance of saying “no assertively” and the differences between being assertive, passive, and aggressive. Review and model how to say “no” and assertive, passive, and aggressive nonverbal behaviors. Review the main points in the [Assertively Saying “No” Reading](#), ([Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#)) especially the information on the first page
2. Distribute the [Assertively Saying “No” To Sex Skill Card](#) ([Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#)). Review the skills and demonstrate how to use them.
3. Explain that they will be role-playing and will have the opportunity to role-play, coach, observe, and give feedback on what they observe.
4. Divide the class into groups of 3-4 and distribute the [Saying No To Sex Situations](#) below. In their group, they are to develop 1-2 responses to each situation that students their age would use in these situations.

5. After they develop each situation, each group member should select one that they then say aloud to their group to allow them to practice saying these assertive responses.
6. After they have completed the situations, bring the whole class back together. Ask for volunteers to share their responses to each situation. You may ask the class to decide which ones are the strongest for each situation. Add any responses that you believe may be effective and ask them if they think it would be effective in that situation.
7. Ask them for other assertive responses that are not on the skill card that they believe would be effective.
8. Ask students if there are other situations that people their age might encounter and then brainstorm the most effective and appropriate responses.
9. Read different situations and randomly call on students to role-play with you. Or ask for volunteers, then select a situation that they role-play with you.
10. Next, process the learning experience. Questions include:
 - What did it feel like to use these responses?
 - How do you think it will feel to say no to someone you want to be in a close relationship with?
 - How do you think saying no in these situations will affect relationships?
 - What would prevent you from saying no in similar situations?
 - What other comments might someone say when trying to convince or pressure someone to have sex? What assertively saying no responses would you suggest in these situations?
11. If you feel comfortable, have a discussion of Know Where You Stand below. Have them write a This Is Where I Stand Now Statement regarding being sexually active and alcohol and other drug use. Tell them you will not ask them to share, and you will not be collecting it. The purpose is for them to be clear about where they stand so if they find themselves in an uncomfortable situation, they will not have to make a quick decision because they already have decided.

Saying No To Sexual Involvement Situations

Imagine you are in the following situations. You have been going out with someone you like a lot. You have a lot in common and communicate well. You have fun when together. The relationship is very important to you. Imagine how you would feel if you were in the following situations. You want to maintain the relationship, but you either don't want to or are not ready to do what they ask. Develop appropriate and effective responses to each situation using your ideas and the Saying No To Sex Skill Card.

1. They want you to come over to their house after school. You know the two of you will be alone, and they hinted that this would be a good opportunity to have sex. You don't want to go to their house because you are worried there might be pressure to have sex and you are not ready. In addition, your parents would kill you if they found out that you went to their house when their parents were not home, and they would probably ground you for life if they found out.

2. You are making out, and they touch you in a place that makes you feel uncomfortable.

- 2A. After your response above, they continue to touch you even though you asked them to stop.

3. They suggest a sexual activity that you are not comfortable with.

- 3A. They keep pressuring you after you have said no.

For the following situations, they want to have sexual intercourse now or in the near future, but you have decided to wait. Become aware of how you or others your age would feel in these situations when you or they have decided to postpone having sexual intercourse. How would you initially respond, and then how would you respond if they continue to pressure you?

4. They bring up the idea of having sexual intercourse. How do you respond?

4A. They keep pressuring you after you have said no.

For the following situations, they brought up the idea of having sexual intercourse, but you said “no” and that you are not ready, but they continue to try and convince or pressure you to say yes.

5. “So, why aren’t you ready?”

6. “When will you be ready?”

7. “But it will bring us closer.”

8. “It will be exciting.”

9. “Don’t be wonder what it’s like?”

10. “Don’t be such a prude.”

11. “Sometimes, you are so immature.”

12. “But everyone is doing it.”

13. “So, what’s the matter with me? Why don’t you want to have sex with me?”

14. “If you love me, you would.”

15. “Oh, grow up. Stop acting like a child.”

16. “Why not? Nothing bad will happen. It will be fun.”

17. “What’s your problem?”

18. After repeatedly saying no, they continue to pressure you.

19. But when we discussed this the other day, you said you would.

20. But we have done it before?

21. Maybe we should re-evaluate our relationship if you don't want to.

Saying No To Sexual Involvement: Possible Responses

You have decided to wait, and your partner wants to have sexual intercourse now.

- I don't want to have sexual intercourse now. I've decided to wait.

They keep pressuring you after you have said no.

- It makes me angry when you don't listen to what I've said.
- I care about you a lot, but when you keep pressuring me, it makes me feel that you don't care about my feelings.

You have decided you are not ready for sexual intercourse now, but they say, don't you wonder what it is like?

- Sure, I wonder what sexual intercourse is like, but I'm not ready for it now.

They say: It will be exciting.

- The idea of sexual intercourse is exciting, but there's more to it than that and I'm not ready yet.

To your response that you are not ready for sexual intercourse, they say, but everyone is doing it.

- I don't think everyone is doing it, but even if they are, I'm not.
- What other people do is their business. I make my own decisions, and I've decided to wait.

To your response that you are not ready for sexual intercourse, they say: "So you don't want to have intercourse with me? What's the matter with me?"

- It's not because of you; it's because of me. I want to wait.
- If I were going to have sexual intercourse with anyone, it would be with you. But I'm not going to do it now.

To your response that you are not ready for sexual intercourse, they say: "If you loved me, you would".

- Don't try to confuse what I'm saying: We're not talking about love. We're talking about sexual intercourse, and I'm saying no.
- If you love me, you won't pressure me.
- Having sexual intercourse won't prove we love each other. I have too much self-respect to do it before I'm ready. I've decided to wait.

They keep pressuring you to have sexual intercourse even though you have said no several times.

- I said no and meant it, and that's all there is to it.
- If I wanted to do it, I wouldn't be saying no.
- You keep asking me to do something I don't want to do. It makes me feel like you don't care about how I feel.
- If all I mean to you is a body to have sexual intercourse with, then we'd better look at why we see each other. You have no right to use me.
- I feel like you keep pressuring me. I have enough pressure on me. I'm not ready for sexual intercourse, either.

You told them that you are too worried about a pregnancy occurring. They say: We can use protection. Don't worry.

- The only sure way to avoid a pregnancy is not to have sexual intercourse.

Know Where You Stand

Know in advance where you stand regarding sexual activity, drinking, and drug use before you are in a situation where you need to make a quick decision (e.g., at a party, at someone's house with no adult supervision, etc.). Think about the repercussions and possible negative consequences of your behavior. Don't wait until you are making out with someone to decide how far you will go. It is also a good idea to have a backup plan with a parent, other trusted adult, sibling, or friend who is willing to come pick you up if you are ever in an uncomfortable situation. You can create a code so the person knows they need to come pick you up immediately when you call or text. An example of a call or text to your parents: "This is so unfair. I can't believe you are making me leave." For friends and siblings: "What happened? Oh no! Come get me, and I'll help." You now have an explanation for why you need to leave.

Remember: If someone is pressuring you to do something after you have said no, they are more interested in themselves and their needs than you and may not care about you. Pressure to have sex when you have said no may mean they are using you.