

Power & Consent:

Purpose: This workshop will help students understand age of consent laws and why they exist. It will also provide students with a tangible way of seeing how unequal power dynamics present themselves in illicit relationships where between an underaged youth and an adult person.

Handouts: Handouts/ Balance Scales/ paper/ pencils/ cubes/ white board and expo markers

Prep: When entering the space students will be assigned a number 1 -6 sequentially.

1. Activity One: Introduction/Community Agreements

FACILITATOR: Good Afternoon. Today we talking about a very important topic. This topic is consent. I want to provide you with an extremely clear definition of what consent is. Please open up your pamphlet, and may I have one volunteer read the definition for consent written on the middle panel of the brochure.

(wait for it to be read.)

Thank you! I want to check for understanding so can I have a volunteer paraphrase that definition of consent into their own words.

Now can someone read the definition for power in your pamphlet.

(wait for it to be read.)

Thank you too! Let's check for understanding again. Would another volunteer like to paraphrase the definition of power for the group?

Thanks! So, today we will examine what that words power and consent mean, how power presents itself in consensual and nonconsensual relationships, and review the law that clarifies how imbalances of power in relationships can be dangerous, especially when an adult is intimate with a person under the legal age of consent.

Objective: By the end of the workshop, students will understand that age and experiences create a unique power imbalance that make it impossible for a person under the legal age of consent to be in a consensual relationship with an adult.

Time: 5 minutes

Materials: Contract

Procedure:

1. Review Contract Agreements from the previous workshop.

Community Agreements

Objective: Participants will indicate that they agree with the community agreements by signing a behavioral contract. The contract indicates that the only way to receive credit is to complete the tasks asked of them and to honor the community agreements expressed.

Procedure:

1. These community agreements are guidelines that our group consents to follow. Tell them that you want to create a safe space for them to have their discussions. Ask the group to suggest community agreements that will encourage them to participate in conversations. Read the agreements from the contract.
 - Don't Assume. Don't assume a person's experience. Everyone's life is different, and assuming someone's experiences may be offensive. Let people speak for themselves.
 - Judgment Free Zone. This classroom is a judgment free zone. There is no right or wrong answer. There are no stupid questions.
 - One mic, one topic. We have a lot of information to cover. If one person talks at a time and everyone stay on topic, we will be able to hear everyone and complete the entire workshop.
 - Step up, step back. Step up and say what's on your mind, but also give everyone a chance to participate in the conversation.
2. Ask participants to sign the contract.

FACILITATOR: Now that we have some agreements set, we can begin having our conversation about power and consent. Let's begin with an activity about power. We'll take a minute to think about all the ways people show they have power or the ability to control their own and somebody else's actions.

2. ACTIVITY TWO: Power Brainstorm

Objective: Creating the Power List by group brainstorming.

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: Students:
Sheet of paper and pencil/pen

Facilitator:
Chalk/White Board with chalk/expo markers

Procedure: Break students into groups. Try to limit it to 5 people per group.

1. Ask them to think about the ways people show they have power.

FACILITATOR: Please take 7 minutes as a group to generate 10 ways people might show they have power. For example, people with cars might have power because they have more ability to choose when and where they want to be at any point in their lives. Also, someone with money may have power because they can use it to pay for an apartment, food, or other services. Any questions?

(pause for questions and answer any)

If there are no more questions, lets begin.

2. Set a timer for 7 minutes.

- Go around to each group to check on their work.
- When time is up, ask each group to read their list and compile top ten list on a main board where everyone can see it. The top list should be sourced from the most frequent examples of power that came up or examples that got a large response from the group.

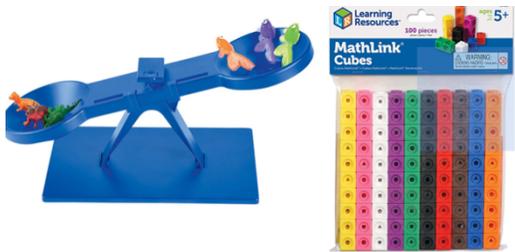
FACILITATOR: 7 minutes is up. Let's report out some of the examples of power your group came up with. I'm going to make a list on the board of your answers. Then we'll narrow the list down to about to ten examples of power to make our top ten list.

3. ACTIVITY THREE: Who has more Power?

Objective: Using the “top ten list” of examples of power, ask each group explain why youth or adults are more likely to have/or have access to that type of power. Each group should designate one side of their scale as the youth side, and one side of the scale as the adult side.

Time: 30 Minutes

Materials: 6 Balance scales, 6 sets of cubes or counters, top examples of power list (from above)



Procedure:

- Ask each group to explain why they think young people (17 and under) or adults (18+) have more access to the type of power on our “top examples of power list”.
- Each time the group agrees if young people or adults are more likely to have a particular type of power, instruct them to place a cube on the side of the scale that is for adults or for young people.
- Once each group discussed all the examples of power, debrief with the following questions.
 - How did it feel to see the scale weigh more on one side than the other?
 - Do you believe this is an accurate depiction of who has more access to power? Why?

FACILITATOR: Let's think about if we add one more factor. Say this scale represented a sexual relationship exploitive relationship between an adult and a young person. Judging based on who has more power, does it look like this relationship can be an equal one? Who might be more at risk or in danger in this relationship?

(discussion)

4. ACTIVITY FIVE: Why we have Age of Consent Laws

Object: Students will know the age of consent laws, and why they protect children from being in exploitive adults.

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: Age of Consent Hand-Outs

Procedure:

1. Read over the age of consent laws and check for understanding in large group structure.
2. Discuss institutional sexual assault and how certain relationships make it impossible to give consent.

Ask following questions:

- a. How could it be dangerous for a person to be in a relationship with someone who is their Doctor (a police officer, a social worker, a camp counselor, a teacher)?
- b. Place a cube on the side to show how this contributes to a greater imbalance of power.

FACILITATOR: You've done a lot of good work today. Thank you. I'm really impressed by the conversations you've had, and I want to save this time to answer any questions you might have about what we discussed. You can also use this time to share anything that is on your heart.

5. Activity SIX: Q&A

Objective: Answer questions or give space for young people to talk about their feelings.

Time: 10 minutes

Materials:

Procedure:

1. Allow for Q&A (if no questions are asked/ ask the students the following)
 - What is something that stuck out to you today?
 - What new ideas about power do you have?
 - Was there anything that is still difficult to understand about consent?
 - How can you continue thinking about consent and power outside of this space?
 - Have you heard about this issue in the news recently?
 - Broaden conversation to current events. (#metoo, police exerting power on Black people, places where power is shared evenly)