

### TEACHER PREPARATION

#### KEY CONCEPTS

1. We live in a society where many promote the misconception that premarital sex is expected, normal, and inevitable. This idea – that everyone wants to have premarital sex – is a false assumption.
2. Many, especially young girls, think that by having sex one can force or guarantee that the other person will have to marry them or in some way this proves their love. Actually, the opposite is true.
3. There are very often physical consequences of premarital sex: HIV/AIDS, STDs, pregnancy, and often poverty.

#### OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

1. List physical consequences of premarital sex.
2. Realistically evaluate the risks of premarital sex.
3. Explain several reasons for waiting until marriage for sex.

#### KEY TERMS

**STDs:** Sexually Transmitted Diseases.

A category of contagious diseases primarily transferred through the exchange of any fluids of the body or the touching of any genital area of a person who has the disease.

**AIDS:** Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, caused by the human immunodeficiency virus.

This virus destroys the immune system, making it increasingly more difficult for the body to stay healthy. The infected person eventually dies earlier from certain types of diseases most people never contract. There is no cure for HIV/AIDS at this time.

**HIV:** Human Immunodeficiency Virus, the virus that causes AIDS.

This virus attacks the immune system, which protects the body against infection and various diseases.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

**AIDS:** The AIDS virus has spread throughout the world. For example, it has ravaged the southeastern area of Africa. It is estimated that ninety percent of the homes in the African country of Malawi have at least one person who is infected. Entire communities are gone. The biggest problem in halting this tragedy is due to some of the widely held, mistaken beliefs in Malawi about sexual behavior which encourage promiscuity.

**Research regarding premarital sex:** Many researchers are investigating whether or not premarital sex is harmful. In reviewing numerous studies, the conclusion is that cohabitation is associated with a greater hazard of disillusionment, less marital stability, and more dissatisfaction (*Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 54, pages 178-190 and Vol. 55, pages 399-407). Researchers are discovering that sexual relationships are designed to prosper under certain conditions and that outside those conditions people experience significant problems.

*LIFE AT THE CROSSROADS* is an excellent curriculum that teaches young people how to have healthy relationships in the context of good character, which will protect them from harmful, high-risk behaviors such as sex outside marriage, violence, and drugs and alcohol. Visit the Web site at: [www.crossroadslink.org](http://www.crossroadslink.org).

## MATERIALS / PREPARATION

**In the Box: A box of finishing nails. No Grandmothers' Letter.**

- Nails should be "headless" (finishing nails) and not more than two inches long.
- Six- or eight-ounce glass filled to the brim with water.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

If available:

1. Crossroads curriculum: Unit Three: *Sex in Perspective*
2. *No Apologies: The truth about life, love, and sex*, A Focus on the Family Book published by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.
3. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 54 and 55.

## LESSON

### BEGINNING THE LESSON

#### INTRODUCTION

*[On your desk, place a full-to-the-brim glass of water and, beside it, six nails. Remember to use headless nails.]*

In our first lesson on male-female relationships, we looked at what it means to be an ideal mate. Today we're going to learn about the physical effects of having sex outside of marriage.

The first idea we are going to consider is that things may not always be as they seem. I've prepared an illustration. Please come closer to my desk so you can see my illustration.



#### EXPERIMENT ILLUSTRATION

15 MINUTES

**NOTE:** You should practice this exercise before trying it with your class. The secret is to carefully slip each headless nail through the surface tension of the water, point-first.

*[Ask your class to guess how many nails they think you'll be able to insert in the water glass before water begins to spill over.]*

*Begin by slipping six nails into the water, one at a time. When all six nails are in without any spillage, pull out another six finishing nails and ask again for their guesses.*

*When all six of these nails are also in the full glass, pull out another 20 nails and repeat the exercise. When all of these nails are safely in the glass, pull out another 20 nails and continue until there is a spillage. Depending on the size of the nails and the size of the glass, you will likely be able to place 80 to 120 headless nails in the glass without it overflowing!]*

**How many of you predicted I could get as many nails into the glass of water without spilling as I did?**

**Would you agree with me now that sometimes things may not actually be as they seem? What you personally think or feel about something may not be what is actually true.**

*[Ask the class to return to their seats.]*

### EXPLORING THE LESSON



#### LECTURE INPUT

ABOUT 15 MINUTES

**When it comes to sex, things may not actually be as they seem to be either. What seems obvious if you watch TV, read magazines – including the advertisements, listen to pop music, and even listen to some of your older friends is that the only result of sexual intercourse is very good feelings. THIS IS NOT TRUE!**

Write “STDs” on the board.

Let students give their answers and then cover what they have missed:

Sometimes the obvious answer – the one that is so simple you don’t even have to think about it – is the wrong answer. There are many things about sex that are not the way they seem. Just as with the nails-and-glass illustration, there are more factors at work than first meet the eye.

The claim that the only result of sexual intercourse is “very good feelings” ignores several grave dangers. Let’s talk about some of these dangers.

### The first is STDs.

Do you know what the letters STD stand for?

STD means Sexually Transmitted Diseases.

Can you name some STDs?

There are many STDs but the most serious ones are HIV/AIDS, Chlamydia, genital warts, genital herpes, syphilis, and gonorrhea.

These STDs can cause serious health problems, if not treated – including heart trouble, eye problems, brain damage, and blindness. Some STDs, if not treated, can eventually result in death.

It might seem as if I am trying to scare you with this discussion. I am not. Rather, I’m trying to give you accurate, clear information so you can make intelligent, informed decisions. Sadly, many young people around the world and in our own country have been unaware of these risks or have not really believed what they’ve been told. Some of these adolescents have suffered terrible consequences.

But a young person who wants the best out of life needs to be smart enough not to gamble with his or her own future.

So how do you avoid STDs? The answer is simple – wait to have sex until you marry, and marry someone who also has waited. Some people claim that having sex is the best way to find out whether you are compatible and therefore the best way to find a good marriage partner.

In fact, the reverse is actually true! STDs often carry life-long consequences. Premarital sex and living together outside marriage are always riskier.

While all STDs are dangerous, there is one that is far more serious than the rest. We now want to consider it separately.

Write the symbols on the board:

HIV/AIDS

Let students give their answers and then cover what they have missed:

This is a crucial point. Make certain your students grasp the significance.

Write “**PREGNANCY**” on the board.

NOTE:

For additional information on the early days of life, see the appendix at the end of this curriculum.

**The second danger is HIV/AIDS.** (This is a specific kind of STD.)

Do you know what the letters HIV and AIDS stand for?

HIV means **H**uman **I**mmunodeficiency **V**irus.

AIDS means **A**cquired **I**mmune **D**eficiency **S**yndrome.

What do you know about HIV and AIDS?

HIV is usually transmitted in one of two ways:

1. Body fluids during sexual intercourse.
2. The use of non-sterile needles in drug abuse.

Stated briefly, the virus slowly destroys the immune system, making it more and more difficult for the body to stay healthy. In the final stage, called AIDS, the body is too weak to fight off diseases any more.

One of the reasons HIV/AIDS has spread so quickly throughout the world is that people can be infected for many years and not know it, and can transmit it at any time even if they don't feel sick. This is why understanding AIDS is so critical. It is a stealth disease.

At present, there is no cure for HIV/AIDS. It is a killer disease, spreading quietly, mostly by people who do not limit their sexual intercourse to one partner – their spouse. There is no gene that prevents HIV/AIDS. There are problems with the use of condoms as protection against pregnancy and HIV/AIDS, the most common of which is that they tend to be abandoned when partners see no symptoms of disease.

So how do you avoid HIV/AIDS? The same way as you would avoid other STDs – wait for sex until you marry and marry someone who has also waited.

### 3. Pregnancy

Pregnancy is another physical consequence of premarital sex that catches many by surprise.

Pregnancy is usually a happy event for a married couple, but things are not actually as they seem to be, especially outside of marriage.

Premarital pregnancy leads to the difficult and often painful choice of whether or not to have an abortion. Most religions, including Christianity, consider abortion a form of murder. However, if the girl (now the mother) decides to take the baby to full term, she will have to make the decision whether to place the baby for adoption or raise the child herself.

A girl in this situation hopes that the baby's father will simply want to marry her, and the "problem" will be solved. But the likelihood that he will marry her is low. And lower still is the likelihood that a marriage starting with pregnancy will last longer than a few years. Statistics in many cultures support this result.

Some people advocate the use of condoms or other preventive birth control methods as the answer to unwanted pregnancy. However, all forms of prevention (other than abstinence) only reduce the chance of pregnancy. They do not eliminate it. And none of them eliminates the risk of STDs.

In other words, life can get very complicated when you have sex before marriage.

The best and surest way to avoid all of these diseases and problems that come with premarital sex is to abstain from sex until marriage.

 = 30 minutes

## SUMMARY

1 MINUTE

Advertisements for cigarettes and alcohol on TV don't tell us about the problems associated with those products (or else they would never sell). Likewise, books and movies containing premarital sex don't usually include the related negative consequences, such as STDs, AIDS, and others.

Books and movies often portray premarital sex as exciting, fun, romantic, and beautiful. Unfortunately, that is the only side that is shown. People can be lulled into the belief that there are no consequences. When we are careless with our lives, we will have many regrets. When we are smart with our lives, we won't regret it.

 = 31 minutes

## PROBABILITY DIAGRAM

8 MINUTES

We have talked about HIV/AIDS, other STDs, and pregnancy as physical risks of premarital sex. The risk of one or more of these consequences is too high to gamble with our lives.

There are also emotional consequences that come with premarital sex. We will look at these more in our next session.

But right now let's look at a few principles about risk.

STDs, including HIV/AIDS, are diseases of promiscuity. Sexual promiscuity is the behavior of having more than one sex partner.

You may wish to choose a student to come to the board to assist in the demonstration.

Draw 30 circles on the board in rows of six and columns of five.

Put an X through one of the circles.

Put an X through two more randomly chosen circles.

Put an X through four more randomly chosen circles. (Now seven circles should have Xs in them.)

Put an X through eight more randomly chosen circles.

Now draw 60 more circles (or a number representing the sexually non-active young people in your city if reliable statistics are available).

Each of these circles represents a young person in a large group of friends who range in age from 15 to 18.

One of these young people has been infected with an STD, but doesn't know it yet. Remember, this person's STD was sexually transmitted.

Within six months of having been infected with an STD, this person's sexual activity has infected two other people in the group.

Within another six months, these people's sexual activity has infected another four people in the group. As you can see, within a year of the first person's infection almost a quarter of the group is infected, and none of them knows it yet.

Within another year, these people have infected another eight people in the group. Within two years of the first person's infection, half of the group is infected. But only the first person has had symptoms. So only the first person has gone to a doctor and been diagnosed with an STD. None of the other 14 knows he or she is infected.

Remember, STDs are diseases of promiscuity. There is no question about how STDs spread; there is only a question of how promiscuous people are. Only you can decide to avoid promiscuity.

This represents non-promiscuous young people as an example. How many of them get infected with an STD the first six months? *[None.]*

How many the second six months? *[None.]*

How many the next year? *[None.]*

Which group would you rather belong to as far as lowering your chances of being infected with an STD?



= 39 minutes

## SUMMARY

3 MINUTES

*[Ask whether there are any questions about what you have presented. Answer those if you can. Any you cannot answer will probably not be questions about what you presented.]*

Now you can understand why STDs are a serious health problem. Many STDs are very painful. Even the milder ones can result in great emotional and physical suffering. If the STD is HIV/AIDS, it can kill within a few years.

Ask your students to suggest answers. Add any from the following that they don't mention.

You may be tempted to ignore all of this and say, "It won't happen to me." Unfortunately, that attitude greatly increases the likelihood of getting STDs.

Here is one last question before we come to the end of today's lesson: "Does marriage guarantee immunity from STDs or an unwanted pregnancy?"

Of course not. But what are the differences?

1. **Pregnancies are safer.** Usually both parents are happy about the pregnancy and the prospect of having a baby, so they take care of the mother's health.
2. **STDs are less likely.** People who already have STDs get married, too, and pass the disease to their spouses. Not all married people are faithful to their spouses.

But STDs, including HIV/AIDS, are diseases of promiscuity. A good marriage greatly lowers the risk of STDs, and a faithful marriage of two people who have abstained from sexual intimacy until marriage is the best guarantee there is against becoming infected with an STD.

 = 42 minutes

## ENDING THE LESSON



### CONCLUSION

3 MINUTES

1. If you are not yet sexually active, the wisest course you can take is to choose to remain a virgin until marriage.
2. If you are sexually active, the wisest thing you can choose to do is to stop. You don't need to jeopardize your health or the health of your friends any longer.

In a later lesson [*Lesson 24–The Media Unmasked*], we will look more closely at how the media and our culture influences and shapes our attitudes and choices about sex. Begin to look for examples in the TV shows and movies you watch, in the music you listen to, and in advertisements you read, to observe how this is true.

Before dismissing your students, remember to dictate the Parent-Teacher questions to them.

 = 45 minutes



## RESOURCES

### GOING DEEPER

*[Before your students come into the room, write the first names of all your students on separate slips of paper. Then write several more names (different from the names of any of your students), and mix all the names together in a bowl or a hat. Finally, write these phrases on the board:]*

**Someone who . . .**

1. **Has traveled more than 500 kilometers from home.**
2. **Is left-handed.**
3. **Knows how to change the oil in a car.**
4. **Can play a musical instrument.**
5. **Has eaten an insect sometime in his or her life.**
6. **Has had to go to the hospital for stitches or to set a broken bone.**
7. **Has more than two siblings.**
8. **Personally knows someone who lives in another country.**
9. **Owns a fountain pen.**
10. **Has flown in a plane.**

### FIND “SOMEONE WHO” MIXER

*[When your students arrive, tell them to take out a sheet of paper and sign it at the top.*

*Then, give your students a few minutes to circulate throughout the room, securing the signatures of other students who fit the descriptions listed above. If you have enough students in your class, stipulate that no one person’s signature can appear more than once on any sheet.*

*The winner, the first one to secure ten legitimate signatures, will receive a prize. (There may also be a prize for the second- and third-place winners, so wait until you have found your top three contestants before you announce the end of the contest.)]*

**Today, I have written on the board some facts that might describe some of you. Take out a sheet of paper and sign the top and number it from 1 to 10.**

**Now, I will give you a few minutes to go around to the other students in the class to secure the signature of the students that match these facts. The first person to get 10 legitimate signatures will win a prize.**

*[After you have found your winner, stop for a dramatic moment: Draw one of the names out of a bowl or hat. Before you announce the name, explain that someone bearing that name has contracted a highly contagious disease. If the name you draw was not a member of your class, your entire class is free from that deadly disease and you may award the prize to the winner. Then, draw two more names accompanied by the same announcement.*

*If any of the names you draw is the name of a member of your class, things get complicated: That student is automatically disqualified, even if that student is the winner. In addition, every student whose paper bears the signature of that student is also disqualified. What's worse, if the name drawn is the name of more than one of your students, all students bearing that name are disqualified, as well as all students who have those students' signatures.*

*Your students will quickly see how the transmission of a disease by just one carrier can affect many others. Have each person "infected" by the disease sit down, signifying sickness or death. Point out that if each person in your class had 25 signatures, it would be easy to see how an entire community could be quickly devastated by a disease initially carried by only one person.*

*Ask your students to read Proverbs 6:27-29. This passage sketches the common-sense reason for abstaining from sex outside marriage — it is self-destructive. What images does the passage use to portray the destructiveness of sex outside marriage (scooping fire into one's lap, walking on hot coals)? When a person has sex outside of marriage, they are risking damage not only to themselves but also to people around them, as our contest just illustrated.]*

## FOCUS POINT

Be sure to leave time for discussion at the end of the learning activity so your students can discuss the connection between the learning activity and the lesson. Listen to see whether they seemed to understand the key points listed. If you sense that one or more of these points may have been lost, be sure to guide the discussion to make sure they get these main ideas.

- 1. Sex outside marriage is self-destructive.**
- 2. The best way to avoid STDs is to avoid sex until marriage and marry someone who likewise has avoided sex.**
- 3. Sex cannot be a casual activity because the risks and consequences are so serious, for you and for others.**

## PARENT-TEACHER CONNECTION

### **For Family Discussion:**

Discuss with your adolescent the physical problems that can result from premarital sex (STDs, pregnancy, etc.).

