

# Let Me Tell You

*A Lesson Plan from Rights, Respect, Responsibility: A K-12 Curriculum*

*Fostering responsibility by respecting young people's rights to honest sexuality education.*

## **NSES ALIGNMENT:**

By the end of 12th grade, students will be able to:

**SH.12.IC.1** – Demonstrate skills to communicate with a partner about STD and HIV prevention and testing.

**SH.12.INF.1** – Analyze factors that may influence condom use and other safer sex decisions.

**TARGET GRADE:** Grade 10  
Lesson 4

**TIME:** 50 Minutes

## **MATERIALS NEEDED:**

- White board and markers
- Communication signs prepared as described
- Masking tape
- STD Communication Scenarios, prepared as described

## **ADVANCE PREPARATION FOR LESSON:**

- Print out the communication signs 1-6. Photocopy signs 1, 2 & 3 onto paper of one color, and signs 4, 5 & 6 onto paper of a different color. You will need to make a second copy of each sign on white paper.
- Post signs 1, 2 & 3 around the room, one on each of the side walls and one on the back wall as space allows. Post one set of signs 4, 5 & 6 around the room similarly, but away from the first set. Keep the second copy of the signs aside for use in class.
- Tear off at least 6 two-inch pieces of masking tape and attach loosely to the white board for use during the activities.
- Each of the four STD Communication Scenarios contains two parts, a role for Partner One and a role for Partner Two. Print out enough copies of the STD Communication Scenarios so that each pair of students will get one scenario. Cut each scenario in half and either clip them together with a paper clip or put each scenario into an envelope so each student pair will have a scenario containing both a Partner One and Partner Two role.

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

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

1. Explain the impact of having a communication style that is similar to or different from a partner on the ability to communicate about important topics. [Knowledge]
2. Demonstrate how to communicate with a partner about STD risk and protecting their own and their partner's sexual health. [Knowledge, Skill]
3. Demonstrate an understanding of where and how to be tested for STDs both in person and at home. [Knowledge, Skill]

## **A NOTE ABOUT LANGUAGE:**

Language is really important and we've intentionally been very careful about our language throughout this curriculum. You may notice language throughout the curriculum that seems less familiar - using the pronoun "they" instead of "her" or "him", using gender neutral names in scenarios and role-plays and referring to "someone with a vulva" vs. a girl or woman. This is intended to make the curriculum inclusive of all genders and gender identities. You will need to determine for yourself how much and how often you can do this in your own school and

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classroom, and should make adjustments accordingly.

#### **PROCEDURE:**

**STEP 1:** Say to the students, “All of us in this room are unique individuals, yet we will often find we have some things in common. We’re going to start today’s class by looking at what we do and don’t have in common in social situations.”

Say, “I’m going to ask you to think about how you feel about talking – specifically talking, not texting – when you’re with a group of friends. I’ve placed three [say color of signs] signs around the room. One reads, ‘I’m the one who does most of the talking,’ another reads, ‘I like to do some of the talking, but it’s a balance,’ a third reads, ‘I prefer to sit back and listen to everyone else talking but don’t talk much myself.’ Please think about which of these signs applies to you, then go up and stand beneath that sign. If you think you could fit under more than one sign depending on the circumstance, please go stand under the sign that reflects what first came to your mind.” Give students a minute to decide and stand under their sign.

Say, “I’m going to give you a minute to talk among yourselves about why you chose to stand where you are standing. Then we’ll have a chance to talk as a larger class about it.”

***Note to the Teacher:** If you have only one student standing beneath a particular sign, be sure to go over to make sure they have someone to talk with.*

After about a minute, stop the student conversations. Say, “Look around the room – what do you notice about our class based on how many people are standing beneath which sign?” (Possible responses may include, we have a lot of talkers in class, we have a lot of people in class who don’t like to talk, etc.)

Starting with the group that has the smallest number of students standing in it, ask for a few students to explain why they chose to stand where they did. Repeat back or paraphrase what students share. Move to the second and third groups and do the same.

Say, “Now, I’m going to ask you to think about being in a romantic relationship with someone – whether it’s someone you’re with currently, or someone in the future if you aren’t in a relationship now. Around the room you’ll see signs that are [say the color of the second set of signs]. Thinking about when you’re one-on-one with a partner, I’m going to ask you to think about how you talk with them or imagine you would talk with them about something important. The first sign reads, ‘I like to be the one to bring things up and do most of the talking.’ The second sign reads, ‘I like it when it’s a balance where we both talk back and forth.’ The third reads, ‘I don’t bring stuff up. If they have something to talk about, they can bring it up.’”

Ask students again to think about how they are, one-on-one with a partner or how they think they’d be with a future partner, and ask them to move to that sign. Ask them to, again, talk among themselves about why they chose to stand where they did. If there is only one student standing beneath a particular sign, be sure to walk over and stand with that student so they have someone to talk with.

After about a minute, ask the students to stop their conversations. Again ask for a few people from each group to contribute why they chose to stand where they did.

Process, using the following questions:

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- Look around the room again. What do you notice about how many people stood where?
- Was there much difference from the first set?
- Why do you think that is?

Ask three students to volunteer to take down the second set of signs and bring them to you and have everyone sit down. (15 minutes)

**STEP 2:** As students are returning to their seats, post the duplicate sets of signs on the board in two columns next to each other:

**I like to be the one to bring things up and do most of the talking**

**I like it when it's a balance where we both talk back and forth**

**I don't bring stuff up. If they have something to talk about, they can bring it up**

**I like to be the one to bring things up and do most of the talking**

**I like it when it's a balance where we both talk back and forth**

**I don't bring stuff up. If they have something to talk about, they can bring it up**

Say, "Take a look at the styles up here. What do you think happens in a relationship when there are two people who both like to bring things up and do most of the talking?" Probe for, "they may talk over each other and not listen."

Ask, "What about when both people feel there should be a balance?" Probe for, "they probably will have really good conversations – as long as they both are honest and proactively bring this up when they need to."

Ask, "What happens when neither person feels like they want to bring things up?" Probe for, "They probably don't talk a lot, it's probably really hard for them to have serious conversations."

Say, "A lot of times, we will be drawn toward people who are similar to us in a variety of ways – similar likes and dislikes, similar ways of communicating, like what you see here. But many times, we end up with people who are really different from us. This can have an impact on how we communicate with each other.

For example [switch card two with card three in the right-hand column], what do you think would happen between two people when one never wants to talk about anything, and the other does best when there's an equal exchange?" Probe for, "it may get frustrating for them – the one who likes to bring things up and hear from the other person can get impatient, and the other one who doesn't like to talk may feel pressured."

Say, "Regardless of how we communicate and how our partner communicates, we need to be able to do this. And it's not just talking about, 'How was your day?' There are lots of really important things relating to your sexual relationship that you need to figure out how to communicate about so you have a positive, healthy relationship. We're going to look at how to do that now." (10 minutes)

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**STEP 3:** Divide the class into pairs. Once they are settled, say, “For the purposes of this activity, I’m going to ask you to pretend you are in a romantic and sexual relationship. Please remember our groundrules about respect; this is a totally hypothetical situation that’s for the purposes of our class discussion only.

***Note to the Teacher:** It can help to have your class groundrules posted in a visible place for this lesson for easy reference. Also, this activity can bring up discomfort for some students, which may appear as reinforcing stereotypical gender roles within the activity and/or homophobic comments at times if two males are paired together. It can help to anticipate these reactions so you can be ready to intervene when necessary.*

I’m going to come around the room and give each of you one half of the same scenario and ask you to talk about the issue that’s listed. Please do not show your role to your partner, because your roles are slightly different. Communicate as you typically would, you don’t have to play a role when it comes to that, just be yourselves.

I’m going to give you a few minutes to work to reach the goal listed there. You will have about 5 minutes in which to do this.”

Answer any questions, and have them get started. (8 minutes)

**STEP 4:** After about 5 minutes, ask the pairs to stop. Process using the following questions:

- What was it like to do that?
- What was [fill in students’ responses] about it?
- How many pairs reached the goal of the assignment? How many didn’t?
- For those who reached the goal, please describe the scenario you had and explain why you think you were able to reach the goal.
- For those who were not able to reach the goal on your assignment, please describe the scenario you had and why you think you weren’t able to.
- In what way did the fact that it was about discussing STDs make it easier or harder to have these conversations or reach your assigned goal? Why?
- What do you think would have been different about the scenarios if you were having these conversations by text instead of in person? What does that tell you about texting vs. in-person conversations about tough topics?

Ask, “What does doing this tell you about communicating with a partner about STDs and sexuality in general?” Probe for:

- It takes work!
- It takes more time than you think – it’s more than a quick, “Hey, we should use condoms” “Okay!”
- Our communication styles have an impact on our relationships – and the better and more clearly we communicate in our relationships – no matter what that looks like – the better they will be.

Explain the homework assignment and close the class. (17 minutes)

## **RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES AT CONCLUSION OF LESSON:**

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The forced choice activity at the beginning of the lesson will fulfill the first learning objective. The paired communication scenarios will achieve the second learning objective. The homework assignment will achieve the third learning objective.

### **HOMEWORK:**

Students will find one place where they can get tested in person for STDs and HIV and explain the process.

*(Note to the Teacher: Once you have collected the homework, you may wish to combine the responses and create a resource for your students to take home as a resource so they know the full spectrum of options for STD testing and treatment in your community.)*

## Scenario A

### PARTNER ONE

You and partner two haven't yet had sex, but have been talking about it. You and your partner each have had one partner before and have used condoms. You need to talk about what you're going to do sexually and what steps you're going to take to avoid STDs (and pregnancy, if that's an issue).

**Your goal:** Reach agreement on what you plan to do to reduce your STD risk when you do have sex.

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## Scenario A

### PARTNER TWO

You and partner one haven't yet had sex, but have been talking about it. Your partner has only had one partner before – and although you told them that you'd only had one partner before, you actually have had four others. You just didn't want to tell them because you were worried they wouldn't want to be with you. You've never been tested for STDs but feel fine.

**Your goal:** Reach agreement on what you plan to do to reduce your STD risk when you do have sex.

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## Scenario B

### PARTNER ONE

You just met partner two at a party, and you are totally into each other. You are in a room away from the rest of the party and have been making out and are pretty sure you two are going to have some kind of sex. You've had oral sex before, but no other kind of sex. You definitely don't want to get an STD and you don't think you've had one.

**Your goal:** Reach agreement on what you plan to do to reduce your STD risk in that moment.

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## Scenario B

### PARTNER TWO

You just met partner one at a party, and you are totally into each other. You are in a room away from the rest of the party and have been making out and are pretty sure you two are going to have some kind of sex. You've had sex before, but don't like using condoms because it doesn't feel the same. You had chlamydia last year, took medicine to clear it up, and don't think STDs are a big deal. You do, however, definitely want to have sex right now with this person!

**Your goal:** Reach agreement on what you plan to do so you both feel okay about doing whatever you decide to do sexually and about their concerns about STDs.

## Scenario C

### PARTNER ONE

You and partner two have been in a relationship for about four months. You have had several different kinds of sex and have used condoms most of the time. When they went away with their family for a long weekend, you had sex with someone else and didn't use condoms. You really care about your partner – this other person means nothing to you, it just happened. But you don't know anything about the other person's STD status.

**Your goal:** Tell your partner about what happened and figure out what you should do about figuring out your STD risk and protecting both of you moving forward.

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## Scenario C

### PARTNER TWO

You and partner one have been in a relationship for about four months. You have had several different kinds of sex and have used condoms most of the time. You are monogamous – meaning, you only have sex with each other, no one else. Neither of you has ever had an STD – but you've also never talked about it. You think it's time for you two to stop using condoms altogether so you can really feel close to each other all the time. You really want to be with your partner, no matter what, and are committed to being in it together.

**Your goal:** Talk with your partner about what you think should happen in the relationship, and figure out what you should do about figuring out your STD risk and protecting both of you moving forward, especially if you plan to stop using condoms.

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## Scenario D

### PARTNER ONE

You have been on the pill for a few months because you had some issues with acne. You and partner two have been together for a while and been having sex and using condoms. Partner two is really worried and always wants to use two methods. You would prefer to stop using condoms since you are a faithful pill taker, so what's the risk?

**Your goal:** Stay in the relationship, but maybe stop using condoms...

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## Scenario D

### PARTNER TWO

You and partner one have been together for a while and have been having sex. You always use a condom with your partner although you know they are taking the pill too. You know someone who had gonorrhea and even though it cleared up really quickly once they took some medicine, it freaked you out. You really, really like partner one and don't want to mess things up but also want to make sure to keep doing everything you can to protect both of you.

**Your goal:** Stay in the relationship, no matter the cost.

## Homework

### STD Testing: What Are My Options?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please find one place in your community that does STD testing, and describe the process below. **NOTE: *You do NOT need to actually get tested, you just need to find out what someone needs to do in order to get tested.***

Name of testing site: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

How far is the clinic from home? What about from school? What are directions to get there from both? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What are the days of the week and hours the clinic is open? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How much does it cost? \_\_\_\_\_

Do they take insurance?      Yes              No

Who would you bring with you to get tested? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If you were to test positive (meaning, you had an STD), who would you go to for support? What would you want/need from them? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**I'm the one who  
does most of the  
talking**

**I like to do some  
of the talking, but  
it's a balance**

**I sit back and  
listen to everyone  
else but don't talk  
much myself**

**I like to be the one  
to bring things  
up and do most  
of the talking**

**I like it when it's  
a balance where  
we both talk  
back and forth**

**I don't bring stuff  
up. If they have  
something to talk  
about, they can  
bring it up**