

Session 5

Replacing teasing, taunting, bullying, peer pressure with respect and positive relationships

Rationale

Children at this age group are eager to belong to a peer group. In their eagerness, they may give in to or agree to do things which they actually may not want to do. They are often taunted and bullied by their peers, older children and at times by adults. They have a few ways of handling such incidents, ranging from retaliation, complaining to someone in authority, ignoring the taunts and at times, internalizing the damaging message. This can reduce a child's self-esteem. We need to help children understand that words, like the deeds of a person, describe and tell others about the character and personality of the person doing the taunting. Also learning how to be assertive helps the child respond positively to taunting and bullying.

Materials required

- Session worksheets/Posters
- Marker pen
- Any sticking substance (Blu Tac / double sided sticking tape / cello tape / board pins)
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Objective

At the end of the session 5 the children will internalize:

Core Message 1: Living in a group leads to a variety of situations and feelings.

Core Message 2: My peer group influences me as a person

Core Message 3: The way people words and act tells us about the character and behavior of those people.

Core message 4: Peer influence is normal. We can manage peer pressure assertively.

Core Message 5: Identify your values: When I act in accordance with my values, I feel happy. When my values are negated, I may feel angry/ cynical/ sad.

Core Message 6: Sexual attraction towards another person is normal and natural

Core Message 7: Actions have consequences.

Core Message 8: I can learn to express my anger in an appropriate way.

Core Message 9: I can recognize and build positive relationships

Core Message 10: I know the Law and my responsibility

Core message 1: Living in a group leads to a variety of situations and feelings

Activity: Warm up and setting the context for safe relationships (Objective is to understand consent and decision making in a relationship)

Facilitator asks students to stand in a circle

Facilitator explains the activity to participants: When the music plays they have to walk in the circle. When music stops, a number will be called out. They have to get into groups of that number. The ones remaining are out of the game and stand/sit on one side of the room. They become observers.

Clap while the participants walk around in the circle.

Facilitator stops clapping and calls out a number.

Participants form themselves in groups of that number.

Those in the groups return to their circle and they start walking when the clapping starts again. Those left out, join the observers. The activity is repeated a few times. Begin with large numbers. Eg. 30, 22, 15, 20 and come down to 4.

After a few rounds, facilitator asks participants to sit where they are standing only (in the same circle but those with back to facilitators can move to face in front) and do the processing:

- What was happening during this exercise – did you get pushed out of a cluster?
- How did that feel?
- Did you get pulled into a cluster? Did you want that? How did it feel?
- I noticed few people were clinging to each other. Why was that? How did it feel?
- Those getting out how were it for them?
- What did the observers notice about what was happening?
- Do these things happen in life sometimes? Give examples
- What does this exercise teach you about relationships? – sometimes you get pulled against your will and that feels bad; people are competitive; you want to belong and getting left out feels bad; winning feels good; people want to stick to their friends; those who are strong get their way.

Material Required

Marker pen, Blu Tac / Board pins /
Double sided sticking tape / Cello tape
Marker pen, Chalk, Duster,
Blackboard, Emoticons for feelings,
Music player

Advance Preparation

Carry the Music player and a song to be played

Tips for Trainers

- Praise children who have answered correctly or are on the right track by using words like, "very good response"
- Incorporate a lot of hand gestures and voice modulation to capture the interest of the students.

Core message 1: Living in a group leads to a variety of situations and feelings continued...

Activity: Do I Really Decide for Myself?'

In their handouts, children respond to the prompts by reflecting on what influences them to make these decisions:

Refer to Annexure 5: 1 for Handout

Responses are likely to include:

- media (television, music videos, movies, celebrities, advertisements)
- parents and other family members
- other adults
- peers
- personal likes and dislikes, personal decision.

Discussion-

Making decisions about what we like, feel comfortable with and wish to do is often very tough because there are a lot of factors that affect all our decisions. These influences can be positive as well as harmful. E.g. everything that we see on TV is not true. The media uses many tactics to make us believe some things are good for us, even when they are not. They show us how doing certain things make us look cool or feel good. It is important to keep this in mind so that we are able to make choices which are actually good for us. Can you think of ads where what is shown does not happen in real life or might actually be harmful for you? (E.g. Axe ads for attracting women, fairness cream ads for becoming more beautiful, Complan/Horlicks for instant height growth, etc.

Core Message 2: My peer group influences me as a person

Methodology: At this age, do we feel a strong need to belong to a group? Why do we feel so?

Discussion: Because our peers are going to live as long as us, also they have a better understanding of what we are going through. We are social animals and we survive and prosper in groups. Hence the need to be accepted in a group, to belong to a group, to be appreciated by the group members. Hence many times we feel pressured to conform and to be accepted by our peer group.

Tips for Teachers

- First ask the question to a single child and then put it forth to the other children. This helps giving every child an opportunity to answer as well as provides opportunities to clear doubts if necessary.
- If any child gives a different answer from the expected response, do not correct the child; rather ask the child to state the reason and use such incidents as points for discussion.

Core Message 3: The way people talk and act tells us about the character and behavior of those people.

Methodology: Role play: You are on a busy street. The first person is in a hurry and is walking his way through the crowd by saying politely "excuse me please." Please give me some place". The second person is also in a hurry but to make space, he/she pushes people apart and says "get out of my way!" "Move!". When you saw both these people, what did you think about the behaviour of both these people? Did the words they used tell us anything about the behaviour of these people? What are the ways of dealing with people who tease or taunt you?

Key Message to Communicate

All of us have feelings and everyone feels happy, sad, angry, scared and confused at some time. We have learnt that we all have similar body parts. We now know that all of us also have feelings. If someone hits us, we do not like it and feel sad and angry. In the same way, when we hit others they also feel sad, angry and scared. We must treat others the same way that we would like them to treat us."

The way we treat others defines our character.

Core Message 4: Peer influence is normal. We can manage peer pressure assertively.

Methodology: Can we allow ourselves to be pressurized to doing whatever the peer group decides? How do we resist peer pressure without making them wrong or angering them?

Discussion: Ways to resist peer pressure

- being assertive when refusing
- disagreeing with peers
- give a reason
- refuse repeatedly and consistently
- reverse the pressure
- leave the place
- join another group which respects your feelings and values.

Refer to Annexure 5:2 for poster on 'Saying NO' for children to understand the script for being assertive.

Core Message 5: Identify your values: When I act in accordance with my values, I feel happy. When my values are negated, I may feel angry/ cynical/ sad.

Methodology: Role plays of peer pressure:

(1) A group of friends trying to make you smoke when you don't want to. How can you be assertive and refuse?

(2) Your friends are teasing a junior. You don't agree with what they are doing. You are worried you will be thrown out of the group if you protest.

Act out different ways of expressing and asserting yourself.

Discussion: How can you get an indication what your values are? The way you interact with parents, friends, society helps you to identify what your values are e.g. loyalty, courage, fairness, freedom, truth, friendship, care.

How do I Identify my values? When I find out what really makes me happy, those are the values I believe in. What makes me very angry with my friends, those are the things which clash with my values. - Value compromise, but do not compromise values.

Core Message 6: Sexual attraction towards another person is normal and natural

Methodology: Let us understand some of the pubertal changes specifically with regard to the effects they have on our emotions and desires.

Discussion: Sexual feelings and feeling of attraction towards another person. Nature is turning you into adults, into reproductive beings.

Your reproductive cells are being produced (sperms/ eggs) but you don't have any feelings of attraction can you reproduce?

No.

Therefore the feelings are necessary and needed and are perfectly natural.

Core Message 7: Actions have consequences.

Methodology: Can we take action on every feeling we have?

Discussion: Feelings arise naturally. I can accept them. But actions have consequences. Managing feelings is choosing the actions and ways of expression after thinking about its possible consequences. Every feeling does not need to be acted upon. We control our feelings – like anger –it's a very strong emotion - yet the way we express anger with our father, mother, sibling and Principal are different!

Sexual feelings: learn to observe them, and channelize your energy elsewhere, rather than feed them by watching pornography. Attractions / crushes at this age are short lived. Take an action when you can manage the possible consequences. A consequence of sexual activity is pregnancy. STI/HIV may be contracted. Bring in responsibility while acting and managing emotions.

Core Message 8: I can learn to express my anger in an appropriate way.

Methodology: Taunting by friends, family or other people can make us angry. How can we deal with our anger? List responses

Discussion: It is ok to have feelings. It is ok also to feel angry.. If I allow my anger to become more and more without expressing it, it suddenly bursts like a thundercloud. Instead, if I express my anger when it is still less, then I can express my feelings slowly, like a gentle rain.

Do - State your feelings, describe the situation and suggest a solution.

Do not label the other person. Do not call them names. Do not use physical or verbal violence.

Core Message 9: I can recognize and build positive relationships

Methodology: How would you define a positive relationship/ friendship? Ask and list down their responses.

Discussion:

Positive Influence:

- Encouraging you and helping you believe in yourself.
- Helping you stand up for what you believe in.
- Listening when you want to talk things over.
- Including you in the group and activities.
- Being someone you look up to.

Negative Influence:

- Calling you names or putting you down if you don't do something, for e.g. "you are dumb".
- Convincing you that it is ok to do something that you don't want to do (e.g. "It will be ok, nothing bad will happen").
- Believing that it is important to fit in with the group and do what they are doing.
- Feeling afraid of what will happen if you refuse to do something.

Refer to Annexure for Activity 5: 3 on Positive Friends/Relationships

Managing Peer Influence (C.A.A.R)

Be Confident

- Know that not everyone is doing it, and that it's OK for you not to do it.
- Be confident about your choices

Suggest an Alternative.

- Think of something else you can do, either with a friend or as a group.
- "Can we do something else instead?"

Avoid the situation.

- Walk away.
- Think ahead. If you see a situation arising where you might be pressured, avoid the situation.

Refuse

- It's ok to say "No," or "No thanks."
- Give reasons (e.g., "I don't feel comfortable" or "My mother will be upset").

Discuss characteristics of an unhealthy relationship

1. Anger, emotional abuse or humiliation- Calls you names privately or in front of others. Puts down or makes fun of you. Inappropriately grabs you or shows off your personal items in public.
2. Using social status/male privilege- Acts like they are the boss and they can make all the decisions e.g. you get their permission to go somewhere, do something.
3. Intimidation- tries to scare you by yelling, smashing things, or by looks and gestures. Threatens to get you in trouble with family, friends or school
4. Minimise- refuses to acknowledge your discomfort or rights. Calls you a sissy or nagger for bringing up issues. Puts the blame on you.
5. Threats- threatens to harm you, your friends or family. Threatens suicide if you leave them. Threatens to break up with you.
6. Sexual coercion- forcing intimacy, threatening to break up with you, making you jealous to force you into sexual intimacy
7. Isolation- Pressures you to choose between them and your friends or family. Pressures you to quit activities you like, etc.
8. Violating your privacy- Reads your notes to or from other people. Goes through your bag or personal belongings without permission. Forces unwanted intimacy.
9. Limiting independence- Wants to control what you wear and how you look. Pressures you to use cigarettes, alcohol or drugs. Wants to make all the decisions in the relationship.

Methodology: How can you recognise a healthy relationship?

Discussion: Think of a person who is very important to you.

- What do you value in this relationship?
- How does this relationship make you feel about yourself?
- What positive role does this person play in your life?

Decoding Healthy Relationships- Respect, Rights and Responsibility

Outcome: Teens learn to establish equality in relationships Learn how to build healthy relationships and how to avoid unhealthy ones Better social and interpersonal relations for teens

Learning healthy and respectful expression of affection.

Activity:

Scenario 1: You want to break up with your girlfriend/boyfriend because you would prefer to have more time to yourself and/or to hang out with your friends, but they plead with you to not break up

Is it appropriate to compromise in this situation? Why/Why not?

Scenario 2: Your girlfriend/boyfriend tries to go physically further with you than you are comfortable with. Is it appropriate to compromise in this situation? Why/Why not?

Scenario 3: Someone 6-7 years older than you wants to go out with you. You are unsure, but they are very persuasive. Is it appropriate to compromise in this situation? Why/Why not?

Refer to the Annexure 5:4 for Handouts on Rights and Responsibilities

Core Message 10: I know the Law and my responsibility

Methodology: Have you heard of POCSO Act?

Share with children a plain reading of the Act suggests that:

- Any person (including a child) can be prosecuted for engaging in a sexual act with a child irrespective of whether the latter consented.
- A husband/wife can be prosecuted for engaging in a sexual act with his/her spouse below the age of eighteen years. Marriage before 18 years for a girl and 21 for a boy is anyway illegal.
- The Act does not recognise consensual sexual acts among children or between a child and an adult.

Do you know that is a 19 year old boy runs away with a 17 year old girl friend, he can be charged with child sexual abuse under this act? Because a girl/boy under 18 years is considered a child and incapable of giving consent for sexual activity?

Discussion: Discuss responsibility. Age for consent and marriage.

Tips for Trainer

Trainers should be well versed with POCSO for answering children's question, if any.

Concluding the session:

Summarize and review the key messages:

Ask children to share what they learnt today in the session

Reiterate:

Core Message 1: Living in a group leads to a variety of situations and feelings.

Core Message 2: My peer group influences me as a person

Core Message 3: The way people words and act tells us about the character and behavior of those people.

Core message 4: Peer influence is normal. We can manage peer pressure assertively.

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I came here to help you learn more about yourself, how you interact with others and how to be safe. I will come again and we will learn some more things.

Handout: Do I Really Decide for Myself?

In their handouts, students respond to the following prompts by reflecting on what influences them to make these decisions:

How do you decide

- Which clothes look the best on you _____
- Which movie you should watch _____
- Which radio station plays the coolest songs _____
- Which haircut will suit you the most _____
- Which film star is the best _____
- How to have a good time with friends _____
- How to behave with girls/ boys _____
- Which game/ sport to play _____

Annexure 5:2 Poster on being Assertive

Pick a good time and place:

If possible, think of a place and a time that you feel comfortable having this conversation.
Decide what you want to say beforehand.
This helps you feel in control of the situation.

Body language:

Stand tall, keep your head up and keep eye contact.
Feel strong and equal.
Believe in yourself

Say something positive first:

Begin by saying something positive to the other person,
for example:
You are my friend but ...
I want to have a good time but ...
I really like you, but I don't want to ...

Use short clear statements:

I don't feel like ...
I think it's unfair to ...
I'm not going to ...

You don't need to give a reason:

Avoid being manipulated into giving further explanations. If the person requests a reason, repeat a short, clear statement, such as:
"Because I'm not going to ..."
"I've already said I don't want to and I'm not going to change my mind."

Don't make it worse:

Don't accuse or blame the other person for anything, simply state your views and wishes. Listen to what they say and acknowledge their point of view.
"Yes, I hear what you're saying, but I'm still not going to ..."

Annexure 5:3

Describe healthy (positive) and harmful (negative) characteristics of relationships.

Ask the students:

How would you define a positive relationship/ friendship?

Be it a peer or an adult, it's also important for children to identify trusted adults/friends they feel they can turn to for help. Let them also know they can talk to these adults if they feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused. It's important to help children identify more than one adult and to update this list regularly.

Summarize the students' ideas with the following definition:

A positive friend or an adult encourages you to do things that are safe and healthy and helps you learn and grow in healthy ways.

Distribute the Student Worksheet, On the Lookout for Positive Friendships, to each student. Tell the students to place a "+" in front of each characteristic they would look for in a positive friend. Indicate that they can add other characteristics that are important to them at the bottom of the page.

Worksheet 'On the Lookout for Positive Friends'

On the Lookout for Positive Friends

- Listens to you
- Encourages you to pursue your interests & talents
- Yells at others when he or she is angry
- Enjoys some of the same interests you do
- Hurts other people by making fun of them or calling them names
- Cares about how you feel and what you think
- Spreads rumors
- Uses physical force to get you to do what he or she says
- Stands up for you
- Does things you think are wrong or that your parents wouldn't approve of
- Lies
- Does things that are dangerous
- Encourages you to stay away from illegal activities
- Acts jealous
- Makes fun of you

Write other characteristics that are important to you in positive friends:

- When the students have completed the worksheet, divide the class into groups of 3-4 students. On the Lookout for Positive Friendship (slips of paper listing each characteristic), the group will discuss three categories:
 - One category should contain those characteristics which all members of the group would look for in positive friends.
 - A second category should contain those characteristics which all members of the group think might lead to friendships which could be problematic or negative.
 - A third category should contain those characteristics on which group members do not agree.
- Remember each individual may look for different characteristics in positive friends.
- Share any characteristics group members added at the bottom of their worksheets and write them on the board.
- Allow ten minutes to complete the task.
- After ten minutes, ask a spokesperson for each group to read the characteristics their group would look for in a positive friend.
- Compile a list of agreed-upon characteristics for positive friends on the board or on a piece of chart paper.

As the groups share their lists, encourage students to consider the rationale for inclusion of various characteristics. Use the following questions to further their thinking:

*What types of behavior would you see in friends who possessed this characteristic?
How would having a friend with this characteristic help you?*

If groups categorize characteristics differently, ask the spokespersons to explain their group's rationale.

Ask the students:

What characteristics in a friend might mean trouble or problems, perhaps even violence? Explain your answer.

Post the title, "A Positive Friend..." with the outline of a person, on the board or chart paper. Post the words, "Shows Respect" and "Acts Responsible" on the board. Ask the children to define what they mean to you (note responses)

Summarize their ideas on the board using their language to define these two words.
Respect: showing regard for the worth of someone or something; not hurting others
Responsible: taking care of self and others; keeping promises and commitments;
being dependable; helping others. Explore the behaviors which demonstrate respect
and responsibility while practicing the skill of listening.

Tell the students that one of the characteristics of positive friends mentioned by many students is being a good listener. Ask the students what a good listener does or says (You can take up any other characteristic/s depending on children's worksheet or discussion).

Write their suggestions for effective listening behaviors on the board. Be sure to include the following:

- Stop what you are doing.
- Pay attention to what the person is saying.
- Look at the person.
- Ask questions to help the person talk about the subject, or rephrase what the person said.
- Don't interrupt.

Wait until the person is finished before you start to talk about something important to you. It's equally as important as to communicate your feelings and wishes to another.

Annexure 5:4

Relationships can change throughout life. Some relationships grow deeper and stronger and continue into adulthood, while we outgrow other relationships and move on from them. It is important for young people to recognise that, although there is no such thing as a perfect relationship, healthy relationships are, for the most part, rewarding, fulfilling and fun for the people involved. Being able to recognise some differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships will help them to maintain and nurture relationships that have a positive effect on them, while letting go of relationships that are damaging or cause worry or distress. This important learning will be of benefit to them as they grow older and begin to develop deeper romantic relationships in adulthood.

Scenario 1: You want to break up with your girlfriend/boyfriend because you would prefer to have more time to yourself and/or to hang out with your friends, but they plead with you to not break up

My rights	My responsibilities

Is it appropriate to compromise in this situation? Why/Why not?

Scenario2: Your friends want you to gang up to bully a younger child. You are not comfortable. But you do not want to loose your friends.

My rights	My responsibilities

Scenario 3: Your girlfriend/boyfriend tries to go physically further with you than you are comfortable with

My rights	My responsibilities

Is it appropriate to compromise in this situation? Why/Why not?

Scenario 4: Someone 3-4 years older than you wants to go out with you. You are unsure, but they are very persuasive

My rights

My responsibilities

Is it appropriate to compromise in this situation? Why/Why not?