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| <p>Course: Health Education/Personal Development and Career Planning</p> | <p>Grade: 8, 9/10</p> |
| <p>Unit: Grade 8: D, Grade 9/10: Unit 2</p> | <p>Lesson Title: Media literacy for teens</p> |
| <p>Curriculum Connections</p> | |
| <p>General Outcomes:</p> <p>D1) understand the role of the media in establishing feelings and attitudes about ourselves and relationships with others, including dating and becoming sexually active</p> <p>2.3) explain factors that can affect an individual’s decisions about sexual activity;</p> | <p>Specific Outcomes:</p> <p>Exposure to sexual content in the media is one of the factors that influence sexual behaviour. Using critical media literacies, engage students in an evaluation of media (internet, television, movies, music, and magazines) as a powerful force in communicating norms about intimate relationships (love and romance), sexuality and sexual behaviour. Specifically, students will be required to identify and deconstruct hidden and overt sexual messages and evaluate their impact on sexual health.</p> <p>Students may also examine contextual factors and their impact on sexual decision making. Factors may include substance use, peer pressure, venue, etc. Sexual decisions are also influenced by family values.</p> |
| <p>Facts for Educators</p> | |
| <p>- Pornography is a critical place where [teenagers] are learning scripts about negotiating sex consent, what does it mean to be a healthy partner and their sexual nature.” – Nicole Daly, curriculum facilitator at Boston’s Start Strong: Building Healthy Teen Relationships program.</p> <p>- 2SLGBTQ+ plus students are at particular risk of relying on pornography as a form of sex education. In addition to reiterating sexist and at times racist perspectives, pornography gives students unrealistic expectations for how their bodies should look, for healthy relationships, and sex. https://www.the74million.org/article/how-a-lack-of-inclusive-sex-education-and-a-reliance-on-pornography-leave-lgbtq-youth-facing-greater-risks-than-their-straight-peers/</p> | |

- By age 13 as many as a third of male students may have seen pornography which may negatively inform their notions of what constitutes sexual activity. Content note: gendered language
<https://sites.ualberta.ca/~publicas/folio/44/13/09.html>

Inclusivity for 2SLGBTQ+ students

- When discussing behaviour and body expectations, it is heterosexual interactions and cisgender bodies that are used as examples

- **DISRUPT:** Make sure to explicitly question stereotypes about gendered behaviour
 - **THIS:** *Sometimes, boys or masculine-presenting people can get messages from their friends or the media that they should be the one to initiate dating or sexual activities. Why do you think that happens?*
 - **NOT THIS:** *Because boys have high testosterone, they are more likely to initiate dating or sexual activities instead of their girlfriend.*
- **DISRUPT:** Avoiding using gendered or body-shaming language when discussing stereotypes about how people look
 - **THIS:** *What are some things that are the same, and some things that are different, about how people look in movies versus in real life?*
- **DISRUPT:** Explicitly include 2SLGBTQ+ relationships
 - **THIS:** *What are some things that 2SLGBTQ+ people might observe about how the media shows their relationships?*

Resources

<https://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy/digital-issues/pornography>

https://www.scarleteen.com/article/politics_sexuality_etc/making_sense_of_sexual_media

<https://www.keepitreonline.govt.nz/parents/pornography/> - New Zealand government site for parents

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/14/opinion/sex-ed-curriculum-pornography.html>

National Sexual Violence Resource Centre

<https://www.nsvrc.org/resource/2500/teaching-porn-literacy> – Teaching Porn Literacy

<https://www.nsvrc.org/resource/2500/sex-ed-truth-about-pornography> - The Truth About Pornography

<https://sites.bu.edu/rothmanlab/porn-literacy/>

Nadine Thornhill on how parents can talk to tweens about pornography

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YNGvQrN1wPM>

Atlantic Connections

"Dr. Lucia O'Sullivan's research lab at the University of New Brunswick focuses primarily on sexual health, intimate relationships, and the affective and cognitive components of sexual decision-making of young adults and adolescents" - <http://www.sexmeetsrelationships.com/>
<https://www.unb.ca/faculty-staff/directory/arts-fr-psychology/osullivan-lucia.html>

Topics to Explore with students

- The influence of media on how people think and act
- The role of the media in reinforcing norms and expectations
- The role of the government in determining what is age-appropriate for media (e.g. movie ratings, song ratings)
- The impacts of censorship and limitations on free expression
- The evolution of technology to bring entertainment experiences from the public space into the private space (theatres to smart devices & computers)
- The role of social media in influencing what teens think their peers are doing in their relationships
- What is critical thinking and how can it help them resist and question the things they see in media.
- Differences between cultures and over time as to what is considered sexual or explicit in clothing, behaviour and language.

Questions to ask students

- Why do YOU think we are having this lesson? What might be some of the reasons we should discuss this?
- Why do you think there are age restrictions on things like movies or music albums?
- How realistic do you think the things are that you see in the media? (Instagram/SnapChat filters, stunt doubles, CGI)
- How do you know if what you're seeing or hearing in the media is realistic?
- Who can you talk to about what you've seen or heard in movies/songs to find out if they are good examples of how to behave, or not-so-great examples? Who would you find it hard to talk to?
- In what ways does what you see or hear in media, reflect how people look and act in the real world? How is it different?

- What have you noticed about how people act in relationships in movies or TV? What kinds of similarities or differences have you noticed?
- How do you think people should behave with people they find attractive or in a relationship with? Does that match what you see in media? Why, or why not?

Activity suggestion

Note: All activities presume the educator has established classroom expectations around respectful and appropriate behaviour for the subject matter under discussion. It may be helpful to remind students of codes of conduct, supports and self-care techniques to ensure a healthy learning environment. **A further point is to make sure students are explicitly cautioned against sharing personal anecdotes about sexual behaviour or providing details about sexually explicit material that they seen. Please make sure to review the relevant school and school board policies pertaining leading discussions on sensitive topics and what to do if you suspect a student is being abused.**

1. Quiz with discussion ** ** note class discussions on sensitive topics can be challenging, so consider making this a Kahoot! or Quizlet with the teacher providing the discussion points. (Source: https://mediasmarts.ca/sites/default/files/lesson-plans/lesson_relationships_sexuality_media.pdf)

Quiz

1. How many teenagers have had at least one boyfriend or girlfriend or partner?
Answer options: 25% , **35%**, 60%, 80%
- According to a study of US teens aged 13-17, 64% had never been in a romantic relationship)
2. Compared to 20 years ago, do you think teenagers today first have sex
Answer options: **when they're older**, when they're younger, about the same
Young people today have sex slightly later than teens 20 years ago
3. Where are teens most likely to be exposed to sexual content?
Answer options: the internet, movies, music, **TV**, video games
75% of youth have been exposed to sexual content on TV, followed by music at 69%. The internet is where youth are least likely to be exposed to sexual material.
4. How many Canadian teens have NEVER looked for adult material online?
Answer options: 1%, 8%, 19%, 34%, 42%, **77%**
According to a MediaSmarts' survey, just 33% of students grade 7-11 have looked for adult material.
5. In a list of things teens are worried about online, how high does unwanted adult material rank?
Answer options: **first**, second, third, fourth, fifth, last
According to European research, being exposed to unwanted adult material is the number one concern for youth.

6. How many Canadian students in Gr 9 have sent someone a sexy photo?

Answer options: 1%, 7%, 11%, 12%, 19%, 31%

According to a MediaSmarts' survey, just 7% of students in Gr 9 have sent someone a sext.

7. How many Canadian students in Gr 9 have forwarded a sext that someone sent them?

Answer options: 1%, 4%, **10%**, 15%, 21%, 33%

According to a MediaSmarts' survey, 10% of students in Gr 9 have forwarded a sext they were sent.

8. Movies that included sexual content make more money

Answer options: True, **False**

A study of 1000 movies released between 2001-2005 found movies with sexual content made less money.

9. Ads that include sexual content sell more product

Answer options: True, **False**

A 2015 study found that commercials that included sex or violence were less effective and people were less likely to buy the product.

10. Based on what they see on social media, teens think their friends have sex

Answer options: **more often than they really do**, less often than they really do, as often as they really do

A 2015 study found that teens that were heavy social media users were likely to overestimate how often their peers were having sex and whether their peers were having sex at all.

2. Small group discussion.

Have students self-select small groups of 2-3 and answer the following questions:

- What answers from the quiz surprised you the most? Why?
- What was the most important fact that you learned?
- Who are some people that you can talk to if you see something that confuses or upsets you in the media?
- If your friend was feeling sad and comparing how they look and acted to what they see in the media, what would you say to them?

3. Exit slip/Question box

- What questions do you have about what you learned today?

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear parent or guardian,

As part of our Health Studies curriculum, teachers are instructed to help students understand the role that media plays in influencing what they think and believe about sexual behaviour. Many

tweens and teens will accidentally or deliberately come across sexually explicit media. For this reason, the objective of this lesson is to encourage students to think critically about the media they encounter.

I want to provide some clarification about the content of this lesson:

1. The conversation will centre around representations of relationships and behaviour in media (TV, movies, songs)
2. Students will be discouraged from sharing personal experiences with explicit material
3. There will not be detailed descriptions of explicit material or sexual behaviours

While it is my hope that your child will be present for this lesson, given the sensitive nature of the topic, your child will not be penalized if you or they feel that they would prefer not to participate.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions.

Regards,

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