

Relationship Statements

FRIENDS ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN
BOYFRIENDS/GIRLFRIENDS

IF YOUR BOYFRIEND/GIRLFRIEND ASKS YOU
TO DO SOMETHING THAT YOU DO NOT WANT
TO DO, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SAY NO

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BULLY OR MAKE
FUN OF SOMEONE WHO IS IN A GAY OR
LESBIAN RELATIONSHIP

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO MAKE FUN OF
SOMEONE WHO HASN'T HAD SEX

IF YOU HAVE SAID YES TO DO SOMETHING
ONCE, SOMEONE HAS THE RIGHT TO EXPECT
YOU TO DO IT AGAIN IF THEY ASK

IT IS EASIER TO TALK TO MY FRIENDS ABOUT
MY FEELINGS RATHER THAN MY
PARENTS/CARERS

IF MY FRIENDS DIDN'T LIKE MY
BOYFRIEND/GIRLFRIEND I WOULD STOP
SEEING HIM/HER

15/16 IS TOO YOUNG TO BE A PARENT

IF YOUR PARENTS/CARERS DO NOT LIKE YOUR
BOYFRIEND/GIRLFRIEND YOU SHOULD STOP
SEEING THEM

IT IS OK TO ASK SOMEONE OUT

LOVE AND RESPECT ARE THE TWO MOST
IMPORTANT THINGS IN A RELATIONSHIP

IT IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP YOUR OWN
FRIENDS WHEN IN A RELATIONSHIP

IF MY BEST FRIEND TOLD ME THEY WERE GAY
I WOULD STOP BEING THEIR FRIEND

HAVING A RELATIONSHIP WILL ALWAYS
MAKE YOU HAPPY

ONE OF THE RIGHT REASONS TO HAVE SEX IS
BECAUSE YOUR FRIENDS ARE DOING IT

YOU SHOULD BE MARRIED BEFORE YOU HAVE
SEX

SOME PEOPLE TRY TO PUT PRESSURE ON
OTHERS TO HAVE SEX (PEER PRESSURE)

HAVING SEX WILL MAKE THAT PERSON LOVE
YOU AND STAY WITH YOU

AGREE

DISAGREE

UNSURE

Facilitator Notes

Friends are more important than boyfriends/girlfriends.

Suggestions:

- When someone is in a relationship it is important to keep your own friends.
- There should never be a choice, time should be found for both (ask the class – why?)

If your boyfriend/girlfriend asks you to do something that you do not want to do, you have the right to say no.

Suggestions:

- Just because two people care about and or love each other does not mean that you do not have the right to say no.
- In a relationship it is important to keep self-identity - to be your own person and make your own decisions. A partner should respect this.
- If sexual activity continues after one partner has said no this is sexual abuse.
- If sex continues after one partner says no then this is rape and should be reported to someone that can be trusted.

You have the right to bully or make fun of someone who is in a gay or lesbian relationship.

Suggestions:

- You never have the right to bully someone for whatever reason. Everyone has the right to be who they are and should learn to be proud of themselves, this includes their own sexuality.
- If anyone is being bullied for any reason, it should be reported to someone that can be trusted and that person should deal with it. If they don't go back again, until they do.
- To call someone gay or lesbian in a negative way is a form of abuse/bullying and should not be tolerated and it needs to be reported.

You have the right to make fun of someone who has not had sex.

Suggestions:

- No-one has the right to make fun of someone for not having sex. (This is another form of bullying and should be reported to someone who can be trusted).
- Everyone has the right to have sex when they are ready, it should always be a personal decision and they should know when the time is right for them.

If you have said yes to do something once, someone has the right to expect you to do it again if they ask.

Suggestions:

- No-one has the right to expect something of another person that they do not want to do.
- It is the same with sex. Someone may choose to have sex with someone once but then they may choose not to do it again. This is a personal decision and should always be respected by the other person.
- It is always important for someone to be their own person and make their own decisions and not allow themselves to be influenced by others to do things that they do not want to do.
- It is important to be clear on consent and what is a clear yes or no.

It can be easier to talk to friends about feelings rather than to parents/carers

Suggestions:

- This question needs to be recognised as true. Explain to the class that sometimes their parents/carers can be the best ones to talk to and give out the correct advice.
- Friends fall out and when this happens important secrets could be spread. People like to talk and gossip and rumours spread very quickly in a school.
- It may always be best to talk to a trusted adult if issues of concern arise as they would be able to help in a much more positive way (friends may not be able to give advice as they may not know the answers).

If my friends didn't like my boyfriend/girlfriend I would stop seeing him/her.

Suggestions:

- If someone is in a relationship that they enjoy then no-one has the right to interfere with it.
- People start and have relationships for many different reasons but as long as it is their own choice then friends should respect that decision.
- Explain to the class that friends should be there for each other and should always be non-judgemental with each other. They also need to keep their friends even though they may be in a relationship, keep a balance of friends and male/female relationships.
- But what if friends concerns are valid?

At 15/16 years is too young to be a parent

Suggestions:

- This question raises the positive/negative issues of being a young parent and this could lead to a discussion which should be objective, acknowledge all the points that the students may make.
- Positive – if they want a baby and have the means to house, financially support and look after their baby then this is their choice.
- Negative – financial costs, housing, going out with friends – who will babysit? Being woken in the night (always tired), a 24/7 commitment, food in one end – out the other!!

It is ok to ask someone out.

Suggestions:

- Yes it is ok to ask someone out; however, it is important to remember that everyone has the right to say no.
- If someone does say no then this could be a problem for the person who asked. They may feel embarrassed, angry, hurt and the rejection may cause them a lot of sadness. It is therefore necessary for someone who asks another person out to accept that may be given the answer no and that they have to accept it and respect it and just move on.

You should be married before you have sex?

Suggestions:

- There is no right or wrong answer to this.
- Many people do not have sex until they are married but this a choice which, of course, people have the right to make. They may choose this for many different reasons but each reason will be personal to them and should be accepted and respected by others.
- Many couples choose not to marry but live together in their own homes.
- Other couples have happy relationships with or without sex but still live with their own families.
- When sex happens it is a personal choice/decision couples in relationships make for themselves.

Your parents/carer do not like your boyfriend/girlfriend you should stop seeing them.

Suggestions:

- This is an issue that would need to be discussed by the male/female and their parents. All reasons for and against need to be raised and in some cases perhaps a compromise could be reached, e.g. the parents may invite him/her to their house to get to know them better.
- Parents may put in sanctions e.g. earlier times to be home, number of times a week they see each other to find out if the boy/girlfriend can be trusted.
- The young person may choose to stop seeing the boy/girlfriend when the discussion has taken place as to why the parents object to the person.

Love and respect are the two most important things in a relationship.

Suggestions:

- Both of these things are very important because together they form the basis of a very good relationship. However, lots of other qualities are important too – ask the class for ideas e.g. trust, being faithful, not abusing your partner in any way, allowing a partner to be their own person and always keeping your own friends and hobbies etc.

Some people try to put pressure on others to have sex (peer pressure).

Suggestions:

- This is true.
- Explain to the group that many young people talk about sex but that most of them are NOT having sex. Talking is normal and acceptable however actually having sex is a choice that should only happen when someone is ready to do it. Sex should never happen because someone puts pressure on another person to do it.
- Explain to the class that peer pressure can be very risky and that unprotected sex at any time can lead to an unwanted pregnancy, STIs or HIV.

If my best friend told me they were gay would I stop being their friend?

Suggestions:

- Someone's sexuality should not interfere with a friendship, however, sadly sometimes a friend could react in a negative way and end the friendship. These things may need to be considered before the information is disclosed to a friend.
- If the friendship does end then it is important to be mindful of the fact that rumours are then likely to spread around the school.
- A trusted adult may be a better person to talk to first, if someone is deciding to discuss their sexuality or 'come out'.

Having a relationship will always make you happy.

Suggestions:

- Having a relationship should be a happy thing but it can also make someone very sad.
- If there is abuse in the relationship then one partner (male or female) will be being abused and this will make them very unhappy.
- Also relationships can end and do so for many reasons if both partners do not agree to breaking up then one will be very upset.
- A female may become pregnant while she is in a relationship and if she or the male do not want the baby then it can become a very stressful and difficult time for both of them.
- Explain to the class that having a baby will not guarantee to keep a poor/bad relationship together. Babies are lovely but they need 24/7 love and attention, they cost a lot of money and appropriate housing would need to be found. Hobbies and friends may be difficult to fit in to usual lifestyles when baby comes along. All of these things can put a huge strain on a relationship and a baby could end the relationship and not make it better.
- However relationships do have ups and downs.

One of the right reasons to have sex is because your friends are doing it.

Suggestions:

- You should never have sex with someone to try and fit in or because your friends are all doing it.
- (see the notes for peer pressure)
- If someone is trying to force you to do something sexually that you feel uncomfortable doing, you need to think before you do it. Quite often people will tell you they are having sex, when they aren't. Statistically most people wait until they are 17 before having sex and remember the legal age is 16.

It is important to keep your own friends when in a relationship.

Suggestions:

- You should always try to keep your friends as well as boy/girlfriend (even if your friends don't like them). Remember you will probably have been friends longer than you have known your boy/girlfriend.
- You do not know how long the relationship will last.
- Try to keep a happy medium between doing things together with your boy/girlfriend and doing things with your friends.

- Your friends will probably want to do things, which your boy/girlfriend doesn't like. e.g.: shopping, girlie nights in, football, computer games. (Think of other examples which don't necessarily stereotype).

Having sex will make that person love you and stay with you.

- Having sex with someone can never guarantee to make someone stay with another person.
- Sex and love are different – you can love someone without having sex or you could have sex with someone and not love them.
- If someone says “I will love you if you have sex with me” or “I will stay with you if you have sex with me” remember these are just words and could mean nothing. Sex could happen one night and the relationship could end the next day.
- A person could be out just to have sex with someone and use words to get what they want.