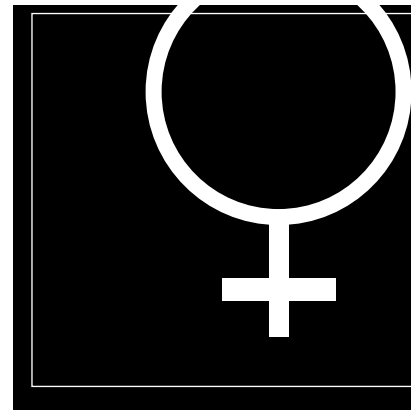


sexual & reproductive health

EDUCATE | EMPOWER | ACT



educate

Young women make sexual and reproductive choices everyday, but do they really count if they don't know what they're choosing?

Sex is an important part of young women's lives. Although many cultures frown on female sexuality, statistics show that around the world the majority of women become sexually active during their teenage years. This early sexual debut is often not by choice, as globally one in every five women report being forced into their first sexual act. Apart from outright sexual abuse, many cultures still promote marrying girls before age 18. This early initiation to sex can have serious implications for a young woman's life, including sexually transmitted infections, unwanted pregnancies, and damaged reproductive organs. Young women's human right to full control of their bodies and their sexuality must be respected and protected. However, respect for rights can only be meaningful if it is accompanied by education and services that enable young women to make informed choices, and access retribution when their rights are violated.

What you don't know

Ignorance is a dangerous thing. Simply not knowing how her body works can lead a young woman to agree to unprotected sex under the false security that the full moon, for example, will prevent her from conceiving. Not knowing that the choice to reproduce and the spacing of children belong by right to them, leaves young wives hopeless in the face of pressure to bear children they are ill prepared to care for. Young women make sexual and reproductive choices everyday, but do they really count if they don't know what they're choosing?

Between a rock and a hard place

Information without services, leave young women with the understanding that choices exist, but not for them. When young women are sexually harassed and have nowhere to turn for legal advice and emotional support, they can only 'decide' to keep silent. When healthcare workers insult pregnant teenagers, frightened young women may 'choose' to forego prenatal care. Real options for young women must include information alongside legislation, and unbiased access to healthcare and other services.

fast facts



According to the United Nations Population Fund:

- ▼ Despite a shift toward later marriage in many parts of the world, 82 million girls in developing countries who are now aged 10 to 17 will be married before their 18th birthday.
- ▼ In some countries, the majority of girls still marry before their 18th birthday. These include India (50 per cent), Nepal (60 per cent) and Niger (76 per cent).
- ▼ Worldwide, some 14 million women and girls between ages 15 and 19 — both married and unmarried — give birth each year.
- ▼ Pregnancy is a leading cause of death for young women aged 15 to 19 worldwide, with complications of childbirth and unsafe abortion being the major factors.
- ▼ For both physiological and social reasons, girls aged 15 to 19 are twice as likely to die in childbirth as those in their twenties. Girls under age 15 are five times as likely to die as those in their twenties.

Where to find more information:

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
www.unfpa.org or your local UNFPA office

International Planned Parenthood Federation
www.ippf.org or a local family planning organisation

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)
www.unifem.org or your local UNIFEM office

Family Health International **www.fhi.org** or your local health centre

Your school's biology teacher

Your local Ministry for Gender or Women's Affairs

empower

This section outlines a workshop designed to educate young women about their sexual and reproductive health and rights and how to protect them.

The workshop can be adapted to the needs of your group by selecting any combination of the activities listed.

WORKSHOP

GROUP SIZE: 10 - 20

Objectives:

To give participants a clear understanding of how their sexual and reproductive systems work.

To eliminate myths about women's sexuality and reproductive systems.

To enable participants to discuss sensitive issues such as abortion, and homosexuality.

To give participants a clear understanding of their sexual and reproductive rights.

To improve participants' ability to protect their sexual and reproductive health and rights.

You will need:

- One facilitator
- Enough paper and pens or pencils for each participant
- Small bag or basket
- Garbage bag or bin
- Three pieces of paper for making signs
- List of statements (provided) *Activity 4
- Tape
- Firm paper in four or five different colours
- Scissors
- List of questions and answers (provided) * Activity 3
- Tape
- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Male and female condoms
- Dildo or other penis representation
- Sample packs of contraceptive pills

Optional materials:

- Refreshments for a morning and afternoon break
- Lunch for all participants

Preparation:

Write out the questions and answers provided on the firm paper. Write one question or answer per piece of paper. Make four or five full sets of questions and answers with each set a different colour. *Activity 3

Write out the list of human rights related to sexual and reproductive health on flip chart paper and place it where all participants can see. *Activity 3

Copy the diagram of female reproductive organs and place it where all participants can see. *Activity 3

Write 'Agree', 'Disagree' and 'Don't Know' on three pieces of paper. Stick each one of these signs in a different corner or area of the workshop space. Ensure that the signs are close enough together to allow for easy communication between participants under each sign. *Activity 4

Arrange seats in a circle. *Activity 5

NOTE TO FACILITATORS:

*Issues surrounding sexual and reproductive health and rights can be very controversial. Establish and insist on respect for each person's opinion.

*To access male and female condoms, contraceptive pills and other forms of contraception contact a local health centre or family planning organisation.

ACTIVITY 1 INTRODUCTION, ICEBREAKER OR TONE SETTING

All introductions, icebreakers and tonesetting exercises are listed in the chapter “icebreakers, introductions & tonesetting”

ACTIVITY 2 LEADERSHIP

Select a leadership activity from the chapter on Young Women's Leadership

ACTIVITY 3 FACT OR FICTION?

TIME: 1 HOUR

Objectives:

To ensure that all participants have accurate information on female sexuality and reproduction, including related rights.

To dispel any myths about sexuality and reproduction that participants may hold as true.

You will need:

- One facilitator
- Firm paper in four or five different colours
- Scissors
- List of statements (provided)
- List of human rights related to sexual and reproductive health (provided)
- Diagram of female reproductive organs (provided)
- Tape
- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Male and female condoms
- Dildo or other penis representation
- Sample packs of contraceptive pills and other forms of contraception if possible

Preparation:

Write out the statements and the fact or fiction answer on the firm paper. Write one statement or answer per piece of paper. Make four or five full sets of questions and answers with each set a different colour.

Write out the list of human rights related to sexual and reproductive health on flip chart paper and place it where all participants can see.

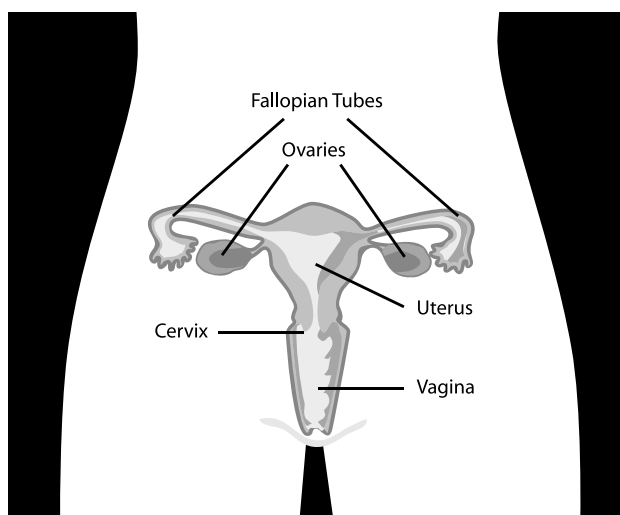
Copy the diagram of female reproductive organs and place it where all participants can see.

Activity overview:

The group is divided into four or five teams, and each team is given a set of statements and answers. The teams decide whether the statements are fact or fiction and pair them with the appropriate answer. The aim is to complete the task as quickly and accurately as possible.

Instructions for facilitators:

1. Depending on the number of participants, divide the group into four or five teams.
2. Give each team a stack of statement and answer cards, and let participants know that each team must match the statements to the word Fact or Fiction as they see fit. The team who finishes first and most accurately wins the game.
3. After the game invite everyone to sit in a circle and discuss with participants whether they learned any new information. Do they have any further questions? Did the new information change the way they think about sexuality, or reproduction?
4. Demonstrate correct male and female condom use. Explain the use of other forms of contraception.
5. Ask if everyone understands the menstrual cycle. If the group says yes, ask a volunteer to describe the menstrual cycle, and make corrections to the information if necessary. If the group says no, describe the cycle using the diagram provided.
6. Using the list of human rights provided, discuss with participants how each one is relevant to their sexual or reproductive health.
7. Discuss risks associated with being sexually active, and ways to reduce these risks and protect sexual and reproductive health.
8. Discuss methods of contraception including male and female condoms, diaphragms, contraceptive pills, injections, patches and rings. Ensure that participants understand that not all methods of contraception provide protection from sexually transmitted infections.
9. Explain the importance of an annual Pap test, during which the doctor uses a small tool to scrape some tissue from the cervix. These cells are then tested for abnormalities that might indicate cancer. Pap tests also can detect human papillomavirus (HPV), a sexually transmitted disease that can increase a woman's risk of developing cervical cancer.
10. Stress the importance of monthly self-examinations of the breasts for changes that might indicate cancer or other problems. Recommend that participants visit a local health clinic to learn how to do the self-exam correctly.
11. Remind participants that if they are sexually active, they should have annual checks for sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, some of which produce no visible symptoms, but can lead to serious complications like infertility if left untreated.



Fact or Fiction?

A woman cannot get pregnant the first time she has sex.

FICTION

A woman can get pregnant while menstruating.

FACT

A woman with a sexually transmitted infection will feel ill or develop warts on her vagina.

FICTION. Some sexually transmitted infection have no symptoms however, left untreated they can produce complications like infertility.

Contraceptive pills protect women from sexually transmitted infections like HIV, and syphilis.

FICTION. Contraceptive pills only prevent pregnancy.

A healthy woman's menstrual cycle should be 28 days long.

FICTION. Every woman's cycle is unique.

Sperm can live as long as seven days inside a woman's body.

FACT

Some sexually transmitted infections can leave women infertile.

FACT

Extreme pain during menstruation is normal for young women.

FICTION. It is normal to experience some discomfort during menstruation. If you are in a lot of pain you should visit a doctor.

Jumping up and down immediately after sex will drain sperm from a woman's body and prevent pregnancy.

FICTION. Sperm cells are microscopic and swim towards the ovaries.

All women who are sexually active or over 21 years old should have an annual pelvic exam and pap test.

FACT



HUMAN RIGHTS RELATED TO SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

- ▼ Right to the highest attainable standard of health
- ▼ Right to life and survival.
- ▼ Right to liberty and security of person.
- ▼ Right to be free from torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.
- ▼ Right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of one's children and to have the information and means to do so.
- ▼ Right of women to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence.
- ▼ The same right of men and women to marry only with their free and full consent.
- ▼ Right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications, and to consent to experimentation.
- ▼ Right to privacy.
- ▼ Right to participation.
- ▼ Right to freedom from discrimination (on the basis of sex, gender, marital status, age, race and ethnicity, health status/disability).
- ▼ Right of access to information.
- ▼ Right to education.
- ▼ Right to freedom from violence against women.

THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE

During puberty, the ovaries produce oestrogen and progesterone. These are hormones that cause the eggs in the ovaries to mature. Approximately once a month, one egg leaves one of the ovaries and travels down the fallopian tubes to the uterus. At the same time, the uterus starts to develop a thicker lining in preparation for a potential pregnancy. If the egg is fertilised by a sperm cell on its journey to the uterus it attaches to this lining of the uterus and a pregnancy begins. If the egg is not fertilised the uterus no longer needs the extra blood and tissue that makes the walls thick, and so sheds them through the vagina. This cycle continues until the ovaries stop releasing eggs. This is called menopause.

Every woman's menstrual cycle is different. They can begin as early as age nine or as in the late teens. The length of the cycle can also vary, and may take some time for your body to regulate.

ACTIVITY 4 WHAT'S YOUR POSITION?

TIME: 1 HOUR

Objectives:

To provide an opportunity for participants to think through and discuss various issues related to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

To provide an opportunity for participants to discuss sensitive issues related to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

You will need:

- One facilitator
- Three pieces of paper
- Scissors
- List of statements (provided)
- Tape

Preparation:

Write 'Agree', 'Disagree' and 'Don't Know' on three pieces of paper. Stick each one of these signs in a different corner or area of the workshop space. Ensure that the signs are close enough together to allow for easy communication between participants under each sign.

Activity overview:

The facilitator reads out different statements related to sexual and reproductive health and rights. After each statement participants choose a sign to stand under based on whether they agree or disagree with the statement, or don't know. Once participants have chosen their position the facilitator leads a brief discussion by asking volunteers from under each sign to explain their position on the statement.

Instructions for facilitators:

1. Explain to participants that you will be reading a series of statements and after each one they should stand under a sign that reflects their opinion on the statement.
2. Tell participants that while they are encouraged to share their perspectives and discuss the statements, the exercise is not a debate, and no efforts should be made to change anyone's perspective. It is a chance to share and discuss without judgement.
3. After each statement ask for volunteers from each opinion group to share their perspective.
4. Choose the statements you feel are most appropriate to the group, and add any others that may be interesting.
5. Use the opportunity to correct any misconceptions that are revealed during the discussions.

List of Statements

- ▼ Sex before marriage is morally wrong.
- ▼ Anal sex is unnatural.
- ▼ A woman who has had more than three sexual partners is promiscuous.
- ▼ Oral sex between consenting adults is acceptable.
- ▼ A woman should marry the man her parents choose for her.
- ▼ A man's sexual drive is stronger than a woman's.
- ▼ After a certain point of arousal a man can not control himself.
- ▼ Women should enjoy sex.
- ▼ Women should have full control over how many children they have, and the spacing of those children.
- ▼ It is unnatural for a woman to be sexually attracted to other women.
- ▼ Abortion is only acceptable if the woman has been raped.
- ▼ If a woman gets a man sexually aroused it is her responsibility to satisfy him.
- ▼ If a drunk woman is raped it is her own fault.
- ▼ It is okay for a woman to be attracted to both men and women.
- ▼ A husband can rape his wife.
- ▼ Teenagers should be taught about sex and provided with condoms if they decide to have sex.
- ▼ Sometimes a woman can be responsible for being raped.
- ▼ Women should have as many sexual partners as they choose.

ACTIVITY **5** QUICK FIX

TIME: 2 HOURS

Objectives:

To enable participants to anonymously share challenges with their sexual and reproductive health and rights, and develop solutions to these challenges.

You will need:

- One facilitator
- paper and pens or pencils for each participant
- small bag or basket
- garbage bag or bin

Preparation:

Arrange seats in a circle

Activity overview:

Participants take some time and anonymously write down a problem or challenge they, or someone close to them are currently experiencing. All pieces of paper with problems written on them are crumpled and placed in a bag or basket. The facilitator then randomly chooses problems from the basket and reads them to the group. The group then discusses solutions and volunteers act out the solution chosen by the group.

Instructions for facilitators:

1. Hand out pieces of paper and pens or pencils to all participants.
2. Ask them to write down a problem related to sexual and reproductive health and rights, that they are facing, or that they know of.
3. Assure participants that the process is anonymous.
4. When participants have finished writing down the problem, ask them to crumple the paper and place it in the basket or bag.
5. While sitting in a circle, randomly choose a problem from the basket or bag and discuss solutions to the problem with the group.
6. Ask some volunteers to act out some of the solutions.
7. Lead group discussions on the effectiveness of each solution. When the group agrees on a satisfactory solution to a problem, pass the paper around the group so that each young woman can rip it once before throwing it into the bin or garbage bag. This signifies that the problem has been solved and is no longer part of the young women's lives.

act

There are many ways that you can take a stand for young women's sexual and reproductive health and rights. Read the following ideas, add your own, and take action. Every action, big and small, makes a difference. You have the power to change the world for good!

Learn as much as you can about your sexual and reproductive health, rights and how you can protect them.

Teach your sisters and friends how to protect themselves from unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections.

Ask your school principal to organise a sexual and reproductive health workshop for students.

ACTION TOOL: teach-in

WHY TEACH-IN?

A Teach-in is an interactive session that provides information and analysis of a current issue or event. It gives members of the community an opportunity to have their questions answered and discuss their views on the topic. An effective teach-in also gives people an opportunity to take action on the issue at hand.

TEACH-IN TIPS

- ▼ Hold the teach-in at a time and location that is accessible and convenient for the community you are working with.
- ▼ Carefully select dynamic and knowledgeable teachers or facilitators who can keep the group engaged and get the information across clearly.
- ▼ Provide handouts with a summary of the information provided and other sources of information.
- ▼ Maintain an informal atmosphere that is welcoming to all – even those with no knowledge on the issue.
- ▼ Make sure the community knows about your teach-in. Seek opportunities to advertise your teach-in on radio and television spots. Place flyers and posters in schools, groceries and other places community members frequently visit. Remember that word of mouth can be a powerful promotional strategy. Encourage members of your group to spread the word to their networks.
- ▼ Leave time to engage the audience in a discussion about the issues presented and steps for action.
- ▼ End the teach-in with ways that participants can get involved, such as signing a petition or joining your organisation.
- ▼ Provide a sign in sheet for participants who want to be contacted for future events and activities.
- ▼ Get feedback from participants on ways to improve your teach-ins.

GOOD PRACTICE BOX

England & Wales: Young Women Research Sexual Behaviour

YWCA England & Wales has begun a two-year research project with young women about relationships and sexual health.

Young women are not only the focus of the study, but also lead the project and the research process. Young women attending YWCA centres in Cumbria, Bristol, Northants and London West have identified key issues for examination and effective research methods. At regular meetings, the teams discuss safer sex and sexual health, and explore the experiences, views and the factors that influence their sexual behaviour, and that of their peers.

Twenty two year old Lucy, a participant in the project says, "There wasn't much about sex and relationships at school that I can remember. I have become a lot more confident in giving my opinion. I wasn't able to talk to my family about things like that. I am able to open up more." Nineteen year old Clare reports, "Sex was just sex, the act of it, whereas here we talk about the emotions around it."

The young women's research groups will work for one year and present their findings at an event in the summer of 2006. Support for the project is provided by trained youth workers and research professionals from the University of Bath.



SOURCES

United Nations Population Fund www.unfpa.org
World YWCA www.worldywca.org

violence against women

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educate

Nearly one in four women may experience sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetimes.

The elimination of all forms of violence against women is a priority of the World YWCA. YWCAs in 60 countries offer a range of programmes from advocacy to providing emergency shelters for women and their children.

Violence against women is

any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life

Violence is not only physical

It encompasses but is not limited to, “physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women; non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation; physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere; trafficking in women and forced prostitution; and physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated by the state, wherever is occurs.

A public health and human rights emergency

Violence against women is a violation of their human rights and includes a wide range of violations of women's human rights, such as trafficking in women and girls, rape, wife abuse, sexual abuse of children, and harmful practices and traditions that irreparably damage girls' and women's reproductive and sexual health.

In addition, the social consequences of violence against women are staggering. Violence against women is a public health emergency and a major cause of death and disability for women 16 to 44 years of age¹. It has been estimated that violence against women is as serious a cause of death and incapacity among women of reproductive age as cancer, and a greater cause of ill health than traffic accidents and malaria combined.

All countries and all socio-economic groups are affected

Violence against women occurs in every country in the world. In Cambodia, 16 per cent of women are physically abused by their husbands; in the UK 30 per cent are physically abused by partners or ex partners; this figure is 52 per cent in the West Bank; 21 per cent in Nicaragua, 29 per cent in Canada, and 22 per cent in the US².

Based on several surveys from around the world, half of the women who die from homicides are killed by their current or former husbands or partners. Women are killed by guns, beatings and burns among numerous other forms of abuse³. A study conducted in São Paulo, Brazil reported that 13 per cent of deaths of women of reproductive age were homicides; of which 60 per cent were committed by the victims' partners⁴.

Although a majority of countries now have legislation that addresses domestic violence, high levels of violence still persist. There is clearly a need for greater focus on implementation and enforcement of legislation, and an end to laws that emphasise family reunification over the rights of women and girls.

Violence against women

- ▼ Involves a pattern of abusive and threatening behaviours, which includes, physical, sexual, psychological, isolation, coercion, and intimidation
- ▼ Is an exertion of male power and control over women,
- ▼ Is not caused by genetics or illness, but learned through observation and reinforcement in both the family and society
- ▼ Is reinforced by society's acceptance that men have the right to control women in relationships and the right to use force to ensure that control

Specific groups of women are more vulnerable to violence, such as indigenous women, migrant women, women refugees, women in armed conflict, women with disabilities, women in detention and institutions, female children, young women and the elderly.

¹ UNIFEM, www.unifem.org/gender_issues/violence_against_women/facts_figures_2.php#

² Krug et al. 2002. World Report on Violence and Health. Geneva: WHO. 93.

³ Krug et al. 2002. World Report on Violence and Health. Geneva: WHO. 93.

⁴ Referred to by S.G. Diniz, A F. d'Oliveira. International Journal of Gynecology and Obstetrics. 63 Suppl.1 (1998). 34.

**Where to
find more
information:**

Your national YWCA and World YWCA www.worldywca.org
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) country offices and www.unfpa.org
UNIFEM country offices www.unifem.org
UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women
www.unhchr.ch

empower

This section outlines a workshop designed to educate young women on violence against women.

The workshop can be adapted to the needs of your group by selecting any combination of the activities listed.

Facilitator Notes

1. Opening up the issue of violence must be done with great care and sensitivity as some participants may find this activity difficult or upsetting. Be prepared for surprises and to assist anyone needing support. You cannot know everyone's background or what is happening or has happened in her family. Some participants may have witnessed or experienced violence themselves. Some may or may not want to tell their stories to the group or privately to the facilitator. It is also possible that some may have not realised their experience is abusive until this Activity. Be informed about confidential counselling services by checking whether your YWCA has a counselling programme for women experiencing violence. Or check with another local women's organisation to get information to share with participants if they need support.
2. Make sure that everyone knows and understands the principles of participatory group work: that everyone should be treated with respect, that what anyone says is held in confidence and that no one is to feel under pressure to say anything which makes them feel uncomfortable.

WORKSHOP

GROUP SIZE: 10-20

Objectives:

To explore and understand how globally pervasive and diverse violence against women is.

To understand that violence against women is a violation of human rights.

To enable participants to come up ideas for action on the issue.

You will need:

- Pens and notepads
- Flip chart paper
- Enough drawing paper for all participants (*it is useful to have some extra)
- Several markers in a range of colours
- Comfortable seats and drinking water for all participants
- Wall space or other structures displaying work on flip chart paper and artwork
- Scotch tape, thumb tack or other means of displaying flip chart paper and artwork

Optional materials:

- Refreshments for a morning and afternoon break
- Lunch for all participants
- Art supplies including markers, scissors, glue, beads, leaves, seeds, glitter, glue, old gift-wrappings, scraps of cloth, discarded magazines paper, etc

ACTIVITY 1 INTRODUCTION, ICEBREAKER OR TONE SETTING

All introductions, icebreakers and tonesetting exercises are listed in the chapter "icebreakers, introductions & tonesetting"

ACTIVITY 2 LEADERSHIP

Select a leadership activity from the chapter on Young Women's Leadership

ACTIVITY **3** THE STORY OF VIOLENCE

TIME: 1 HOUR

Objectives:

To dramatise different forms of violence against women and stimulate discussion on the issue.

You will need:

- Stories of violence (provided)
- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Handouts (provided)

Preparation:

Research violence against women in your country, and prepare some information and statistics to present to the group.

Choose the stories that highlight the type of violence most prominent in your community, or the types of violence you want to highlight to participants.

Talk to some participants before the session starts and ask them to read or act out the stories at the beginning of the activity.

Print or copy the stories of violence provided for the reading volunteers.

Arrange seats in a circle and place flip chart paper where it will be seen by everyone in the circle.

Activity overview:

Some participants read or act out selected stories to the group, which depict different forms of violence. Based on the stories a group discussion on violence against women is held.

Instructions for facilitator:

1. Explain that some stories will be read by volunteers. The stories will present some examples of how violence affects young women.
2. The volunteers read their stories.
3. After the readings, ask the readers their impressions of the stories they read.
4. Ask all participants what forms of violence were portrayed. Was each person experiencing violence? Were there similarities in the stories?
5. On the flip chart paper, write down key terms as they are mentioned.
6. Talk about the different forms of violence and how violence against women can be
 - PHYSICAL
 - EMOTIONAL
 - SEXUAL
 - PSYCHOLOGICAL
7. Note differences in what young women consider an act of violence.
8. Present some of the information and statistics about violence against women in your country, if possible.

STORIES OF VIOLENCE

These stories are adapted from real situations.

STORY 1 **Teenage girl in abusive dating relationship/cut off from friends and outside activities**

“I’m a university student and have been with my boyfriend for the last eight months. I used to be involved with many activities such as my YWCA young women’s club, played basketball and loved to go to the movies and shopping with my girlfriends. But my boyfriend doesn’t like me doing these things. He says he wants me ‘all to himself’. It’s so sweet that he loves me that much. But sometimes I also wish I could also be with my friends and playing sports, but that makes him mad and I don’t want my boyfriend to drop me.”

STORY 2 **Young married woman being physically abused by husband**

“My husband and I got married last year. Although it was an arranged marriage and I was hesitant to accept my parents’ choice, we had a beautiful wedding day. It started off quite well, but a few months ago I was late getting home from work and my husband was really angry. He wanted to know where I had been and asking who I was with. I was really surprised by his reaction. He wouldn’t let it go and started criticising that I wasn’t cleaning the house well and that there was no dinner ready. When I suggested he could help out too, he started shouting about my disobedience and slapped me hard. I was shocked and crying and then he was very sorry for hitting me. He said he’d never do it again. But then a week later, he was angry and hit me again. It’s been getting worse and now he wants me to quit my job, but every time he hits me he says I have done something to make him mad and that he’s sorry. I am scared that his temper is getting worse and I don’t know what to do. My mother says it’s my duty to stay with my husband.

STORY 3 **Young woman who was sexually assaulted**

I was at a friend’s birthday party and met someone. We started talking and he seemed really nice. There were a lot of people, so he asked me to step outside for a minute to get some fresh air. He took my hand and we walked outside. There was no one around. He tried to kiss me and I said no, we have only just met. But he didn’t listen to me. He just laughed and said, ‘don’t be such a prude.’ I got scared and angry and told him to stop but he became rough and pushed me to the ground. I tried to scream and get away but he covered my mouth and held me down and raped me against my will. I am so ashamed. I know it was wrong and that he broke the law but who will believe me? Sometimes I wonder if it was my fault.

STORY 4 **Young married woman whose husband does not want her to study or work outside the home, has no control over the household income and is regularly put down and insulted**

My husband won’t let me work. He says that is his job as husband and he says he’s the head of the family and besides, who would want to hire me? It’s true that we have enough money for our needs but I would still like to have an interesting job as well as take care of our little daughter. My husband keeps me like a bird in a cage. We have a beautiful house but he decides what is bought and gives me a small allowance. I don’t even have a credit card! He says it’s my duty to be a good wife and to do what I am told and that he knows best how much money I need. Sometimes I am so embarrassed buying food, as I do not have enough money to get what we need. Then when I ask for more he explodes and does not trust that I have used my allowance well. He wants to control everything I do and feel so stupid.

STORY 5 Woman forced to have sex with her husband

The last five years of my marriage were like a fairytale of joy and happiness. Two months ago I discovered that my husband was having an affair. We agreed that we would use condoms. Last night he said that he is faithful now and won't use condoms anymore. I refused to have sex with him, but he demanded what he called his "marital rights". Now I don't know what to do. His is my husband. Maybe I have no right to refuse to sleep with him.

STORY 6 Young woman being sexually abused by her father

When my mother works the night shift daddy comes into my room and makes me touch his penis. I hate doing it, but he tells me that I will bring shame to the family if I told anyone. Besides, who would believe me? Everyone loves daddy. I feel so ashamed.

STORY 7 Woman falsely accused of adultery is afraid of being killed

I stayed longer at granny's house because she was ill. I missed the bus that would take me close to home. There was one man at the bus stop when I got there, and I was glad that I knew him because it was getting late. Rain began to fall and he opened his umbrella to share with me. Someone must have seen me because when I got home my husband accused me of being out with another man. I tried to explain but he was furious and told me that he will get me for this. We all know about wives who have been killed for being caught with another man. I am so scared.

STORY 8 Young woman being sexually harassed by a male supervisor

After every department meeting my supervisor asks me to stay in the room after everyone leaves. Even though he talks about work, he stands so close to me I can feel his breath, and sometimes I am right against a wall. He also calls me "sexy" or "hottie" when no one else is around. It makes me feel so bad, but what can I do? He is my boss. Maybe I am just overreacting. After all, he has never touched me.



HANDOUT FOR ACTIVITIES 3 & 4: what are the different types of abuse?

Any of the following acts violate a woman's right to dignity and protection, and are forms of abuse and violence.

Physical: slapping, pushing, hitting, kicking, biting, etc.

Sexual: being forced into sexual contact (including within marriage)

Emotional: name-calling, putting down, insults, etc.

Psychological including:

Threats: "If you...I'll kill you!"

Intimidation: gestures, looks, smashing things

Isolation: being kept from seeing or talking to others, not allowed to go out.

Economic: not allowed to have a job, no control over financial resources, etc.

life cycle of violence against women

Phase	Type of violence
Pre-birth	sex-selection abortion; effects of battering during pregnancy on birth outcomes
Infancy	female infanticide; physical, sexual and psychological abuse
Childhood	child marriage; female genital mutilation; physical, sexual and psychological abuse; incest; child prostitution and pornography;
Adolescence & adulthood	dating and courtship violence (e.g. acid-throwing and date rape); economically coerced sex (e.g. school girls have sex with 'sugar daddies' in return for school fees); incest; sexual abuse in the workplace; rape; sexual harassment; forced prostitution & pornography; trafficking in women & girls; partner violence; marital rape; dowry abuse and murders; partner homicide; psychological abuse; abuse of women with disabilities; forced pregnancy
Elderly	forced "suicide" or homicide of widows for economic reasons; sexual, physical and psychological abuse

Source: Violence Against Women Information Pack, World Health Organisation, 1997

ACTIVITY 4 GROUP WORK EXAMINING VIOLENCE & BRAINSTORMING HOW TO STOP IT

TIME: 1 HOUR

Objectives:

To give participants and opportunity to violence and think of ways to prevent it.

You will need:

- One facilitator
- Flip chart paper
- Markers

Preparation:

Arrange seats in a circle and place flip chart paper where it will be seen by everyone in the circle.

Activity overview:

In small groups participants discuss violence, its impact, and ways to prevent it.

Instructions for facilitator:

1. Ask participants to form small groups.
2. Give participants five minutes to review the hand out from the previous activity and then have each group appoint a facilitator and reporter.

*Note: Participants should be aware that discussions about these issues can be very personal and that no one should feel under pressure to disclose more than they want.

3. Group discussion questions:
 - a. How prevalent is violence against women in your community and in your country as a whole?
 - b. Why does violence against women happen?
 - c. How can it be stopped?
4. Allow the participants 45 minutes for this discussion (have flipchart papers and coloured markers and encourage the groups to 'record' the highlights of their discussions through drawing.
5. At the end, come together in plenary to report back and discuss.
6. In plenary, each group reports on their discussion. Facilitator leads discussion comparing what each group has given and asks for general feedback from the group about the activity.
7. Wrap up this activity by pointing out there are many myths associated with violence such as:
 - a. violence only happens in poor and uneducated families or only in big cities or only in small villages
 - b. alcohol and drug use is the major cause of violence against women
 - c. that women 'deserve it' or 'ask for it' by for example, the way they dress or that they were out late at night or not allowed to say no to sex or when to stop if they have been kissing, etc.
8. If there is time, encourage discussion on these points.

ACTIVITY **5** COMMITMENT TO ACTION

TIME: 2 HOURS

Objectives:

To ensure that all participants understand the breadth of violence against women and to develop ideas for action.

You will need:

- One facilitator
- Flip chart paper
- Markers

Preparation:

Arrange seats in a circle and place flip chart paper where it will be seen by everyone in the circle.

Activity overview:

In small groups, participants develop strategies for eliminating violence against women and present their strategies as a television newscast.

Instructions for facilitator:

1. Start with an energising exercise from the chapter Young Women's Leadership.
2. Divide participants into groups to devise strategies or programmes to eliminate violence against women.
3. Tell participants to prepare to present their strategies in the form of a television newscast.
4. Participants have one hour to develop their 5-10-minute television programme that presents how young women have transformed these issues into positive action.
5. Encourage the groups to address what should or could be done by:
 - a. the YWCA
 - b. local community
 - c. public authorities/government/UN agencies
 - d. how to work with men and boys
 - e. friends and neighbours
6. At the end of one hour, ask groups to present and record the programme ideas on a flipchart paper.
7. Following the presentations, ask participants to discuss the exercise and the kinds of solutions proposed through their news broadcasts.
8. Review the different strategies presented to provide a synthesis of the ideas.

ACTIVITY 6 CHOOSING THE WAY FORWARD

TIME: 1 HOUR

Objectives:

To help participants prioritise concrete actions on violence against women

You will need:

One facilitator

Preparation:

None.

Activity overview:

In small groups participants prioritise the top three actions against violence against women.

Instructions for facilitator:

1. Explain that from the strategies presented in the earlier Activity, participants will choose three to work on as a group.
2. Divide the participants into groups to prioritise their top three actions to eliminate violence against women.
3. After 30 minutes reconvene the group and ask each group to give its top three actions. Facilitate plenary discussion on the ideas presented. Are the ideas similar across the groups? Try to work to consensus. If necessary, you may need to ask for a vote for the top three.
4. If appropriate to your group, facilitate the process of selecting volunteers to lead the effort and reconvene the group to plan the project.



ACTIVITY 7 MOVING TO ACTION

TIME: 1 HOUR

Objectives:

To allow participants to give feedback on the workshop.

You will need:

- One facilitator
- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Two colours of post-it notes or small pieces of paper and tape

Preparation:

Arrange seats in a circle

Place two sheets of flip chart paper on the wall with the headings 'What worked well' and 'What could have been better.'

Activity overview:

Four participants read four stories to the group, which depict different forms of violence. Based on the stories a group discussion on violence against women is held.

Instructions for facilitator:

1. Do a short review of the day's activities and highlight how hard everyone has worked to "unpack" the complex issue of violence against women.
2. Ask for feedback from the group as to what worked well and what could have been improved to incorporate into future activities.
3. Distribute post-it notes or small pieces of paper in two colours.
4. Have two flipchart papers on the wall, one for 'what worked well' and another for 'what could have been better' and ask everyone to post their comments.
5. Review the comments.
6. Close the activity.

act

There are many ways that you can take a stand against violence against women. Read the following ideas, add your own, and take action to free women from violence. Every action, big and small, makes a difference. You have the power to change the world for good!

Make a personal pledge never to condone any form of gender-based violence, whether directed at you or a woman you know.

Start a campaign challenging your neighbours to refuse to turn a blind eye to abuse and report any domestic violence they witness.

Working with the men and boys in your community, start a “real men don’t hit women” campaign that challenges men not to use violence and provides anger and conflict management training for men and boys.

ACTION TOOL: street theatre

WHY USE STREET THEATRE?

Hallways between classes, a busy shopping street or a public park are some of the places people can be educated about violence against women through street theatre. Acting out a short story of violence can raise awareness of the fact the violence against women is not ‘family business’ or a ‘private’ issue, but a community problem to be addressed.

STREET THEATRE TIPS

- ▼ Designate someone to pass out leaflets describing the issue your group is focusing on as well as information about any related events that your group has planned.
- ▼ Designate several people to answer questions from passers-by.
- ▼ To reach more people, make the skit short and act it out several times, with short breaks in between. The breaks will also give viewers an opportunity to ask questions.
- ▼ Make sure the message is compelling and concise; otherwise passers-by might easily walk by without stopping.
- ▼ Be sure to get permission in advance from the owners of the location, if necessary.
- ▼ Involve young men in the efforts. Men can help to design a play that will engage and empower other men to take a stand against violence.
- ▼ Ensure that the street theatre does not become a men bashing event. Cooperation with men and boys is vital to eliminating violence against women.
- ▼ Ask some young men to interact with the public, as other men may be more willing to get involved if it is clear that you see men as allies in the fight against violence.
- ▼ Provide passersby with a way to take some specific action right away such as sign up to volunteer for or support a shelter for women fleeing violence, and have a sign up sheet for those who want to be contacted for other events your group will organise.

GOOD PRACTICE BOX

Canada: Resources for Women Fleeing Abuse

According to Canadian statistics, it takes a woman an average of five attempts before she is able to leave an abusive relationship for good. A long list of factors including fear of further violence, financial dependence, and emotional distress make it difficult to walk away from abuse. Fresh Start, a publication by the YWCA of Canada, equips women with emotional support and practical advice to make it easier to break free.

Understanding the cycle of domestic violence, the booklet details the dynamics and likely consequences of domestic violence, and talks about the emotional contradictions women often experience. It also provides step-by-step information on how women can build a safety plan for themselves and their children. Essential information such as an overview of the Criminal Code, child protection laws and access and custody legislation are included in the booklet, as well as simple explanations of police procedures, legal options and proceedings.

Every year the YWCA in Canada provides emergency shelter to over 6,000 women and children fleeing violence. As one of Canada's leading providers of safe houses and services for domestic violence survivors, the YWCA advocates emotional preparation and a safety plan as vital first steps in leaving an abusive partner.

Contact YWCA Canada at 416-962-8881 or visit their website at www.ywca.ca



SOURCES

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