Smart Sex = Self Esteem

Respecting ourselves in our relationships.

Brought to you by the Counselling Service
ph: 9925 4365,
email: counselling@rmit.edu.au
Smart Sex = Good Relationships

• **Be Yourself:** value yourself as a partner – You’re Worth It!

• **Be Realistic about your partner:** accept them as they are rather than trying to change them.

• **Develop Good Communicate:** be open and genuine

• **Develop Trust:** make only promises that you are committed to keep

• **Reciprocate:** Give equal importance to the feelings, interests, and needs of both partners

• **Have Fun Together!**
Smart Sex = Choice

• You Decide
• Individual Personality, Values, Mood, Feelings about the other Person, Situation,
• Its OK to say YES – just remember that YES feels right
• And NO Means NO
Smart Sex = Communication

• The Myth of “Token Resistance” (that women say NO when they really mean YES)

• Its OK to Ask
  – The other person out
  – If something isn’t clear, is confusing, doesn’t feel right
  – For Pleasure
  – To ask partner to use a condom

• Trust shouldn’t = Ignorance or Risk
Smart Sex = Safety

• You have rights:
  – To sexual privacy
  – To say ‘no’ to sex
  – To say ‘yes’ to some sexual activities and ‘no’ to others
  – To stop sexual activities that feel inappropriate or uncomfortable
  – To make decisions about safe sex & contraception
  – To be respected and cared for during sex
Smart Sex = Consensual

• CONSENSUAL – Agreement free of any Coercion

• COERCION – any pressure used to access sex; may be emotional, social, financial, cultural as well as physical

• NON-CONSENSUAL SEX = CRIME
Types Of Coercion

- Emotional –“if you really love me…”
- Social – “everyone’s doing it”
- Financial – “do you want to keep this job?”
- Situational – “so do you want to walk 5km home?”
- Cultural – “I bought dinner – so how about you pay me?”
- Chemical- “Have another drink”
- Drink spiking, being encouraged to have another drink or take drugs. Talk about isolating behaviours.
Myths about rape

- “No Harm was Done”
- “She Wanted It”
- “She Deserved It”
- “She Wants Revenge for Being Dumped”
- “Women are Responsible for Not Provoking Men”
- “Rapists are Sick, Mad, Unattractive”

There are many myths surrounding rape. Rape myths allow for the denial that rape has occurred in instances of coercive sex. These are some of them. The first 3 will discussed in more detail on the next few slides. The others will be discussed now. There is a myth that women cry rape when they have been dumped or jilted, and this is confirmed to the public by isolated examples of false rape charges that are widely publicized.

This myth suggests that a women is responsible for preventing rape, and ultimately suggests that since men cannot control their sexual urges, women are responsible for not provoking him.

The idea that rapists are easily identified as a particular kind of man is dangerous because it means that men who do not fit this description e.g. well dressed, has a good job, is married, can not possibly rape.
MYTH: “No Harm”

- “It’s not rape if there’s no physical threat or violence”
- “No Penetration = No Harm”
- “It’s not traumatic if it’s someone you know”
- “If you’re not a virgin it doesn’t matter if you have sex”
- “You’ve always been up for it before”

• Rape actually is harmful! And although generally the majority of all rapes are committed by someone known to the victim, most do not involve a weapon or injury (generally not beyond minor bruises or scratches if there is any injury). Although a victim may not actually be physically harmed, it is very likely they will be psychologically harmed. There are potentially long term emotional consequences. Women who have had this experience will often accept the blame and feel they can’t tell anyone, which can effect their sense of control and self esteem. They may also lose trust in others, and find that their view of world is turned upside down. The harm is also related to future relationships i.e. avoiding relationships, or keeping parts of yourself aside.

• Any sexual act that is non-consensual can be harmful. Legislation includes oral sex, and anal or vaginal penetration by any part of the body of another person or an object.

• Knowing the person who rapes you is NOT less traumatic. Being raped by someone you know, particularly by someone who is meant to love you, or has respect for you, can shatter your trust in them and in yourself.

• Just because you have had sex before (i.e. you are not a virgin) does not make being raped any less traumatic.

• Just because you have engaged in prior consensual sex with a person, this should not be perceived as a guarantee that you will engage in sex at any time.
MYTH: “She Wanted It”

• Stereotypes of “Good” & “Bad” Women
  • She asked for the date
  • She kissed first
  • She had a condom in her bag
  • She was on the Pill
  • She didn’t fight back
  • She had an orgasm

• A crucial part of this myth appears to be what constitutes appropriate conduct for women. Survivors of rape who appear to have violated these “rules” by engaging in activities or behaviours regarded inappropriate or incompatible with a woman’s role are more readily seen as having triggered the attack or are in part responsible for their rape. These are some examples of things that are seen to only to be done by “bad” women

• Just because you ask a person out on a date, this should not and does not = asking for sex/asking for rape.

• She kissed first suggests that from a kiss a man can assume that the women wants to engage in sex when in actual fact she may only want to engage in kissing or other things but not have intercourse.

• Carrying a condom or being on the pill does not mean that a women wants to have sex.

• Often women who find themselves in this situation do not fight back because they believe that the man will listen to her when she says NO, and actually may not perceive that the situation is leading to forced sex. Because a women may be unprepared for this situation, they often do not fight back.

• Having an orgasm does not = having enjoyed it. Our bodies will respond when stimulated and we have no control over this.
MYTH: “She Deserved It”

• Stereotypes of “Provocative”:
  - Dress, Behaviour, Speech, Teasing, Flirting, Foreplay
  - Being in the “Wrong” Place – e.g. pub vs. library

• This myth accepts that sex was forced, but places the blame on the woman because she acted or did something to bring it on. Women who dress in clothes that exposes their chest or legs, flirt, engage in consensual kissing or petting are seen to at least in part have asked for sex or be willing to engage in sex and when they do not engage in sex, a man may take what he sees as rightfully his. Women who are seen to have been in a place where a good woman should not go like the pub is more deserving of being raped than if she had been somewhere respectable like the library.

• You may want to flirt or engage in consensual kissing or foreplay, but this does not and should not mean you have to finish off what you started
Our Rights

• We ALL have rights:
  – to say “NO” at any stage of the contact – and not feel guilty
  – to change our minds
  – to experience sex according to our sexual preference and orientation
  – to make mistakes – forgive ourselves, and learn from experience