



Title: Disability and Relationships – an introduction to our RSHP learning this year

Level: Third/Fourth

Links to Curriculum for Excellence

Unlike other activities in this resource we do not offer links with specific Experiences/Outcomes or Benchmarks as this activity is an introduction to the full RSHP curriculum. When delivering the topic/themes activities described at this and other Levels, these links are provided.

Learning intentions

- Young people with disabilities are informed that they will be learning about relationships, sexual health and parenthood in the coming school term/year.
- Young people are given information about the scope and nature of RSHP education.

Success criteria

- I know that I will be taking part in RSHP education this school year, and have a general idea about what this will be about.
- I am able to ask questions about this learning.

Resources to support this activity

- PowerPoint slides

NOTE TO TEACHERS/FACILITATORS

This Activity Plan describes a session that is intended to act as an introduction to your RSHP curriculum for learners with disabilities.

You might use this session if you feel that young people may have misconceptions, worries or very little experience with the topics and themes associated with the RSHP curriculum.

As an introduction, you can use all or parts of the session as meets the needs of your learners – the session will work if it is delivered in ‘parts’ over a day or week.

The session does not replace any learning on specific topics offered at Third/Fourth Level, but it does flag up some of the themes of those later lessons.

Activity

1. Use the title slide and then slides 2, 3 and 4 (text below) to introduce the purpose of the lesson – which in itself is an introduction to the RSHP education young people will take part in in the coming term/school year. Pause to check understanding and discussion after each slide.

This lesson is an introduction to the learning we will do about the topic we call: Relationships, sexual health and parenthood education.

We will do our lessons on relationships, sexual health and parenthood education because people with disabilities have the same human rights as everyone else.

And because:

- People with disabilities have relationships and fall in love.
- When they are old enough (and if they want to) people with disabilities can have sex, they can marry and have a family.
- In a relationship everyone has the right to be healthy, happy and safe.

2. In slides 5, 6 and 7 (text below) the focus is on introducing aspects of RSHP education that are about relationships, attraction and love. Again pause and discuss as might benefit your group/class.

In our lessons we will talk about being attracted to someone. When you like someone you can start to have feelings of attraction to them.

- You might 'fancy' someone.
- You might go out with them.
- You might say you are in a relationship.
- You might feel like you are in love!

What songs, poems, movies and stories can you think of that are about relationships or love?

When we learn together we will think and talk about how young people with disabilities experience love and relationships.

3. Building on discussion so far, in slides 8 and 9 young people are asked to talk about what they see represented in the pictures of each couple. They can build characters/stories around the couples.
4. Slide 10 poses a statement and a question, asking young people to reflect on how parents or carers might feel when a young person with a disability is in a relationship. In the discussion the facilitator can acknowledge that this can be a complex/difficult aspect of life to talk about.

Sometimes, when a person has a disability their parents or carers or other people can worry about them being in a relationship.

Why do you think that they would worry?

5. Remind the young people that this lesson is raising a lot of different topics, and that there will a chance to talk about them again. So, another thing that RSHP education can help us learn about together is this:

When we learn together, we will also say that it is okay if you don't want to be in a relationship with someone.

Do you think young people can feel under pressure to have a boyfriend or girlfriend?

6. Bring the focus back to disability and relationships, slide 12 poses a statement and some questions to discuss together. Slide 13 suggests some ways in which people with disabilities and their relationships can be affected by other people's attitudes. Again, for discussion.

Disability and Relationships

Sometimes when you have a disability there are important things you have to think about. Some of these things will affect relationships.

How do you think having a disability can affect relationships?

Do you think these things happen to people with disabilities?

- Because of how our society is, a person with disabilities can be made to feel bad about themselves.
- They can be put down by others.
- This can leave the person feeling lonely or down. They can lack confidence.
- When you have these experiences or feelings it is hard to socialise and meet others.

7. Slides 14, 15 and 16 address disability and sexual relationships. You can decide as facilitator whether this is an aspect of the curriculum you want to introduce here, or use these slides after delivering some of the RSHP content which is initially about other aspects of relationships. Slides 15 and 16 offer some suggestions as to how disability can affect sexual relationships, young people might agree or not, they may have other things to say, all part of the discussion that you can encourage.

When we learn together we will talk about sexual relationships.

When they are old enough (and if they want to) people with disabilities can have sex, they can marry and have a family.

Sometimes when you have a disability there are important things you have to think about when it comes to having a sexual relationship.

How do you think having a disability can affect sexual relationships?

How might a 'physical impairment' affect relationships and sex?

- It might be harder to meet people or to get into some places where people meet.
- Mobility can affect how someone has sex.
- Communication difficulties can mean it is harder to express yourself or be understood.
- Some medication can affect erections, contraception, pregnancy and plans to have children.

How might a 'mental impairment' or learning disability affect relationships and sex?

- A person might not have opportunities to meet people.
- It might be difficult to communicate or chat to new people.
- They may need extra support to learn about sex and relationships.
- Some people might need easy-read information on relationships, sex, contraception and parenthood.
- Some medication can affect erections, contraception, pregnancy and plans to have children.

8. The final elements of the lesson, slides 17 and 18, identify the importance of talking and finding help, support or information when needed. Young people can also identify whether they have any questions that the teacher/facilitator needs to consider, either now or in subsequent meetings.

This has been a short introduction into the learning we will do about relationships, sexual health and parenthood.

When we are learning together it is important to remember that if you have a question or a worry about friendships or relationships you can speak to someone.

Who would you speak to?

You can also find lots of information here: <https://www.easyhealth.org.uk/>

Do you have any questions about the RSHP learning we will do this year?

Connecting with home

The RSHP resource has information for parents about *Learning at School* and *Learning at Home* at each Level. You will also have your own school protocols about engaging with parents and carers about your RSHP education.

Practitioner Notes