

# 9th GRADE: ABUSE

## LESSON 2 OVERVIEW

### Signs and Situations of Abuse



**Lesson Time:**  
30 Minutes

#### Materials Provided:

- Video: [Teenagers and Sexual Abuse](#) (3:52)
- Video: [Missing US Teen](#) (1:47)
- Lesson Slides [Download](#)

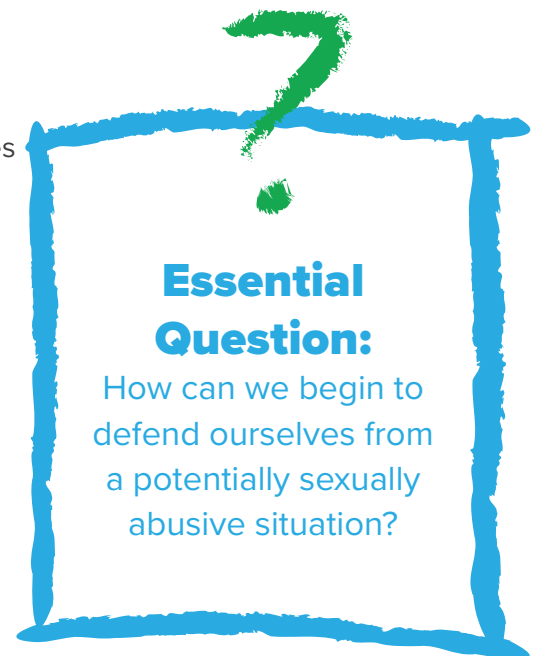
#### Materials Needed:

- Projector with Video/Audio Capability

#### Objectives:

Students will be able to:

1. Identify possible signs of abuse.
2. Determine how to avoid dangerous situations where abuse can happen.
3. Differentiate between the truth and the lies of social pressures that can lead to sexual abuse.



# Signs and Situations of Abuse



## Lesson Introduction: (1 minute)

Our first lesson about abuse outlined the 4 types of abuse which are physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect, and gave us information about each of these. Today we will look at how to recognize the signs of situations where abuse can potentially happen and how to prevent them as well as signs that abuse may have happened.

Now that you are in high school, there are many new and appealing things you will get to experience and enjoy. But there are also some things that can come along with them to be on the lookout for so that you don't find yourself in an unfortunate or even unsafe situation.

## Core Lesson Part 1: Situations (7 minutes)

This video we are about to watch illustrates how with new independence, such as doing things on your own, going out with friends, jobs, and relationships, can come the unexpected - sometimes the unexpected is sexual abuse. These teens share their stories to start the conversation about preventing sexual abuse.

Video: [Teenagers and Sexual Abuse](#) (3:52)

So at the end of this video, they shared some concepts that are important in helping to prevent sexual abuse for teens.

1. Recognizing how abusive people can take advantage of you
2. Listening to yourself and not giving in to social pressure or lies
3. Watching out for friends when they are in unsafe situations
4. And the bottom line was if someone's behavior makes you feel uncomfortable, you should tell them to stop. If they don't, they are in the wrong, and you should get away.

But let's dig a little deeper into number 2: "Listening to yourself and not giving in to social pressure or lies" What is another term for social pressure? (*Answer: peer pressure*).

Peer pressure, as we know, is influences from others that can steer our choices, behaviors, and beliefs in order to feel accepted and fit in. We also know that peer pressure can be positive, but most of the time we think of it as negative. The comment from the video was "not giving into social pressure and lies." There are many things that can fall under the category of lies in this context. Let's talk about some of them.

## Activity: Truth or Lie (10 minutes)

In these next slides, I'm going to show statements, and after I read the statement from each slide, I will ask you if it is a truth or if it is a lie, and as a class together, I want you to respond to them as "TRUTH" or "LIE." Then we will discuss why they are either the truth or a lie. (*Answers will vary and are provided, but make sure the reasons why originate from the students by asking them why or for examples and encourage further discussion. If not, then ensure the answers why are presented and discussed.*)

### Slide/Handout

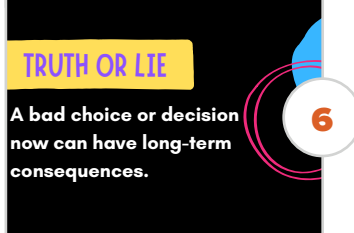
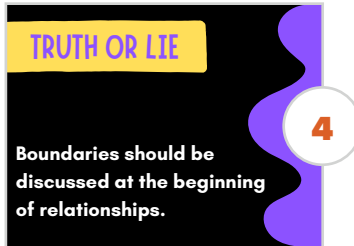
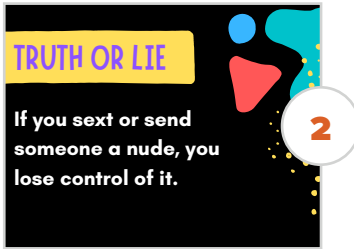


### Lesson Script/Talking Points

**Slide 1:** "Don't worry, no one will ever find out." Truth or Lie? (*Answer: LIE*) Why? (*Answers: Because most of the time people find out eventually, secrets are rarely kept, people like to gossip, could be a set-up, an example of being taken advantage of/selfishness or an unsafe situation, etc.*)

# Core Lesson (cont)

## Slide/Handout



## Lesson Script/Talking Points

**Slide 2:** If you sext or send someone a nude, you lose control of it. Truth or Lie?  
(Answer: TRUTH)

Why? (Answers: There are always risks, even if you hide your personal information, risk of images being shared with others, shared online, in social media, shared without consent, which is against the law, can be used for revenge after a break-up, can become part of your digital footprint, sexting is considered sexual activity since it is a sexual act, etc.)

**Slide 3:** "If you really loved me, you wouldn't just tell me, you would show me."  
Truth or Lie? (Answer: LIE)

Why? (Answers: A person should never be pressured to have physical or sexual contact. If someone is pressured, then it is not a healthy or respectful relationship.)

**Slide 4:** Boundaries should be discussed at the beginning of relationships.  
Truth or Lie? (Answer: TRUTH)

Why? (Answers: Because it lets each person know what the limits of physical contact are, it is an opportunity to discuss morals and beliefs, there are no mistakes or excuses for not respecting boundaries and if a line is crossed then it is a sign of an unhealthy relationship or an unsafe situation or person, etc.)

**Slide 5:** "It's ok, everyone is doing it!" Truth or Lie? (Answer: LIE)

Why? (Answers: According to a survey by the CDC in 2021, only 30% of high school students have ever had sex (CDC, 2024), because it's not ok if you have to be pressured or forced into doing it, it will lead to regret, etc.)

**Slide 6:** A bad choice or decision now can have long-term consequences.  
Truth or Lie?

(Answer: TRUTH)

Why? Examples? (Answers: Pregnancy, STDs (Sexually Transmitted Diseases), legal implications, sexting/nudes, emotional health/broken hearts, unable to attain life goals, etc.)

All of these Truth or Lie scenarios are examples of situations that may develop from being in a sexually abusive situation or relationship. There are so many other possible risky situations as well that have to do with all types of abuse. Remember, if someone doesn't stop when you tell them to, they are in the wrong. You should immediately get away.

# Core Lesson (cont)

## Slide/Handout



## Lesson Script/Talking Points

### Core Lesson Part 2: Signs of Abuse (10 minutes)

The video also talked about signs and red flags. It showed their peers who were hurting in different ways. And hurting people manage their pain in ways that sometimes they can control and sometimes they can't.

### Slide 7: Signs of Abuse

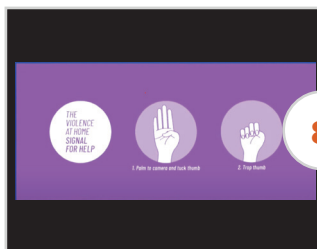
Some possible signs of someone being abused are:

- Drug dependencies
- Suicide attempts
- Self-harm or mutilation
- Eating disorders
- Pregnancy
- Running away from home
- Being withdrawn or angry often
- Heavily preoccupied with pornography or being verbally sexually aggressive
- Crying for no apparent reason
- Low self-esteem
- Trouble having or maintaining friendships
- Gets upset at the idea of a specific person
- Dresses differently
- Changes their friend circle
- Does worse at school
- Doesn't like doing activities they previously loved
- Injuries, discomfort, bruises
- Depressed

Remember, every individual processes abuse in their own way. Sometimes, there will be an immediate change in them. Other times, it will take years for their feelings to surface (Hogan, 2021).

As we are talking about signs, something very important to mention is that there is a new hand signal that is now being taught and used that is becoming a universal sign for help for abuse victims or anyone when they are in danger.

This hand signal for help provides an opportunity for children and adults to reach out without attracting attention from the person they're with. People who know this universal gesture can use it when they are in any unsafe situation (Hahn, 2023).



### Slide 8: Universal Hand Signal for Help

This is how to do the hand signal; everyone, try it with me.

- 1) Tuck thumb in the palm
- 2) Trap thumb with other fingers
- 3) Lift fingers back up (keep the thumb in)
- 4) Repeat

# Core Lesson (cont)

## Slide/Handout



## Lesson Script/Talking Points

### Slide 9: Missing US Teen Video [Missing US teen rescued after using distress hand signal learned on TikTok](#) (1:47)

In November 2021, a teenage girl was saved from an abduction by flashing this signal to passing cars. Here's that story.

We can be a source of information, help, and encouragement to friends, acquaintances, or even strangers that we suspect or know are in an unhealthy or unsafe situation. Don't hesitate to reach out to a trusted adult to ask for help for yourself or someone else.

## Closing: Essential Question (2 minutes)

### How can we begin to defend ourselves from a potentially sexually abusive situation?

If someone's behavior makes us feel uncomfortable, they are in the wrong. If asking them to stop doesn't work, we must immediately get away from them and the situation.

Remember, if you find yourself in a situation where something doesn't feel or sound right, ask yourself if it's probably a lie or if it's more likely to be true. Trust your instincts and reasoning and don't worry about what could happen if you do something or speak up. It's always best to put yourself and your safety first.

## References:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2024, March 26). *Sexual risk behaviors*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/sexualbehaviors/index.htm>

Hahn, B. (2023, January 11). *Kids use this hand signal for help*. Compass Abuse Prevention Services. <https://preventchildabusetraining.com/kids-use-this-hand-signal-for-help/>

Hogan, L. (2021, September 10). *How to spot the warning signs of child sexual abuse*. WebMD. <https://www.webmd.com/parenting/features/warning-signs-of-sexual-abuse-teens-young-adults>

YouTube. (2020, May 12). *Teenagers and sexual abuse*. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aOwmLMnZwi4>

YouTube. (2021, November 8). *Missing us teen rescued after using distress hand signal learned on TikTok*. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PPN6mEjZmow>

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