

Abuse in Relationships

Age Range:

12+, Years 8 +,
KS 3, KS 4

Topics Covered:

**Ethics, Perpetrators,
Victims and Bystanders**

Time:

20 - 40 minutes

Equipment needed:

A clear space.

An exercise to look further at rights and widen this to the responsibilities that both an individual and society have in keeping people safe and free from abuse.

Introduction

This exercise uses creative thinking and teamwork to help groups to think about rights and responsibilities and develop empathy for people in abusive relationships.

Exercise

Quickly recap or establish an agreed definition of the difference between rights and responsibilities. e.g. we all have a right to be safe so we all have a responsibility to help protect each other from danger.

Read out the extract below and ask the group to imagine the scene.

This scene takes place in the High Street / City Centre. It is a busy Saturday and there are lots of people around. Dale and his wife Lexi are out shopping. Dale keeps making sarcastic and hurtful comments to Lexi. Dale is clearly angry and starts to push Lexi. She is clearly scared and upset and tries to get away from Dale. Dale grabs her and slaps her hard across the face.

Ask the group to think about who may have seen or heard what was happening. Ask them to imagine that they can overhear the conversations that are happening about this incident.

Go round the group (a circle works very well here) and ask each person to say what they heard. Ask each person to start by saying **"I heard someone say..."** as it should be very clear that it is not necessarily their own opinion. You can also give the opportunity to pass or to repeat a comment.

Run a discussion that explores why the people witnessing the situation might have made these comments. What attitudes or views came through from the overheard conversations?

Explore the role of the bystander. Did anyone say they were going to intervene? If not, why not? What might stop people getting involved? What would it take for people to get involved? What if the violence increases or people know Lexi? What might Lexi expect / want people to do? Would it be different if Dale and Lexi were teenagers? Would it be different if Lexi was the one slapping Dale and calling him names?

Summary

Sum up by recapping the rights and responsibilities of a bystander and explore safe methods that learners can use to make a stand against violence and abuse. Explain that even though Dale and Lexi are married that this is still an assault and when violence (whether it is physical or emotional) happens in a relationship and it is deliberate and repeated then it is illegal and defined as 'Domestic Abuse'.

Learning Outcomes:

- Young people have increased empathy for people affected by abusive relationships including domestic abuse and teenage partner abuse.
- Young people have increased knowledge of the definitions of abusive relationships including teenage partner abuse and domestic abuse.

This supports key concepts for PSHE education in personal wellbeing including:

- personal identities
- healthy lifestyles
- risk
- relationships