

## FUNNELS

All the people in this class do not have the same sexual values and experiences. There are:

- those who haven't had sex; have made a choice not to, or are avoiding it
- those who haven't had sex; but have not made a clear decision about it
- those who haven't had sex, but are close, slipping, or tempted
- those who are doing it and don't see any problem with it
- those who are doing it and feel guilty and afraid
- there may be some who did it once and never again
- there's the phony virgin who teases, leads on, does everything but. . .
- and the guy who uses girls to build up his own ego, then brags about scoring.

Sexual activity at your age is a big gamble, and once you get involved in it you have a lot more to lose than you do to gain. This lesson is mainly for those who haven't crossed the line, and for those who might wonder if they have made a mistake and would like to quit before they compound their losses.

Show the transparency, Funnels of Intimacy and Commitment . You may wish to use the following definitions to explain how one step naturally leads to the next. Just as gravity naturally would pull you down a funnel, making it hard to stay near the top and not slip all the way through, our natural desires urge us on through each level to get to the last one.

### DEFINITIONS:

**Making Out:** heavy kissing and close physical contact

**Petting:** exploring each other's bodies up to but not including intercourse

**Intercourse:** the penetration of the penis into the vagina

**Dating:** casually dating a person, the relationship may be very casual and a friends only basis.—those involved in this type of relationship are most likely dating other people

**Going steady:** A progression of a relationship to the point that the couple is dating each other exclusively

**Engagement:** dating one person only with the agreement that you will marry—this agreement is usually accompanied by some token such as a ring.

### Intimacy Funnel

Holding Hands

Kissing

Making out

Petting

Intercourse

### Commitment Funnel

Dating

Going Steady

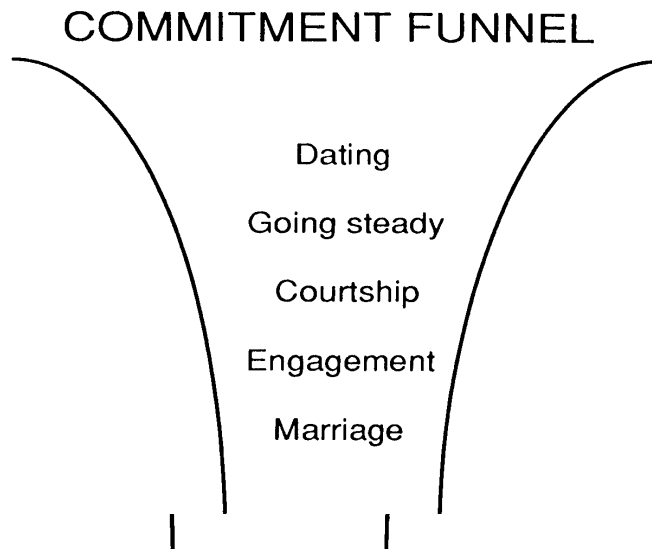
Engagement

Marriage

Marriage

Carlfred Broderick and Elmer Knowles

## FUNNELS



Carlfred Broderick and Elmer Knowles

In the funnel of commitment, most of us want to belong to someone and have someone belong to us; if not now, then in the future. The excitement and thrill of the relationship moves us further and further into the funnel.

### SLIPPING THROUGH THE FUNNEL OF SEXUAL INTIMACY

In the funnel of intimacy, the body has many signals that urge us to go on from step to step. Only the brain signals, let's stop. Nerves in the mouth and tongue during a simple kiss, get us thinking about more intimacy. Normal embracing during kissing touches nerves that get us thinking about exploring other parts of the body. Each step urges you on to the next step.

The urging is at different rates. These are some generalities that may or may not be true for you, but they show a pattern in males and females.

1. Guys are generally aroused more quickly than girls: by smell, by the sight of anything sexual (Playboy magazine is much more popular than Playgirl), by dreams, and close dancing. Girls take a good deal of sexual contact to create as much arousal. If you were to graph the arousal cycle, it would look like this:



2. Girls send out signals to guys. Sometimes they don't even realize the kind of signals they are sending when they dress and behave the way they do.
3. Guys get outspoken pressure from friends and society that it is expected that they make sexual passes. Girls more often get the opposite message. Guys feel they have to live up to the masculine stereotypes of sexual aggressiveness.
4. Both guys and girls will move down the funnel until they reach a point of urgent need where control is lost, and physical need takes over (usually more quickly for guys). Girls may think they have everything under control, are enjoying the pleasurable feelings and feeling very womanly, when they suddenly realize that the guy has reached that point of urgent need. She may then find that his need for physical release has become stronger than his concern for her, and she may not be able to stop them from slipping down the funnel.

It takes two to keep in control of the situation. It is very dangerous to keep getting to the steps in petting where you work up to a fever-pitch then try to apply the brakes. That degree of tension is hard to handle; sooner or later, you will find the brakes just are not there.

#### COMPARE THE TWO FUNNELS:

1. The speed down each funnel varies; it can take years, or it can happen in one night (sex happens in one night more often than marriage in one night).
2. Girls are usually more interested in pushing down the commitment funnel, guys control how far and how fast (guys ask, girls accept).
3. Guys are usually more interested in pushing down the sexual intimacy funnel, girls control how far and how fast (she decides how far to let him go).
4. Girls and guys will use one funnel to bargain for the other **Girls give sex to get love, guys give love to get sex.** (Teacher note: This statement makes a great poster for your classroom.)
  - \* How might that backfire for girls? (She gives in sexually to get him to love her, just to discover that this kind of love only lasts until she gets her clothes back on, leaving her feeling used and degraded.
  - \* How might that backfire for guys? (He makes promises just to get her into bed with him, but they get pregnant and he gets trapped into promises he never meant to keep.)
5. The earlier in age one enters the funnel, the longer one is faced with the problem of fighting gravity down the funnel.
6. The more you date one person, the slipperier the funnel becomes.
7. It is easier to break off a relationship than it is to back up the funnel. A relationship is usually broken up when couples disagree on continuing down the funnel. It is almost

impossible to back up a funnel. If you want to go to the top of the funnel, you will have to break off the relationship and find someone else to date.

8. Once you have gone down the funnel, future funnels are more slippery. Once you have traveled down a funnel with a person, a separation from that person does not put you back at the top of the funnel. When you are back together again, you will continue on from the point at which you were separated.
9. Going down the intimacy funnel gives girls a different reputation than guys (slut vs. stud).

## **FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE GIRLS AND GUYS TO HAVE SEX**

1. Going steady.
2. Beginning dating at an early age.
3. Whether friends are sexually active or not. Maybe you think everyone is doing it, but this is not true! Two out of three high school students are virgins, and five out of six are not sexually active! You will have plenty of company if you decide not to become sexually active.
4. Alcohol and other drugs alter a person's judgement and breaks down his/her resistance. However, they do not enhance sexual performance.
5. Lack of involvement in religion (it is the involvement in religion, not the particular religion that counts).
6. Parents and family:
  - a. Very permissive or very strict parents are associated with more sexual activity among their teenagers.
  - b. Lack of family values that discourage premarital sex.
  - c. Divorced or single parents have a harder time discouraging sexual activity among their teenagers.
  - d. Opportunity presented:
    - \* The fewer brothers and sisters around, the less deterrent to have sex.
    - \* Parents who work or are not at home a lot. Where is the most common place for teenage sex to occur? (at his house when his parents are not home) Where is the second most common place? (at her house when her parents are not home)
7. How you feel about school and how well you are doing in school influence your sexual activity. The reverse is also true.
  - a. If you are a poor student, you are more likely to get involved in sex.
  - b. If you do not take part in extra-curricular activities, you are more likely to get involved in sex.
  - c. If you do not plan to go to college, you are more likely to get involved in sex.
8. Dating older guys/girls—because you do not want them to think you are a baby you consent to have sex with them.
9. Feeling unloved. Sadly, many teenagers feel no one loves them or cares about them; they crave being touched, held, cuddled; they crave affection, and need to be important to someone, even if only for a few minutes. Often, they know they are being used and don't enjoy the sex. This is dangerous physically and emotionally and may make it so you never find someone to love you for yourself.
10. Media—How much of this can you avoid? Understand what is happening and do not allow yourself to be sucked in by the part you cannot avoid.
  - a. Sex appeal is sold in most advertisements (jeans, cars, toothpaste, etc.)
  - b. 9,000 scenes of suggested intercourse per year on TV.
  - c. Rock music and videos that are sexually explicit.

- d. Movies and videos (how hard is it to see or rent R-rated movies?).
11. Pressure from your partner—Read each of the following lines and have students come up with a response to fend off the suggestion. (Remember, a man's sexual urges ARE controllable. He does not have to have sex to survive! Also, remember, guys are not the only ones putting on the pressure to have sex.)

## THE NATURAL BALANCE

For any relationship to grow, there needs to be a balance between intimacy and commitment. If this balance gets too far out of line, then it will jeopardize the relationship.

INTIMACY	COMMITMENT
Hold hands	Date
Kiss	Go Steady
Making Out	Engagement
Petting	Marriage
Full Intimacy	Marriage

If a couple is dating and kissing, this is probably not too far out of balance. However, if a couple is dating and involved in full intimacy, then there is not enough commitment for that much intimacy. If a couple is about to be married and has never kissed, this is also out of balance and not very good for the relationship.

**MAKE A DECISION:** Have students complete this following process. Tell them that their decision is private, it will not be handed in or told to the teacher.

1. Identify the problem:

*"Should I have sex at this point in my life?"*

2. List the choices:

*"Yes, with someone I love." "No, not now."*

3. List the pros and cons of each option, being sure to include the consequences:

*Pregnancy, STDs, guilt, reputation, hurt family, etc.,*

4. Make a choice.

*You cannot choose not to choose; if you do not make up your mind, it will most likely be yes by default. No one can make this decision for you; it is up to you to make this choice.*

5. Make a plan:
  - a. *Avoid situations that make the funnel more slippery.*
  - b. *Practice refusal skills (let the class think of examples).*
    - \* *Give a reason. ("I don't want to feel like used merchandise.")*
    - \* *Use definite non-verbal signals with your words.*  
*(Look into his/her eyes as you say it, then move away.)*
    - \* *Show you care. ("I like you, but...")*
    - \* *Provide alternatives. ("Let's go back into the party.")*
    - \* *Take definite action. ("I am not going to do this.")*
  - c. *If you have sex, how can you avoid pregnancy and STDs?*
6. Act.
7. Take responsibility for the results of your decision.  
*If you have decided not to have sex, take credit for saving something important for an important person at an important time. If you have decided to be sexually active, take responsibility for preventing pregnancy, marriages that may result, and for the health of yourself and your partner with regard to diseases.*