Fictional versus Real Violence

Lesson Plan

Resource: H&PE Elementary Resources

Grade(s): 3

Unit: Human Development and Sexual Health

Lesson: 4 of 5

H&PE Curriculum Expectations

2019 H&PE Curriculum Expectations: A1.1, A1.2, A1.5, D1.5, D3.2

Materials

- Access to a shared document (chart paper and markers or online interactive tool)

- **Teacher Resource: Anecdotal Recording Chart (PDF)**

Learning Goals

- We are learning how the portrayal of fictional violence in various media, both on and offline, can create an unrealistic view of the consequences of real violence.

- We are learning how our choices and behaviours affect the social-emotional development of ourselves and others.

Overall Assessment

Using the Teacher Resource: Anecdotal Recording Chart, observe and provide verbal and written feedback on students' ability to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of how the portrayal of fictional violence in various media can create an unrealistic view of the consequences of real violence and how their choices and behaviours affect theirs and others social-emotional development.

Minds-On

Share the learning goals with the class and co-construct success criteria with students. Consider posting the success criteria in the learning space for reference throughout the lesson.

Divide students into small groups of 3-4 and provide groups with access to a shared document. Using a **Graffiti** strategy and the following prompts, have groups reflect on and record what they know about violence and its effect on themselves and others.

1. **Teacher prompts**: What is violence?

   Sample student responses: violence is when a person hurts someone or makes someone feel sad or scared. (Encourage students to consider both physical and emotional acts of violence in their definitions.)

2. **Teacher prompts**: What are some examples of these types of violence?

   Sample student responses: emotional - yelling, put-downs, name-calling and dumping (transferring unrelated anger to another person); physical - threatening, bullying, pushing and shoving, hitting, punching, kicking, shooting, stabbing, vandalism and dangerous behaviour.

3. **Teacher prompts**: Why is emotional violence just as hurtful as physical violence?

   Sample student responses: feelings can be hurt, just like bodies can be hurt. Yelling, put-downs, name-calling and threats can lead to physical violence. Put-downs or name-calling can lead to threats, which can lead to pushing or shoving, which can escalate to hitting or punching, or attacking with a weapon.

4. **Teacher prompts**: How do you feel when someone yells at you, calls you names, or threatens you?

   Sample student responses: a wide range of emotions, including shame, embarrassment, confusion and fear.

5. **Teacher prompts**: How can this type of emotional violence affect your social-emotional development?

   Sample student responses: emotional violence can lead to feelings of lowered self-esteem and self-worth that cause individuals to withdraw from friends, isolate themselves, and avoid school or physical activity.

6. **Teacher prompts**: What are some reasons that people hurt others either physically (pushing, hitting, kicking, etc.) or emotionally (bullying, excluding, ridiculing, etc.)?

   Sample student responses: sadness, anger, jealousy, frustration, hurt, stress, anxiety, loneliness.

7. **Teacher prompts**: These feelings can have a profound effect on our actions. What are some ways we can deal with these feelings other than emotional or physical violence?

Sample student responses: talk to a trusted adult about how they are feeling, pause and decide what to do, walk away, use deep breathing to calm their emotions.

Invite students to share their graffiti with the class, clarify student understanding of violence and the effect it can have on the social-emotional development of themselves and others.

Action

Use the following prompts to lead a large group discussion about fictional versus real violence and the consequences of viewing fictional violence.

Teacher prompt: "What is the difference between fictional violence and real violence?"

Student responses:

- "Fictional violence is in stories that are not true and real violence is something that actually happens to a person, like what we see on the news."
- "Real violence can be mean words, looks, signs or acts that hurt a person's body, feelings or damage their things. Fictional violence is the same thing, but it is make-believe and is not real."
- "Fictional violence is what we see on television, in movies, in videos, in magazines, and as words in songs."

Teacher prompt: "Watching violence in movies, video games and on television might make you think that violent behaviour is normal or acceptable. How is violence in cartoons (fictional violence) different from real life?"

Student responses:

- "In a cartoon, characters aren't really hurt. If they are badly hurt in one scene, they may be suddenly all right in the next."
- "In real life, a person involved in violence can be seriously hurt, physically and emotionally."

Teacher prompt: "How are the consequences in fictional violence different from consequences of violence in real life? What are some other consequences of real violence that affect the person or their loved ones?"

Student responses:

- "In a video game, when someone dies, the next time you play the game the character is living again, but in real life when you die it is permanent."

- "In a movie, when someone gets stabbed, the knife does not really go in, and they use make-up that's like ketchup for the blood. In real life, if you get stabbed, the knife cuts into your skin and the blood really comes out of your body."

- "A person could get in trouble with the law, go to jail or pay a fine, and they will be responsible for paying hospital bills or for any damage to property."

- "The consequences of their actions will also hurt those around them, who will be sad and upset that the person got hurt or is in jail."

Divide students into pairs with access to a shared document. Have pairs create a **Venn Diagram** to compare the similarities and differences between real and fictional violence and consolidate their understanding using the following list to guide their thinking.

Have pairs list the following on their chart:

- Different places they see both types of violence (e.g., the schoolyard [real], television shows [fictional], home [real], movies [fictional]).

- Examples of real and fictional violence (e.g., a schoolyard fight [real], professional wrestling [fictional]).

- Consequences of real and fictional violence (e.g., physical trauma [real], chronic disability [real], becoming insensitive to depictions of violence [fictional], idolization of violence characters [fictional]).

Invite pairs to share their Venn Diagram with other pairs to compare their responses and add any missing information to their diagram.

Consolidation

Explain to students that the problem with violence on television is that it can confuse children and youth about the real world. If children and youth see people on television solving their problems with violence, they might think that violence is a normal part of life, or that violence is a good way to solve problems. And if children and youth see a lot of violence on television, it may make them less sympathetic to victims of violence in the real world.

Use an **Exit Card** strategy for students to respond to the following questions:

- What is one thing you learned today about fictional and real violence and how it might affect you or other people?

- What is one thing we should remember when we view fictional violence?

- What is one thing you would share with someone about how fictional violence might affect people in their real life?

Notes to Teachers

A discussion about relationships/violence within families may be triggering for some students who have experienced trauma. Teachers should be aware of student disclosures and/or triggers, and know appropriate actions to take (i.e., have a social worker or child and youth worker participate in the lesson, be available to meet with students as needed, know reporting procedures to administration and children's aid society).

For additional information about media and violence visit **MediaSmarts.ca**.