

## SAFE ABORTION

### Objectives:

After this lesson, the students:

- Understand what safe abortion means
- Are aware of the risks of unsafe abortions
- Know where to get a safe abortion

### Lesson Outline (1 hour sample lesson plan)

Use this outline as an example of a good and complete learning process which includes: new knowledge, skill building and changing attitudes.

- 0.00 – 0.05 Introduction:** Introduce the topic, by making a link to existing knowledge and make it real – connect to real life.
- 0.05 – 0.15 Warm up:** Get the energy going with an interactive exercise. This should create a good atmosphere and make sure everyone feels at ease.
- 0.15 – 0.30 Information:** Share the information with the students. The information should be presented clearly without difficult terms. Make sure to keep it factual and present without judgment.
- 0.30 – 0.40 Discuss:** Give students time to reflect on the information and form their own opinions.
- 0.40 – 0.55 Practice:** Let students practice the skills they need to use the new information in their own lives.
- 0.55 – 1.00 Take action:** Come up with a plan on what the students can do in their own time to use the new information.

### Introduction

Start by introducing the topic. When you introduce new information it is important to link it to existing knowledge the students already have. This can be done by:

- Referring to previous lessons when this topic builds on what was discussed in those lessons. For example the information on pregnancy or contraceptives.
- Introducing the lesson by asking the opinion of the students. Do you think you have the right to have an abortion? Do young people know the difference between safe and unsafe abortion?
- Using the videos that are on the platform. Share a story from one of the videos and ask the students to some reflective questions like: do you recognise this situation, can you relate to the person in the story?

### Warm-up

*A warm-up is important to introduce students to a certain topic and make them feel comfortable with each other and the topic they are going to discuss. In this course, you could do a warm-up to test opinions about abortion. Introduce the topic to the youth and ask them what they think about it, if they know someone who had an abortion, if they understand the difference between safe and unsafe abortion and whether they know if abortion is legal or illegal in their country.*

### Information

*Share the information from the platform with the students.*

- *If they have access to the platform you can ask them to read it on their own.*
- *You can create a Power point presentation where you create slides with images and the most important information*
- *You can present the information to the whole group. Use keywords for yourself and if possible also write the keywords on a board as reminders for the listeners.*
- *You could make handouts with the key information.*

*Make sure that you take enough time to present everything clearly and that you build in moments where the students can reflect on the information and ask questions. The information has already been written in paragraphs – after each paragraph you can ask a reflective question.*

*You can use these questions to engage the group:*

- *Where can young people go to have a safe abortion?*
- *Do you think safe abortion is a right for all?*
- *What reasons can you come up with why young girls would have an abortion?*

*Free and informed decision making about pregnancy and childbirth is a basic right. It is therefore important that, where abortion is not against the law, health systems ensure that women have the opportunity to have a safe abortion.*

*There are a lot of different reasons for girls or women to decide to end a pregnancy:*

- *Not able to support and care for a child, either economically, physically or psychologically*
- *Contraceptive failure*
- *Pregnancy as result of rape*
- *Desire to stay in school or pursue higher education*
- *Risk to the health and wellbeing of the woman*
- *Risk to the health and wellbeing of the foetus*

*In many countries in the world abortion is legal and seen as a women's right to decide whether to continue a pregnancy or not. Girls and women can go to a health facility to have a safe abortion performed by a professional doctor.*

## SAFE ABORTION

*In some countries abortion is illegal which causes abortion services to be done by non-professionals in risky environments. They are often done in a rush and unhygienic way which puts women's life at risk of health complications or even death.*

*Unsafe abortion is done by giving herbs, or not prescribed medicines or chemicals to terminate the pregnancy. Unsafe abortion is very dangerous and risky; do not take any of these treatments from a nonprofessional. It is a human right that women have access to safe abortion practices, because it ensures that women can attain the highest possible standard of health.*

*Safe abortion can be performed through surgery or medication.*

### **Discuss**

*Allow some time to reflect on the information and to form their own opinion. This is important because it helps the students to process the information by reflecting on how this information is related to their own situation. You can use the following activities:*

- *You can facilitate a discussion by using the reflective questions. Or use the story as a starting point for a debate.*
  - *Do you know what the law is in your country about abortion?*
- *Use the story as a starting point for the students to come up with their own story based on their realities. This can be in the form of a roleplay, comic, story etc.*

### **Story:**

*I am 26 years old right now and I just found out I am pregnant. My boyfriend and I have only been together for 3 months and we are just not ready to have a baby yet so soon into our relationship.*

*This is going to be my second abortion and I have such a fear of being judged because of the decision my boyfriend and I have decided. My first pregnancy was when I was 21 or 22 years old and the guy I was with had a son already and never took care of him. I made that decision on my own to have an abortion. This time my boyfriend and I made the decision together and we are going to go together to the doctor for this procedure.*

ANONYMOUS

*Source: 1in3campaign.org*

- *Use the quiz on the platform to reflect on whether the statements are true or false. Read out the statements and ask the group if they think it is true or false. Make sure you provide the correct answer without judging those who gave a wrong answer.*

### **Quiz**

*The students are presented to various statements. For each statement, the student needs to decide if it is true or false. At the end of the game, the student gets to know how well he or she did.*

## SAFE ABORTION

- 1.** *Abortion is dangerous*  
Feedback: False. If the abortion is performed by a professional doctor in safe circumstances, or also called 'safe abortion', then it is not dangerous
- 2.** *Foetuses experience no pain during abortion*  
Feedback: True. A foetus is not a baby yet, and does not feel pain until the 24<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy
- 3.** *Most women have an easy access to get an abortion*  
Feedback: False. Most women in the world face a lot of obstacles to access safe and legal abortions.
- 4.** *Emergency contraceptives do not cause abortion*  
Feedback: True. Emergency contraceptives prevent pregnancy from happening.

### **Practice**

Use the outcomes from the discussion to ask the students come up with a plan on how to do something in their own community, peer group or family.

Since such an activity requires skills, make sure you practice these first. Some of the skills you could practice for this lesson are:

#### **How to address youth:**

Addressing youth is important to get the right tone of voice to convince them of your message. Whether you are talking to your fellow peers, or to people younger than you are, it is always important to keep the tips below in mind.

Practice on each other by having a normal conversation on a topic which is important to young people. How do you talk about it, what is the feeling you give to the person you are talking with, what is your tone of voice, how do you give confidence to youth, etc? Evaluate your technique by asking some feedback from others.

What is important to know when working together with young people? Read the tips below to improve your skills!

- Discuss with young people as equals. Respect and value their opinions, beliefs and ideas.
- Explain to them that their ideas are important too.
- Work in a location where youth feel comfortable and safe
- Do some activities with youth to win their trust, for example sharing something personal about yourself
- When a young person is not speaking, that doesn't mean he/she has no opinion. Give them time to open up and feel comfortable.
- Be open and non-judgemental
- Do activities with youth to strengthen their confidence
- Offer support if they ask for it
- Take them serious
- Make your work with youth interactive and fun
- Don't make assumptions about individuals

### **Take action**

*Wrap up today's lesson by asking what the students have learnt, liked, found difficult etc.*

*Give an assignment to put the new knowledge and skills into action:*

- *Identify the places where youth can have a safe abortion. Also list whether this place is youth-friendly, according to the knowledge you gained in the lesson on quality services.*