



## **RESPECT YOURSELF**

*Abuse Prevention through Sexuality and Body Education*  
A Program of We Care A Lot Foundation  
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### **Respect Yourself Course Description**

The *Respect Yourself* Educational Series teaches adults with developmental disabilities about sexual abuse prevention through sexuality and body education. Over the course of 7 weeks, the series presents fact-based instruction designed to decrease the chance of abuse and unsafe sexual practices. Movies, interactive class exercises, and entertaining role-plays help demonstrate what it looks like to show respect for our bodies and our minds. Having knowledge of things such as body part names and what a normal sexual relationship should look like, teaches class members to be their own first line of defense against abuse.

Classes are taught by Peer Instructors that offer a safe and healthy environment to learn in. This is done in an easy-to-understand format through speaking, visual presentations, individual handouts in a binder, games, role-plays, movies and more. The *Respect Yourself* Educational Series offers a professional way to provide this necessary information for sexual abuse prevention to any adult receiving services from Far Northern Regional Center free of charge. *Anyone who is conserved will need their form signed by their conservator before Week 3.*

#### ❖ **Week 1- Getting Started**

A summary of each lesson is given to the class so they understand what they will be learning and why. Consent forms, if not turned in before the start of the series, will be completed. Learning will begin with conversations on self-esteem, what a good relationship looks like, and participants creating their own dating boundaries. *\*A pre- and post-test are administered in Weeks 1 and 7. This test is done as an evaluation to ensure course quality and is not done as a test for ability to consent.*

#### ❖ **Week 2- Healthy Sweethearts**

In Week 2 the class will focus on learning more about what romantic relationships are, including what a boyfriend or girlfriend is. The class will also learn what an unhealthy relationship looks like, including abuse. Although talking about abuse is unpleasant, we try to present it in an empowering way that gives participants the tools needed to prevent abuse in their own lives along with reasons why we deserve to be abuse-free. The class will also cover tips on how to stay safer if they have chosen to meet people on the internet.

#### ❖ **Week 3- Your Body**

Most people coming to the class already know the basics of hygiene, but some may not understand WHY hygiene is so important, such as in our personal relationships. The class will also learn the names of both male and female reproductive body parts. Knowing the real names for body parts and where they are allows people to have better relationships with their doctors and be able to report abuse accurately.

❖ **Week 4- Body Health**

This class will talk about different things that can affect our body's reproductive health. This includes the menstrual cycle, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, simple self-exams every adult should do for cancer, as well as going through step-by-step what doctors will do in exams such as a Pap smear or prostate exam. By showing exactly what happens during these exams and talking about what the doctor is looking for, many participants go on to get these exams without fear.

❖ **Week 5- Healthy Sexuality \*Very important class for sexual abuse prevention\***

As our sexuality is a natural part of being human, Respect Yourself uses fact-based information to teach adults their sexual rights, their responsibilities, and more. The class will learn what intimacy is, how to set boundaries (i.e. letting your date know you are not ready to have sex), as well as how to be safe and legal IF they choose to have sex. **If we know what can be normal and good about human sexuality, we are able to tell when a situation is NOT normal or good.** This truly gives the individual the power to prevent abuse through understanding of personal boundaries and what is legal. It also is information that could prevent the person from being an abuser or sexual offender themselves.

❖ **Week 6- Pregnancy and Parenting**

Many adults with developmental disabilities are not clear on what actions may result in a baby. We show through models and video how pregnancy happens, as well as the progress of a baby in its mother's womb and the realities of parenting. Different types of birth control are discussed, including the benefits of abstinence.

❖ **Week 7- Graduation**

The final class is a chance to review the major ideas taught throughout the series such as privacy and online safety. It is also a time for open discussion and questions about anything related to the series. At the end of the class, each participant is given a certificate of participation, which is a great source of pride to most of our participants. Each participant gets to take home the binder of handouts given to them. We stress to each person that this binder is private to them and they do not have to share it as there is very personal information in there. *\*A pre- and post-test are administered in Weeks 1 and 7. This test is done as an evaluation to ensure course quality and is not done as a test for ability to consent.*

Please contact us for more information or to schedule a series. You can visit us online at [www.wecarealot.org/respect](http://www.wecarealot.org/respect) or email us at [respectyourself@wecarealot.org](mailto:respectyourself@wecarealot.org).