Lesson 5 and lesson 6 can be combined into one day if necessary. If combining into one day, show chapters 4-13 (end) straight through without discussion.

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will understand how gender-role pressures and homophobia affect all young people’s lives.
2. Students will explore connections among issues of gender, sexual orientation, race, culture, class and other aspects of identity.
3. Students will explore the idea of gender as a spectrum.
4. Students will know they are not alone in the challenges they face by drawing parallels between their experiences and those of students in the film.
5. Students will develop empathy for others.

AGENDA

5 minutes    Do Now
45 minutes   Straightlaced Video & Discussion
Homework     Gender in My School

MATERIALS

- Straightlaced DVD
- Vocabulary Reference List
- Straightlaced Video Guide
- Worksheet: Guide for Reflective Viewing
- Homework: Gender in my School

CALIFORNIA HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS

1.10.G Recognize that there are individual difference in growth, development, physical appearance, gender roles, and sexual orientation.
2.5.G Evaluate how culture, media, and other people influence perceptions about body image, gender roles, sexuality, attractiveness, relationships, and sexual orientation.
5.5.G Use a decision-making process to analyze the benefits of respecting individual differences in growth and development, physical appearance, gender roles, and sexual orientation.
Lesson 5: Sexuality: Influences, Expression, & Our Health (part 1)

BEFORE THE CLASS

For this lesson, teachers use the video “Straightlaced,” which is available for teachers from the School Health Programs office at (415) 242-2615. Some school-based Wellness Centers have a copy as well. The DVD is available for purchase from groundspark.org.

DO NOW 5 minutes

Materials
- Every student needs a notebook, journal, or paper and a pen
- Flipchart or whiteboard and markers

Activity
Write on board and have students complete the following questions:

What are some of the messages you received growing up from your family or culture about how you were supposed to be as a girl or as a boy? How did you feel about it?

If there is time, have a few students share their answers.

STRAIGHTLACED VIDEO & DISCUSSION 45 minutes

Materials
- Straightlaced DVD
- Worksheet: Guide for Reflective Viewing

Activity
Show chapters 4 – 8 of the Straightlaced DVD. If there were students absent for chapters 1-3, give a brief overview of the film before starting. Pass out the Guide for Reflective Viewing worksheets and have students follow along with the film by taking notes on the worksheet.

The topics covered in these segments include: Gender and intelligence, power and control, not fitting into traditional boxes, the gender binary, fear of difference, harassment and bullying leading to suicide, dimensions of masculinity, pressure to have sex, the sexual “double standard” for men versus women.

You can show chapters 4 – 8 in a row, or pause between chapters for a discussion. Below are some suggested questions to guide your discussion.

Teacher Tip:
For quieter groups: have students form pairs or small groups and discuss these questions.
• One student from the film says that, although we often say this is a free country where people can do what they want, “a lot of people really aren’t free because they can’t show their true selves.” What are some of the ways that idea come out in this segment?
  o In relation to ideas about masculinity?
  o In relation to sex and relationships?
  o In relation to culture, race, or class?
  o In relation to those who don’t feel they fit in traditional gender boxes?
• How do you feel about the story of Josh and his friends? What needs to change in schools and society so that all people like Josh no longer feel the need to harm themselves?
• How do you think a person’s race or ethnicity might be connected to expectations they face about how their gender is supposed to act?
• Do you think there are stereotypes for men/boys of certain cultures or races? Women/girls? Why do you think that is? What similarities do you see across cultures?
• What do you think of the statement, “My experience is that there’s not two genders. There’s really a spectrum.”?

**HOMEWORK**

*Gender in My School*
Lesson 5: Vocabulary

1. **Expression**: The ways in which a person makes their thoughts or feelings known to others. This can be through behaviors, speech, dress, attitude, or actions.

2. **Gender roles**: Cultural norms and expectations of how people of a certain gender are “supposed” to act, often based on stereotypes about people of certain genders. Also known as gender norms.

3. **Harassment**: Aggressive pressure or intimidation. Continued unwanted and annoying actions by one person or group of people, which may include verbal/physical/emotional abuse, towards another person or group of people.

4. **Stereotype**: A generalization, usually negative, in which one or more characteristics are attributed to all people in a certain group.

5. **Spectrum**: A wide range or variety that goes beyond two, binary (opposite), categories. An example would be gender, because there are not just two (binary) genders, there are many genders (man, woman, genderqueer...)

*Be Real. Be Ready.*
Worksheet: Guide for Reflective Viewing

Name:_____________________________________________________________  Period:____________________
Date:____________________

**Directions:** While you watch the film, use this guide to record your thoughts about what you hear the youth in the film saying.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Youth Feel Limited by Gender Pressures:</th>
<th>Examples of Resistance or Action for Change:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other Thoughts & Questions:**
Chapter 4 “Dumbing Down” Duration: 5 minutes
It’s not just their bodies—girls are supposed to have soft, meek voices and hide their intelligence. One girl expresses her frustration with guys who don’t want to go out with her because she’s smart, while her male friend says he would be teased if people thought his girlfriend was smarter than he was. Girls protest that they are not allowed to lead in any way with their boyfriends; guys say they are stigmatized if they don’t dominate in relationships with girls and ridiculed if they express romantic feelings toward a female. One boy proudly tells of defying this norm with an extravagant, public Valentine’s Day message.

Chapter 5 “The Gender Spectrum” Duration: 5 minutes
Raises questions about whether gender is fixed and about how we define what is “male” versus “female.” Students say they feel like they are both male and female, or no gender at all, yet they are required to identify as one gender. One student floats the concept that gender is a spectrum; another resists fitting into any gender box and identifies as “gender queer.” Two students go shopping and point out all the products coded as “masculine” or “feminine.”

Chapter 6 “Tragic Toll” Duration: 4 minutes
Students in Kentucky work together on a memorial garden for Josh, a classmate who committed suicide. Josh defied any gender definition and was often harassed at school. One of his friends says that knowing someone like Josh enriched her life and describes how painful it was to hear the homophobic comments from other students after he killed himself.

Chapter 7 “Walk and Talk ‘Like a Man’” Duration: 5 minutes
It’s not a free country if you can’t go to school and act as you truly are. Male students talk about their strategies for staying under the radar so no one questions their sexual orientation or “maleness”: the way they walk, the way they talk, joining in fights, disrespecting females. If they share their feelings like girls do, they are looked down on. No sadness or tears, no joy, no physical affection between males. Two guys can hold hands or embrace in other cultures, but not here.

Chapter 8 “Sex—The Double Standard” Duration: 5 minutes
In high school, there is a lot of pressure, from both media and peer culture, to lose your virginity. Guys are taught to see girls as sexual objects and to try to have sex with as many girls as possible. It’s scary to confess that you haven’t had sex or choose to lie about it. Girls, on the other hand, tread a fine line between being perceived as a “prude” or a “slut.” Female students talk about a new trend for girls to be sexual with each other to attract guys’ attention. But that behavior doesn’t translate into acceptance for young women who really are lesbian.

Be Real. Be Ready.
Homework: Gender in My School

Name:_________________________________________________________

Period:_________________ Date:____________________

Directions: Imagine that you are featured in a documentary like Straightlaced. Write a 1-paragraph response to each question.

Question #1: What are gender roles and expectations like at your school? How do gender roles affect people in your school?

Question #2: How do gender roles at your school affect you?