

# Condom & Sex Dam Communications Activity

**Recommended Age: 12+**

## Goals

- To have youth identify responses when negotiating condom and sex dam use with a partner.
- To normalize and practice communication between partners, increasing the likelihood of safer sex.

## Have Ready

- Write two or three excuses on each flipchart, leaving space in between for youth to write their responses.
- Additional flipchart paper.
- Markers and tape.
- Printed Excuses/Responses cards, if using option B or C.

## Instructions

### Option A: Brainstorming Activity

- Divide youth into small groups, or this activity can also be done as a large group brainstorm, or individual reflection. Ask youth to imagine a situation where they are ready to have sex and want to use a barrier. Pass out the flipcharts and have them come up with responses to the excuses. Encourage youth to write helpful responses that could encourage condom/sex dam use. Depending on time and barring any offensive responses, ask for volunteers to read out their flipcharts (or read them out yourself if the group is quiet). Debrief the responses, adding the responses on the next page, if needed.

### Option B: Excuses/Responses Card Match-Up

- While it is preferable for youth to come up with the responses, an alternative activity (for groups that may benefit from a bit more tactile activity vs. a discussion and list) would be to print out the cards on the following pages, and have the youth match the response to the excuse. This can be done in small groups, or the

excuses can be taped to a wall or flipchart to complete as a whole group.

### **Option C: Condom Responses Competition**

- For a more movement-based activity, print multiple sets of cards in distinct colours. Hide the responses cards around the space. Split the group into teams and give each team the excuses cards. The teams will then compete to find all of their cards, and then match them to the excuses. Once they have matched all of their responses cards to the excuses, they will have to bring you the 'make your own response' card and tell you what they would say if they wanted to use protection and their partner did not. The first team to complete the challenge wins!

### **Sample Excuses (to write on flipcharts)**

- |                             |                           |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. It doesn't feel as good. | 2. I'm on the pill.       |
| 3. Don't you trust me?      | 4. I'm allergic to latex. |
| 5. I'll pull out.           | 6. It's our first time.   |
| 7. The condom won't fit.    | 8. I don't have anything  |
| 9. I don't have any.        | (STIs).                   |

### **Potential Corresponding Responses**

1. We can relax and enjoy more with condoms/sex dams because we won't be so worried; Adding lube can make it more fun; Sex with a condom/sex dam will feel better than no sex; No sex without one.
2. The pill doesn't protect us from STIs/HIV.
3. I trust you and want to be safer; Can't tell by looking if there is an STI.
4. There are condoms/sex dams that are non-latex.
5. Pulling out doesn't always work because of pre-cum, I want to be extra sure. FYI: You might need to explain the pull-out method: the penis removed from partner before ejaculation. It doesn't protect against STIs. It's not a reliable method of birth control.
6. We've never been tested; I want to be safe.
7. Let's try or get another size or brand; Internal condoms fit everyone.
8. Let's get tested together, but until then, we'll use condoms/sex dams.
9. I have or we can go get some from... (local resource).

## Debrief

- Ask the group, **“Why would we get you to think up these responses?”** Conversations with a partner about safer sex can be difficult, and we don’t always see examples of condom/sex dam discussions in real life or media. In fact, we usually see kissing and making out that turns into sex without talking about safer sex (or consent). Some may not know what talking about safer sex could sound like or might not have thought about it before.
- Even if we have condoms or sex dams and know how to use them, we need to communicate with our partners to have safer sex. This exercise allowed us to practice communicating our need to use condoms or sex dams. If a partner is respectful, they will respect your need to use condoms or sex dams. FYI: Research has shown that condom use declines over time in relationships.<sup>i</sup>

## Additional Activities

Ideally, this activity can be followed by:

- Condom/Internal/Sex Dam Demos
- Condom Competition and Play Stations

**Excuses: Print on white/different colour paper than responses**

**It doesn't feel as good.**

**I'm on the pill.**

**Don't you trust me?**



**I'm allergic to latex.**

**I'll pull-out.**

**I don't have any STIs.**

|

|

**Condoms don't fit.**

**I don't have any.**

**It's our first time.**





# **Make your own excuse!**

**Responses: Print on white/different colour paper than  
excuses**

**I can enjoy sex more with  
condoms because then I  
don't have to worry.**

**Condoms can make sex  
last longer.**



**Adding lube can make it  
feel better.**

**I trust you will respect that  
I want to use condoms.**

**Make your own response!**

**I have a condom!**



**We have never been tested  
and I want to be safe.**

**The pill doesn't protect us  
from STI/HIV.**

**Make your own response!**

**Pulling out doesn't always  
work because of pre-cum.**

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<sup>1</sup>Fisher, W. A., & Boroditsky, R. (2000). Sexual activity, contraceptive choice, and sexual and reproductive health indicators among single Canadian women aged 15-29. *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 9(2), 79-93.