
OBJECTIVE Each young woman will realize the effect that dating decisions and practices can have on her future.

PREPARATION

1. Provide pencils and paper.
2. If it is available in your area, show “Chastity: As a Man Soweth,” or “The Importance of Proper Dating,” on *Family Home Evening Video Supplement 2* (53277).
3. Assign young women to present any stories, scriptures, or quotations you wish.

**SUGGESTED
LESSON
DEVELOPMENT**

Each Young Woman Is Accountable for Her Behavior with Young Men

Scripture discussion Read 2 Nephi 10:23. Explain that God has given us the power to choose. While some decisions in our lives may be made quickly, others require forethought and planning to ensure that they will bring the eternal consequence desired. In the next few years, the young women will make some very important decisions about young men.

Chalkboard discussion

- What are some of the important decisions you must make about young men?

Record their answers on the chalkboard. The following suggestions may be used to stimulate discussion.

- Will I date nonmembers?
- Will I date boys who smoke or drink?
- Will I date one person steadily while I am a teenager?
- What limits on intimacy will I maintain before marriage?
- What will be my standards in dress, language, and actions?
- What qualities must a young man I date possess?
- Will my thoughts follow a consistent pattern of virtue?
- Will I live my life according to gospel standards?

Ask the young women to discuss why these decisions are so important.

Teacher presentation Explain that the decisions the young women make about young men during their maturing years will probably have more effect on their future happiness and their family’s happiness than decisions made during any other period of their lives.

The Lord Has Provided Counsel to Help Young Women in Their Relationships

Discussion

- In what ways will the Lord and his Church help you in your relationships with young men?

The following ideas may be discussed: answers to sincere prayer; guidance by the Holy Spirit; answers from the scriptures; counsel from parents; advice from Church leaders, teachers, and others; and teachings obtained from sacrament meetings, Sunday School and Young Women classes, and conferences.

Quotations Explain that the following quotations are a sample of instructions given by Church leaders about dating relationships. Have young women read the statements. After each quotation is read, ask the young women: How do you feel about this counsel? How do you think this counsel can be a blessing to you?

1. “Remember, young women, the importance of proper dating. . . . Our Heavenly Father wants you to date young men who are faithful members of the Church, who will be

worthy to take you to the temple and be married the Lord's way. There will be a new spirit in Zion when the young women will say to their boyfriends, 'If you cannot get a temple recommend, then I am not about to tie my life to you, even for mortality!' . . .

"My young sisters, we have such hope for you. We have such great expectations for you. Don't settle for less than what the Lord wants you to be" (Ezra Taft Benson, "To the Young Women of the Church," *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, p. 84).

2. "Begin to prepare now for a temple marriage. Proper dating is a part of that preparation.

"In cultures where dating is appropriate, do not date until you are sixteen years old. Not all teenagers need to date or even want to. . . .

"When you begin dating, go in groups or on double dates. Avoid pairing off exclusively with one partner. Make sure your parents meet and become acquainted with those you date. Later the time will come for choosing just one. You may occasionally want to invite your dates to activities with your family.

"Plan positive and constructive activities when you are together. Do things that help you get to know each other. Be careful to go to places where there is a good environment, where you won't be faced with temptation.

"Because dating is a preparation for marriage, date only those who have high standards, who respect your standards, and in whose company you can maintain the standards of the gospel of Jesus Christ" (*For the Strength of Youth*, p. 7).

We Should Express Affection within the Limits Set by the Lord's Prophets

Teacher presentation	<p>Explain that the prophets have also given inspired counsel about expressions of affection in dating relationships. In order for the young women to follow the counsel, there are some words that they need to understand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the difference between <i>love</i> and <i>lust</i>? (Love is unselfish concern that seeks the good of the other person. Lust is unrestrained, selfish desire for sexual enjoyment.)
Quotation	<p>Read the following quotation by President Spencer W. Kimball:</p> <p>"If one really loves another, one would rather die for that person than injure him. At the hour of indulgence, pure love is pushed out one door while lust sneaks in the other. Your affection has been replaced with biological materialism and uncontrolled passion. . . .</p> <p>"When the unmarried yield to the lust that induces intimacies and indulgence, they have permitted the body to dominate and have placed the spirit in chains. It is unthinkable that anyone could call this love" (Spencer W. Kimball, <i>Faith Precedes the Miracle</i> [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1972], p. 154).</p>
Prophets' standards	<p>Explain that if the young women are to keep their dating relationships happy and virtuous, they must keep their expressions of affection within the limits set by the Lord through his prophets. Present, or have young women present, the following standards for expressing affection during dating:</p> <p><i>Kissing:</i> "A kiss is an evidence of affection. A kiss is an evidence of love, not an evidence of lust—but it can be. Don't ever let a kiss in your courtship spell lust. Necking and petting are lustful; they are not love. . . . I don't mind [you] kissing each other after you have had several dates; . . . not the kiss of passion, but the kiss of affection" (Spencer W. Kimball, address to missionaries, 2 Jan. 1959).</p> <p><i>Being Alone Together:</i> "In interviewing repenting young folks, as well as some older ones, I am frequently told that the couple met their defeat in the dark, at late hours, in secluded areas. . . . The car was most often the confessed seat of the difficulty" (Spencer W. Kimball, <i>The Miracle of Forgiveness</i>, p. 225).</p> <p><i>Necking and Petting:</i> "Among the most common sexual sins our young people commit are necking and petting. Not only do these improper relations often lead to fornication, pregnancy, and abortions—all ugly sins—but in and of themselves they are pernicious evils" (Spencer W. Kimball, <i>The Miracle of Forgiveness</i>, p. 65).</p>

Scripture discussion

Explain that these standards are given to us by a loving Heavenly Father. Feelings of romantic love are ordained of God. But we are counseled to control these feelings and expressions and not have them control us.

Have the young women read Alma 38:12.

- In what way can bridling our passions help us be filled with true love?

Explain that sometimes the choices to bridle our feelings and keep the Lord's standards are not easy, but these choices do contribute to our lasting happiness.

Chalkboard discussion

We Can Establish Guidelines Now

Using the quotations in this lesson and local customs, have the class develop guidelines that the young women would like to follow in their relationships with young men. Record these on the chalkboard. Give each young woman paper and a pencil and have her record these guidelines for her reference.

The guidelines may include the following:

1. I will date only those young men who live Church standards.
2. I will attend only activities that meet Church standards.
3. I will save physical intimacies for marriage.
4. I will uphold high standards of modesty in my dress, language, and actions.
5. I will make a list of personal qualities that I would like the young men I date to possess.
6. I will return home from each date clean and unashamed.
7. I will discuss my dating activities with my parents.

Emphasize that each young woman can have wholesome, worthwhile relationships with young men if she makes correct decisions and follows the Lord's counsel.

Conclusion

Explain that the dating decisions the young women make and the relationships they develop with young men will greatly affect their lives throughout the eternities. Suggest that class members put their lists of basic guidelines in some place where they can refer to them often.