

Athletes As Leaders

Session 5: Rumor Spreading

Make sure you have:

- Group agreements to refer to during “Warm Up” (only if needed)
- Technology to show YouTube video during “Work Out”
- Ball to throw during “Cool Down”

Warm Up

Review group agreements (only if needed).

Introduce topic: (1 min)

Welcome! Last session we talked about challenging society’s standards of beauty. Today we are going to talk about rumor spreading. As you know, spreading rumors about someone is often something negative and can lead to miscommunication and hurt feelings. Today we are going to talk specifically about spreading sexual rumors and its effects. In discussing this topic, hurtful and offensive language might come up today in our discussion. Please remember to be respectful and maintain our group agreements.

Introduce & show video: (3 min)

We are going to watch a video produced by students at Two Rivers High School in North Bend, WA, called “Rumor Wildfire.” This video shows how harmful rumors can be and how they can get out of hand.

“Rumor Wildfire” (2:12)

https://youtu.be/W8_9cuQlZqQ

Work Out

Discussion Questions: (5 min)

 *Is this something that you see happening at your school or on social media?*

- ❓ *How do you see how these types of rumors about girls being different than the ones about guys? [Possible answers: sexual rumors about girls can sometimes damage their reputation more than for boys; when boys are having sex, it is not talked about as much, or it is seen as a positive thing].*
- ❓ *If these types of sexual rumors become commonplace at a school, what might happen over time? [Possible answers: people might think it's okay to spread rumors; the targets of the rumor might feel embarrassed or depressed; if someone reports a sexual assault they might not be taken seriously or might blame themselves; boys who are sexually assaulted may be afraid to report it because people think that men are always supposed to want sex].*

Talking Points: (2 min)

- » *There is a societal expectation about girls that they are supposed to be both virgins and also be sexual. Like "be sexy but don't have sex." If a woman is perceived as too sexual, then that is considered a very bad thing.*
- » *Have you ever noticed a double standard? Girls are more often (than boys) the targets of negative sexual rumors. Think about all the negative sexual names that are targeted at girls and women. Are there as many for guys?*
- » *It is not okay to call anyone a slut, thot, ho, skank, whore ... the names go on and on. This is a form of sexual harassment, even if people say they are "just joking". It also contributes to a society where degrading women is considered to be okay.*
- » **So here is a challenge for you:** *Think about ways that you personally can help stop sexual rumor spreading. Whether the rumor is about someone you know, or don't know; whether it is something that may be true or untrue; it doesn't matter. Think about how these hurtful rumors and harassment unfairly target women and other oppressed groups.*
- » **As student leaders and athletes,** *you can help create an environment where there is less drama, and where sexual rumor spreading is unacceptable.*

Facilitator Notes

It is important to use these words for the sake of the discussion. You can use slang terms that you hear young people using.

Cool Down

Team Talk: (8 min)

Now it is time for you to lead the Team Talk! Let's get in a circle and get ready to pass the ball. We are going to think of things that you can all do as student leaders & athletes. Hopefully these will be things everyone in the group can agree to do, when you are interacting with people on your team, at school, on social media, or in the community. We are hoping they will become the new team norms that will help you take action as leaders in the community.

This week we are going to brainstorm ways that we can help stop hurtful rumors.

- ❓ What are some things you can do when you hear someone spreading a rumor about someone's personal life?*
- ❓ What could you do to help a friend who tells you they are the target of sexual rumors?*
- ❓ What if sexual rumors or name-calling were being spread on social media instead of in-person. What could a person do to help in this situation?*

Thank you for all of your participation and sharing your ideas on how to stop rumor spreading and the unfair double standards. It's time to break for the day (or get to practice).

Close the circle with a team cheer.

