



Rock and Water Lesson Plan

Strong Girls program – week 1

Theme: Becoming empowered and staying empowered

Aims:

- Setting group rules
- Understanding the differences between genders
- Becoming aware of the way we stand
- Using our hands to defend ourselves

Activities:

Rules

The group will be encouraged to think of rules. Important rules for the program:

- Not hurting ourselves or others physically or verbally
- Can always say 'no' if you really don't want to do something
- Respect and confidentiality
- Turning off mobile phones
- Arriving on time
- Others

Differences between genders

Group discussion – apart from anatomy, what differences do you notice between males and females?

Some important facts for girls to know:

- Males have 10-100 times more testosterone than females
- In a male brain, the 'sex processor' is twice as large than it is in females
- Progesterone in females inhibits sex drive
- The differences in sex hormones can cause confusion and different expectations between genders
 - Males often explain away a woman's lack of sexual desire as 'she no longer loves me'
 - Females respond the same way when males do not want to talk

- Males frequently respond to stress, worry and violence by externalising behaviour in the form of aggression and/or escape into an addiction to alcohol, sex, drugs and computer games.
- Females tend to respond by internalising behaviour and focus their pain, worry and aggression on themselves. More frequently develop eating disorders, depression, anxiety and/or self mutilation. Females can often spend years in an unhealthy relationship.
- Males are usually physically stronger than females but can lack the ability of self-control, self-reflection and verbal communication
- Females tend to have a freeze reaction when challenged

Being proud

Others might often tell girls and women that they are doing well but this frequently does not correspond to their own feelings.

Participants will stand in a circle. Each takes a turn to step into the middle and state what they are proud of about themselves.

Was this hard or easy to do?

Standing

Rolling foot over a tennis ball – Standing up, participants roll the sole of one foot over a tennis ball. Feel for any tender spots on your foot. Take your foot off the ball – what do you feel? Is there a difference between the 2 feet?

Now roll the sole of the other foot over the ball. What do you feel as you stand?

Feeling connected to the floor is related to your right to stand up for yourself.

Swinging leg – place one hand on your sternum. Standing solidly on one leg, swing the other leg back and forth so the foot just touches the ground. What do you feel through your body?

Now do the same with the other side.

By keeping our sternum present, we can be present. We refer to this as the bone of presence.

The concepts of standing firm on the ground and making ourselves bigger by making our bone of presence be present are important to remember when we find ourselves in a confrontation.

Using our hands as a weapon – hammer fist

Put your hand into a fist with the thumb on the outside. Why don't we put our thumb inside? Because it could break if we strike something

Practice making a hammer punch. Instead of a forward strike, this involves using the fist like a hammer to strike downwards. This can be more comfortable for women than using a punch with the knuckles.

Work in pairs. Without making contact, practice slowly moving the hammer fist toward the nose then to the temple of your partner. How does it feel to use this? How does it feel to receive this?

Move back from your partner and practice the movements explosively by breathing out with each strike. You can use your voice to say 'no' as you strike

Now practice the movements on a punching bag. Gradually build up your strength.

Reflection on today's lesson

- Comments
- Questions
- Next week we will be learning to defend a strike to the head, how to get out of a wrist trap and using breathing to gain control.

Strong Girls program – week 2

Theme: Employing power from your basis

Aims:

- Defending self from a strike to the head
- Increasing body strength through standing strong and breathing
- Releasing from a wrist grip

Activities:

Any reflections from last session

Group discussion

Defence against a clip to the ear

Person A attempts to strike person B to the ear.

Person B steps back to create more space. They bend their arm and raise it to slightly above the shoulder. They use the arm to block the strike.

Generating force in your centre

Participants will work in pairs and stand along a line. They will grab each other's hand/wrist firmly. Person A will bring their body down and breathe out. Person B will hold their air high in their chest. Person A will use their centre and ground to move their partner, while keeping their shoulders and arms relaxed. Person B will then offer gradual resistance.

What did you learn from this activity? What role does breathing play in changing our body?

This activity is then done as a competition with each person trying to shift their partner across to their side of the line.

Freeing wrist

If I grab you on the wrist, how will you get out of it? Discussion with the group.

Snake – turn your wrist against the person's thumb joint as this is the weakest part of the hold

If they make a strong grip, make a fist with one hand and place your other hand on top of the fist. Pull the arms toward the thumb in an explosive movement – being grounded, breathing out and using your voice if you like.

If you are grabbed with 2 hands, make a fist as above and place the other hand on top. Use the same explosive movement.

Move your hands towards your centre so you don't hit yourself on the head!

Pushing a row of people out of balance

Warm up with tai chi breathing – breath in move onto the back leg, breathe out move to the front leg while stretching your arms out without fully straightening your elbow. Focus on something distant, like you're trying to push something heavy.

Participants stand in a row, close together. The first person crosses their arms over their centre. Person A stands in front of the row and places their hands against Bs arms. Initially they try to push the row with brute force – what happens?

Then they use the tai chi breathing – building up energy before releasing it along the row. What happens?

Reflection on today's lesson

- Comments
- Questions
- Next week we will be learning to use our voice, use our power and using kicking to defend ourselves.

Strong Girls program – week 3

Theme: Breathing power and using your voice

Aims:

- Discussing why our voice is important
- Developing an awareness of changes to our breathing when we are threatened
- Using our feet to defend ourselves

Activities:

Any reflections from last session

Group discussion

Group discussion

- Why is using our voice important?
- How can we create a deep, serious voice?
- What happens to our breathing when we are threatened?

Using our voice

We experiment with using our voice to say “NO” when:

- Jiggling from one leg to the other
- Laughing
- Not looking someone in the eye
- Standing still
- Standing still and looking someone in the eye

Discussion of how this felt different and sounded different.

Stamping in a circle

Participants gather in a circle and hold hands. They lift their right knee up and as they breathe out forcefully they push it to the floor without physically connecting. Continue this adding voice and you push down.

What do you notice when you add your voice? How does your body feel? What changes in the room?

Sound exercise with ho, har, hee

Participants will raise their arms and say “HO”, place their hands on their chest and say “HAR”, place their hands on their centre and say “HEE”. ‘Ho’ indicates boundaries, ‘har’ indicates taking action, ‘hee’ indicates focus. We continue this for 5 rounds.

Discussion about what was felt/experienced.

Sumo wrestler

Participants form pairs. Person B holds A around the waist from behind. Person A tries to reach the other side of the room while B holds them back.

First time, this is done while A holds their breath while trying to move. What happens?

Second time, A breathes out with each step. What happens?

Third time, A uses their voice as they move. What happens?

Kick to the crotch

Stand in the self-defence pose – one leg forward and one back. Make sure both feet are firmly placed on the floor

Raise your knee. Bend your toes downwards. Kick and replace the foot on the ground.

Work in pairs. Without making contact, practice slowly moving your kicking leg toward your partner's groin. How does it feel to use this? How does it feel to receive this?

Move back from your partner and practice the movements explosively by breathing out with each kick. You can use your voice to say 'no' as you strike

Now practice the movements on a punching bag. Gradually build up your strength. Remember to keep your toes pointed to the floor like you're kicking a ball.

Reflection on today's lesson

- Comments
- Questions
- Next week we will be talking about body language and the rules of confrontation.

Strong Girls program – week 4

Theme: Body language and attitude

Aims:

- Developing an understanding of how body language can influence what others think of us
- Recognising and being comfortable with our own personal space
- Learning the rules of confrontation and putting these into practice.

Activities:

Any reflections from last session

Group discussion

Shrinking space, emotions and posture

Participants walk criss cross through the room. The space is made smaller as they walk. What happens to your breathing and posture as the space becomes smaller?

Bone of Presence – refers to our sternum or breast bone. By sticking out the bone and walking tall, we go into a fight response. By hiding the bone and caving in our chest, we go into a flight response.

Now walk with your bone of presence hidden while the space is shrunk. What happens to your breathing and posture?

Now walk with your bone of presence showing while the space is shrunk. What happens to your breathing and posture?

How does this related to real life?

Observing and imitating

Participants pair up. One person in the pair will walk around the room. The other will observe. Then the observer will walk like the walker – following body language, step size and speed while the original walker watches on. How does it feel to see how you walk? What sort of image are you showing others?

Indicating boundaries

Participants pair up. One lies on the floor on their stomach. The other stands still some distance away. When the instructor says 'go', the people standing still will run toward their partner. Those on the floor must jump up and say STOP firmly. Each time the distance is shortened. How does it feel to protect your boundary?

The rules of confrontation

The following ideas can be applied during confrontation

- 1) Stand grounded
- 2) Make yourself look bigger
- 3) Make eye contact
- 4) Keep calm by breathing deeply
- 5) Clearly state what you do not like and what you want the other person to do

What do each of these steps mean?

Let's put them into practice using the following scenarios

1. She is looking at me!
2. She is talking behind my back!
3. She is posting stuff online about me!
4. She kissed my boyfriend!
5. She is ignoring me and not talking to me!
6. She is turning my friends against me. They are not including me!
7. They had a party Saturday night and I was not invited!
8. No one contacted me over the holidays. They were doing things without me!

Reflection on today's lesson

- Comments
- Questions
- Next week we will reflect on the use of the 5 rules of confrontation, reflexes and trusting your intuition.

Strong Girls program – week 5

Theme: Trusting your intuition and feelings

Aims:

- Being able to use reflexes to think on your feet during a physical attack.
- Sensing where other people are within your personal space
- Sensing who is friendly and who may be dangerous

Activities:

Any reflections from last session

Group discussion

Connected breathing

Participants stand in a circle with their hands on their stomachs. They feel what is happening to their stomach as they breathe in and out.

Often women and girls who have been exposed to violence breathe high and their stomach moves in the opposite direction.

Touch boxing

In this activity, we learn to remain calm in situations where we feel attacked.

Pairs face each other and remain grounded, centred and focused. Person A moves their left arm towards B's right shoulder and then their right arm toward B's left shoulder. B moves back and blocks the attack. A alternates which side they go to and then attacks randomly and quickly.

What happens to your breathing, centring and focusing?

How can you use the 5 rules of confrontation in this task?

Intuition – feeling where another person is

One person stands in the middle of the room with their eyes closed. They are asked to take a deep breath in and out and relax their body. They are asked to scan the space around them for a sense of anything present.

Another person starts to walk around the person with their eyes closed. The rest of the group claps while the person walks. The walking person comes to a stop within the personal space of the standing person. The standing person is asked to keep their eyes shut and feel the space around them for any changes. They are then asked to point to where they think the person is standing.

The person who is doing the sensing is asked to be centred and grounded to enable them to trust their feelings. This is particularly important for women and girls who have experienced violence as they will withdraw from their bodies so they don't feel emotional and physical pain.

Walking down the street

Participants will stand in 2 lines. One will think positive thoughts, the other negative thoughts. One participant will walk through the middle of the 2 lines and will be asked to sense if there is a difference between the lines and what that difference is. Is it giving you a warning?

Reflection on today's lesson

- Comments
- Questions
- Next week we will reflect on the use of the 5 rules of confrontation and personal boundaries

Strong Girls program – week 6

Theme: Setting and defending boundaries

Aims:

- Understanding how your body reacts when your personal space boundary is breached
- Understanding your physical and verbal boundaries
- Using the 5 rules of confrontation to protect your boundary

Activities:

Any reflections from last session

Group discussion

Looking for boundaries

Participants will pair up. One person will stand at the opposite end of the room. The other person will walk toward them, looking for changes in their body to see when their personal space boundary is being reached.

The person who was walking reports back why they stopped – was there a shift in grounding, eye contact, facial expression, posture etc?

Yes/no pushing

Participants will find a partner. They will face their partner with palms touching. A pushes and shouts “yes” while B pushes and shouts “no”. Is your voice connected to your ground and centre?

Swap roles.

When is your voice more powerful – with yes or no?

Repeat the activity without physical contact. Can you keep grounded and centred?

Holding on

Person A lies/sits on the floor with a cushion. Person B tries to grab the cushion while A keeps a firm grip and using their voice to send a clear message that the cushion is in their possession. The cushion represents individuality and the identity we wish to keep.

Looking around a space and plotting where one will move with the eyes closed.

Put hands in front of your body and walk firmly but slowly. Use your courage to trust your feelings of where you are heading.

Repeat by thinking of a person who means a lot to you. Was there a difference?

Reflection on today's lesson

- Comments
- Questions
- Next week we will be discussing sexual violence and escaping from physical restraint

Strong Girls program – week 7

Theme: Sexuality and sexual violence

Aims:

- Developing an understanding of rape
- Discussion around strategies for managing sexually confronting situations
- Developing confidence to release your body from a bear hug

Activities:

Any reflections from last session

Group discussion

In love DVD

This DVD is important because most females and many males do not comprehend that sexual contact within a relationship could also be rape.

80% of perpetrators of sexual violence are known to their victims. Many of us grew up with comments such as “don’t go out after dark, don’t go with strange men, don’t act or dress provocatively”. But how about boys that you know and are friends with? Could they be a threat?

1 in 3 girls have already experienced sexual violence by the time they turn 16.

- Was it rape?
- What is rape in a legal sense?
- What expectations did Carol have when she invited Peter to come inside with her?
- Could Peter’s expectations have been different?
- Which rules are important in a relationship?
- Did Carol make it sufficiently clear that she did not want to go any further?
- Why might she struggle to indicate her boundaries?
- Why did Peter carry on?
- Did he know the difference between love and lust?
- What would Carol’s impression of sexuality be as a result of this experience?
- Does the girl share some responsibility in the whole incident?
- What are the consequences for the rest of the victim’s life?
- What should Carol do now?

Escaping from a bear hug

How do you think you would escape from this?

Heel kick – use the foot to move from the knee down the shinbone and onto the ankle. Point toes down while kicking and after kicking retract your foot and re-ground.

Hammer fist to the crotch – move your hip to one side so your arm is freer to move.

Elbow to the stomach and jaw

Push using your bum

Hit backwards with your elbows

Graze knuckles against hand

Bend back a finger

Use your voice with all of the moves as it will stop you freezing up.

Reflection on today's lesson

- Comments
- Questions
- Next week we will be discussing mental strength and mind over matter

Strong Girls program – week 8

Theme: Mental strength – believing in your power and self-confidence

Aims:

- Developing the power of self control
- Increasing mental strength through self belief

Activities:

Any reflections from last session

Group discussion

Making a Rock castle

Real communication means that you connect to the other person while retaining your own strength.

Working in pairs we practice keeping mental strength when being distracted by verbal taunting. The Rock stance means we focus on something that isn't moving

The same activity is then practiced in the Water stance where we keep eye contact with the distractor.

Unbendable arm

A and B face each other centered and grounded/ A places their fist with palm facing upwards onto B's shoulder. B places both hands on the inside of A's elbow and slowly builds up pressure.

Then A uses a positive affirmation – my arm is strong, it is unbendable.

What happens when we use positive thoughts?

Practice again by saying – “I am strong”. Then “I am weak”

The board

Breaking the board is symbolic of the power you have.

- Write a goal on the board
- Practice releasing energy through the hammer fist into a punch bag
- Hold the small punch bag between 2 hands. Make sure the little finger is on the side. It is crucial to build up your strength through your ground and centre and to punch through the cushion
- Get centre, centre connection with the fist. One person sits opposite the other with their hand upright and open, bracing around their wrist. The other person pushes their hammer fist into this open hand. Focus on feeling centre centre connection with your partner – a real strength in your belly
- Set up the board that you are going to break

- Recite “My fist is like a rock, My fist will break this board”
- Swing fist twice in slow motion.
- 3rd time add voice and break the board

Taking your own path

- 2 rows of people. They make a zip with their arms
- Using a strong basis (grounded and centred), they shout “I will take my own path” and they run with a loud voice down the street towards the trainer
- As the person runs through, the zip opens up

Reflection on today’s lesson

- Comments
- Questions
- Next week is our last class and we will be talking about caring for ourselves and others

Strong Girls program – week 9

Theme: Solidarity – a water quality

Aims:

- Developing trust in self and others
- Awareness of how to relax
- Awareness of care for self and others

Activities:

Any reflections from last session

Group discussion

Tai chi exercise

Breathe in – raise arms up

Breathe out – push arms towards centre and push hands away from the body

Breathe in – push hands to the centre

Breathe out – push hands to the ground

Rocking exercise

Participants pair up. Person A stands in the self-defence pose with open hands. B stands beside A and allows their body to fall into A. A gently pushes B back to the centre.

This is then done in groups of 3 or 4 people.

What did it feel like to be cared for?

Carrying each other

One person lies on the floor. The remainder of the group divides up across the person's body. They pick up the person from the floor and lift them to hip height. They gently rock the person back and forwards before returning them to the floor.

Remember to bend your knees before lifting and to keep your centre tight and back straight.

What did it feel like to be cared for?

Massage

In pairs, one person will bend from the hips and let their body and arms hang. The other will pat them on the back. The person receiving the massage will state whether they want more Rock or more Water.

Reverse roles.

Being proud

Others might often tell girls and women that they are doing well but this frequently does not correspond to their own feelings.

Participants will stand in a circle. Each takes a turn to step into the middle and state what they are proud of about themselves.

Was this hard or easy to do?

Review of the program

- Discussion re the most important thing learnt
- How can you use what you've learnt in the real world?
- Recommendations for future programs.