

A Healthy Look at Sexuality

An Introduction

A HEALTHY LOOK AT SEXUALITY

A Healthy Look at Sexuality is a 10-lesson comprehensive sexual health education curriculum developed for introductory high school health courses. This curriculum was primarily adapted from *Family Life and Sexual Health (F.L.A.S.H.)*, a comprehensive sexuality education curriculum developed by Public Health - Seattle & King County. *F.L.A.S.H.* has been adopted and widely used by school districts throughout Washington State, the U.S. and Canada. Additional information about F.L.A.S.H. and free downloadable lesson materials (some of which are cited and recommended throughout this curriculum) can be found at: www.kingcounty.gov/health/FLASH.

Additional activities have been adapted from the curricula *Streetwise to Sex-wise*, *Safer Choices Level 1*, and *Making Proud Choices*.

Lessons

Lesson plans in this curriculum are based on a 1-hour class period, and include student and family homework activities. Lesson titles in the 10-hour curriculum are:

1. Goals and Dreams
2. Learning to Love
3. Communication For Better Relationships
4. Abstinence
5. Reproductive System
6. Pregnancy and Hormonal Contraceptive Methods
7. Barrier and Other Contraceptive Methods
8. Sexually Transmitted Infections
9. HIV and Communication
10. Communication and Practice; Closure

Healthy Youth Act Compliance

A Healthy Look at Sexuality meets the requirements of the Washington State 2007 Healthy Youth Act in several ways, including:

1. All information is medically and scientifically accurate. The factual information is referenced from professional peer-reviewed publications or government sources (citations included throughout curriculum). Furthermore, *F.L.A.S.H.*, *Safer Choices Level 1*, and *Making Proud Choices* (curricula from which *A Healthy Look* was primarily adapted) were reviewed for accuracy by the WA State Dept. of Health (DOH) and received the highest possible score, indicating that all information and materials are acceptable as written.
***A Healthy Look at Sexuality* has not been separately reviewed by DOH as of Sept. 2008, so districts are encouraged to conduct their own review or submit it to DOH (contact Marla Russo at marla.russo@doh.wa.gov for guidance).
2. The curriculum meets the WA State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and DOH 2005 Guidelines for Sexual Health Information and Disease Prevention. *F.L.A.S.H.*, *Safer Choices Level 1*, and *Making Proud Choices* were reviewed in 2008 by OSPI's Sex Education Review Panel and found to be in compliance with the guidelines.

3. Stresses that abstinence from sexual activity is the only certain way to avoid pregnancy and to reduce the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV.
4. Provides information related to the prevention of pregnancy, HIV, and other STIs.
5. Addresses the health needs of all youth whether or not they are sexually active, including how to access services.
6. Promotes the development of intrapersonal and interpersonal skills including the communication, decision-making, assertiveness and refusal skills necessary to reduce health risks and choose healthy behaviors.
7. Encourages young people to develop and maintain healthy, respectful and meaningful relationships and avoid exploitative or manipulative ones.
8. Is respectful and inclusive of people with different races/ethnicities, cultural and religious backgrounds, and sexual orientations.
9. Encourages communication with parents/guardians and other trusted adults.
10. Creates a safe environment and recognizes and respects people with differing personal and family values.

More information about and resources for implementing the Healthy Youth Act and the OSPI Guidelines for Sexual Health Information and Disease can be found on OSPI's website at: <http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/healthfitness/HealthyYouthAct.aspx>

A Science-Based Approach to Teen Pregnancy Prevention¹

***A Healthy Look at Sexuality* employs a science-based approach to teen pregnancy and STI prevention (with technical assistance from the Center for Health Training) by:**

1. Using demographic, epidemiological, and social science research to identify the risk and protective factors of young people at risk for early pregnancy and/or STIs².
2. Using health behavior and health education theory to guide the selection of intervention activities.
3. Using a logic model to link risk and protective factors with program strategies and outcomes.
4. Selecting and adapting programs that have been shown by research to be effective in changing youth sexual risk taking behavior³.

Intended outcomes of the program include:

1. More perceived personal benefits of abstaining from sex
2. Greater motivation to avoid pregnancy, STIs, and HIV
3. Greater perceived susceptibility to pregnancy, STIs, and HIV
4. Greater self-efficacy to refuse sex or to use condoms or other forms of contraception correctly
5. Greater parent-child communication about sexuality

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2007). *Adolescent Reproductive Health: Promoting Science-based Approaches*. <http://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/AdolescentReproHealth/DefineScienceApproach.htm>

² Kirby, D. and Lepore, G. (2007). *Sexual Risk and Protective Factors: Factors affecting teen sexual behavior, pregnancy, childbearing and sexually transmitted disease*. Santa Cruz, CA: ETR Associates.

³ Kirby, D. (2007). *Emerging Answers 2007: Research Findings on Programs to Reduce Teen Pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Diseases*. Washington, DC: National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy.

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