

AGE/Developmentally APPROPRIATE, COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION TOPIC GUIDELINES

Oregon Department of Education
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The purpose of the document is to provide educators, parents, community members, health providers and school districts guidelines for age-developmentally appropriate topics for comprehensive sexuality education, as required by law, for grades K-12. The topics listed below are the result of developmental research and are suggestions to guide your school district in providing an effective comprehensive sexuality education curriculum to have a positive impact on sexual health. Oregon Revised Statute 336.455 states that human sexuality education courses "...shall enhance student's understanding of sexuality as a normal and healthy aspect of human development." ORS 336.455 further states that course instruction shall:

- Be required at elementary and secondary grade levels;
- Be age-appropriate;
- Be comprehensive;
- Be an integral part of the health education curriculum;
- Promote abstinence, but not to the exclusion of material and instruction on contraceptive and disease reduction measures. Also, not devaluing or ignoring those young people who have had or are having sexual intercourse;
- Discusses the characteristics of the emotional, physical and psychological aspects of a healthy relationship and a discussion about the benefits of delaying pregnancy beyond the adolescent years as a means to better ensure a healthy future for parents and their children;
- Include information regarding the efficacy of contraceptives in preventing HIV/STIs and unintended pregnancy;
- Advise students of the laws pertaining to their financial responsibilities for their children;
- Advise students of ORS 163.435 and 163.445 pertaining to persons 18 years or older having sexual relations with persons younger than 18 years of age;
- Teach that no form of sexual expression is acceptable when it physically or emotionally harms oneself or others;
- Validate honesty, dignity, and respect for oneself and others;
- Teach effective communication and refusal skills;
- Encourage family communication.

Oregon law requires school districts to use a "comprehensive" approach for sexuality education, defined as:

- **Comprehensive** (also called "Abstinence-based")—emphasizes that abstinence is the only 100% effective way to prevent HIV/STI's and unintended pregnancy, but not to the exclusion of medically accurate, age-appropriate information and instruction about condom use and other forms of contraception.

The topics below are a summary of recommendations made by the Sexuality Instruction and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS); Advocates for Youth; Guttmacher Institute;

The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation; Douglas Kirby, Ph.D. (*No Easy Answers* and *Emerging Answers*); Phi Delta Kappa; Center for Disease Control and Prevention-Division of Adolescent School Health; the Oregon Sexuality Materials Review Panel; and align with ORS 336.455, OAR 581-022-1440 and the Oregon Health Education Standards.

A. Grades K-3:

1. Uncomfortable/inappropriate, and appropriate touch;
2. Understanding body parts, proper anatomical names, stages in basic growth process;
3. Communicable/non-communicable diseases, the concept;
4. Behaviors that reduce the spread of communicable diseases (washing hands, not sharing eating utensils, using Kleenex);
5. Accepting of their uniqueness and a positive regard for themselves and others;
6. Recognize risk behaviors (sharing body fluids) and methods of prevention;
7. Unsafe objects (needles, broken glass, drug paraphernalia);
8. Refusal skills, role playing;
9. Personal hygiene;
10. Emotional development;
11. Discussion of diverse family structures.

B. Grades 4-5:

1. Puberty – physical and emotional changes;
2. Biological explanation of the anatomy and physiology for reproduction, for HIV and infectious diseases;
3. Infection prevention (hand washing, avoiding body fluids, needles, etc.);
4. Unsafe objects (needles, syringes, etc.);
5. Communication skills (assertiveness and listening), role playing;
6. Communicable/non-communicable diseases;
7. HIV/STI risk, personal plan of prevention;
8. Developing healthy attitudes about oneself and others;
9. Respect for all genders and freedom of gender expression;
 - a. Identify teasing, including sexual harassment based on gender non-conformity
10. Realistic body image;
11. Media influences;
12. Personal hygiene
13. Sexual expression is a healthy element of most adult's lives;
14. Discussion of different types of relationships (i.e. friendship, family, romantic);
15. Discussion of diverse family structures.

C. Grades 6-8:

1. Puberty and maturation;
2. Positive body image and healthy identity;
3. Healthy dating relationships;

4. How to access valid, accurate information and support to make positive choices and decisions regarding their sexual health;
5. Not having sexual intercourse is the safest and most effective way to prevent STIs and unintended pregnancies;
6. Teenagers need to discuss sexual limits with their partners and people need to respect the sexual limits set by their partners;
7. There are many ways to express love, attraction and connection to a partner. Sexual intercourse or other sexual activities are just one way;
8. There are many ways to give and receive romantic attention and not have sexual intercourse or engage in sexual activity that can put you or your partner at risk;
9. Teenagers need to talk to their parent(s) or other trusted adult(s) before they engage in sexual intercourse;
10. Skills-based instruction on effective use of contraceptive and other disease prevention methods;
11. The majority of school-aged youth are not having sexual intercourse;
12. Critically analyzing media influence and its effects on personal decision making;
13. Begin discussion of masculinity/femininity, gender identity and sexual orientation;
14. Reproductive health, conception, personal hygiene;
15. Healthy vs. unhealthy relationships, responsibility and respect for oneself and others, gender respect;
16. Effectively dealing with peer pressure, communication and asserting personal boundaries;
17. Identify teasing, including sexual harassment and harassment based on gender non-conformity;
18. HIV/STIs and the immune system, symptoms, effects, testing, and self examination;
19. Define vaginal, oral and anal sexual intercourse;
20. Chain of infection;
21. Skills for making positive sexual health decisions and choices;
22. Family structures and dynamics;
23. The effects of alcohol and drug use on decision making;
24. Abstinence is to be stressed, but not to the exclusion of other methods, including condoms, for preventing unintended pregnancy, HIV infection, sexually transmitted diseases, and hepatitis B/C
25. Advise students of the laws pertaining to financial responsibility for their children.

D. Grades 9-12:

1. Recognizing the positive impact of healthy choices, made freely, which fit our personal beliefs and boundaries;
2. How to access valid, accurate information and support to make positive decisions about their sexual health;
3. There are many ways to express love, attraction and connection. Sexual intercourse or other sexual activities are just one way;
4. Accessing contraceptive and disease prevention methods, resources and community services, adoption and abortion;
5. Review of HIV/STI's symptoms, effects, testing, self examination;

6. HIV stigma and stereotypes including the connection with homophobia;
7. Effectively instill the skills needed to identify and deal with peer pressure;
8. Skills-based instruction in communication, asserting one's boundaries, and respecting other's boundaries;
9. Research and scientific developments regarding sexual health;
10. Male and female anatomy and variation (intersex, transgender), and reproduction;
11. Masculinity/femininity, gender identity and sexual orientation;
12. Promoting gender respect, respect for oneself and others and individual differences;
13. Family structures and dynamics (including non-traditional families);
14. Critically analyzing media influence, peer and parental influence on sexuality;
15. Skills-based instruction on effective use of contraceptives and other disease prevention methods:
16. The effects of alcohol and drugs with regards to responsible sexual decision making;
17. Vaginal, oral, and anal sexual intercourse;
18. The emotional, physical and psychological aspects of a healthy relationship and a discussion about the benefits of delaying pregnancy beyond the adolescent years as a means to better ensure a healthy future for parents and their children;
19. Healthy dating relationships;
20. Abstinence is to be stressed, but not to the exclusion of other methods, including condoms, for preventing unintended pregnancy, HIV infection, sexually transmitted diseases, and hepatitis B/C
21. Advise students of the laws pertaining to financial responsibility for their children.

Other themes that need to be included in an effective comprehensive sexuality education program:

- Human sexuality decisions can impact our health;
- HIV/STI's and unintended pregnancies are public health issues.
- Human sexuality education is an important component of an individual's mental, social and psychological well being;
- Human sexuality education is about age/developmentally-appropriate, accurate knowledge and skills that, when addressed in a safe and healthy environment, can help our young people grow into responsible community members.

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