

Comprehensive Sexual Health Education Instructional Materials Review 2024

Special Needs Signature Toolbox

Year Published/Revised: 2023

Publisher: SexEd Mart

Website: sexedmart.com

Full or Supplemental: Supplemental

Grade Level: 7 - 12

Student Population: SPED

Duration/Number of Lessons: 12 Lessons for Students and 13 lesson resources for teachers.

Format and Features: Hard copies, with some materials available as a downloadable resources.

Materials Provide Support for online or in-person learning: Intended for in-person learning

Available in Multiple Languages: No

Evidence-based/informed: Not evident

National Standards Alignment: Not evident

Consistent with WA Health Education Standards? Yes

Consistent with Comprehensive Sexual Health Education Law? With significant modification

Consistent with AIDS Omnibus Act? Yes

Inclusive Materials/Strategies: No

Bias-Free Materials: No



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PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Primary Subject Areas and Topics Covered:

- ☒Anatomy and Physiology, Reproduction, and Pregnancy (Pregnancy for Grade 6+)
- ☒Growth and Development/Puberty
- ☐Self-Identity (gender stereotypes, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc.)
- ☐Prevention (general):
 - ☒HIV/AIDS Prevention
 - ☐Pregnancy Prevention
 - ☐STD Prevention
 - ☐Health Care and Prevention Resources
- ☒Healthy Relationships (general):
 - ☒Affirmative Consent
 - ☐Bystander Training
 - ☐Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Communication Skills for Healthy Relationships
 - ☒The development of meaningful relationships and avoidance of exploitative relationships
 - ☐Understanding the influences of family, peers, community, and the media throughout life on healthy sexual relationships

Reviewer Comments:

Reviewer 353

The supplemental materials provide information on a variety of topics for students. It seemed like some of the activities were all-class based/group discussions, which I liked. It seems like the activities would give students the opportunities to reflect on the information together. However, in terms of shortcomings, I did not see information about pregnancy or STI prevention. In addition, I didn't see examples or discussions about people with diverse identities. Some of the photos seemed outdated and would be more engaging if they were updated.

Reviewer 355

Although this tool kit is accessible, easy to use, and comes with clear instructions for all the activities, I do not recommend it. The graphics and clip art throughout the toolkit need to be updated. The toolkit unnecessarily separates some lessons by binary genders, including the lessons on self touch and lessons on using the bathroom. For the "appropriate self-touch rules", the card deck instructs "girls" to make sure they are quiet when masturbating, but this instruction is not included in the "boy" card deck, which feels problematic. Overall the consent card deck is fine, but it does include a card about someone not being able to give consent if they cannot speak, which is ableist and implies that people who are nonverbal, and some deaf people, cannot give consent. The body positivity game lists "may start to watch what they eat or 'diet' under changes

during puberty, and may be sensitive about their weight", which is problematic and perpetuates harmful health behaviors. The "Baby steps game" did not have great descriptions of anatomy, conception, pregnancy, and birth. The menstrual hygiene deck needs to be updated, and could be improved by including other hygiene products aside from pads. Some of the card decks seem to instill shame around bodily functions. Although this toolkit works to be as accessible as possible, I do not recommend it.

Reviewer 358

This set of activities does not appear to have been developed with special education (SPED) and disability inclusion in mind, but rather is a collection of activities for a general ed classroom that the creators thought might work for SPED students. While there is some good content, the activities are generally poorly designed and not an appropriate fit for a SPED audience. Activities often lack information or guidance for teachers on how to facilitate these discussions appropriately with students with disabilities or how to address complex and nuanced topics. Many activities won't be inclusive or accessible for many SPED students in grades 4-8, because they require reading, movement or independent group work.

Beyond a general lack of appropriateness for SPED students, the content is not inclusive of the range of identities present in classrooms and families: Bodies shown are almost all white, all bodies shown are thin, the doctors shown are all white men, and the hygiene lesson lacks culturally responsiveness and inclusivity. A few activities normalize the expectation of compliance with non-consensual behaviors from authority figures rather than centering consent and bodily autonomy. That's very problematic for this age group and for SPED, where sexual abuse rates are disproportionately high. The activity about family structures is abstract and only engages students by asking them to match the definition of a family type with a family type label. That won't achieve the aims of the activity: to help students understand and value the range of families that exist. To achieve that learning objective, a teacher would need to plan for how to explain, discuss and normalize the range of families that exist (blended families, divorced families, same-sex vs different sex parents, etc.).

Reviewer 360

There are a great variety of learning activities included in this Special Needs/Young Child Tool Kit from SexEdMart.com.

The activities are simple, clear and easy to implement. Many activities include printouts to post categories around the classroom and then have students decide where different

actions, behaviors, etc. on printed cards should be placed.

Some of the topics covered are: Reproductive Anatomy, Conception & Pregnancy, Understanding Body Language and Facial Expression, Body Positivity, Appropriate Ways to Communicate Feelings, Private versus Public behaviors, Hygiene, Differing Family Groupings, Healthy versus Unhealthy Relationship, Personal Space & Boundary Communication, Internet Safety, Affirmative Consent and Developing Relationship/Communication Skills.

Some of the illustrations in some of the activities may be "too much, too soon" for some audiences. There are a variety of activities to choose from that may be appropriate for Elementary, Middle School or High School students.

Reviewer 363

In the context of a comprehensive sex education curriculum, these supplemental lessons could be valuable additions for students with special needs, covering topics such as appropriate self-touch, hygiene, bathroom etiquette and consent. There are some things to note:

The quality of included visuals varies, mostly consisting of clip art. While some attempt at diversity is made, it's inconsistent. There are no obvious visual or written references to people living with disabilities.

Multimedia activities are limited, primarily analyzing music videos from white artists, some with broken links. Diversifying multimedia sources could enhance engagement and representation.

While specific lessons address gender expression/stereotypes, gender identity, and diverse families, some materials inadvertently reinforce stereotypes and use outdated language and assumptions that may not be accurate. Discussion about sexual orientation is lacking.

There's a notable absence of information on accessing healthcare resources.

While HIV and HPV are covered, comprehensive STI prevention is lacking.

Activities are presented in a simple format suitable for group settings but many lack opportunities for personal goal setting and decision-making practice.

Discussion guides accompany many activities but may not clearly indicate the lesson's purpose or takeaway message.

Reviewer 370

This supplemental material included an 'Educators Toolbox' with 11 activities that had printable visual cards and games to reinforce concepts pertaining to sexual health. Nearly all of these activities were great. They proved to be an excellent opportunity for extending student learning. However, there were a few activities that did seem to border on not being "age appropriate" if the curriculum is being advertised as a K-3 curriculum (*editor note: toolbox is not advertised as a K-3 resource*).

Further, there were 12 other social stories that addressed other areas of learning. These social stories were also excellent opportunities for extending learning on these topics. They used visuals and appropriately challenging verbal explanations. However, again, there were a few that seemed to exhibit bias and may not have been appropriate for our youngest students. I imagine this can be differentiated by teachers based on their needs.

These tools would have been amazing to have access to when I was teaching and I could have used them many times while working with students with IDD.

Reviewer 371

In the Private vs Public cards, it shows things that should be done in private and list "public nudity" teachers should be prepared to discuss how something is both private and public. No support or explanation is shared for this tool.

Rules for consent cards are exclusive and dismissive of individuals who do not use words for communication. Card says, "a person who cannot speak cannot consent".

Lower grade tools state for low grades or students with developmental disabilities. Seems to box students with disabilities as getting a lower level of instruction.

Overall, many of the hand outs and activities do well on staying within grade level needs and assist with learning the objectives. Biggest concern is the focus on verbal skills which will not assist individuals who use augmented devices, ASL or other means to communicate beyond words.

Med/Sci Reviewer 367

This curriculum is outdated and provides no references to gender identity, nor does it teach about gender versus biological sex. Research shows that sex education for a

special education audience can and should be inclusive. Specific examples of the lack of up-to-date inclusive information are seen in the anatomy and reproduction lesson activity, "Baby Steps" where descriptions of "female eggs" and "male bodies start to make sperm" are provided. This language is not aligned with inclusive sex education. In the lesson on consent it reads, "a person who cannot speak, can't give consent" which excludes the non-verbal students from feeling any bodily autonomy or even being seen or heard in a lesson such as this. This is not reflective of inclusive sex education for the disability community. The lesson on Universal Emotions is very strong and I think could be very helpful for some members of this population. I don't know where this content comes from, I see no citations or program name attached to this curriculum.

Med/Sci Reviewer 368

No comments provided.

OSPI Comments

This supplemental material is not comprehensive enough to meet all requirements for comprehensive sexual health education but could be used with significant modification to supplement other instruction. Notable concerns are lack of inclusivity and examples of bias, which would need to be addressed before using in public schools in Washington.