CVUSD's Sexual Health Curriculum 2023-24

A Message from Tony Thurmond, CA State Superintendent of Public Education

As evidenced by data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Youth Risk Behavior Survey, the <u>California Healthy Youth Act</u> is succeeding in providing students with the knowledge and skills to protect their sexual and reproductive health from unintended pregnancy, HIV, and other STIs. According to the most recently published data from 2019, California high school students report significantly lower rates of sexual activity than high school students nationally, and rates have consistently decreased since implementation of the California Healthy Youth Act in 2016.

California has the lowest rate of sexual activity for all 50 states. Further, for California high school students who affirmatively report being sexually active, their rates of contraceptive use have also consistently increased since the passage of the California Healthy Youth Act. California high school students also show an increase in contraceptive use well above the national average.

California's Healthy Youth Act (CHYA) requires comprehensive sexual health education at least once in middle school and once in high school. Any curriculum or program meeting this requirement, follows all California Education Codes, and includes the explicit goals of:

- preventing teenage pregnancy
- preventing sexually transmitted infections, as well as
- assisting students in developing interpersonal skills, responsible behavior, and setting goals.

CVUSD's Sexual Health curriculum was designed to meet these three goals, follow California Ed Code, and meet the requirements of the California Healthy Youth Act (CHYA). Starting in August 2023, and working through January 2024, CVUSD facilitated a

curriculum design process led by a committee consisting of parents, educators, and staff committed to the district's mission of personalized education, with programs that develop students into happy kids, in healthy relationships, on a path to gainful employment. The resulting curriculum is science-based, rooted in research, aligned with the CA state health standards for 7th and 8th grade, as well as with the requirements outlined in California's Healthy Youth Act (CHYA)

The purpose of this curriculum is <u>not</u> to replace parental instruction or cultural values/expectations about sexual relationships and behavior, but rather to complement these values and expectations with the <u>knowledge and skills needed to choose healthy relationships and self-protective behaviors</u>.

We understand that a brief introduction to sexual health, presented once in middle school, is not by itself enough to instill the knowledge, attitudes, or skills for a lifetime of healthy relationships and responsible relationship choices. However, in combination with the support of parents/guardians, other trusted adults, and access to valid health information and resources, we hope this curriculum will contribute to each student's understanding of this important health topic.

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The Design Process: How We Got Here

In the spring of 2023, our governing board tasked Educational Services with developing a CVUSD sexual health curriculum that complied with state law and the California Healthy Youth Act (CHYA), incorporating direct input from staff and parents, given our limited options for curriculum at the time. To aid in this effort, funding was allocated to engage a third-party consultant to facilitate this build. Collaboration with CVUSD staff and families was strongly emphasized to ensure that community voices were integrated alongside CHYA guidelines. To achieve this, a dedicated working committee was formed, consisting of 7th and 8th grade science teachers (traditionally the instructors of sexual health curriculums), and parents of students in these grades. Over the span of 12 meetings from September to February, this team meticulously designed and reviewed 12 lessons to address the needs of our students while fulfilling CHYA requirements.

With the curriculum finalized for implementation in May and June of 2024, all Cajon Valley families were given a 10-day preview period to review the materials. This provided an opportunity for feedback, which would assist the team in refining the curriculum in subsequent years. By creating our own curriculum, Cajon Valley now offers complete transparency to all 7th and 8th grade families, enabling them to review and opt out of each of the 12 lessons as desired. This approach provides significantly greater transparency compared to previous years, where copyright restrictions from publishers hindered accessibility.

Teacher Training and Expectations

Prior to providing instruction, 7th and 8th grade CVUSD science teachers will participate in training sessions outlining the curriculum's content, structure and instructional practices. During these professional development sessions, we will emphasize the goal that all instruction, including any answers to questions from students that educators provide will be aligned to the provided curriculum. Teachers will not be sharing personal opinions about the topics contained in this curriculum. Teachers are instructed to direct questions that go beyond the curriculum away from the classroom, with directions to students to talk to a "parent/guardian or other trusted adult."

Curriculum Content

The curriculum includes slides for classroom instruction, a student workbook (with options for either printed or digital pages), and a teacher guide for instruction. Instructional features include:

- Science- and Research-based content
- Alignment to CA Health Standards for 7th and 8th Grade
- Alignment to CHYA goals and requirements
- Essential Questions and Outcomes to frame instruction and learning
- Student work pages to support learning
- At-Home connections for students to share learning and questions with their parent/guardian or other trusted adult

The curriculum addresses the following 12 topics:

1	Setting the Right Environment	Establishing shared agreements for learning about sexual health
2	Healthy Relationships	Understanding how to have safe, respectful, and responsible relationships now and in the future
3	Consent and Boundaries	Understanding how consent and boundaries are an important part of healthy relationships
4	Changing Bodies and Relationships	Knowing the physical, emotional, and social changes during adolescence & puberty
5	The Parts of the Human Reproductive System	Understanding the anatomy of the human reproductive system
6	How the Reproductive System Works	Understanding how all the parts of the system work together
7	Decision-Making, Choices, and Body Image	Understanding how to be positive and informed about ourselves and others
8	Pregnancy	Understanding the role of pregnancy in human reproduction
9	Preventing an Unplanned Pregnancy	Understanding how to prevent an unplanned pregnancy and to make healthy choices
10	Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)	Understanding sexually transmitted infections and how they are spread
11	Preventing STIs	Understanding how to make healthy choices to prevent STIs
12	Goal Setting	Making plans for now and for your future

Parents/Guardians' Considerations and Options

California law respects and protects parent/guardians' right to opt out of sexual health curriculums. CVUSD is supporting this by providing parents/guardians of 7th and 8th grade students a simple process to make choices regarding your child's participation in our upcoming sexual health curriculum. Please take a moment to understand the process:

- 1. By default, all 7th and 8th-grade students are considered enrolled in the sexual health curriculum.
- 2. If you want your child to attend all sexual health lessons, no action is needed; they will automatically be enrolled.
- 3. To opt out of specific lessons or the entire curriculum, please complete this <u>opt-out</u> <u>form</u>. Carefully review the options and indicate which lessons you <u>do not</u> want your child to participate in.
- 4. We will plan alternative assignments for students who opt out, provided in a separate class or space.
- 5. You will receive a copy of your choices in a follow-up email for your records.

For those wishing to opt out, the form needs to be completed by May 10, 2024. If you have any questions or need specific dates for instruction, please contact your child's science teacher. You can review the entire curriculum at (insert link). It should be noted that this is the first iteration of this curriculum and you will have opportunities in subsequent school years to provide feedback for future versions.

Medical Information

Due to the health focus of this curriculum, each lesson within the curriculum directs students to connect with a parent/guardian or other trusted adult, and to consult 211 San Diego for additional information and resources for healthcare, seeking medical advice, and/or locating sexual health resources in San Diego County. Attention to evaluating sources and identifying trusted adults in a student's network is also addressed in this curriculum.

At Home Connection

If you choose to have your child be enrolled in the Sexual Health curriculum, you will find that each lesson has an "At Home Connection" activity which provides opportunities for students to share what they are learning with their parent/guardian or other trusted adult at home. We know that, in general, students at this age are very curious and may have many tangential questions as they learn about themselves and their health. Keeping this in mind, the curriculum was designed to encourage students to discuss personal beliefs, opinions, and values as they pertain to the content with a parent/guardian or other trusted adult rather than with educators. Furthermore, students are also invited to direct any additional questions of a personal nature or any questions that are outside of the curriculum scope to their parent/guardian or trusted adult.

We recommend that you preview lessons prior to their usage in the classroom so that you can be prepared to have conversations with your child around the "At Home Connection" activities.

During the design process, the curriculum design committee felt that it was very important for families to have these conversations early on with their children with the hope of making things easier as their child matures to revisit those conversations. For the parents and educators on the committee, this has been a labor of love, not only since many who served on it have children who attend schools in the CVUSD district, but also because the committee members felt it was essential to promote positive, proactive communication between parents/guardians and their children.

Teacher Considerations

It is highly recommended that you review each lesson prior to teaching it in your classroom to familiarize yourself with the content and prepare to utilize it in your classroom with your specific group of students. The curriculum review workgroup worked diligently over the better part of a year to ensure that each component was well-sourced, developmentally appropriate and engaging for students. Any questions regarding the instructional considerations for this curriculum should be directed to the Assistant Superintendent of Education Services, Karen Minshew in CVUSD (minshew@cajonvalley.net).

Lesson Structure and Instructional Practices

Teacher notes

Teacher notes are provided for each lesson, with information provided for each section of the lesson to provide context and set the purpose. The notes are designed to help you anticipate the best way to navigate each section of the lesson with your student to ensure that they are engaged and contributing to a positive learning environment for all.

A brief overview of each section, including connections to the student activities, are included in the teacher notes. Suggestions for best practices are included for the teacher to ensure that the content is conveyed as successfully as possible in a classroom setting, as well as additional content details to help answer student follow-up questions.

Classroom Agreements

Classroom agreements are an integral part of setting high expectations for learning as well as promoting a sense of student ownership over their role in creating respectful, inclusive, and safe environments. Classroom agreements are intended to be co-created with students, rather than simply handed out as directives from the teacher. These classroom agreements can be referred to at the beginning of each subsequent lesson to help students practice being mature and responsible while discussing topics that can be sensitive.

Classroom agreements are different from classroom rules because we are inviting students to share what they think will contribute to positive discussions and productive activities. When classroom agreements are created as a learning community, research has demonstrated that students are much more likely to adhere to them and encourage their peers to remember the agreements. A best practice is to post the classroom agreements in a highly visible place in your classroom/online. You may also want to invite students to share suggestions for any revisions or new agreements as the learning progresses.

The teacher is also part of the learning community and so when we invite students to create agreements for a positive learning environment, we want to be sure also to share what we are committed to as educators facilitating that environment. Doing this at the outset of each lesson will also help establish the content as coming from an academic, scientific approach and set the tone accordingly.

Mandated Reporting

The teaching agreements include information to be shared with students about mandated reporting. All educators working in the state of California are considered to be mandated reporters. Unfortunately, as many of us are already well aware, it is highly possible that during the course of the school year students may report abuse or neglect to you or another trusted adult at school.

It is also a likelihood that this could occur when teaching the Sexual Health curriculum, especially when teaching lessons around healthy relationships, consent, and boundaries. To learn more about your role as a mandated reporter, please visit the CA State Department of Education's website.

Below is an example of the Teaching Agreements:

In Our Sexual Health Lessons, it's important to know that...

- I am a mandated reporter, which means I'm required to report suspected abuse or neglect.
- We will be examining sexual health through research, evidence, and scientific facts.
- We will be learning and using accurate scientific terms for systems, processes, and anatomy which come directly from the California Health Standards for 7th and 8th grade.
- We will not be discussing our personal values or opinions about any of the topics.
- We will ensure a safe environment that is inclusive for all students.
- We will focus on questions that relate to the science we are learning and encourage you to talk to your parent/guardian or other trusted adult at home about your values and opinions when it comes to making choices.

Introductory Activity

Most lessons start with an introductory activity to get students engaged and thinking about the theme of the lesson. The activity could be a pair share, art activity, icebreaker, brainstorm, journaling prompt, or some other similar activity to prepare students for learning. These activities serve to lower students' affective filters and build community prior to learning about topics that may be more daunting to some. The activities also serve to promote a positive learning environment where students can feel safe to ask questions and learn new ideas.

Student Work-Pages

Student work pages are designed as an engagement strategy and to increase comprehension and retention of the content which leans heavily on scientific information. The student work pages are interspersed with periods of direct instruction to create opportunities for student-centered learning whenever possible. Students can also refer to their work pages when completing their exit slip and when engaging in the At Home connection activities with their parent/guardian or trusted adult.

Exit Slip

Exit slips provide an informal opportunity to assess how well your students have met the learning intentions outlined at the beginning of each lesson. Exit slips can also be used to acknowledge student participation and/or as a review tool to be referred to throughout the curriculum.

At-Home Connection

Each lesson has an "At Home Connection" which provides opportunities for students to share what they are learning with their parent/guardian or trusted adult at home. The purpose of these activities is to strengthen family communication around Sexual Health topics with the hope of establishing a foundation for such conversations to continue as the child matures. Many parents have shared that they find these conversations challenging to have, especially when their child is in middle school, and the At Home Connection may give them a place to start if they wish.

Additionally the curriculum was designed to honor the important role a parent/guardian can play in a child's development, not only as a caregiver, but as an influential mentor and

advisor. The At Home Connection activities encourage students to discuss personal beliefs, opinions, and values as they pertain to the content with them. The activities include ideas for parents/guardians to have open dialogue with their child about decision making and future choices related to their sexual health and overall well being. Furthermore, students are also invited to direct any additional questions of a personal nature that are outside of the curriculum scope to their parent/guardian or trusted adult.

Scope and Sequence and the California Health Standards

Standard 1: Essential Concepts

	Setting the Right Environment	Health Relationships	Consent and Boundaries	Changing Bodies and Relationships	The Parts of the Human Reproductive System	How the Reproductive System Works	Decision-Making, Choices, and Body Image	Pregnancy	Preventing Pregnancy	STIs	Preventing STIs	Goal Setting
						Standard 1: Ess	sential Concepts					
1.1 Explain physical, social, and emotional changes associated with adolescence.												
1.2 Summarize the human reproduction cycle.												
Suplain the effectiveness of abstinence in preventing HIV, other STDs, and unintended pregnancy												
1.4 Explain how conception occurs, the stages of pregnancy, and the responsibilities associated with parenting												
Explain the effectiveness of FDA-approved condoms and other contraceptives in preventing HIV, other STDs, and unintended pregnancy												
1.6 Identify the short- and long-term effects of HIV, AIDS, and other STDs												
1.7 Identify ways to prevent or reduce the risk of contracting HIV, AIDS, and other STDs.												
Recognize that there are individual differences in growth and development, physical appearance, gender roles, and sexual orientation.												
1.9 Explain why individuals have the right to refuse sexual contact												
1.10 Describe the emotional, psychological, and physical consequences of rape and sexual assault.												
1.11 Explain why rape and sexual assault should be reported to authorities and trusted adults.												
1.12 Describe responsible prenatal and child care, including California's Safely Surrendered Baby Law.												
1.13 Evaluate the benefits to mother, father, and child when teenagers wait until adulthood to become parents.												

Standard 2: Analyzing Influences

Standard 3: Accessing Valid Information

Standard 4: Interpersonal Communication

	Setting the Right Environment	Health Relationships	Consent and Boundaries	Changing Bodies and Relationships	The Parts of the Human Reproductive System	How the Reproductive System Works	Decision-Making, Choices, and Body Image	Pregnancy	Preventing Pregnancy	STIs	Preventing STIs	Goal Setting
						Standard 2: Ana	lyzing Influences					
Analyze how internal and external influences affect growth and development, relationships, and sexual behavior.												
Evaluate how culture, media, and other people influence our perceptions of body image, gender roles, sexuality, attractiveness, relationships, and sexual orientation												
Analyze the influence of alcohol and other drugs on sexual behaviors.												
2.4 Describe situations that could lead to pressure for sexual activity and to the risk of contracting HIV and other STDs.												
2.5 Recognize that there are individual, family, and cultural differences in relationships												
Explain how sexual exploitation can occur through the Internet.												
						Standard 3: Accessi	ng Valid Information	1				
didentify trusted adults in one's family, school, and community for advice and counseling regarding reproductive and sexual health.	×											х
3.2 Locate medically and scientifically accurate sources of information on reproductive health.												х
3.3 Identify health care providers for reproductive and sexual health services												
					s	tandard 4: Interpers	onal Communication	n				
Practice effective communication skills with parents, guardians, health care providers, or other trusted adults by discussing issues related to reproductive and sexual health	х	×	х	×	Х	×	×	×	×	×	×	х
4.2 Use effective verbal and nonverbal communication skills to prevent sexual involvement, HIV, other STDs, and unintended pregnancy		×	×						×		×	
4.3 Use healthy and respectful ways to express friendship, attraction, and affection		×	х				×					
4.4 Analyze the benefits of respecting individual differences in growth and development, physical appearance, gender roles, and sexual orientation.1		×		×			×					
Demonstrate how to ask for help from parents, other trusted adults, or friends when pressured to participate in sexual behavior.		×					×		×		х	

Standard 5: Decision Making

Standard 6: Goal Setting

Standard 7: Practicing Health-Enhancing Behaviors

Standard 8: Health Promotion

					The Parts of the							
	Setting the Right Environment	Health Relationships	Consent and Boundaries	Changing Bodies and Relationships	Human Reproductive System	How the Reproductive System Works	Decision-Making, Choices, and Body Image	Pregnancy	Preventing Pregnancy	STIs	Preventing STIs	Goal Setting
						Standard 5: D	ecision Making					
5.1 Analyze why abstinence is the most effective method for the prevention of HIV, STDs, and pregnancy.												
5.2 Use a decision-making process to examine the characteristics of healthy relationships.												
5.3 Use a decision-making process to evaluate individual differences in growth and development, physical appearance, gender roles, and sexual orientation.												
5.4 Analyze the responsibilities and privileges of becoming a young adult.												
5.5 Identify how good health practices in adolescence affect lifelong health and the health of future children												
5.6 Explain the immediate physical, social, and emotional risks and consequences associated with sexual activity												
5.7 Use a decision-making process to evaluate the value of using FDA-approved condoms for pregnancy and STD prevention												
						Standard 6:	Goal Setting					
6.1 Develop a plan to avoid HIV, AIDS, other STDs, and pregnancy												
6.2 Describe how HIV, AIDS, other STDs, or pregnancy could impact life goals												
					Standa	ard 7: Practicing He	alth-Enhancing Beh	aviors				
7.1 Describe strategies for refusing unwanted sexual activity												
7.2 Demonstrate the ability to anticipate and minimize exposure to situations that pose a risk to sexual health												
7.3 Describe personal actions that can protect reproductive and sexual health												
						Standard 8: He	ealth Promotion					
 8.1 Support and encourage safe, respectful, and responsible relationships. 												
8.2 Promote respect for and dignity of persons living with HIV or AIDS.												

CVUSD Sexual Health Lessons

<u>Curriculum Introduction and Overview</u>

Lessons for 2023/24

7th and 8th Grade

Only 8th Grade

1. Setting the Right Environment	2. Healthy Relationships	3. Consent and Boundaries
Slides Student Teacher Guide	Slides Student Teacher Guide	Slides Student Teacher Guide
4. Changing Bodies and Relationships	5. The Parts of the Human Reproductive System	6. How the Reproductive System Works
Slides Student Teacher Guide	Slides Student Teacher Guide	Slides Student Teacher Guide
7 Decision Making Chaices	8 Prognancy	9. Preventing an Unplanned
7. Decision-Making, Choices, and Body Image	8. Pregnancy	Pregnancy
·	Slides Student Teacher Guide	j i
and Body Image Slides Student	Slides Student	Pregnancy Slides Student