



# Sexual Health Education Instructional Materials Review

## Curriculum Title: Care For Kids

Year Published: 1996

Publisher: Prevent Child Abuse - Vermont

Website: <https://www.pcavt.org/healthy-relationships-project>

Full or Supplemental: Supplemental

Grade Level: Pre-K (Care for Kids), Elementary (We Care Elementary), Middle School (SAFE-T)

Student Population: General

Duration/Number of Lessons: 6 lessons per grade level

Format and Features: Training manuals, CDs, posters, books

Evidence-based/informed: Not evident

National Standards Alignment: Not evident

Healthy Youth Act Compliance: Yes

AIDS Omnibus Act Compliance: N/A

Bias Free Materials: Yes, with some modification

### Primary Topical Areas (Check all that apply)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abortion                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Identity/Orientation           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abstinence                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Online Safety                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access to Services               | <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy & Reproduction       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anatomy and Physiology           | <input type="checkbox"/> Puberty/Adolescent Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication/Decision-making    | <input type="checkbox"/> Refusal Skills                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Condom Use                       | <input type="checkbox"/> STD Prevention                 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent               | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contraception                    |   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Healthy relationships |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HIV Prevention                   |   |

## Reviewer Comments:

### Reviewer 103

Care for Kids (K-2nd grade) & We Care Elementary (3rd-6th grade) are comprehensive child sexual abuse curricula which aim to prevent/reduce child sexual abuse through sexual health education and by building healthy skills to reduce perpetuation and victimization. This includes information about development, sexuality, consent, boundaries, sexual harassment and safe adults. Skills are taught around empathy, emotional regulation, mindfulness and healthy forms of communication. The curricula include training manuals with step-by step directions, educational CDs, posters and informative books for children. While people of color are represented on the curricula's binders, they are not represented in the 6-8 books provided in the curriculum. The curriculum also does not visuals of include persons with disabilities or visuals of persons from the LGBTQ population. This reviewer also did not see any information on challenging rigid gender roles. All in all, this is a good curriculum, but could be improved by adding the above missing components.

### Reviewer 103

Safe-T (7th-8th grade) is a two-year comprehensive child sexual abuse curriculum which aims to prevent child sexual abuse through sexual health education and building healthy socio-emotional skills to reduce sexual abuse perpetuation and victimization and increase bystander intervention. This includes education around sexuality, consent, rigid gender roles/stereotypes, boundaries, sexual harassment and safe/trusted adults and resources. Skills are taught around empathy, emotional regulation, mindfulness and healthy forms of communication. The curriculum includes training manuals with step-by step directions, educational CDs, and posters. People of color are represented on the curricula's binders and there are sections within the curriculum which includes members of the LGBTQ community. This reviewer did not see any representation of persons with disabilities within the curriculum or discussion surrounding power and oppression. All in all, this is a good curriculum, but could be improved by adding the above missing components.

### Reviewer 203

I would highly recommend the Care for Kids curriculum. This review includes Care for Kids (for PreK- grade 2), We Care Elementary (for grades 3-6) and SAFE-T (for grades 7-8). The two curricula for primary grades are excellent. I rarely see a program that aims to prevent both victimization and ALSO to build skills to prevent children from developing sexually abusive behaviors toward others. For example, it teaches children how to recognize if they are close or if they crossed someone else's boundary, how to ask permission, and how to cope and accept a "no". This is so important, and I rarely see this in a program, especially one for younger children! In addition to preventing being harmed and causing harm, the program also explains how to get help and support for children who have already experienced sexual abuse. One missed opportunity is that this curriculum does not attempt to challenge gender stereotypes in the early grades, but that theme does emerge in the older grades.

There are different series of lessons for EACH grade (so a child could go through this each year: kindergarten, 1st grade, 2nd grade, etc. and it would not be too repetitive). This is a major bonus (and is uncommon with most other curricula) because at each grade they get new info and developmentally appropriate education that builds on past topics. With that said, it

would also be fine to start this at any grade. A child would still be able to follow along fine if they started in 3rd grade and did not get the K, 1st, or 2nd grade program.

The program is interactive and has great variety of activities including group discussion, charades, role play, games, stories, art, physical activity, baby doll activities (for younger kids), and picture books. Kids would enjoy this program, because the content and activities are fun and accessible. They avoid scary language and jargon and instead talk about all topics in a developmentally appropriate way (like adults do not need any help with their private parts; there should be no secrets about touching; private parts are covered up in public places; you must ask permission before touching someone; how to cope with stress, etc.). It also uses medically accurate terms for body parts and introduces the topic of sexuality in older grades in a developmentally appropriate way.

The program is trauma informed. The authors really thought about how to be supportive of children in the classroom who may have already experienced abuse. I like how it explains mixed up and confused feelings, giving various scenarios and how a kid could feel one way, but also feel another way. This is often the dynamic with sexual abuse. The program is validating and supportive of survivors, and has children identify who supportive adults are in their life. It is also careful to use the word “could” instead of “should” when discussing what a child’s choices are when an adult makes them feel uncomfortable. This is a nuanced use of language, but it is very important. It avoids the onus being put on children to stop abuse from adults, and instead gives them options.

The middle school edition is also highly recommended. Themes throughout the entire span of the program continue which include feelings, empathy, coping, consent, boundaries, relationships, sexual harassment, etc. The same themes continue in middle school but are presented with more detail, nuance and age appropriate scenarios that include more use of sexual behaviors (like kissing) and technology (like sending and posting photos). In the older grades, more advanced topics are introduced such as gender and sexuality, taking responsibility for one’s actions, and bystander intervention. The program is still very interactive and includes more writing activities in middle school, as well as videos.

One important note: The videos were not reviewed as part of this curriculum review. Beyond this, there is no imagery on the handouts, only in the picture books for early grades, so it is difficult to fully assess how inclusive the program is for different identity variables. Simply from my basic assumption/ judgments based on the names of the fictional characters and the types of relationships described, my assumption is it is mostly white and heterosexual characters. It would be important to have videos that include diverse characters, to be inclusive of all races/ ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, etc. When discussing abuse, it is inclusive of male survivors of sexual abuse/ assault, which is important. The program does discuss sexual orientation and sexuality; however, I did not see explicit examples/ scenarios of same sex couples.

In short, this program is recommended for all grades and levels. I did not see any outcome evaluation or research on this program, but it incorporates almost all the best practices in the field of sexual assault prevention. It is interactive at all grades and does an excellent job of addressing risk and protective factors for both victimization and perpetration. It also includes teacher training and parent training which makes it even more comprehensive and effective at preventing sexual abuse.

## Reviewer 201

Care for Kids K-6 grades:

Comes with complete training packages including PPT slides for training of faculty and staff, and of parents and caregivers.

Includes lots of activities for each grade level.

Designed to be taught over a series of weeks.

Materials are inclusive: often cannot tell where on the gender or skin color spectrum the characters are. This is the most inclusive and most bias free package that I have reviewed.

Is designed for all grades to receive this over a number of classes. Can have significant impact when a child/class of children, receive this every year, K-8.

One of the most complete educational packages I've reviewed.

This would be on my short list to pick if I were a principal.

Care for Kids grades 7 & 8:

Very extensive coverage of topics

The first one I've seen that includes support for victims and even provides recommended books for teens.

Even though this package falls short in its inclusion of a diversity of people, it is one of the most comprehensive packages and I would be pushing strongly to have this one implemented in my school. I would be eager to teach this.