

Comprehensive Sexual Health Education Instructional Materials Review 2025

Differing Abilities

Year Published/Revised: 2024

Publisher: My Health Alberta

Website: [Differing Abilities Archives - Teachers | Teaching Sexual Health](#)

Full or Supplemental: Full

Grade Level: 6 - 12

Student Population: General

Duration/Number of Lessons: 10 lessons

Format and Features: PDF files can be viewed online or downloaded and printed. Lessons, accompanying videos, group activities, interactive tools, illustrations, slides.

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

Available in Multiple Languages: Yes, French and English

Evidence-based/informed: Not evident

National Standards Alignment: No

Consistent with WA Health Education Standards? Yes

Consistent with Comprehensive Sexual Health Education Law? Yes

Consistent with AIDS Omnibus Act? Yes

Inclusive Materials/Strategies: Yes, with modification

Bias-Free Materials: Yes



Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Primary Subject Areas and Topics Required by Law:

- ☒ 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 376

I strongly encourage educators considering/using this curriculum to read the introduction to the resource prior to use in a classroom: <https://teachingsexualhealth.ca/app/uploads/sites/4/DA-Introduction-for-Teachers.pdf>. This introduction includes information about the curriculum that may inform the approach for teaching and provide strategies to adapt the curriculum to meet student needs. This curriculum does a decent job of encouraging use of accurate, non-stigmatizing, inclusive language to represent diverse bodies/identities while also considering the language needs of people with cognitive/learning disabilities. Throughout, teachers are encouraged to use their best judgment to help meet the needs of students. Some of the handouts from this curriculum use terms like "women" to describe people who menstruate, which excludes some identities (e.g., premenstrual syndrome health education PDF).

Lesson plans all include learner outcomes and activities on the first 1-2 pages which may be useful to refer to for an overview of the material in that lesson plan. The lesson plans for each topic are long and include recommended language for teachers to use in the classroom; this recommended language is generally medically accurate, plain language, and non-stigmatizing. I recommend this curriculum to educators who teach students with differing abilities with the suggestion to adapt the materials to meet the needs of students.



Reviewer 379

Strengths:

- Intentional about promoting a safe learning environment
- Lessons contain several age-appropriate activities for teachers to choose from
- There are stand-alone lessons/activities
- Extensive supplemental resources - Kahoot quizzes, group activities, interactive tools, slides, handouts, videos

Shortcomings:

- Learning objectives do not have specific methods for assessment
- There is an abundance of materials and resources to sift through
- The "A Using a Condom" video referenced a condom resembling a sombrero; culturally insensitive
- Use of Canadian specific laws, links, spelling

Reviewer 381

This 10-part curriculum for students with differing abilities is well adapted for students in grades 6-12 depending on their level of needs and engagement. In general, the curriculum targets students with mild to moderate learning needs. The curriculum is well designed, and provides comprehensive directions for teachers, including helpful background information about subject matters, potential language to be used to simplify the content, and examples of how to answer student questions. The activities themselves are very interactive, often involving group work such as sorting cards or answering scenario prompts.

One large drawback of this curriculum is that it does not provide diverse representations of varying racial identities (almost all images depict white people), nor does it discuss non-heterosexual relationships and what sex can look like in those relationships. While sex-assigned-at-birth and gender are well differentiated throughout, the definition of "sexual intercourse" remains limited to penis-in-vagina sex and does not account for varying sexual orientations or bodies (including trans and intersex bodies). Research shows that people on the autism spectrum, who might benefit from a curriculum like this, are overrepresented in the LGBTQ+ community, making it particularly necessary to discuss varying types of relationships, sexual activities, etc.

Finally, while the curriculum is designed for people with mild to moderate learning needs, it does not directly discuss the ways in which people with disabilities or learning needs might experience additional barriers to sexual freedom, expression, and acceptance. It is important to find representations of people with varying disabilities and needs (i.e., on the autism spectrum) and create open, honest, and hopefully empowering spaces for students to see other representations and prepare to navigate their own relationships in the world.



Reviewer 388

Content is not easy to navigate. When you select a grade level on the site you then have to navigate around the page to find the teacher's guide, the lesson guide (not certain why these are separate), the slides, and the student workbook.

Lessons are for mild to moderate students, but workbook requires students to be able to read and write in the book, does not contain strategies for students who use communication devices or who do not write.

Guide sends you out of the grade page to a standard page for "differing abilities". Lessons on this page do not line up with the lessons in the grade level and you have to find the one that matches your lesson.

No slide guide. Slides are just images of the content, but the lesson plan frames everything like you are doing follow up questions with options for possible answers. Unclear where the direction is to teachers on the content they need to teach. A lot of statistics are used. Games for students to do in teams. No videos, lesson is primarily activities and question/answer sessions. Grade 7 has a full lesson on abstinence.

May be useful as a supplemental kit but does not flow well for a standalone curriculum.

Teacher will need to bounce between grades to find the required content for WA standards.

Overall, Differing Abilities has some tools that could be useful for some students with mild intellectual disabilities but most likely would not work well for students with more significant needs on its own.

Med/Sci Reviewer 373

I concentrated on lesson relevant to biology and medical terminology. I reviewed lessons 1,2,3,8,10.

Pluses:

- Materials is French and English.
- Variety of type of materials like video, handouts, activities, presentation, tools, resources.
- Materials are in depth, accurate, trauma informed (group agreements, check-ins)

Minus:

- If applicable for WA, links are to Canada Health Care system not WA health care system, that could be likely added/removed/fixed.
- BC kit lesson in Lesson 10: There are updates.
- Depo - can be provided by provider or self-administered
- Ring-monthly and yearly
- EC-pill, efficacy dependent on weight/BMI
- IUD- efficacy 3-12 yrs



- Implant effective for 5 yrs
- Again, Canada resource for abortion, health insurance, healthy pregnancy, Canada Health care system-Alberta Health

Med/Sci Reviewer 385

Teaching sexual health to students with differing abilities- important point is that the lesson plan isn't by grade level it is by subject so teachers will know their students' developmental level and decide what lessons to teach.

Good information provided before each lesson about not using gendered language.

Lesson 1: factual diagrams

Lesson 2: puberty- factual and also brings up this can be a hard time for trans/nonbinary youth, and they may need more support.

Limitation: Cards/ images don't have youth of diverse racial, or gender identities represented.

Lesson 5: clear videos on consent. Clear and factual definitions and laws. Simple card / examples of OK/ not OK/ confusing touch

Lesson 10: Background information for teachers:

Has inclusive language and examples of how to make it more understandable depending on the cognitive or developmental level of the students. The information about birth control and STIs are factual. Non biased information about pregnancy options is provided also. It talks about how past teaching with the scare tactic is not helpful and can reduce students reaching out for care. Discusses up to date language to make sure all feel included – discussing anatomy or physiology more – example: “when someone gets their period” vs. “when a girl gets her period.” Also has clear factual definitions of different types of sex. Language with the student discussion and questions section on sex is clear and developmentally appropriate.

Birth control kit: clear factual brief information on all methods. Limit: doesn't have further information for the teacher to reference if there are more detailed questions on a method.

But has more in-depth information on each birth control method in the health information sheets.

STIs: factual STIs info. Condom - external and vaginal and dental dam demonstration videos are clear step by step factual video

Condom line up game: clear, factual steps from the video now on cards for students to put in the correct order

Health information sheets- all factual and up to date information. Videos are also all good, factual, and free of biases.



Limitation: STI links and resource links to clinics not applicable since all Canadian

Disadvantage in the sex scenario section: scenarios are missing what types of sex or what body parts they will be using leaving students to assume things because of names making the scenario biased prone

Overall, very complete education curriculum with few limitations/ disadvantages

