



Sexual Health Education Instructional Materials Review

Curriculum Title: Owning Up

Year Published: 2017

Publisher: Corwin Publishing

Website: <http://owningup.online/>

Full or Supplemental: Supplemental

Grade Level: Age 10 to 15

Student Population: General

Duration/Number of Lessons: 17 lessons, 45 – 80 min per session,

Format and Features: Paperback or electronic version

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

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 208

Seems like this curriculum was designed to teach students about the skills that one needs for everyday relationships (i.e. personal boundaries, personal communication skills, etc.) Which is definitely something that youth need. However, for the purpose of this review (sexual assault, child trafficking) material or information was missing.

I did love the portion around bystander intervention.

Reviewer 202

Owning Up extensively covers a myriad of topics important to healthy relationships and preventing sexual abuse. Its theory includes making sure that adults do not talk down to youth, as well as making sure their voice is included throughout. There are many hands-on activities and different ways of engaging in the material. They also offer a supportive community for folks who might not have a lot of support for the curriculum at their school.

In comparison to other sexual abuse prevention curriculum for teens, it covers all of the important topics, but the curriculum guide is less visually appealing, and I wonder what the presentation itself looks like, or if the teachers have to create that themselves. The curriculum also creates a signature technique called "SEAL" and while effective, it also seems a bit wordy and it could just be easier to learn the concepts themselves.

Overall "Owning Up" has an immense amount of content that would be helpful to plan curriculum around child sexual abuse prevention, even though parts of it could probably be skipped.

Reviewer 203

I would recommend the Owning Up curriculum for middle school students.

This curriculum does not outright explicitly use terms like sexual assault, and instead frames the issues as they relate more to bullying. At the end there is a session on sexual harassment, and the curriculum overall does tend to have age appropriate scenarios that cover issues that middle schoolers most commonly face. Everything seems very relevant to 11-14-year-old experiences. It is well laid out and easy to follow for teachers.

PROS:

The program seems like it would be fun and engaging for students. It offers many different types of activities that will cater to diverse types of learners.

The program is inclusive and does address intersectionality, specifically with gender, race, and sexual orientation. It does a good job of having diverse scenarios and talks about how some of these issues cause more harm to certain groups. I love how it gives simple examples (but ones that are common), like how dressing up for Halloween as someone else's culture is not okay. Everything is described in an accessible way using age appropriate language that makes these concepts really easy to understand. With that said, the teacher using this program should educate themselves on intersectionality and be sure to listen and validate the experiences when students bring them up.

It covers a lot of the underlying issues that lead to sexual assault happening, particularly rigid gender roles which is key because it is related to gender-based violence. For example, it addresses the pressures that boys and girls feel to act a certain way. Middle school is considered the peak of rigid, traditional gender norms, and I like how this program encourages them to think more deeply about these cultural messages without being overly judgmental or directive on how they should think. It incorporates other relevant issues such as sexual rumor spreading, physical appearance, boundaries and consent, all of which are considered topics that are best practice in the field of sexual assault prevention.

This program respects the voices and opinions of the students. It uses inclusive language that is accessible to most students. There is a lot of discussion that encourages them to have their own opinions and to learn from their peers, without being overly adult-led.

Many of the issues discussed are relevant and also incorporate social media.

CONS:

Labels: This program is all about avoiding labels and stereotypes, being who you want and that all people are complex and diverse. However, the program then uses labels as part of their activities. One example is the scenario with "Fruit Cup Girl" and another is a handout that labels different people's role in a group, like "Queen Bee." It makes it seem like it's okay to use these types of labels and it can appear to reduce people to their label, or stereotypical role, which seems like an oversight. Better to label behavior than people.

Role Plays: This curriculum heavily relies on the use of role plays. Especially for middle schoolers, they can feel very vulnerable or attacked if asked to play or "act" a certain role. I like the suggestion in the Introduction on "Conducting Role Plays," which offers alternatives like reading the scenarios out loud and then discussing in small groups. You would need a lot of trust within a group to do some of the activities, like when they have to disclose things about themselves that they have experienced, but there are so many ways to adapt these types of activities.

Could use more action: I wish the curriculum went a step further with action steps. I wish there were more skills taught, i.e. giving students more options for bystander intervention, for example. I would want students to come away with a higher level of readiness to take individual or community action. It often takes the approach of how not to be a target (set your boundaries) but does not go enough into how to show another person you respect their boundaries. They have a session on "recognizing and respecting boundaries" but does not really go into how to show respect for someone else's boundaries and how to handle rejection in a healthy way. You could incorporate this as an addition to the program.

Overall, I could see this benefiting young people and would use it myself, probably with some of the suggestions above, with middle school students.