



# Sexual Health Education Instructional Materials Review

## Life Skills and Healthy Choices

**Year Published:** 2010

**Publisher:** Reality Works

**Website:** [www.realityworks.com](http://www.realityworks.com)

**Full or Supplemental:** Full

**Grade Level:** Middle School (high school version is also available)

**Student Population:** General

**Duration/Number of Lessons:** 16 lessons, most 45 minutes each

**Evidence-Based - CDC or HHS/OAH registry; National Campaign database; ETR database:** No

**Healthy Youth Act Compliance:** No (see ratings and reviewer comments)

**AIDS Omnibus Act Compliance:** With significant modification (see ratings and reviewer comments)

**National Standards Alignment:** National Health Education Standards, National Family and Consumer Science Standards

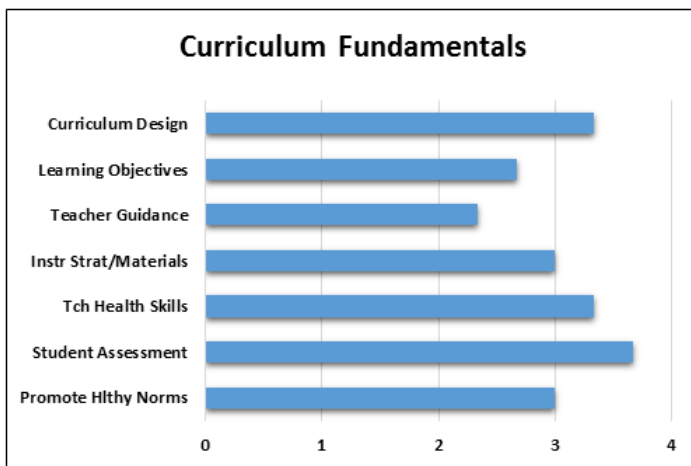
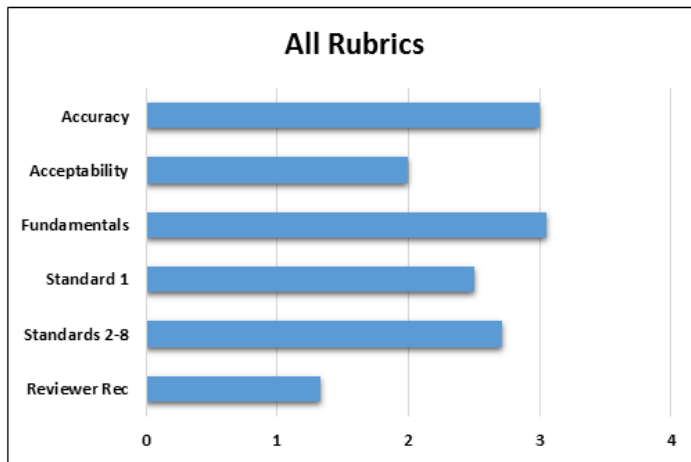
**Format and Features:** PDF documents and PowerPoint slides available for download on-line; or CD rom with PDF files of all lessons and materials; RealCare ©Baby ordered separately

**Professional Development:** Available, not required

### PRIMARY TOPICAL AREAS

- Anatomy and Physiology
- Puberty/Adolescent Development
- Pregnancy & Reproduction
- Contraception
- Abstinence
- STD Prevention
- HIV Prevention
- Identity/Orientation
- Healthy relationships
- Other
  - Abortion
  - Access to Services
  - Character Building
  - Condom Use
  - Human Rights
  - Infant Care Simulation
  - Marriage and Parenthood
  - Refusal Skills
  - Sex Trafficking

## OVERALL RATINGS



## REVIEWERS' COMMENTS

### Review 1

#### Rev ID 14

Life Skills and Healthy Choices for Middle School Students is curriculum available on a DVD (meaning a storage device not that it is all video) with 15 lessons, 8 of which have included PowerPoint presentations. In fact, there are no videos included with the curriculum. It provides several lesson plans that would contribute to a comprehensive sexual health education curriculum, but there are some notable things lacking: any mention of LGBTQ students, accessing clinical services like STI testing and HPV vaccination, and information on birth control methods besides condoms. This curriculum requires the Real Baby dolls, which students take care of for a period of time to teach them about parenting. This added cost might be considerable for purchase and upkeep of the dolls.

- + It's helpful that each lesson is mapped to a National Health Education Standard (or several).
- + Supplemental lessons on sexting, sexual harassment, how the media affects sexual decision making, sexual wellness and the law, healthy relationships are all great lessons to include as part of a comprehensive sexual health curriculum.
- + The provided PowerPoints are helpful for teachers. In general lessons are easy to understand and all lesson materials are included or described in detail.
- + There are several opportunities for goal setting.

#### Cons

- There are no formal mentions of LGBTQ students except one case study about a male who solicited nude photos of other males while pretending to be a female and then used them as blackmail to have sex. This is a very stigmatizing example to use considering it is the only mention of a gay male in the whole curriculum. Transgender students are not mentioned at all.
- There is no mention of birth control methods - only abstinence and condoms are discussed. However, there is an activity that addresses proper steps of condom use.
- There is a total lack of role plays around refusal skills, delay tactics, and other communication strategies when dealing with a sexual partner. There are several mentions of how sexual activities can hinder goal attainment, but few activities that allow youth to practice skills related to abstaining, using condoms, demanding condom use from a partner, or talking with a partner about birth control.
- There should be more about teens' rights to access reproductive health services.

### Review 2

#### Rev ID 16

Healthy Choices Middle School is an abstinence based program that addresses relationship skills, promotes abstinence only approaches, pregnancy as it specifically pertains to taking care of an infant and utilizes a Real Care Baby program and other infant stimulators. I was unsure if these babies are included in the cost of the program, they were listed as needed material but if these babies were not included I think it would be a huge factor in deciding to move forward in using this program. Caring for a child and shaken baby syndrome were thoroughly covered and the stressors that come with caring for an infant. If this is something you are looking for in a program, this was a well-covered component.

The program was set out in lessons that flowed together smoothly but often had no cultural diversity or assessments of skills learned or included any lessons that addressed a student who did not select abstinence as their primary choice. Family activities were used throughout, but in support of abstinence being the choice and led to an eventual



abstinence choice contract to be filled out which is not something that could ever be used within the public school system. Condom use was covered but only as it related to prevention of the spread of the 8 STI's addressed in this program. There was no preventative information for STD's or other forms of birth control stated, nor any diversity in gender orientation, sexual identity issues so felt that this area not being of high support and not being the focus of this abstinence based curriculum would prevent me from using a program like this.

You could use a program like this to support abstinence, but would also have to purchase another program or supplement using a lot of other materials to address the other side of sexual choices so that you could address the State Standards and Laws within Sexual Education. Forms of abuse in relationships was addressed but types of abuse were not covered or support provided for kids who may have been effected in these areas.

### **Review 3**

#### **Rev ID 20**

Some teacher preparation instructions ask teachers to create their own video clip or collage or audio clip rather than providing it.

Devoid of same-sex relationships attractions or even examples that are of same-sex couples.

Frequently refers to "promoting sexual activity outside of marriage."

