



Sexual Health Education Instructional Materials Review

FLASH Middle School

Year Published: 2016

Publisher: Public Health Seattle & King County (distributed by ETR)

Website: <http://www.etr.org/flash/>

Full or Supplemental: Full

Grade Level: Middle School (6-8)

Student Population: General

Duration/Number of Lessons: Seven lessons that are fifty (50) minutes each.

Format and Features: Lessons, classroom and homework activities (worksheets, visuals, teacher resources). Online and binder versions available.

Evidence-based/informed: yes, evidence-informed

Consistent with Healthy Youth Act? Yes

Consistent with AIDS Omnibus Act? Yes

Bias-Free Materials: Yes

National Standards Alignment: Yes (National Health Education Standards, National Sexuality Education Standards)

Primary Topical Areas (Check all that apply)

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

Reviewer Comments:

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The Lesson Selection Tool allows districts to include those lessons that reflect community standards and excludes those that do not. The program is heavily sourced with experts and contributors (thereby assuring accuracy), has been updated twice since its inception in 1988, and is widely used in and outside of the state. The program balances messaging of abstinence and birth control, and promotes communication about sexual health topics with family. FLASH is medically accurate, developmentally appropriate, and inclusive.

Family Homework--the feature itself and the way it allows for privacy and choice, is extremely important to maintaining community support of sexual health education, to extend classroom learning to home, and to respect differences in values.

FLASH offers extensive scripting for teachers who may be uncomfortable or unfamiliar with sexual health education. There is an emphasis on inclusivity and making sexual health education ordinary and accessible. The treatment of values, separating them into near universal and not universal categories, and then providing a values question protocol is excellent. FLASH is aligned to the National Sexuality Education Standards and National Health Education Standards.

Languages available: Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

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The elements of this curriculum which are excellent and set it apart: consistency of the organization of each lesson, the scripting and explicit instructions for the teacher to follow, individual and family homework (the family homework does a great job of opening up conversation between adult/student), the general inclusivity for all students (gender, orientation, family situation, ethnicity, etc.)

The elements which are lacking: It does not cover the physical, emotional, and social effects of puberty or of engaging in sexual activity. It lacks discussion about decision making (no model for decision-making), and overall does not include content about consequences (positive and negative). In the same vein, it does not address risk behaviors or protective factors to sexual health (alcohol use ought to be incorporated into this content, too). It does not cover how to manage social media and technology at all. It does not include teaching the skills and ways of knowing if information is valid or reliable.

Though this curriculum is missing some important topics, the content it does cover is excellent, and it is super usable because of the layout/design/organization of content.

I am very impressed by the design and organization of this curriculum. I think this makes it extremely useful for teachers.

The quizzes and homework are very good, but do not meet the goal of having students measure or analyze their own growth in practical skills and/or ways of thinking.

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FLASH Middle School does a great job of teaching the facts about sex, reproduction, STDs (including HIV/AIDS), sexual orientation, and gender identity using language that is free from bias. Its only downfall is in teaching students to evaluate media choices. These skills are available in the High School lessons, but are only briefly touched on in the MS curriculum. Having said that, I would still highly recommend FLASH MS to any educator teaching sexual education.

Materials that go home are available in: English, Arabic, Chinese, Traditional Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

FLASH Middle School is a comprehensive sexual education curriculum. I highly recommend this curriculum without reservations, to beginning educators and those who have taught sex ed before.