

Comprehensive Sexual Health Education Instructional Materials Review 2022

Ghost Club

Year Published/Revised: 2021

Publisher: One Love

Website: <https://www.joinonelove.org/>

Full or Supplemental: Supplemental

Grade Level: Middle School and High School (grades 7-10)

Student Population: General

Duration/Number of Lessons: 1 lesson with 3 video episodes (6-7 mins. each), 45-90+ min total for full lesson.

Format and Features: Videos, discussion guide.

Available in Multiple Languages: No

Evidence-based/informed: Not indicated

National Standards Alignment: No

Consistent with WA Health Education Standards? Yes

Consistent with Comprehensive Sexual Health Education Law? No – see reviewer comments related to bias.

Consistent with AIDS Omnibus Act? N/A

Inclusive Materials/Strategies: With modification

Bias-Free Materials: No – see reviewer comments.



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:

Accuracy

Reviewer 223

No medical/scientific concerns noted.

Reviewer 224

There are no medical or scientific inaccuracies.

Supplemental

Reviewer 201

I would use this in my classroom with a lot of explanation and putting things into context. The Black female character shows some negative stereotypes, like more anger than the other characters. I would also have to be cautious because I teach in a conservative community and there aren't any heterosexual romantic relationships portrayed in this program. I would have to add that in to avoid conservative families opting their children out. However, as a supplemental program, I would find this to be very useful.



Reviewer 202

Strengths: Engaging videos containing good quality audio and visual. The discussion guide is helpful and good handouts and helpful lists are provided such as 10 signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships. The videos and supplemental materials may provide a good platform and effective starting point for colorful classroom discussions.

Shortcomings: Ghost Club videos consist of 3 long episodes and students get way too much screen time already. The videos contain no examples of heteronormative teen behavior. The videos also contain a potential for concern for portraying the Black female character with negative stereotypes such as overweight, angry, slow, different, excluded. The videos also show an example of inappropriate/unwanted touch between female peers which may be viewed and considered to be social/racial injustice, and some may feel places the Black female character in a negative light. These videos may not be inclusive for all students because they do not demonstrate any heterosexual behavior and portray the female Black character in a potentially negative light.

Reviewer 203

I found this material confusing regarding the anger issues associated with one of the friends (Black girl), who was angry in the restroom and throws the brick when she wants the other girl to listen to her. I feel it's inappropriate to have the only black girl in the story to exhibit anger and state that she's not being listened to. Further into the story when the black girl talks about financial hardship and feeling powerless with their physical disability. I do like how the story includes persons living with a disability, and that the material ignites interest in this age group with the mysterious ghost story as a back plot. Addressing consent within the story is valuable, as well as assumptions of one's sexual orientation being easily misinterpreted (when the girl kisses the other girl because she is bisexual, assuming she'd be ok with it).

Reviewer 204

The strengths of this material are high production quality, engaging, audience appeal (music, mini-series format, characters), inclusive of diverse gender expression and sexual orientation/relationships. From the teacher perspective, the material offers a lot of flexibility. There is solid structure for implementation while also offering options for time constraints (45 min or 90+ min). There is detailed guidance as well as the "Just the questions" quick reference for teachers. Overall, a very strong package of material to address healthy relationships.

Reviewer 205

Ghost Club includes some important moments and has many opportunities to start conversations regarding healthy relationships with partners, siblings, and friends. However, in an attempt to be inclusive and show a diverse group of youth, I worry that the material is playing into harmful stereotypes, especially towards LGBTQIA+ students and students of color.



Reviewer 211

This material is of high audio-visual quality, and entertaining. Additionally, the cast represents several races, ethnicities, and sexual orientations. However, the characters are not well developed and often play to harmful stereotypes; these problematic characterizations severely detract from any positive aspects of the material.

Reviewer 213

The video does a good job of portraying multiple types of relationships including dating, friendships, and siblings. It includes characters from the LGBTQIA community and those of diverse backgrounds. At times, the Black female character is part of a stereotype. The plot will likely be engaging for students. Might be a little advanced for 7th graders, likely depends on your community. It was refreshing to see material that is up to date with trends, lingo, etc. for teenagers and therefore may make it more relatable.

The discussion guide is extensive and gives multiple options for how you could use this for a lesson(s). It gives all the talking points an educator would need to be successful and feel comfortable discussing LGBTQIA topics and healthy relationships.

Reviewer 214

Overall, I liked the material. I did have a little bit of a hard time initially figuring out what they were getting at, until I had the discussion guide in front of me. The bizarre plot kind of takes away from the focus of health vs. unhealthy relationships, and many parts felt pretty cheesy.

Also, I struggled with how stereotypically portrayed some of the characters were, more specifically the Black character (Tori) and one of the LGBTQ+ characters (Aidan). I felt that Tori fit the mold of a stereotypical Black girl—loud, everything's a joke, behind all the other characters, etc. Also, Aidan's character was represented as flamboyant, diva-ish, and just stereotypically gay.

Last, when Tori brings up her scoliosis, it felt like a forced attempt to include someone with a disability.

Reviewer 216

The Ghost Club is a fun and easy to incorporate (with Internet access) miniseries. The videos discuss tough and complex social issues using the adventure of a quirky group of ghost hunting students. The focus is on healthy relationships and socioemotional learning, less on the anatomy and biology of sexual health. A particular focus is placed on demonstrating how consent, respect (of spiritual beliefs, and of gender identity), and healthy conflict resolution work and look in live social dynamics. Having the discussions played out with actors is a helpful modeling tool for students to see how these conversations might take place. There is an element of spiritualism, and appropriation therein, that may need to be considered and or addressed before using this tool in your class.



Reviewer 217

The para-normal nature of this video is very off-putting and may be inappropriate for some communities/cultures. The characters are somewhat stereotypical in their roles and the POC character is left out and left behind in some cases. The point of the video is lost in the strange setting and secondary plot. The Discussion guide is absurdly long and complicated to use. While it offers options for how to view and debrief, it is cumbersome at best.

Reviewer 218

The creators at One Love continue to put out some of the most teen-centered, inclusive, and responsive content available to engage with teens about unhealthy dating relationships and friendships, consent and navigating break-ups. The Ghost Club 3 episodes and accompanying discussion guide offer a wealth of discussion questions and activities that tackle the nuance of all relationships, including the stigma that relationships have to be perfect and are without healthy conflict, all while the characters center LGBTQ+ identities, experiences, and relationships in the storyline. The pillar of One Love's programs is its "10 Signs," which breaks down 10 healthy and 10 unhealthy signs of relationships. These touch points are echoed throughout the discussion guide as they explore healthy/unhealthy aspects of dating relationships, friendships, and sibling relationships.

The videos, however, are not without their shortcomings. It is refreshing to see a video series that centers the experiences of LGBTQ+ teens in a way that feels accessible for all students, but some of the racial stereotyping that comes up would need to be addressed.

Reviewer 219

The videos relied on outdated tropes about Black and gay teenagers and had a really problematic representation of Native and Indigenous American history and spirituality. The videos were engaging and age-appropriate, and the actors were diverse, but often they were not represented in an inclusive and valid way.

Reviewer 220

The videos in the curriculum appear to actually have a decent budget, and the script and acting are believable, which can aid in student buy-in. The 10 signs of a healthy/unhealthy relationship complement the videos well. The lesson plans are largely discussion-based, which can be nice in terms of student engagement, but can be difficult to grade learning. Many discussion questions are repeated through the three different videos. Options for journal entries instead of partner discussions are given for those who prefer to process internally.

While the content features a range of races, gender identities, and sexual orientations, the content neglects to problematize the racial stereotypes of the angry black woman, hyperfeminine Latina, or the white-presenting male character as the leader.

Reviewer 221

The structure, scripts, main messages, and resources included One Love's Ghost Club workshop that provides teachers with the tools to lead meaningful discussions and healthy and unhealthy relationships that would lead to knowledge and skills acquisition among student participants. One Love provides helpful reminders for teachers throughout the discussion guide, including tips for reinforcing expectations, providing content warnings, and offering resources and reassurance. The lessons are easy to follow and well organized. If followed thoroughly, students have the opportunity to explore nuanced and relatable situations, develop empathy for self and others, and practice simple strategies that build agency and communication skills. The production value of the videos is of high quality and the concept is innovative. However, the plot distracts from the videos' messages to the extent that students may not be able to focus on the content and engage in productive dialogue around the discussion questions. The characters are overly-styled such that they represent stereotypes rather than representing a range of authentic identities.

Reviewer 222

The videos are engaging and very clearly role model a range of healthy and unhealthy relationship behaviors, and role model youth discussing consent, setting boundaries, and communicating about boundary violations. The discussion guide provides clear, well-structured suggestions for leading a comprehensive and student-centered conversation. With these resources, any teacher should be able to facilitate a productive conversation that meets the learning objectives.

The setting and central storyline revolves around contacting spirits and spiritualism. For some students and families, that will feel appropriate and even affirming of their spiritual practices and beliefs, while for others it will feel controversial or at odds with their beliefs. Be aware of the range of beliefs held in your classrooms and communities and be prepared to validate student reactions in ways that support the full range of beliefs and values. The central characters are LGBTQ+, so be aware that some students may respond negatively and be prepared to affirm the value and dignity of all people. There is a lack of robust disability representation, and so I encourage teachers to explore with students how people with disabilities might have some unique experiences in relationships and navigating boundaries.





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