Sexuality Parent Forum

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Presenter:
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[APS Wellness Website](#)

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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Forum Agenda

Introductions

Discussion Guidelines

Sexual Health Overview

Curriculum Alignment with Standards

Overview of the Sexual Health Curriculum in APS

Lesson Activity Examples

Opportunity for Questions

Discussion Guidelines

- Listen with an open mind and listen to understand

- Respect different points of view

- Feel safe to ask wondering and clarifying questions and please save questions for the end

- Share the time and give each other a chance to speak

- We are here to learn about topics presented in the curriculum but not here to debate those topics

What is Sexual Health?

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<u>Comprehensive Sexual health is a broad term that includes many topics</u>:

Sex Assigned at Birth, Gender, Gender Expression, Sexual Orientation, Anatomy, Reproductive Health, Self Image, Decision Making, Relationships, Respect, Bodily Autonomy & Consent, Values, Self Image, Sexual Behavior, Sexual Consent, Disease Prevention, Pregnancy Prevention, etc.

Why Teach Sexual Health?

Introduce early conversations

Introduce developmentally appropriate content

Build a foundation for later conversations

Why Teach Sexual Health?

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Sexual Health Lessons Are GOOD FOR ALL STUDENTS

Students develop basic life skills that starts with learning how to have respectful, kind and appropriate conversations with their peers with the goal for students to be able to:

- advocate for themselves and others
- knowing how and being able to have appropriate & responsible conversations with their peers
- understanding how their bodies work so if something isn't right they can communicate that to a parent/adult caregiver, trusted adult, doctor or nurse.
- setting clear expectations and boundaries in their relationships (including what consent means)
- Preventing harassment, bullying and sexual assault

Why Do All Students Learn Together?

Model open, shame-free and unbiased communication about sexual health topics.

Students acquire different perspectives.

All students receive unbiased equitable lessons.

Parents/Guardians as Sexual Educators

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The role of parents is to love, nurture and support our children; the role of the schools is to educate our children.

Sexual Health Education is a joint effort.

Many parents request and need support in their role as sexuality educators.

Parents as Sexuality Educators Resource

APS Sexuality (Sexual Health) Curriculum Alignment

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The APS Sexuality Curriculum Aligns with:

- **The APS District Vision**

The vision of the Arlington Public Schools is to be an equitable educational community where all learners feel a sense of belonging, experience growth and joy, and are empowered to shape their own futures and contribute to a better world.

- **Strategic Priorities 1 and 3 of the APS Strategic Plan**
(Improving Equity, Student Belonging & Inclusive Spaces)

- **Massachusetts Health Curriculum Frameworks 2023**

- **National Health Education Standards**

- **National Sex Education Standards**

Unit Overviews/Lesson Content

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Grade 4 & 5 Sexuality Unit Overview

Grade 6 Sexuality Unit Overview

Grade 7 Sexuality Unit Overview

Grade 8 Sexuality Unit Overview

Grade 9 Sexuality Unit Overview

Sexual Health Lessons

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Why Begin Sexual Health Lessons in Grade 4:

- Students are entering into puberty at an earlier age
- To build and maintain self-esteem and positive image through understanding human sexual development
- Provide accurate information and appropriate terms for students
- Encourage students to avoid slang terms
- Begin to evaluate body literacy that is age appropriate

Gender Topics Presented

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In APS we acknowledge that there are students whose gender does not align with their assigned sex at birth.

We acknowledge that in order for ALL students to feel included, our language as educators needs to be inclusive.

Gender Topics Presented

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What is Presented in Grade 4 and 5:

An explanation of gender, sex assigned at birth and gender expression.

Demonstrate ways to treat people – including other students, their family members, and members of the school community – with dignity, respect, and empathy in regard to sex, gender identity and gender expression.

What is NOT Presented:

Having students examine or question their own gender or someone else's.

Schools, through their curricula, shall encourage respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals, including LGBTQ individuals.

The regulations addressing the Student Anti-discrimination Law state: *All public school systems shall, through their curricula, encourage respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.* See, 603 CMR 26.05(1).

Research shows that inclusion of LGBTQ topics in curricula corresponds to all students reporting that they feel safer in school, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity and expression. Curricula should reflect issues of sexual orientation and gender identity, as relevant, to be inclusive across subject areas, including, but not limited to, health, social science, language arts, and family life curricula.

Grade Level Topics

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Grade 4 Topics Covered:

Stages of Development, Growing Up, Sex Assigned at Birth, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Changes During Puberty, Products Used When Puberty Begins

Grade 5 Topics Covered:

Grade 4 Topics Reviewed, Pituitary Gland, Hormones, Reproductive Organs

Grade 4 Slides   Grade 5 Slides

Grade Level Topics

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Grade 6 Topics Covered:

Puberty Review, Reproductive Organs Review, Body Health Growth & Development, Brain Development, Bodily Autonomy & Consent (physical), Gender spectrum (including sexual orientation)

Grade 7 Topics Covered:

Reproduction, Conception, Abstinence, Healthy/Unhealthy Relationships, Consent Laws (sex)

Grade Level Topics

Grade 8 Topics Covered:

Abstinence, Pregnancy Prevention, Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) Prevention, Healthy/Unhealthy Relationships, Consent Laws (sex), Child Pornography Laws, Identifying/Recognizing Harassment

Grade 9 Topics Covered:

Pregnancy and STI Prevention Review, Consent & Child Pornography Laws Review, Sexual Health Decision Making Skills, Personal Values, Relationship Values.

Grade 4 Activity Example - Changes during puberty

Making Sense of Social & Emotional Changes
Optional Activity

- Divide students into groups. Assign one social or emotional change to each group.
- Ask students to come up with at least two suggestions for how kids going through puberty can manage these changes.
- Groups report out. Ask class for their reactions, and if they have anything to add.

Lesson Activity Examples

Grade 6 Activity Example - Consent

Students turn and talk about what consent means to them

Share outs and definitions (**Consent**: permission for something to happen or agreement to do something. **Bodily Autonomy**: the right for a person to govern what happens to their body without external influence or coercion.

True/False partner and group discussion reinforcing consent examples

Skill Practice/Lesson Activity Examples

Grade 9 Activity Example - Communication/Consent

After a presentation lead by the teacher, students self reflect by thinking of a scenario that might call for a soft refusal and a harsh refusal. Optional share outs after the self reflection.

Students participate in a similar personal or small group discussion about what consent looks like, sounds like, and feels like. Optional share outs after.

Questions?

For Specific Lesson Questions:

Contact your child's Health/PE teacher or me directly:

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To Access Presentation Slides:

APS Website (Under Families-Parent/Community Forums)