

Teaching Puberty & Sexual Health with Confidence

Training for Middle School Health Teachers

Based on the Rights, Respect, Responsibility (3Rs) Curriculum

Why This Training?

- First time teaching puberty/sexual health
- Build comfort, confidence, and consistency
- Strategies for sensitive conversations
- Align with National Sex Education Standards (NSES)

Core Values of 3Rs

- Rights: Honest, accurate sexual health info
- Respect: Diversity of experiences, identities, families
- Responsibility: Support students to make healthy choices

Students' Rights & Responsibilities

- Right to ask questions about puberty, reproduction, relationships
- Right to accurate, age-appropriate information
- Responsibility to communicate openly & respect boundaries
- Responsibility to protect themselves and others

Creating a Safe Classroom

- Establish ground rules: respect, confidentiality, right to pass
- Use Climate Setting lessons to co-create agreements
- Post/revisit rules regularly

Answering Student Questions

- Types: Knowledge, Values, Reassurance, Personal, Complicated, Shock-value
- Use anonymous question box
- Respond factually, avoid personal disclosure

Inclusivity & Language

- Use inclusive terms (e.g., 'most girls...', 'partner')
- Avoid separating by gender
- Normalize diversity in families, gender identity, orientation

Trauma-Informed Teaching

- Recognize some students may have experienced trauma
- Offer content gently, right to pass
- Provide safe referrals to counselors/admin
- Know mandated reporting responsibilities

Handling Student Disclosures

- Expect possible disclosures of abuse/assault
- Listen, stay calm, don't probe
- Report immediately per school/state policy
- Have counselor/admin support present

Instructional Strategies

- 50-minute lessons with objectives, prep, family homework
- Use interactive strategies (discussion, role play, reflection)
- Balance knowledge + skills (decision-making, communication)

Cultural Responsiveness & Equity

- Address bias, racism, inequity in sexual health
- Build cross-cultural communication
- Respect and affirm all student identities

Resources for Teachers

- Advocates for Youth (3Rs curriculum, free PD modules)
- Planned Parenthood: Sex Ed To-Go
- Healthy Teen Network: Teacher's Guide to Sex Ed
- School counselors/admin support

Reflection & Next Steps

- What excites you most about teaching?
- What feels most challenging?
- Identify one strategy you'll use to build comfort