

Dear Parents,

During 8th grade we will be studying a unit on human sexuality during our physical education classes. This information is covered under the life skills component of the curriculum and will serve as a bridge from previous instruction on a number of health topics to current and future issues for young adults. The students will be learning about life issues that concern and challenge them each day, as well as learning about skills they need in order to develop a healthy respect for life, for themselves, and for their bodies.

The sexuality unit begins with basic information on the physical changes and development of young adolescents. This information includes a review of the reproductive system. The unit also covers such topics as sexual harassment, sexual assault, and sexually transmitted infections. We study decision-making skills that help students make decisions based on facts, rather than pressure from friends. We examine and evaluate the influences on teenagers that may lead them into sexual activity. We discuss and evaluate abstinence and practice how to "say no" in an assertive manner. The specific outcomes for the unit are listed below.

Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Identify positive health practices
- Explain the effects on the body systems
- Identify ways to prevent diseases and illnesses
- Understand and practice self-examinations
- Explain Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)
- Review HIV and AIDS
- Describe the relationships among physical, mental and social health factors
- Understand, identify, describe and compare the body systems
- Understand how factors influence growth and development

Realizing that many of these issues are very delicate in a young person's life, we have taken great care in developing the curriculum. If at any time the student feels uncomfortable, or if you have a concern or question, please contact your child's physical education teacher or myself. We always welcome your input and thoughts.

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Because of the sensitive nature of the human sexuality unit, we understand that some parents would rather take the lead on discussing with their children the topic of human sexuality. We respect a parent's wish not to have their child participate in this unit of instruction at school. A child who does not participate in this unit of instruction will be provided with an alternate physical education experience for the duration of the unit.

Given the sensitivity of this topic, we need your consent to have your child participate in this unit.

This is an exciting and challenging time in the lives of our middle schoolers. They have many questions regarding their futures, as they look to find their place in the world. We look forward to working with you to help middle schoolers safely navigate their way to young adulthood, while building positive and healthy relationships with others.