

Approved HIV and AIDS information for high school students in California

The Health Framework for California Public Schools

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/fd/documents/health-framework-2003.pdf>

Websites identified by the framework as having reliable information:

California Healthy Kids Resource Center (administered by the CA Dept of Education and the CA Dept of Health Services)

<http://www.hkresources.org>

The SIECUS (Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States) Fact Sheet: The Truth About Condoms

http://www.siecus.org/pubs/fact/FS_truth_condoms_02.pdf

CDC Frequently Asked Questions on HIV and AIDS

<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pubs/faqs.htm>

From The Health Framework for California Public Schools

Family Living

In the teaching of family living, particular attention must be paid to the legislative codes and guidelines that affect curriculum planning and instruction within this content area. Note: See summaries of Education Code sections 51550 and 51555 (parent notification), 51553 (sex education course criteria, emphasizing abstinence), 51554 (parental notification of outside speakers for family life, AIDS, STDs), 51201.5 (HIV/AIDS prevention), and 51513 (personal beliefs) in Appendix A. The requirements of these code sections should be understood prior to the development of curriculum in this content area.

A functional family unit is vital to the well-being of children. Children usually develop best when they live in a stable environment with their mother and father and receive from their parents consistent love, support, and direction. However, children from nontraditional families can also develop successfully. Given the variety of nontraditional families in contemporary society, it is important that children not reared in two-parent families be convinced that their situation can also be conducive to growth and development.

Further, it is important that children not be denigrated because of their living arrangement or the composition of their family. All students, regardless of their current living arrangement, can benefit from classroom instruction and discussion on family living. They can learn how they can contribute to making the family unit harmonious and successful now as well as in the future—when they will likely become parents.

This content area promotes the development of positive family interactions in all types of families, including those that face unusual challenges. Families that have members with physical or mental disabilities can experience major effects on patterns of family interaction. Ideally, families can adapt to these challenges and in fact may develop stronger, more supportive family relationships as a result. Members of these families should feel comfortable participating in classroom discussions of family interactions.

Instruction in family living also focuses on sexuality, the reproductive process, dating relationships, and the selection of a mate. Abstinence from sexual activity is strongly encouraged because it is the healthiest course of action for young people. Statistics based on the latest medical information citing the failure and success rates of condoms and other contraceptives in preventing pregnancy shall be provided to students. In addition, the moral, legal, and economic responsibilities of parenthood are highlighted.

Sexually transmitted diseases and their prevention are discussed. Because parents should be the primary source of sex education and values relating to this subject, they must be notified before lessons in sex education are offered. The Education Code permits parents to withdraw their children from this portion of the health curriculum.

Decisions regarding developing specific instruction in family living within the parameters of legal requirements rest with school districts. The approach of this framework is to encourage districts to work with parents and community members in developing curriculum, especially in the area of family living. The intent of the curriculum in this content area is not to invade the privacy of families and their right to teach values to their children but to assist families in teaching about family living and encourage effective family communication.

Because of the sensitive nature of this content area, school districts may wish to arrange same-sex groupings during presentation of this portion of the curriculum to younger students. Districts should work with parents and community members to decide how controversial issues such as homosexuality, abortion, and masturbation will, or will not, be addressed. Parents should be informed of the district's position, and teachers should receive clear training in fulfilling the district's policies.

Family life curricula must include factual, substantiated information that is free of racial, ethnic, and gender bias and, if consistent with district policy, an opportunity for students to explore different aspects of issues within the parameters allowed by law. The school district must determine what constitutes factual, substantiated information¹ and ensure that all instructional resources are subject to the district's review and approval process. If guest speakers are invited to participate in the discussion of those issues, the speakers' activities must be made to adhere to district policy and state law. Further, districts must ensure that schools comply with all legal requirements concerning family life education, including providing written notification to parents before conducting classes in which the human reproductive organs and their functions are described, illustrated, or discussed.²

Communicable and Chronic Diseases

The most important message to convey in this content area is that students have a considerable measure of control over their health and that chances of contracting most illnesses can be greatly influenced by students' health-related choices and decisions. Such communicable diseases as sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV/AIDS and hepatitis B, dramatically illustrate the point. Chances of contracting these diseases are greatly reduced when young people abstain from sexual activity and

¹ Education Code Section 51553(b): "(1)(A) Factual information presented in course material and instruction shall be medically accurate and objective. (B) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply: (i) 'Factual information' includes, but is not limited to, medical, psychiatric, psychological, empirical, and statistical statements. (ii) 'Medically accurate' means verified or supported by research conducted in compliance with scientific methods and published in peer-review journals, where appropriate, and recognized as accurate and objective by professional organizations and agencies with expertise in the relevant fields such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention."

² School district governing boards dealing with policy issues should refer to Appendix A.

intravenous drug use and use universal precautions when dealing with other people's body fluids. Note: The importance of abstinence education is emphasized in the section on family living.

Although the effects of heredity must be considered, behaviors and decisions also affect the development of such chronic diseases as cardiovascular disease, cancer, hypertension and stroke, diabetes, and osteoporosis. The risk factors for these diseases can begin to be detected early in life and are greatly influenced by health-related choices. Communicable and chronic diseases are too often the consequences of shortsighted or uninformed choices.

With so many health-related choices influenced by peers, skill-building activities, such as development of refusal and communication skills, are a necessary component of instruction at all grade levels. Physically or mentally challenged children are especially susceptible to peer pressure and should be included in skill-building instruction and practice.

This content area also includes the skills necessary to act in a supportive yet safe manner toward people with diseases. Although it is important to promote tolerance toward people with disease, individuals and society also need to work to control and eradicate disease.

The discussion of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV infection and AIDS is a necessary and important part of this content area. Note: See summaries of Education Code sections 51550 (parent notification), 51553(a) (sex education course criteria, emphasizing abstinence), 51201.5 (HIV/AIDS prevention), and 51513 (personal beliefs) in Appendix A. The requirements of these code sections should be understood prior to the development of curriculum in this content area. As with the family life content area, parents must be notified before sex education classes are offered in which the human reproductive organs and their functions are described, illustrated, or discussed, including discussion of sexually transmitted diseases. Parents may withdraw their children from this portion of the health curriculum.

The discussion of communicable and chronic diseases can be sensitive and have cultural, socioeconomic, genetic, or religious implications. Although decisions regarding curriculum content rest with school districts, the approach of this framework is to encourage districts to work with parents and community members in developing the curriculum.

High School: Sexuality

A factual, substantiated discussion of homosexuality may be included at this level. (Note: School district governing boards considering such a discussion should refer to "Family Living" in Section II of this chapter and to Appendix A.) Students should recognize that it is a common experience to feel some affection for both men and women and that feelings of affection for persons of the same sex are not necessarily an indication of homosexuality. Teenagers who have questions about their sexual orientation may be reluctant to discuss the topic for fear of reprisal. Students should respect the rights of others to seek information from a parent or other trusted and knowledgeable adult. The California Student Safety and Violence Prevention Act of 2000 (AB 537) promotes an appreciation of diversity in a democratic society. Name-calling or other hurtful actions must not be tolerated. Teachers, counselors, physicians, religious leaders, and community resource centers may offer support for young people who have concerns about their sexual orientation. While respecting religious and personal beliefs, the curriculum in this content area should affirm the dignity of all people.

Appendix A: Summaries of Selected Education Code Sections with HIV/AIDS mandates

Education Code sections 51201.5(a) and 51201.5(b), instruction on the prevention of AIDS

School districts shall ensure that all students in grades seven through twelve receive instruction on AIDS prevention. Each student shall receive the instruction at least once in junior high or middle school and once in high school. Parent notification of such instruction is required.

Education Code Section 51229.8, in-service training on AIDS-prevention instruction

County offices of education and school districts, through regional training, shall plan and conduct in-service training for all teachers and school employees who provide AIDS-prevention instruction.

Education Code Section 51240, written request by parent to excuse student from family life/sex education

A parent or guardian may request that a student be excused from family life/sex education when such instruction conflicts with religious beliefs and training.

Education Code Section 51550, parent notification of family life and sex education courses

Governing boards of public schools may not require students to attend any class in which reproductive organs and their functions and processes are described, illustrated, or discussed. If such classes are offered, parents and guardians of all students must be notified in writing.

Education Code Section 51553(a), sex education course criteria

All classes in grades one through twelve that teach sex education and discuss sexual intercourse shall emphasize abstinence from sexual intercourse as the only protection that is 100 percent effective against unintended pregnancy, STDs, and AIDS.

Education Code Section 51554(a), parent notification of instruction on family life, AIDS, STDs, and so forth

Parents and guardians shall be notified in writing at the beginning of the school year (or at the time of enrollment when a student enrolls after the beginning of the school year) of any instruction on family life, AIDS, STDs, and so forth that will be delivered by an outside organization or guest speaker brought in specifically to provide that instruction.

Education Code Section 51555, instruction on family life, AIDS, STDs, and so forth in kindergarten through grade six

School districts, county boards of education, or county superintendents of schools shall provide parents and guardians of all students written notice that instruction on family life, AIDS, STDs, and so forth will be given. Information stating parents' and guardians' right to request copies of sections 51201.5 and 51553 (relating to AIDS-prevention instruction) shall be included in the written notice.