



Facilitator Guide for Teachers and Educators

Human Development and Sexual Health: Healthy Relationships (Grades 9-12)

Introduction

This module provides educators who teach students in grades 9 to 12 with a lesson on healthy relationships. The module supports the learning objectives of The Health & Physical Education Ontario Curriculum.

Learning objectives

By the end of this presentation students will be able to better understand:

- Healthy relationships
- Gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation & self-concept
- Consent
- Online safety

Purpose

Improving and protecting the health and well-being of school-aged children and youth is a priority for Ontario's public health sector. Childhood is a time when health practices and behaviours are learned, and adolescence is a period when both positive health behaviours and risk behaviours can be adopted. Because curriculum for the school year may be delivered at various times by different educators, this guide allows the educator to deliver self-paced content related to human development and sexual health in the classroom at their convenience. Depending on the level of discussion, student engagement, and the preferences of the educator, the length of this presentation can vary from approximately 30- 60 minutes. Please ensure familiarization of the content prior to teaching to ensure there is sufficient time within classroom hours.



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About this guide

This guide is intended as a supplemental resource for educators who choose to deliver the health modules developed by Ottawa Public Health (OPH). As content is updated annually and/or when new evidence emerges, we encourage educators to frequently check back on the [School Health Online](#) webpage to access the most up-to-date content.

Additional resources

For more information on sexual health, available services and resources please visit the following:

- [School Health Online](#)
- [OPH - Sexual Health](#)
- [The Link Ottawa](#)

Disclaimer

The information provided is not a substitute for professional medical advice. Educators should encourage students to consult their parents or guardians, and/or qualified healthcare professionals for personal guidance related to sexual health. Educators should approach questions about sexual health with sensitivity, respect, and an understanding of the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of their students. When responding to a student question, the response should be adapted to reflect the age and maturity of the student as well as the classroom environment and individual school policies.

Considerations

Becoming informed about a topic prior to discussing it in a classroom setting, will help create a productive and comfortable conversation with youth. This module includes topics that some students may find uncomfortable and/or difficult to understand. Here are some considerations to support the students' learning experience:

- Be sensitive to different backgrounds and experiences.



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- As much as possible, be aware of experiences in your students' lives that may make certain discussions uncomfortable for them. Consider letting students know ahead of time that the topic will be discussed in class and use proper judgment if accommodations are needed.
- Watch for signs of discomfort.
 - Monitor students' faces and body language.
- Allow ample time for discussion.
 - Allow enough time to introduce the topic, discuss as a group, summarize, and answer questions.
 - Using an anonymous "question box" may encourage students to ask questions they otherwise would not feel comfortable asking in front of the class.

Continued collaboration

Our commitment to improving health outcomes is an ongoing journey*. We encourage you to share feedback and suggestions for improvement on this module, using our feedback form found on our [School Health Online](#) webpage. Together, we can continuously refine our resources to better the evolving needs of our school communities.

**Last updated: October 2023*

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Module

Slide 1



Please use as suggestions only:

Prior to beginning this module, it can be helpful to include a statement such as: "I know this can be a sensitive topic and can make people feel uncomfortable." Let your students know that you are not uncomfortable, and that this is such an important topic to start talking about even before youth may have started thinking about sexuality. Reinforce that this is a safe space where students can learn about their bodies and health to be better able to make informed decisions for themselves.

Ground rules: Review classroom etiquette or establish ground rules together as a group, prior to this lesson.

Some examples:

- Refraining from discussing personal situations or stories; however, students are encouraged to speak to their teacher privately if they would like to discuss a topic further.
- Respecting all beliefs and cultural values.
 - **Cultural sensitivity:** People's decisions and behaviours related to sexual relations are influenced by their cultural beliefs, values and practices. It is important to acknowledge our own personal cultural values and beliefs while respecting that others may not share the same ones.
- Using inclusive language and proper terminology.
- Welcoming all questions.
- Listening attentively.
- Helping create a safe space for students – an environment of respect and sensitivity.
- Keeping classroom discussions confidential.

Slide 2

Before we start...

Let's cover some ground rules!

*Reminder that support is always available at school. Other community resources will be shared at the end of the module.

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Let students know that support on sensitive topics is always available within the school community and through external partnerships. Supports are reviewed at the end of the presentation.



Inclusive language: Inclusive language is used to include individuals of all genders and sexual orientation. Using inclusive language provides a safe space for students, as well as a respectful, caring and welcoming environment.

It is also important to note and share with students that during the lessons, when the female and male anatomy are discussed, they are discussed from a biological stand-point meaning sex assignment at birth. However, it is important to point out to students that for some people, their assigned sex does not match their gender expression and experience and that is okay. The information outlined in this presentation is intended to educate students on the functions of the human body and provide them with valuable knowledge to make healthy and safe choices in their lives.

Note to educator: When talking about body parts, emphasize physiology instead of gender. Referring to “bodies with a penis and testicles” or “bodies with a vulva and ovaries” is more accurate and inclusive than referring to boys or girls. It may be useful to show diagrams of the external genitals if students do not know the words “vulva” or “penis”. For example, rather than saying “Girls will go through menstruation”, educators could refer to a diagram of the reproductive system and explain that “For those who have ovaries, menstruation usually begins between the ages of 8-18”.

For more information on teaching in a gender inclusive way, refer to the “[Principles of Gender Inclusive Puberty and Health Education](#)”.

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<p>Slide 3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Healthy relationships ■ Gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation & self-concept ■ Consent ■ Online safety  <p style="font-size: small; text-align: center;">OttawaPublicHealth.ca/SchoolHealthOnline</p>	<p>Topics covered in this module include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy relationships • Sexual orientation & self-concept • Gender identity & gender expression • Consent • Online safety
<p>Slide 4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Healthy relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Relationships can be one of the best, and most difficult parts of life. ■ Often, these relationships can make you experience feelings you have never felt before. ■ Be selective when getting involved with someone. Make sure they have the same qualities that you admire in your friends and family.  <p style="font-size: small; text-align: center;">OttawaPublicHealth.ca/SchoolHealthOnline</p>	<p>Relationships can be one of the best, and most difficult parts of life. Be selective when getting involved with someone. Make sure they have the same qualities that you admire in your family and friends.</p> <p>Relationships are about:</p> <p>Friendship: Be a friend and respect each other and learn.</p> <p>Patience and tolerance: Both partners need to recognize that no one is perfect, and everyone makes mistakes. Without the effort and compromise of both partners, the relationship cannot work.</p> <p>Understanding and support: A partner can challenge you, stand beside you when you need them, and catch you when you fall- yet gives you space to grow as a person.</p> <p>Trust and intimacy: Being able to count on each other and that the other person will be there for you.</p> <p>Being real: Let your partner get to know the "real you." In a healthy relationship, you need to accept the other person, flaws and all. Don't go into a relationship trying to change the other person.</p> <p>Communication: This is how we show our respect, trust, and honesty. It requires listening to and sharing thoughts and feelings.</p>

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Safety: Both people feel physically and emotionally safe with each other. You're comfortable to set boundaries and say no without fear.

Honesty: You can be yourself. You don't hide things from your partner, your parents, or your friends. You may have things that are private, but not secretive.

Acceptance: You feel accepted by your partner for who you are, and you accept yourself when you are with your partner. You also accept your partner's boundaries, decisions, and values.

Respect: Your decisions, values, beliefs, and boundaries are respected, and you offer that in return.

Enjoyment: You enjoy spending time together, but also know how to balance other things in your life. You also feel okay to have your own space.


An engaging, secure, and loving relationship can be an ongoing source of support and happiness. However, if the relationship isn't supportive, it can be a tremendous drain.

What are some relationship red flags?


Ask yourself the following questions. Does your partner...

- Get jealous often? Remember, love is not jealous!
- Frequently check your cell phone, email, or other social media accounts?
- Makes you feel guilty if you do things with your friends or your family?
- Refuse to practice safe sex?
- Use disrespectful language when talking about you or others?
- Do mean things to animals?
- Start fights or threaten to start fights with you or others?
- Blame you when they are angry?
- Pressure you to use drugs or alcohol?
- Have big mood swings that make it hard to know what to expect when you're together?
- Accuse you of things you didn't do?
- Embarrass you or put you down in front of your friends or in public?


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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure you to have sex or do things that you don't want to do? • Pinch, hit, slap, push, grab, or inflict any type of physical abuse? <p>If you experience any of these "red flags" in your relationship, it's time to step away, get help, and get out of the relationship. It won't be easy but, you are worth it!</p>
<p>Slide 5</p> <p>Self-concept & sexual orientation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Self-concept: the perception an individual has about their own identity. ■ Sexual orientation: a person's emotional, physical and sexual attraction to others.  <p><small>OttawaPublicHealth.ca/SchoolHealthOnline</small></p>	<p>Self-concept: The perception an individual has about their own identity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formed through information and interpretations people acquire about themselves during interactions with others, personal experiences, and their environment • Makes a person unique • Created by interactions with others and knowledge of the things a person likes about themselves • Influenced at times by other people's opinions <p>Sexual orientation: A person's physical, emotional and sexual attraction to others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May remain the same throughout a person's life, or could change as an individual encounters different life experiences and learns about themselves • Essential to treat people of all sexual orientations with acceptance and respect • Important for a person to accept and understand their own sexual orientation, as it can have a strong impact on their development of self-concept <p>2SLGBTQI+ refers to the spectrum of sexual and gender identities and is the acronym used by the Government of Canada to refer to the Canadian community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2S: Used by some Indigenous people as a cultural term to indicate a person has both a male and female spirit; may include concepts of spirituality, sexual orientation and gender identity • L: Lesbian; woman who has emotional, physical and/or sexual attraction to women

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G: Gay; person who has emotional, physical and/or sexual attraction to people of the same gender • B: Bisexual; person who has emotional, physical and/or sexual attraction to people of their own gender and other genders • T: Transgender; person whose gender identity differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth • Q: Queer; reclaimed term used by some people who identify as a sexual and/or gender minority; also used as a positive, inclusive term to describe communities and social movements • I: Intersex; considers sex characteristics beyond sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression • +: Inclusive of people who identify as part of sexual and gender diverse communities, who use additional terminologies
<p>Slide 6</p> <p>Gender identity & gender expression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Gender identity: A person's internal and individual experience of gender.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Gender expression: How a person outwardly expresses or presents their gender to the world. <p><small>OttawaPublicHealth.ca/SchoolHealthOnline</small></p>	<p>Gender identity: This is a person's internal and individual experience of gender; their sense of being a man, a woman, both, neither or anywhere along the gender spectrum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A person's gender identity may be different or the same from their birth-assigned sex. • Gender identity is developed throughout a person's life beginning in childhood. For some individuals, their gender identity will stay the same throughout their life, while others may change their identity over time. • Individual's perception of gender can often be influenced by feminine and masculine stereotypes that are established by society; however, these stereotypes are constantly changing and evolving and can vary depending on different cultures, time, and place. • It is an individual choice for how a person chooses to express themselves. • It is important to remember that one cannot assume an individual's gender identity based on their gender expression. <p>Gender expression: This is the way a person outwardly expresses or presents their gender.</p>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This includes expressing oneself through clothing, hairstyle, voice, body characteristics, name of choice, behavior etc. • It may not always stay the same and can change over time. • Gender expression does not necessarily always reflect gender identity. • A person's chosen name and pronoun are also common ways of expressing gender.
<p>Slide 7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Decision making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Several factors may influence the decision to have sex: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal or family values • Personal or cultural beliefs • Risks involved • Personal experiences • Experiences of family or friends ■ Each person must decide what is best for them and what they are most comfortable with. <p><small>OttawaPublicHealth.ca/SchoolHealthOnline</small></p>	<p>Several factors may influence the decision to have sex:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal or family values • Personal or cultural beliefs • Risks involved • Personal experiences • Experiences of family or friends <p>Each person must decide what is best for them and what they are most comfortable with.</p>
<p>Slide 8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Consent</p> <p>Definition: Active process of willingly, enthusiastically and freely agreeing to engage in sexual activity on an ongoing basis without manipulation or threats.</p>  <p><small>OttawaPublicHealth.ca/SchoolHealthOnline</small></p>	<p>Definition of consent: According to the Government of Canada's Department of Justice, consent is legally defined as the voluntary agreement of a person to engage in sexual activity. Taking this definition one step further, consent is defined as the active process of willingly, enthusiastically and freely agreeing to engage in sexual activity on an ongoing basis without manipulation or threats.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual contact needs to be fully consensual, and everyone needs to accept and respect each other's boundaries. • Consent can always be withdrawn during the sexual relation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: It is possible for someone to consent to sexual contact and then become uncomfortable and choose not to continue. At this point, the sexual relation must stop. • Consent is a one-time only agreement.


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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: Just because someone agreed to engaging in sexual activity on Saturday, does not mean they have already given their consent to sex next Tuesday. • Consent is not automatic and being in a committed relationship doesn't give anyone the right to not seek consent. • In some situations, full, informed, and free consent cannot be given. People who are under the influence (drugs, alcohol), asleep, unable to understand what they are saying yes to, or under severe pressure are not able to freely and willingly consent to participating in a sexual activity. <p>Communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even if someone finds talking about sexual health uncomfortable and awkward, it's important to be up front about what they think is important when it comes to sex. Consent must be communicated verbally.
<p>Slide 9</p>	<p>*If experiencing difficulties playing the video embedded in the presentation, visit https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=raxPKkIDF2k to access the video online.</p> <p>Legal specifications: The legal age of sexual consent in Canada is 16 years of age. If someone is under 16, there is a close age exception which is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals who are under 12 years of age cannot consent to sex. • If they are 12 or 13, their partner must be less than 2 years older than them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: Someone who is 12 years old can consent with someone who is 12 or 13 years old. • If they are 14 or 15, their partner must be less than 5 years older than them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: Someone who is 14 years old can consent with someone who is 14, 15, 16, 17, or 18 years old.


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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even if the person is 16 or 17, they cannot give consent to a person holding a position of trust, authority, or dependency. It is illegal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: a coach, a teacher, a supervisor, etc.
<p>Slide 10</p> <p>Sexually explicit media</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Portrays people, relationships and sexuality in ways that are misleading and inaccurate ■ Promotes an unrealistic body image and harmful gender stereotypes <p><small>OttawaPublicHealth.ca/SchoolHealthOnline</small></p>	<p>Sexually explicit media is easily accessible to youth and can be found in social media, online games, music videos, movies, and pornography. Pornography refers to pictures and videos of people with little or no clothes on, often showing their genital and private body parts, like their penis, vulva, or breasts.</p> <p>Sexually explicit media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often shows people not respecting themselves and others, and not freely giving consent. • Often portrays actors and is not a realistic representation of healthy relationships. • Can promote an unrealistic body image and harmful gender stereotypes. • Can lead to a limited and inaccurate understanding of relationships. <p>Suggested activity: Have a classroom discussion about where students can get answers if they have questions about something they see online.</p>
<p>Slide 11</p> <p>Online safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Only use social media with individuals that you know and trust. ■ Do not accept friend requests from people who you have no connection to. ■ Never share personal information online. ■ Never share naked pictures online.  <p><small>OttawaPublicHealth.ca/SchoolHealthOnline</small></p>	<p>Smartphones, tablets, and computers are part of our daily life. The arrival of online dating and certain technology applications has opened the door to online predators. These individuals and organizations lure teens and young adults through the internet into compromising situations.</p> <p>Discussion for class:</p> <p><u>Don't:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't give out your real name, address, birthdate, and location to anyone who you have met on the internet. That person may not be who they say they are. • Don't accept friend requests from people who you have no connection to.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't engage in sending any inappropriate pictures online. Remember that what is posted online can be traced, shared, and spread everywhere. <p><u>Do:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do report any offensive, bullying, or threatening online correspondence to your parents or another person you can trust. • Do keep private information private. • Do keep your passwords private and in a safe place that only you know about. • Do "be real," always be true to who you are and don't pretend to be someone you're not.
<p>Slide 12</p> <p>Resources & services</p> <p>■ Where do you find credible information on sexual health?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Link <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ottawa Public Health • Community health clinic • Primary health care provider and other health care professionals • Walk-in clinic • Sexual Health Clinic: 613 -234-4641 • Sexual Health Infoline Ontario: 1 -800-668-2437  <p><small>OttawaPublicHealth.ca/SchoolHealthOnline</small></p>	<p>OPH clinics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OPH Sexual Health Clinic: 179 Clarence St., Ottawa – by appointment only. Youth will be prioritized for appointments. • Gay Men's Sexual Health Clinic: 179 Clarence St, Ottawa – by appointment only <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The clinic provides a wide range of sexual health programs and services for gay, bi, trans-men, and other men who have sex with men in the Ottawa area. <p>Other clinical settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students can visit a family physician, nurse practitioner, walk in medical clinic or University or College Health services as they provide STBBI testing, Pap tests and birth control. The Sexual Health Clinic does not provide faster results for STBBI testing than family physicians, nurse practitioners, or other clinics. <p>The Link Ottawa provides an overview on 'What to Expect at the Sexual Health Clinic' prior to a Sexual Health appointment including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to prepare for the visit • What occurs upon arrival • The interview of the visit and assessment • The testing component and how to receive results

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<p>Slide 13</p> <p>Questions? OPH wants you to protect yourself if you are sexually active. Need more information?</p> <p>➔</p> <p>Scan the QR code</p> <p>Free condoms available!</p>  <p><small>OttawaPublicHealth.ca/SchoolHealthOnline</small></p>	
<p>References</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Link Ottawa ■ Ottawa Public Health ■ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ■ The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada ■ Planned Parenthood ■ Alberta Health Services ■ UCSF Health ■ Niagara Region: www.niagararegion.ca <p><small>OttawaPublicHealth.ca/SchoolHealthOnline</small></p>	