



*Educating youth today
for healthier lives tomorrow.*

Frequently Asked Questions regarding the Healthy Youth Act

What is the Healthy Youth Act and when does it go into effect?

A law passed by the State Legislature that says IF a school teaches sex education, the curriculum must be medically accurate, age appropriate, and meets standards set forth in the “Guidelines for Sexual Health Information and Disease Prevention” published by the Department of Health (DOH) and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). Schools must comply with the law by September 2008.

Are the state guidelines a required curriculum?

No, the guidelines outline aspects of effective sexual health curricula. They are a tool to help schools evaluate their existing programs and assess sexual health curricula being considered by school districts.

Does the Healthy Youth Act mandate a certain curriculum?

No – schools can mix and match curriculum, or create one that fits their community – the only requirement is that, as a total program with all elements combined, the curriculum used must be aligned with the state guidelines, be medically accurate, and include information about abstinence and contraception. Schools can submit their curriculum to DOH to be reviewed for medical accuracy and ensure it complies with the act.

What does our school district have to do now?

Schools are encouraged to evaluate their existing curriculum to ensure that it meets the standards set forth in the Guidelines and the Healthy Youth Act. OSPI will ask schools to report any curricula used in teaching sexual health education and the State Legislature will review the results biannually beginning with the 2008-09 school year.

What support is available to help update our curriculum?

Both DOH and OSPI will be creating curriculum checklists that can be used to evaluate how well a school’s sexual health curriculum meets the Guidelines. OSPI will add information on the new requirements for sexual health education to the content of the voluntary HIV/KNOW trainings they provide for teachers each year.

Who is allowed to teach sex education?

As long as the information taught complies with the guidelines, teachers and/or other educators may teach sex education. A school may use outside speakers or curriculum to teach units within a sexual health program as long as the information complies with the Healthy Youth Act.

Is there training available?

Yes. Throughout Washington State, the Healthy Youth Alliance is a valuable resource and can offer technical assistance and training opportunities.

To read a copy of the Healthy Youth Act, including definitions of medical accuracy, and for a complete copy of the *Guidelines for Sexual Health Information and Disease Prevention*, visit:

www.healthyyouthalliance.com