

# Sexual Health as a Social Emotional Learning Intervention and the Role of School Social Workers

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# Agenda

1:00-1:05: Opening/Introductions

1:05-1:20: Healthy Sexual Development Activity

1:20-1:40: Foundational Information

1:40-1:55: Scavenger Hunt Activity

1:55-2:15: Law and Roadmap

2:15-2:30: Capacity Assessment of School

2:45-2:55: Tier 2 Interventions

2:55-3:25: Values and Where Do You Stand  
Activity

3:25-3:35: Tier 3 Interventions

3:35-4:05: Answering Difficult Question and Role  
Play

4:05-4:15: Closing/Questions

# Objectives

- Learn how to implement a three tiered- approach to promoting sexual health in a school setting and assess the capacity level of their school placement in providing sexual health services.
- Effectively engage in discussions and answer student questions regarding sexual health in a medically accurate, values-free, non-shaming manner that stays within the scope of Louisiana law
- Critically analyze personal values and learn how to navigate student, family, administrative, and legal needs and demands in a manner in line with social work ethical values.

# Introductions

# Healthy Sexual Development



# Among US High School Students

## YRBS 2017

- 40% had ever had sexual intercourse
- 10% had four or more sexual partners
- 7% had been physically forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to
- 30% had had sexual intercourse during the previous 3 months, and, of these
  - 46% did not use a condom the last time they had sex
  - 14% did not use any method to prevent pregnancy
  - 19% had drunk alcohol or used drugs before last sexual intercourse
- Less than 10% of all students have ever been tested for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)

# HIV, STD, & Teen Pregnancy

- Young people (aged 13-24) account for an estimated 21% of all new HIV diagnoses in the United States
- Among young people (aged 13-24) diagnosed with HIV, 81% are gay or bisexual males
- Half of the 20 million new STDs reported each year are among young people between the ages of 15 to 24
- Nearly 210,000 babies were born to teen girls aged 15–19 years in 2016



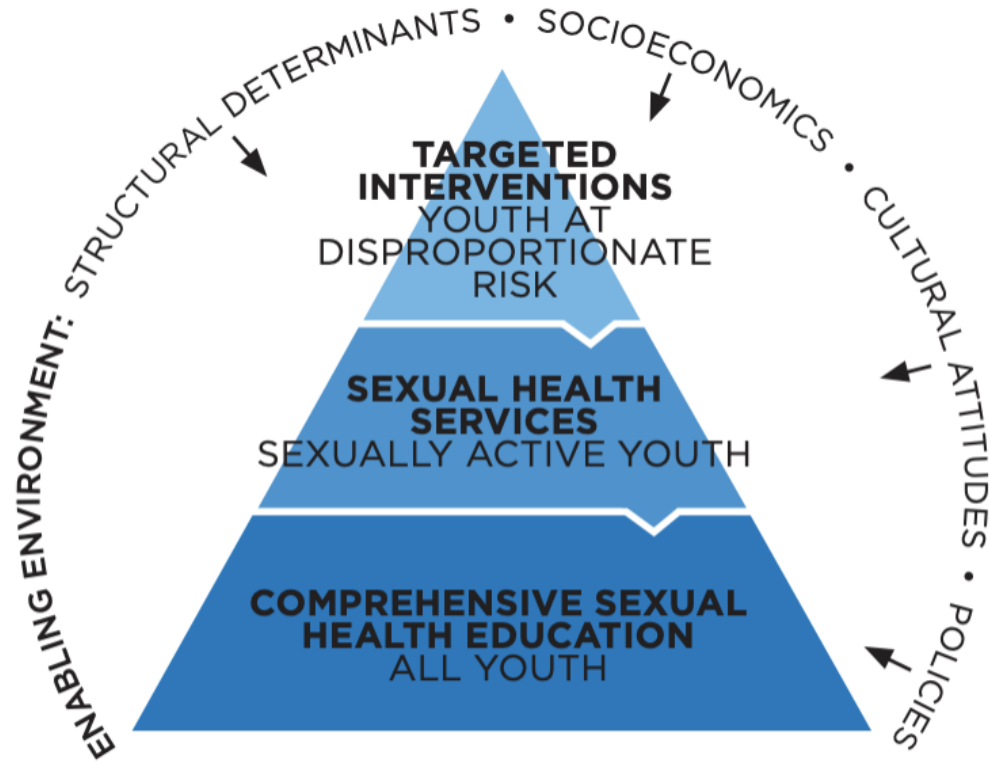
Louisiana has the **highest** rate of primary and secondary **syphilis** among teens in the US

Louisiana has the **2<sup>nd</sup>** highest rates of **gonorrhea** and **chlamydia** among teens

Louisiana has the **3<sup>rd</sup>** highest rate of **HIV** among teens

Louisiana has the **6<sup>th</sup>** highest **teen birth** rate





Advocates for Youth, 2014

## **YOUTH SEXUAL HEALTH PROMOTION: THE BUILDING BLOCKS**



All young people need comprehensive sexual health education

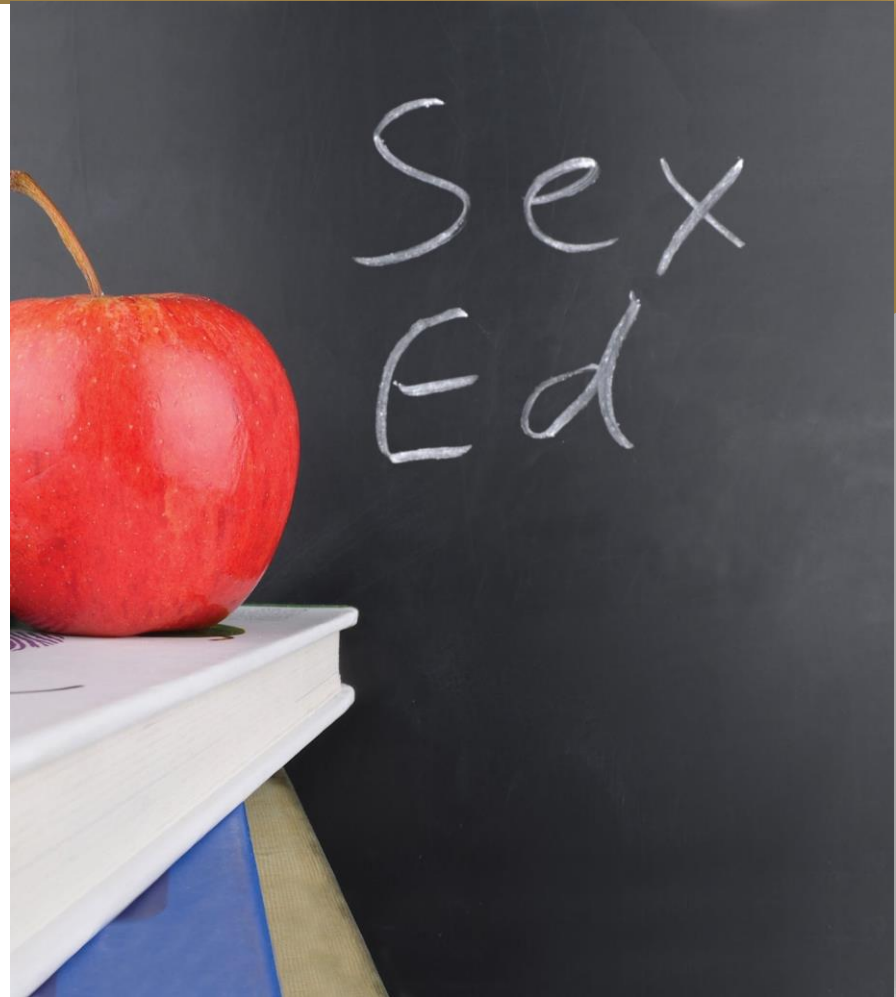
Schools are a good way to reach large numbers of adolescents



**COMPREHENSIVE SEXUAL  
HEALTH EDUCATION**  
ALL YOUTH

# What is comprehensive sex education?

- Planned, sequential curriculum
- Taught by qualified, trained teachers
- Medically accurate and complete
- Age- and developmentally-appropriate
- Builds knowledge and skills



# What is comprehensive sex education?

- Abstinence
- Anatomy
- Physiology
- Families
- Personal safety
- Healthy relationships
- Puberty
- Pregnancy and birth
- Sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV
- Contraceptives
- Media literacy
- Parental responsibilities
- Communication
- Decision-making
- Personal responsibility
- Human sexuality

# Comprehensive Sex Education Works

- Lowers risk of pregnancy
- Delays sexual activity, reduces the number of sexual partners, and increases condom and contraceptive use
- Does not increase sexual activity

# Sexual Health Impacts Education

- 30% of teen girls who dropout of high school cite pregnancy or parenthood as a reason
- Only 38% of teen girls who have a child before age 18 get a high school diploma by age 22
- Less than 2% of teen mothers receive a college diploma by age 30



# Role of Schools in Sex Education

- Schools have a (non-legal) responsibility to provide students with honest, age-appropriate sexual health education
- Sexual health educators are important for young people's health
- Sexual health education content, coursework, and delivery should always follow state laws and school policies
- Should be judgement-free

## Snapshot of CSE in New Orleans

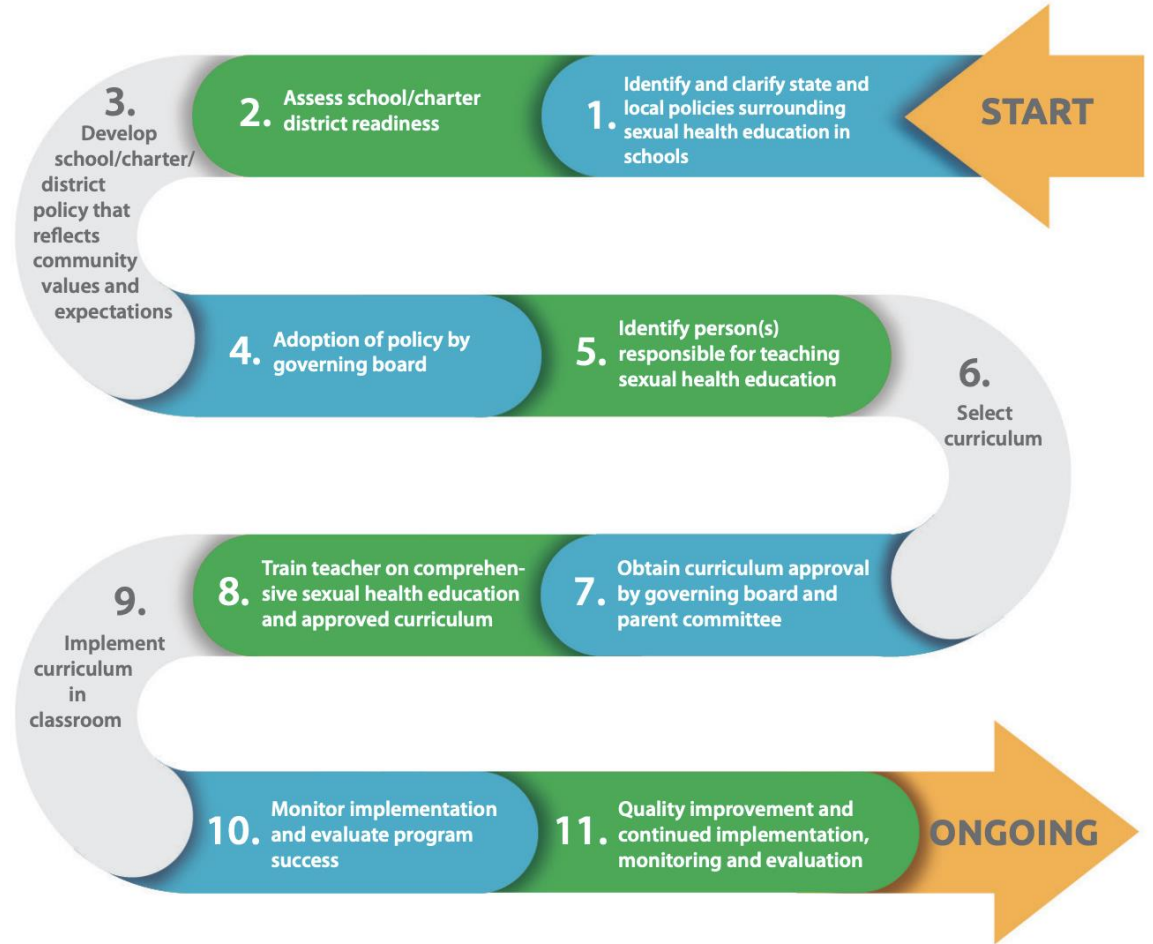
**5** schools are teaching sex education on their own

**36%** of school operators have the required policy in place necessary to teach sex education

**72%** of school operators are ready and want sex education



# Roadmap for Successful Implementation of Comprehensive Sexual Health Education in Louisiana Schools



# Case Study: New Orleans Public Charter Elementary School

- For the past 3 school years, sexual health classes have been implemented in a local charter school starting in 3rd grade as a part of the social and emotional learning curriculum
- Partnership with LPHI to complete roadmap

# Student Feedback

General SEL survey results given in May of each year

- **What were the most useful things you learned in SEL class this year?**  
2016/2017- 11 students referenced sexual health related lessons  
2017/2018- 9 students referenced sexual health related lessons
- **What do you wish to learn more about next year in SEL class?**  
2016/2017- 13 students referenced sexual health related lessons  
2017/2018- 19 students referenced sexual health related lessons

# Student Exit Tickets- 3rd and 4th

## 3rd Grade

Questions: Difference between families, one trusted adult, what to do if someone makes you feel uncomfortable/yucky

- 98% of total answers correct
- 95% of students scored perfect score on exit ticket

## 4th Grade

Questions: Sign of healthy relationship, sign of unhealthy relationship, change of puberty, what to do if sexually abused

- 93% of total answers correct
- 81% students scored perfect score on exit ticket

# Parent/Guardian Feedback

“While I had already discussed anatomy and reproduction, good touch versus bad touch, and body image with my daughter through the years I feel that she gained a deeper understanding and felt empowered by learning about her body in the school setting. As my daughter is entering into puberty I think it’s important that she feel comfortable talking about her body and experiences with trusted adults at school and I feel having a healthy, honest, and well researched sex ed program embedded in her curriculum will help her do that.” - Parent of 3rd grade student

# Parent/Guardian Feedback

"We were very happy with the sexual health program for the 3rd graders. The approach was very much in line with the way we have discussed sexual health with our child at home." - Parent of 3rd grade student

-One 5th grade parent expressed greater comfort with her son asking a student to a school dance because of the SEL curriculum, sexual health curriculum, and conversations about healthy relationships

# Teacher Feedback

“Honestly at first I was apprehensive about the content taught and the need for the program here at school. After being a part of the lessons I am now extremely thankful that our students got to have the program. The focus is around ensuring students are safe and know what is right/wrong at all times. Students learning the correct names is only a small part that gives them the power to know what is private and what is not. I felt the program was taught in a way that is very safe and was really well prepared. 3 adults were in the room during all lessons, students privacy is protected with the written questions and the letters in response, rather than questions and sharing out happening in the room. The entire program was about saying no, what parts are private on your body, and what children should do to remain safe.” - 3rd grade teacher

# Challenges

Training for teachers and possible value conflicts with teachers

Finding the right time of year (not too early, not near testing)

Frontload of work (policy and curriculum adoption, administration buy-in, parent buy-in, etc)

Time in schedule for classes



# Successes

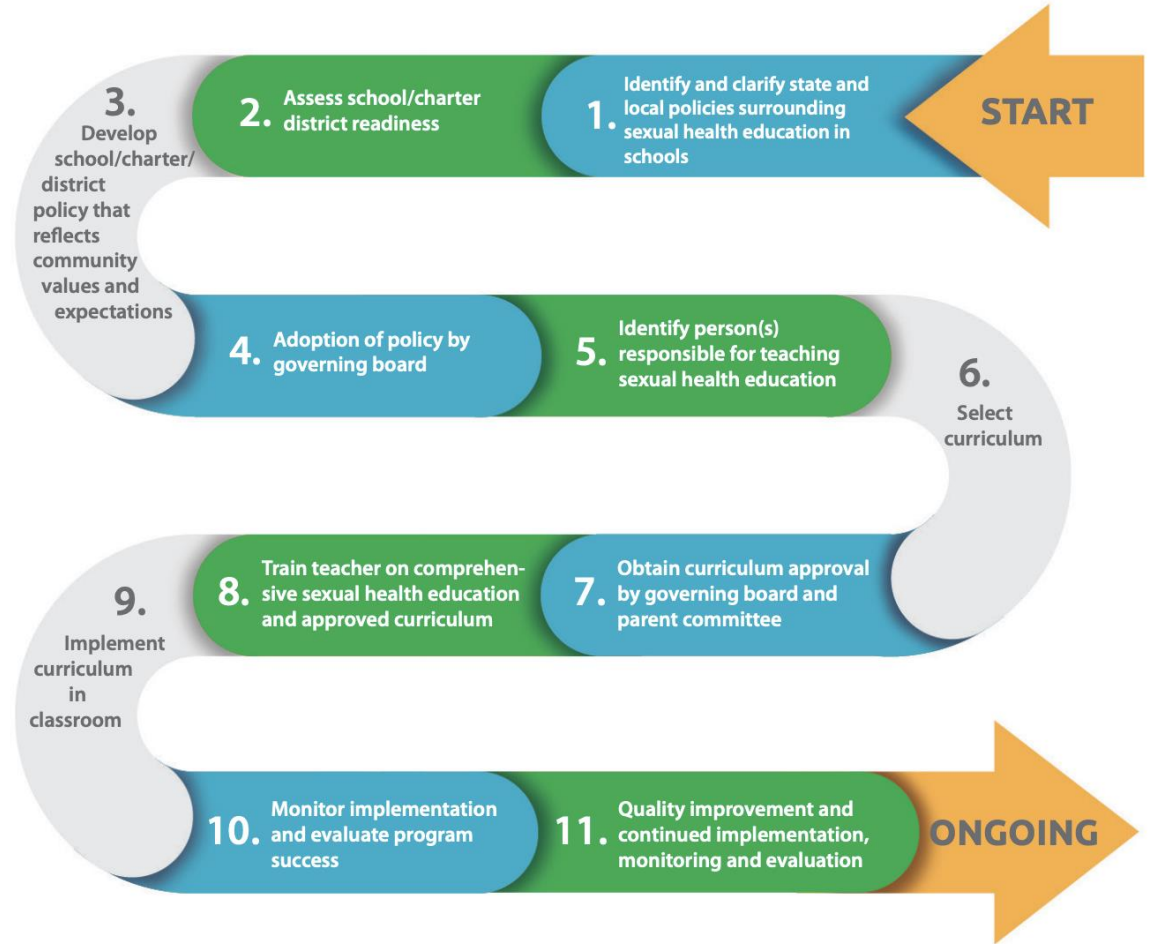
Significantly less reports from grades completing sexual health curriculum related to inappropriate touching, conversations, etc.

Buy in from relevant staff (school nurse, admin, teachers)

Appropriate and timely DCFS referrals made after disclosures

Lots of student questions and interest despite initial embarrassment

# Roadmap for Successful Implementation of Comprehensive Sexual Health Education in Louisiana Schools



# Clarify State and Local Policy

- This can be tricky in Louisiana, the law is (intentionally?) confusing.

# Common Misconceptions

- Many school personnel have indicated that they believed that Louisiana only permitted abstinence-only education
- Therefore, many schools only offer abstinence-based instruction in sexual health education (if any sexual health education is offered at all)



# Clarify State and Local Policy

## Activity

- Use the Louisiana sex education law and BESE policy to answer the following questions

Is sex education required in Louisiana?

# Is sex education required in Louisiana?

## RS 17:281

### SUBPART D-1. PERMITTED COURSES OF STUDY

#### §281. Instruction in sex education

A.(1)(a) Any public elementary or secondary school in Louisiana may, but is not required to, offer instruction in subject matter designated as "sex education", provided such instruction and subject matter is integrated into an existing course of study such as biology, science, physical hygiene, or physical education. When offered, such instruction shall be available also to nongraded special education students at age-appropriate levels. Except as otherwise required to comply with the provisions of Subparagraph (b) of this Paragraph, whether or not instruction in such matter is offered and at what grade level it is to be offered shall be at the option of each public local or parish school board, provided that no such instruction shall be offered in kindergarten or in grades one through six. Such instruction may be offered at times other than during the regular school day, at such times to be determined by each school board. All instruction in "sex education" shall be identified and designated "sex education".

(b) Effective beginning with the spring semester of the 1992-1993 school year and thereafter, whenever instruction in sex education is offered by any school, such instruction shall be available also to any student in such school, regardless of the student's grade level, who is pregnant or who is a mother or father.

**What topics are included in sex education?**



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(b) Effective beginning with the spring semester of the 1992-1993 school year and thereafter, whenever instruction in sex education is offered by any school, such instruction shall be available also to any student in such school, regardless of the student's grade level, who is pregnant or who is a mother or father.

(2) It is the intent of the legislature that, for the purposes of this Section, "sex education" shall mean the dissemination of factual biological or pathological information that is related to the human reproduction system and may include the study of sexually transmitted disease, pregnancy, childbirth, puberty, menstruation, and menopause, as well as the dissemination of factual information about parental responsibilities under the child support laws of the state. It is the intent of the legislature that "sex education" shall not include religious beliefs, practices in human sexuality, nor the subjective moral and ethical judgments of the instructor or other persons. Students shall not be tested, quizzed, or surveyed about their personal or family beliefs or practices in sex, morality, or religion.

(3) No contraceptive or abortifacient drug, device, or other similar product shall be distributed at any public school. No sex education course offered in the public schools of the state shall utilize any sexually explicit materials depicting male or female homosexual activity.

**In what grade can you begin teaching sex education (including puberty)?**

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**Can you teach sex education before 7<sup>th</sup> grade in Orleans Parish?**

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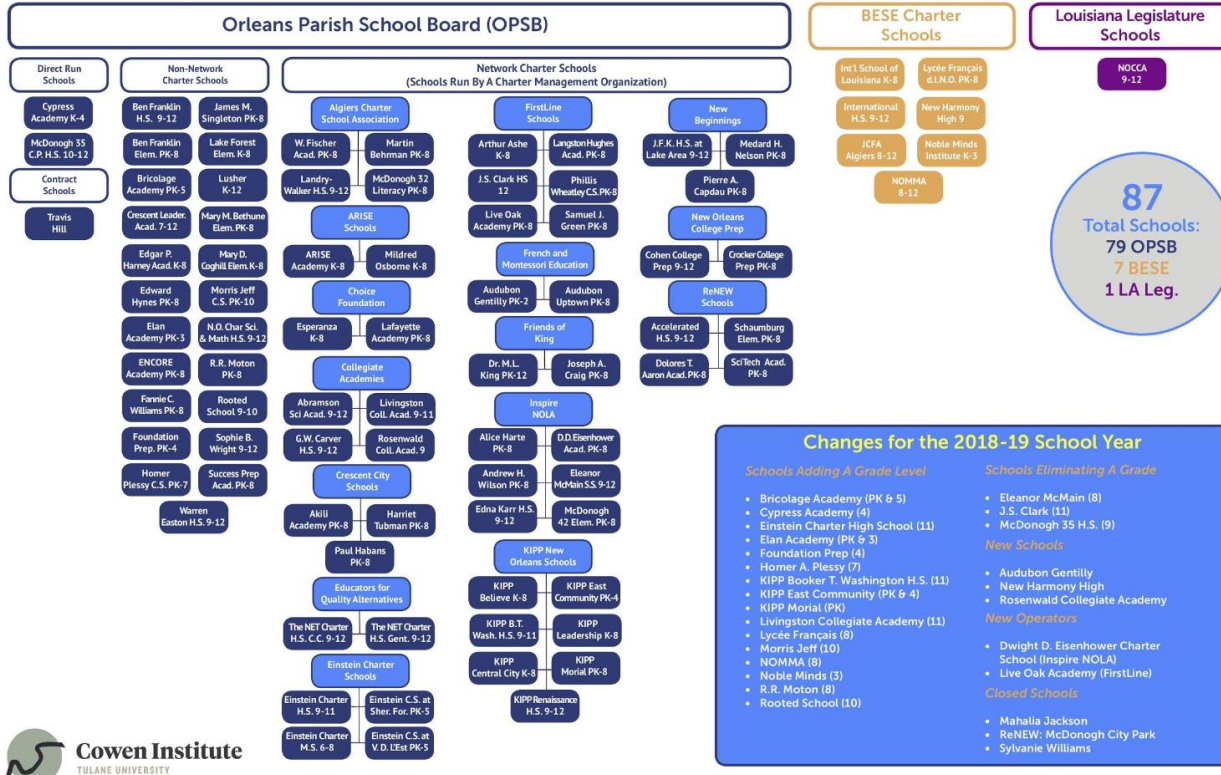
G. A city or parish school system may accept federal funds for programs offering sex education only when the use of such funds does not violate the provisions of this Section and only upon approval by the local school board. The acceptance and use of federal funds for sex education shall in no way be construed to permit the use of any federally supplied materials that violate Louisiana law regulating sex education.

H. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Orleans Parish School Board may offer instruction in sex education at the third grade level or higher.

Acts 1979, No. 480, §1; Acts 1982, No. 581, §1, eff. Aug. 15, 1982; Acts 1987, No. 904, §1; Acts 1988, No. 917, §1, eff. July 26, 1988; Acts 1990, No. 1061, §1, eff. July 27, 1990; Acts 1992, No. 842, §1; Acts 1992, No. 1079, §1, eff. July 14, 1992; Acts 1993, No. 921, §1, eff. June 25, 1993.

# The Blueprint of Public Schools in New Orleans: Governance in 2018-2019

Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) & Louisiana Department of Education



**Should special education students be taught sex education?**

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Can you conduct anonymous surveys that include questions about students' sexual behavior?

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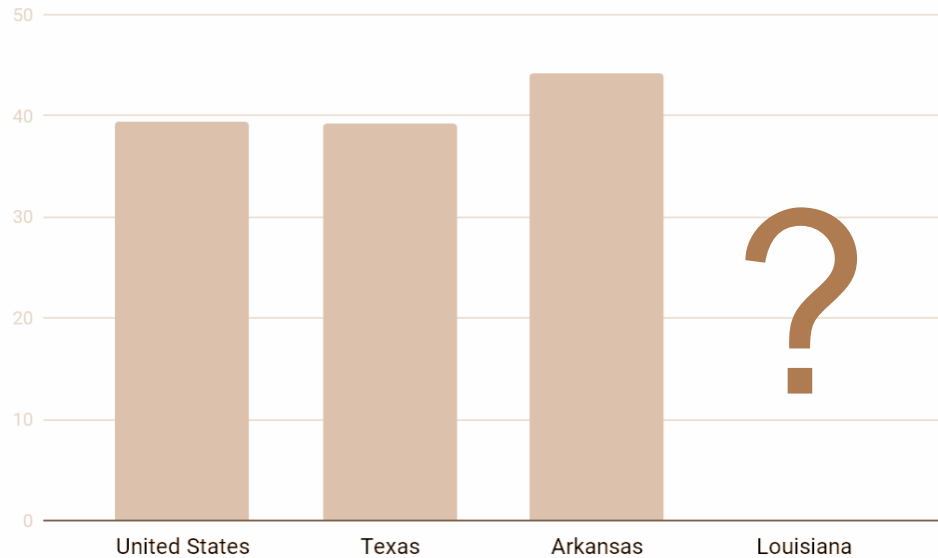
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(2) It is the intent of the legislature that, for the purposes of this Section, "sex education" shall mean the dissemination of factual biological or pathological information that is related to the human reproduction system and may include the study of sexually transmitted disease, pregnancy, childbirth, puberty, menstruation, and menopause, as well as the dissemination of factual information about parental responsibilities under the child support laws of the state. It is the intent of the legislature that "sex education" shall not include religious beliefs, practices in human sexuality, nor the subjective moral and ethical judgments of the instructor or other persons. Students shall not be tested, quizzed, or surveyed about their personal or family beliefs or practices in sex, morality, or religion.

(3) No contraceptive or abortifacient drug, device, or other similar product shall be distributed at any public school. No sex education course offered in the public schools of the state shall utilize any sexually explicit materials depicting male or female homosexual activity.

# High School Students reporting Ever Had Sexual Intercourse

YRBS 2017



Can you teach about risk-reduction methods (condoms, contraception, etc.)?

# Can you teach about risk-reduction methods (condoms, contraception, etc.)?

- It is not explicitly permitted by the law, but it is not prohibited

Can you distribute condoms or prescribe contraceptives on school grounds?

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Students shall not be tested, quizzed, or surveyed about their personal or family beliefs or practices in sex, morality, or religion.

(3) **No contraceptive or abortifacient drug, device, or other similar product shall be distributed at any public school.**

No sex education course offered in the public schools of the state shall utilize any sexually explicit materials depicting male or female homosexual activity.

(4) The major emphasis of any sex education instruction offered in the public schools of this state shall be to encourage sexual abstinence between unmarried persons and any such instruction shall:

(a) Emphasize abstinence from sexual activity outside of marriage as the expected standard for all school-age children.

Can you provide skills-based training on the correct use of condoms (demonstrations, etc.)?



# Can you provide skills-based training on the correct use of condoms (demonstrations, etc.)?

- It is not explicitly permitted by the law, but it is not prohibited
- Students must be monitored during such demonstrations and students are not allowed to remove any condom, opened or unopened, from the classroom where the skills-based training takes place

Can you use sexually explicit materials in sex education courses?

# Can you use sexually explicit materials in sex education courses?

- Technically, the law only prohibits the use of “sexually explicit materials depicting male or female homosexual activity”
- You should not use any sexually explicit materials with your students
- You can and should discuss sexual orientation and gender identity in sex education courses

Does anyone need to approve sex education instructional materials?

# Does anyone need to approve sex education instructional materials?

B. Notwithstanding any other provisions of law, the qualifications for all teachers or instructors in "sex education" shall be established and the selection of all such teachers or instructors shall be made solely and exclusively by the public local or parish school board.

C. All books, films, and other materials to be used in instruction in "sex education" shall be submitted to and approved by the local or parish school board and by a parental review committee, whose membership shall be determined by such board.

D. Any child may be excused from receiving instruction in "sex education" at the option and discretion of his parent or guardian. The local or parish school board shall provide procedures for the administration of this Subsection.

Do parents need to consent for students to participate in sex ed?

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Do parents need to be provided with any other information?



# Do parents need to be provided with any other information?

4. Any student may be excused from receiving instruction in sex education at the option and discretion of his or her parent or guardian according to procedures provided by the LEA. Such instruction may be offered at times other than during the regular school day, as determined by the LEA.

5. An LEA that chooses to offer instruction in sex education shall provide the following information to the parents and/or guardians of the students:

a. a description of the course contents;

b. a listing of course materials to be used; and

c. the qualifications of the instructor(s).

E. All books, films, and other materials to be used in instruction in sex education shall be submitted to and approved by the local educational governing authority and by a parental review committee, whose membership shall be determined by such board.

Do local education agencies need a policy in place in order to teach sex ed?

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# Sexual Health Education Law in Louisiana

- Sexual health education not required
- Sexual health education allowed in grades 7–12
  - Except schools under Orleans Parish School Board, which can start in grade 3
- Must emphasize abstinence
- Can include other risk-reduction methods (i.e., contraception/condoms)
- Surveying students about sexual behavior is not permitted

# Sex Ed Must Include

According to state law

- Abstinence from sexual activity outside of marriage is the expected standard for all students
- Abstinence is a way to avoid unwanted pregnancy and STDs, including HIV
- Each student has the power to control personal behavior, and sexual health education instruction should encourage students to base action on reasoning, self-esteem, and respect for others

# Sex Ed Must NOT Include

## According to state law

- Religious beliefs, practices in human sexuality, or the subjective moral and ethical judgments of the instructor or other persons
- Tests, quizzes, or surveys that ask students about their personal or family beliefs or practices in sex, morality, or religion
- Distribution of any contraceptive or abortifacient drug, device, or other similar product
- Sexually explicit materials depicting male or female homosexual activity
- Counseling about or advocating for abortion

# Sex Ed Laws Nationwide

Guttmacher Institute: <https://www.guttmacher.org/state-policy/explore/sex-and-hiv-education>

- 24 states and the District of Columbia mandate sex education
- 13 states require that instruction be medically accurate
- 26 states and the District of Columbia require that the information be appropriate for the students' age
- 2 states prohibit the program from promoting religion
- 18 states require that instruction on the importance of engaging in sexual activity only within marriage be provided

# Identify person responsible for teaching sexual health education

- What training and preparation do teachers have?
- In what class will sex education be offered?
- Is there a sexual health champion at the school who has shown interest in teaching sex education?



# Identify person responsible for teaching sexual health education

- Educators should have the following competencies to effectively teach sexual health education:
  - Professional Disposition
  - Diversity and Equity
  - Content Knowledge
  - Legal and Professional Ethics
  - Planning
  - Implementation
  - Assessment

# Curriculum Selection

- Involve an interdisciplinary team, including the teacher who will be teaching sex education
- Map potential curricula to state grade level expectations and local policy

# Curriculum Selection

State Education Standards

National Sexuality Education Standards

National Health Education Standards

# Curriculum Selection

- Selection is based on needs of the school, including:
  - Length of time available
  - Who is teaching
  - When it will be offered
  - Funding availability
  - Effectiveness

# Characteristics of Effective Programs

- Have a clear message that not having sex or that using contraception consistently and carefully is the right thing to do
- Last more than a few weeks
- Have well-trained leaders who believe in the program
- Actively engage participants and have them personalize the information
- Address peer pressure
- Teach communication skills
- Reflect the age, sexual experience, and culture of young people in the program

# Training

- Educators will likely need training on a variety of topics:
  - State and local policies
  - Sexual health content
  - Core skills for teaching sexual health
  - Specific curricula

# Program Implementation

- Parents must be notified before students receive sex education instruction
- Parents may excuse their student from participating in sex education



# Monitoring & Evaluation

- Pre- and post-test to measure change in knowledge
- Fidelity monitoring
- Participant satisfaction surveys
- Interviews with instructors



# Select Schools Based on Readiness

- Capacity Assessment Tool
  - LPHI has adapted the Capacity Assessment and Planning Tool from the WISEtoolkit ([www.wisetoolkit.org](http://www.wisetoolkit.org))
- 4 Stages of Readiness:
  - Not Ready
  - Getting Ready
  - Ready for Action
  - Ready for Implementation

# Capacity Assessment: Activity

- How many students are eligible for sexual health?
- When and how could this be implemented?
- Who are allies or untapped advocates of sexual health?
- What are the barriers you may face?
- How can you overcome these obstacles?
- How will parents/guardians react?
- Are there specific incidents you can use as leverage with admin?
- Realistically- how much time can you devote to sexual health?

**Create a next step/action step based on your school's current capacity**



15 minute break

Session resumes at 2:45

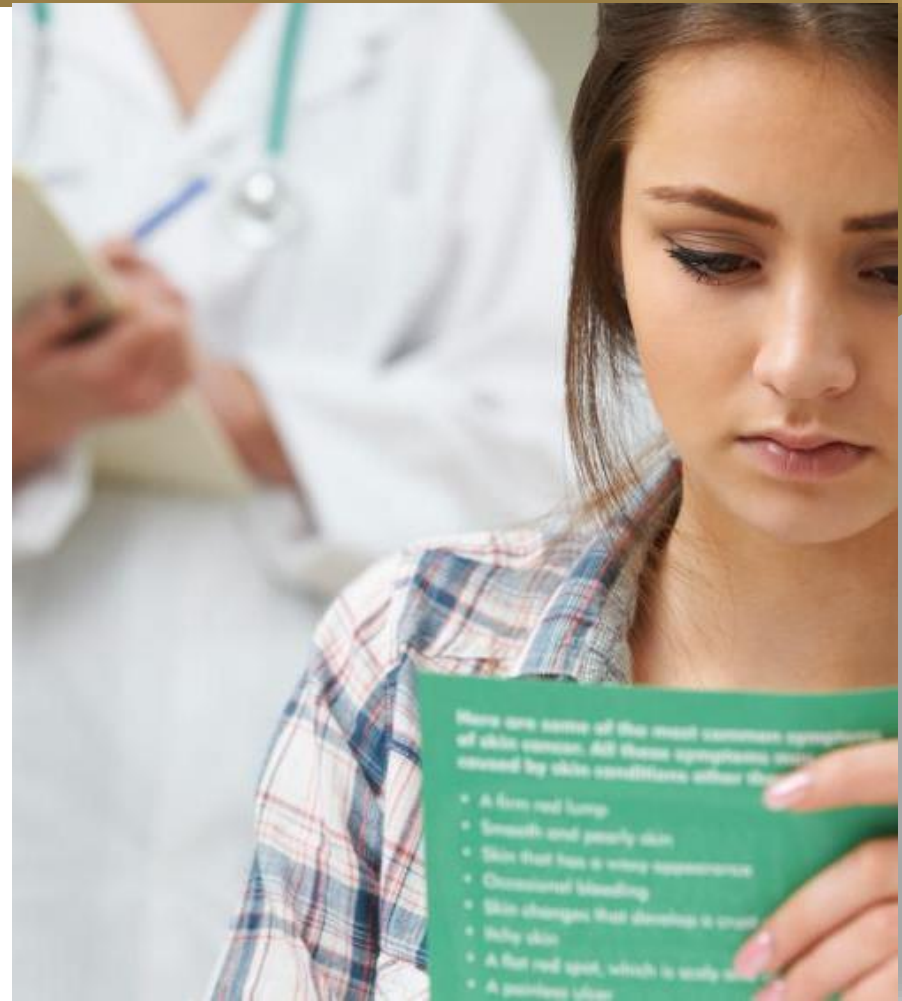
Sexually active youth need sexual and reproductive health services



To be accessible to adolescents, reproductive health services must be youth-friendly and meet adolescents' expectations and needs

# What makes health services youth-friendly?

- Help adolescents develop health literacy
- Protect patient rights
- Guarantee equity & non-discrimination
- Ensure community support
- Offer an appropriate package of services



# What sexual health services do adolescents need?

Teens' reproductive health needs should be assessed at every visit

Services should be available without having an exam

Contraceptive counseling should be provided in order of effectiveness

A wide range of contraception should be made available

Dual-protection should be promoted

A minor in Louisiana can consent to their own medical treatment without permission from a parent or guardian

# Adolescent Health Care Confidentiality in Louisiana

- There is no guarantee to confidentiality of health information for minors in Louisiana
  - While health care providers are not required to inform the parents of a minor about any health services provided, they have the right to do so at their discretion



Confidentiality concerns are the  
**#1 reason** why teens might not  
seek medical care

# Minors' Consent Laws Nationwide

Guttmacher Institute: <https://www.guttmacher.org/state-policy/explore/overview-minors-consent-law>

- 26 states and the District of Columbia allow all minors (12 and older) to consent to contraceptive services
- All states and the District of Columbia allow all minors to consent to STI services
- 32 states and the District of Columbia explicitly allow all minors to consent to prenatal care
- 21 states require that at least one parent consent to a minor's abortion, while 11 states require prior notification of at least one parent
- 28 states and the District of Columbia allow all minor parents to choose to place their child for adoption

# Project Connect

- Evidence-based, scalable intervention designed to increase youth access to sexual and reproductive health care services
- Identifies providers who are already doing a good job of serving youth, then links youth to those resources
- A resource guide of youth-friendly services is created and distributed to youth through schools and other avenues



**geaux  
talk**

**Connect 2 Care**  
Teen Resource Guide

Version 3.0  
November 2017

# Crisis Pregnancy Centers: Beware!



# Values



# My Values

- Complete the “My Values” worksheet
- Do not write your name on the worksheet
- Do not use an identifiable pen/pencil

# My Values



# Processing

- What was your experience of this activity? How easy or difficult was it representing someone else's values?
- Why do we need to think about our own values when teaching sex education?
- If you are/were a parent, how would you feel if values contradictory to yours were taught to your kids?
- What are some things that you will consider when facilitating lessons on values with your students?





**TARGETED  
INTERVENTIONS  
YOUTH AT  
DISPROPORTIONATE  
RISK**

Youth at disproportionate risk for sexual health disparities need targeted interventions designed specifically to build self-efficacy and agency

These interventions are often implemented by community-based organizations who serve these youth

# What can put students at high risk?

- Lack of education
- Homelessness
- Alcohol or drug use
- Sexual or physical abuse
- Mental illness
- Foster care
- Discrimination
- Being a teen parent
- Being the child of a teen parent
- Having divorced parents
- Involvement in the juvenile justice system
- Immigration

# Responding to Challenging Questions



# Underlying Motivations

- Information and/or clarification
- Am I normal?
- “Shock” or “Can I get you?” questions
- Permission seeking
- Values based

# Helpful Tips

- Be aware of your body language and tone of voice
- Respond to or at least acknowledge all questions, affirming the learner
- Paraphrase the slang with the correct terminology
- If you don't know the answer, admit it
- Give brief response to developmentally inappropriate questions
- Ask for questions in writing
- Practice responding to challenging questions

# Responding to Challenging Questions

1. Affirm the learner
2. Identify the motivation and type of question
3. Correct any misinformation and then answer the factual parts of the question
4. Explore a range of values
5. Refrain from stating your own values

## Q: I masturbate, is that okay?

A: That's a great question; a lot of young people wonder about masturbation. Masturbation is when a person strokes or touches their genitals for pleasure. I can't share my own beliefs about whether or not its ok to masturbate because families have really different beliefs about masturbation. One thing I can tell you is that masturbation will not physically hurt your body. Nor will it lead to blindness, or make hair grown on your palms, or drive you "insane." Some families believe it's ok as long as you're in a private place. Other families believe it's never ok. You need to check with your family or another trusted adult to find out how they feel about it. Have I answered your question? If I didn't, you can leave another question in the box or you can talk to me after class.

# Practice Session

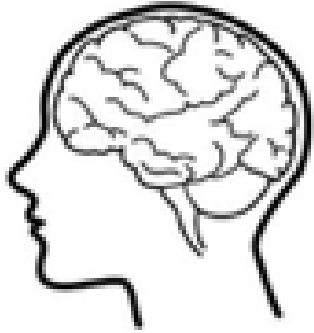
- Form groups
- Each person gets a Question Card
- Work through the 5-Step Question model, responding to each step
- Take turns answering the questions in your group



# Processing

- How did it feel to use this model?
- How is using this model different than your existing strategy?
- How are you going to use this with your students?

# Reflecting...





Questions?

# Thank you!

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