



INDEPENDENT PROCEDURE

Title: **EXEMPTION FROM INSTRUCTION
RELATED TO THE HUMAN
DEVELOPMENT AND SEXUAL
HEALTH EXPECTATIONS IN *The
Ontario Curriculum: Health and
Physical Education, Grades 1-8,
2019***

Procedure No.: 9059
Effective Date: 2020 September 22

Department: Learning Support Services

Reference(s): - Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum No. 162

Introduction/Rationale

In August of 2019 the Ministry of Education introduced PPM 162 directing Boards to develop a procedure that allows students to be exempt from the sexual health expectations found in strand D in *The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019*.

The Thames Valley District School Board recognizes that the Health and Physical Education curriculum promotes the healthy development and overall well-being of all students. The Board recognizes that the curriculum does not replace the role of parent(s)/guardian(s) as the primary educators of their children with respect to learning about values, appropriate behaviour, and ethno-cultural, spiritual, and personal beliefs and traditions. The purpose of this procedure is to outline the process for exemption from instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations found in Strand D-Healthy Living of *The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019*.

This procedure outlines the conditions under which exemptions may occur, the communications process to be included and the supervision of exempted students.

Administered By:	Learning Support Services
Amendment Date(s):	

1.0 Conditions for Exemption

- Exemptions are limited to instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations found in strand D of *The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019*. Students will not be exempted from instruction related to any other expectations in this curriculum or related to expectations in other curriculum subjects;
- Exemptions will be granted only for instruction related to *all* the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in a student's grade, and not for instruction related to selected expectations or groups of expectation;
- References to human development and sexual health made by teachers, board staff, or students outside the intentional teaching of content related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations are not included in the exemption procedure;
- There will be no academic penalty for an exemption;
- There will be no assessment, evaluation or reporting of exempted students' achievement of Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in their particular grade. Exempted students' grade in health and physical education will be determined on the basis of the overall expectations in strand D of the curriculum, without consideration of the specific expectations under Human Development and Sexual Health.

2.0 Notice and Communications

School administrators will ensure that:

- parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with a list of all Human Development and Sexual Health expectations *by grade*;
- parent(s)/guardian(s) are informed that they can choose to have their child or children exempted from instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health expectations by completing and returning an exemption form for each child;
- a standard exemption form is available to parent(s)/guardian(s) every school year, accommodating the timelines specified below. Schools may also choose to accept separate written requests for an exemption;
- parent(s)/guardian(s) are notified at least twenty school days before the start of the period of instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations;
- parent(s)/guardian(s) are informed of the date by which the completed exemption form or written request must be submitted in order for their child to be exempted from instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations. The deadline for parent(s)/guardian(s) to submit their completed exemption form or written request must not be more than five

school days before the start of the period of instruction;

- it is made clear that, in the case of an unforeseen event, schools have the authority to move the period of instruction to a later date in the school year and must give notice of the change to parent(s)/guardian(s) as soon as reasonably possible.

3.0 **Process**

Schools administrators will:

- allow students to be exempt from instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations without academic penalty when a request for an exemption has been made from a parent/guardian in writing in accordance with this procedure;
- acknowledge the receipt of exemption forms from parent(s)/guardian(s) using appropriate means of communication;
- make the final decision about whether to accept or reject a request for an exemption that does not fall within the parameters set out in this procedure (e.g., if the exemption form is returned to the school during the scheduled period of instruction rather than by the school's official submission date).

4.0 **Supervision of Exempted Students**

Parent(s)/guardian(s) may choose **one** of the following options for their child:

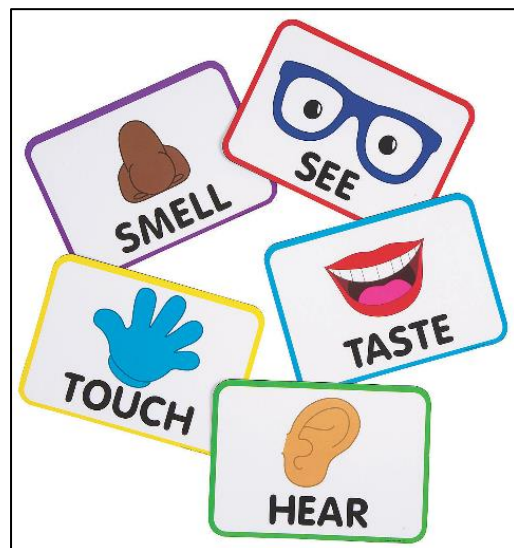
- to remain in the classroom during the exemption period without taking part in instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health, and to be assigned work or activities by the teacher that are *unrelated* to Human Development and Sexual Health; *or*
- to leave the classroom for the duration of the instruction and remain in the school under supervision. The student's activities during the exemption period will be at the discretion of the teacher or principal; *or*
- to be released into the care of the parent(s)/guardian(s) or the parent(s)/guardian(s)'s approved designate.

Human Development and Sexual Health in Grade 1

The revised 2019 Health and Physical Education Curriculum contains some revisions to several topic areas. One component of the curriculum that has undergone some noteworthy change is the section of the program dealing with Human Development and Sexual Health. The curriculum aims to develop relevant and appropriate understanding of important topics related to physical development and sexual health.

In grade 1, topics include:

- ❖ **Body parts, including genitalia**
- ❖ **Body positive language**
- ❖ **Five senses and how each functions**
- ❖ **Proper hygienic procedures**
- ❖ **Prevention of spread of diseases**



Human Development and Sexual Health in Grade 2

The revised 2019 Health and Physical Education Curriculum contains some revisions to several topic areas. One component of the curriculum that has undergone some noteworthy change is the section of the program dealing with Human Development and Sexual Health. The curriculum aims to develop relevant and appropriate understanding of important topics related to physical development and sexual health.

In grade 2, topics include:

- ❖ **Basic stages of human development**
- ❖ **Factors important to healthy growth and living**
- ❖ **How their bodies work**
- ❖ **How to continue body appreciation as they grow and change**
- ❖ **Healthy oral hygiene practices**

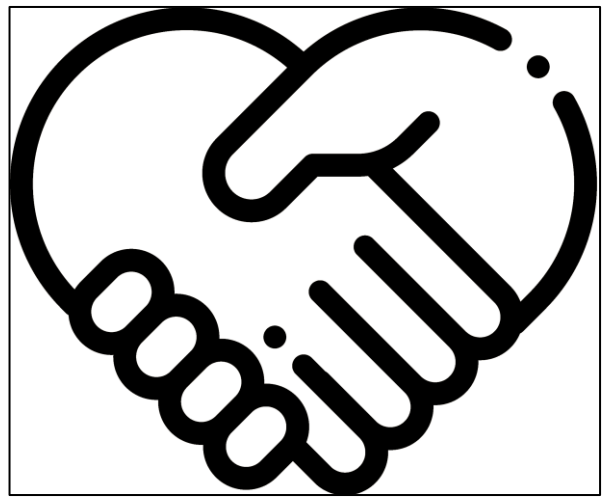
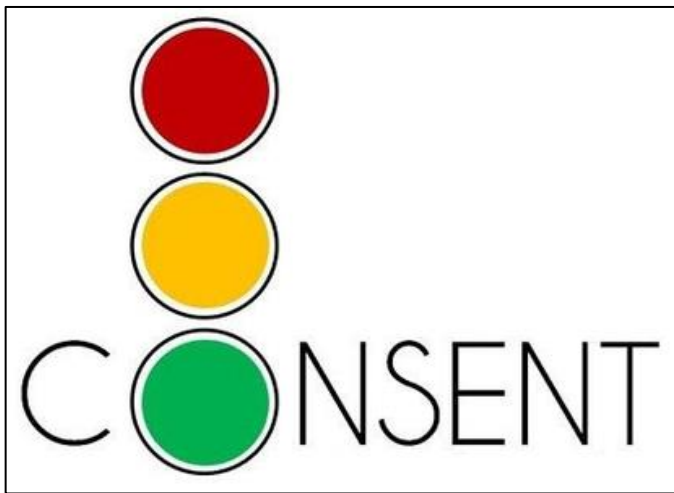


Human Development and Sexual Health in Grade 3

The revised 2019 Health and Physical Education Curriculum contains some revisions to several topic areas. One component of the curriculum that has undergone some noteworthy change is the section of the program dealing with Human Development and Sexual Health. The curriculum aims to develop relevant and appropriate understanding of important topics related to physical development and sexual health.

In grade 3, topics include:

- ❖ **Healthy relationships**
- ❖ **Responding to bullying**
- ❖ **Communicating consent**
- ❖ **Factors that affect physical and social-emotional development**
- ❖ **Factors that contribute to a healthy body image**
- ❖ **Visible and invisible differences**
- ❖ **Showing respect for differences in others**



Human Development and Sexual Health in Grade 4

The revised 2019 Health and Physical Education Curriculum contains some revisions to several topic areas. One component of the curriculum that has undergone some noteworthy change is the section of the program dealing with Human Development and Sexual Health. The curriculum aims to develop relevant and appropriate understanding of important topics related to physical development and sexual health.

In grade 4, topics include:

- ❖ Physical changes at puberty
- ❖ Emotional and social impacts as a result of these changes
- ❖ Personal care needs
- ❖ Personal hygiene at puberty

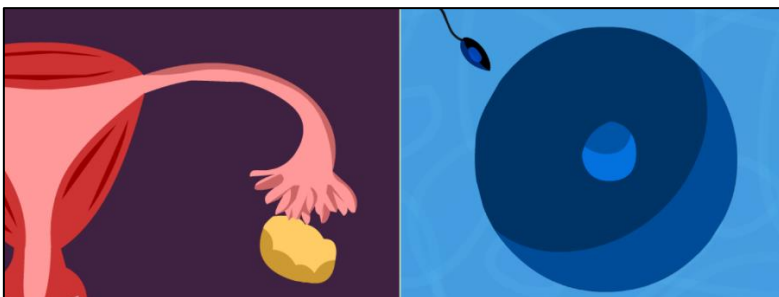


Human Development and Sexual Health in Grade 5

The revised 2019 Health and Physical Education Curriculum contains some revisions to several topic areas. One component of the curriculum that has undergone some noteworthy change is the section of the program dealing with Human Development and Sexual Health. The curriculum aims to develop relevant and appropriate understanding of important topics related to physical development and sexual health.

In grade 5, topics include:

- ❖ **Parts of the reproductive system**
- ❖ **Body changes during puberty**
- ❖ **Menstruation and spermatogenesis, and how they relate to reproduction**
- ❖ **Factors contributing to a person's self-concept**
- ❖ **Sexual orientation**
- ❖ **How self-concept relates to personal health and well-being**
- ❖ **Emotional and interpersonal stresses related to puberty**
- ❖ **Signs indicating mental health concerns**
- ❖ **Strategies to manage stress and build resilience**
- ❖ **Strategies to keep open communication with parents and caring adults**
- ❖ **Strategies to enhance their mental health and emotional well-being**



Human Development and Sexual Health in Grade 6

The revised 2019 Health and Physical Education Curriculum contains some revisions to several topic areas. One component of the curriculum that has undergone some noteworthy change is the section of the program dealing with Human Development and Sexual Health. The curriculum aims to develop relevant and appropriate understanding of important topics related to physical development and sexual health.

In grade 6, topics include:

- ❖ **Impacts of viewing sexually explicit media, including pornography**
- ❖ **Strategies to help build confidence throughout adolescence**
- ❖ **Building and maintaining healthy relationships throughout adolescence**
- ❖ **Making informed decisions that demonstrate respect for themselves and others**
- ❖ **How the concept of consent helps build healthy relationships**
- ❖ **Effects of stereotypes and assumptions regarding gender roles and expectations, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, culture, mental health, and abilities, on an individual's self-concept, social inclusion, and relationships with others**
- ❖ **Appropriate ways of responding to harmful assumptions and stereotypes that can lead to destructive social attitudes, including homophobia and racism**

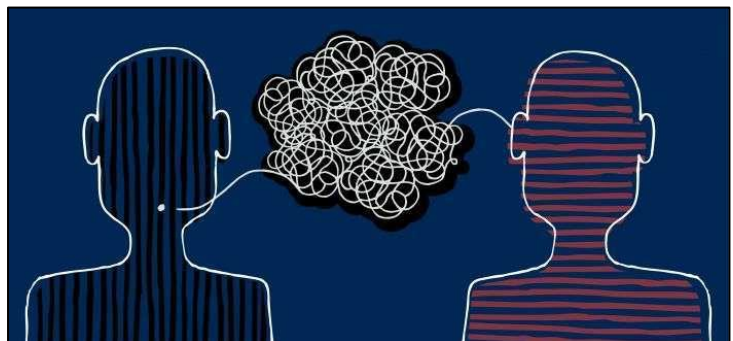
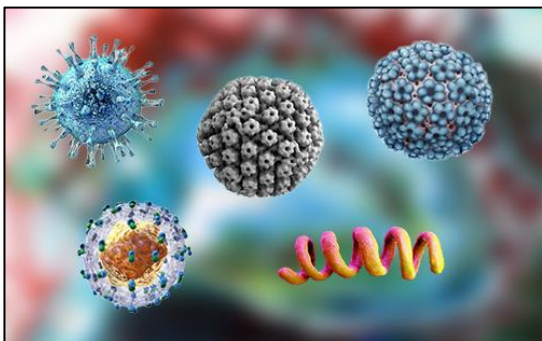


Human Development and Sexual Health in Grade 7

The revised 2019 Health and Physical Education Curriculum contains some revisions to several topic areas. One component of the curriculum that has undergone some noteworthy change is the section of the program dealing with Human Development and Sexual Health. The curriculum aims to develop relevant and appropriate understanding of important topics related to physical development and sexual health.

In grade 7, topics include:

- ❖ **The importance of having a shared understanding with a partner about the following: delaying sexual activity until they are older; the reasons for not engaging in sexual activity; the concept of consent, the legal age of consent, and how consent is communicated; and, in general, the need to communicate clearly with each other when making decisions about sexual activity in a healthy, loving relationship**
- ❖ **Identifying sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections (STBBIs)**
- ❖ **Describing symptoms of STBBIs**
- ❖ **Preventing STBBIs and/or unplanned pregnancy**
- ❖ **How relationships with others and sexual health may be affected by the physical and emotional changes associated with puberty**



Human Development and Sexual Health in Grade 8

The revised 2019 Health and Physical Education Curriculum contains some revisions to several topic areas. One component of the curriculum that has undergone some noteworthy change is the section of the program dealing with Human Development and Sexual Health. The curriculum aims to develop relevant and appropriate understanding of important topics related to physical development and sexual health.

In grade 8, topics include:

- ❖ **Factors that influence decisions about sexual activity**
- ❖ **Sources of support regarding sexual health**
- ❖ **Understanding gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation**
- ❖ **Positive self-concept for individuals of all identities and orientations**
- ❖ **Understanding abstinence, contraception, and the use of effective and suitable protection to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections (STBBIs)**
- ❖ **Understanding the concept of consent, as well as the skills they need to apply, in order to make safe and healthy decisions about sexual activity**
- ❖ **Analysing the attractions and benefits associated with being in a healthy relationship**
- ❖ **Benefits, risks, and drawbacks, for themselves and others, of relationships involving different degrees of sexual intimacy**



Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

The provincial government has made changes to the Health and Physical Education curriculum. The most important changes relate to the Human Development and Sexual Health topics. For your information, below are the specific topics covered in the Human Development and Sexual Health curriculum by grade:

Grade	Understanding Health Concepts	Making Healthy Choices	Making Connections for Healthy Living
Grade 1	Body parts Senses and functions	Hygienic procedures	
Grade 2	Stages of development Body appreciation	Oral health	
Grade 3	Healthy relationships, bullying, consent Physical and social-emotional development		Visible, invisible differences, respect
Grade 4	Puberty – changes; emotional, social impact	Puberty, personal hygiene and care	
Grade 5	Reproductive system Menstruation, spermatogenesis	Self-concept, sexual orientation Emotional, interpersonal stresses - puberty	
Grade 6	Sexual explicit media	Understanding of puberty changes, healthy relationships Decision making consent	Stereotypes and assumptions – impacts and strategies for responding
Grade 7	Delaying sexual activity Sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections (STBBIs) STBBIs and pregnancy prevention	Sexual health and decision making	Relationship changes at puberty
Grade 8	Decisions about sexual activity: supports Gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, self-concept	Decision making consideration and skills	Relationships and intimacy

While all parts of the Health and Physical Education program are important the Board recognizes and respects the parent or guardian's values and beliefs related to their child(ren) learning this content at school. Exercising their right as primary educators of their child(ren), parent(s)/guardian(s) may exempt their child(ren) from instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health expectations, without consequence.

Please see attached an exemption form, specifying the dates currently planned for instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health. In the case of unforeseen events, the school may move these periods of instruction to later dates as needed, in which case notice will be provided as soon as possible. If you wish to exempt your child from instruction of the Human Development and Sexual Health component of the program, please complete the form for each child being exempted, and return to the school by the date specified on the form. Please note that exemptions can be provided for instruction related to *all* the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in a student's grade, but not for instruction related to *selected* expectations or topics.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your child's Health and Physical Education teacher, or the main office.

Sincerely,

Principal



Exemption from Instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health

Having reviewed the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in the elementary Ontario Health and Physical Education curriculum for my child's grade, I would like my child to be exempted from instruction related to these expectations, without academic penalty.

During the exemption period, I would like my child to [*select one only*]:

- ☐ remain in the classroom without taking part in instructional activities related to Human Development and Sexual Health. I understand that my child's activities *unrelated* to Human Development and Sexual Health during the exemption period will be at the discretion of the teacher;
- ☐ leave the classroom and remain in the school under staff supervision. I understand that my child's activities during the exemption period will be at the discretion of the teacher or principal;
- ☐ be released into my care or the care of my approved designate (off-site).

NOTE: If one of the three options above is not selected, the principal or the principal's designate will determine where in the school the child is to remain during the exemption period.

Notice of Period of Instruction*

For the 20__ - __ school year, the period of instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations in your child's grade will start on _____ (insert date).

I understand and acknowledge the following statements:

- 1.1 the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in strand D of the health and physical education curriculum are different in every grade, so I must submit a completed exemption form every school year, for each child, in order for the child to be exempted from instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in that school year;
- 1.2 references to or conversations about sexual health-related concepts among teachers, school staff, or other students outside formal instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health are not subject to this exemption;
- 1.3 my child will continue to receive instruction related to all other elementary health and physical education curriculum expectations;
- 1.4 requests for exemption made by phone, or exemption forms or written requests that do not have a parental signature, will not be accepted;

1.5 this exemption form must be returned by _____[enter date] for my child to be excluded from instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in strand D of *The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1–8, 2019*.

Child's Last Name

Child's First Name

Parent(s)/Guardian(s)'s Name (print)

Parent(s)/Guardian(s)'s Signature

Grade and Class

Date

PLEASE NOTE:

You will receive an acknowledgement from the school by _____ [letter/email/text] by _____ [insert date].

If you do not receive an acknowledgement, please contact: _____ [contact name here].

Please return this signed form no later than: _____ [insert date].

For any questions about this form, please contact the school at _____ [insert school phone #].

Notice of Collection: The personal information provided on this form and any other correspondence relating to involvement in Board programs is collected by the Thames Valley District School Board under the authority of the Education Act and Regulations (R.S.O. 1990 c.E.2) as amended. The information will be used to register the student in a school, for the collection of applicable student/activity fees, as well as for any consistent purpose. Information is shared with employees such that they may carry out their job duties. In addition the information may be used or disclosed to comply with legislation, for compelling circumstances affecting health and safety or discipline, as required in circumstances related to law enforcement matters, or in accordance with any other Act. For questions about this collection, contact the Board's Freedom of Information Co-ordinator, Thames Valley District School Board, 1250 Dundas Street, London, Ontario, N5W 5P2, Telephone 519-452-2000 ext. 20218.

(This form will be retained in the student's OSR for a period of one (1) year.)