

HWDSB

Parent Guide: Health and Physical Education



Purpose of this Booklet

At Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board, we are committed to the health and well-being of all our students. We believe our students deserve to have the knowledge to keep themselves safe and to act with care and consideration for themselves, their peers, and all people in their communities.

This booklet has been developed to help parents, guardians and caregivers understand what is taught through the Health and Physical Education Curriculum.



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Parent Guide: Ontario Health and Physical Education Curriculum Growth & Human Development

Introduction

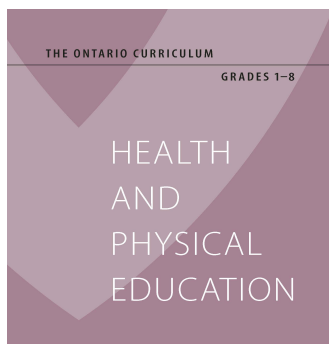
The 2019 health and physical education curriculum includes updated expectations in a number of areas, including mental health. Opportunities to learn about mental health are enhanced through the inclusion of new expectations on mental health literacy; new expectations on social-emotional learning skills, to be taught in connection with all parts of the curriculum; and enhanced connections to mental health within existing curriculum expectations.

The health and physical education curriculum is based on the vision that the knowledge and skills students acquire in the program will benefit them throughout their lives and enable them to thrive in an ever-changing world by helping them develop mental health and well-being, physical and health literacy, and the comprehension, capacity, and commitment they will need to lead healthy, active lives and promote healthy, active living.

The HWDSB Approach

The Hamilton Wentworth District School Board is committed to the health and well-being of all our students. We believe our students deserve to have the knowledge to keep themselves safe and to act with care and consideration for themselves, their peers and all people in their communities.

- We will teach the 2019 Health and Physical Education curriculum, as directed by the Ministry of Education.
- Our staff is committed to teaching the 2019 curriculum including topics such as healthy eating, personal safety and injury prevention, substance use, addictions, and related behaviours, human development and sexual health, and mental health literacy with our continued comprehensive safety and well-being approach, in a professional and respectful manner that is both developmentally and age-appropriate.



2019 Curriculum

It is important that students be connected to the curriculum; that they see themselves in what is taught, how it is taught, and how it applies to the world at large.

The health and physical education curriculum promotes important educational values and goals that support the development of character. These include striving to achieve one's personal

best, equity and fair play, respect for diversity, sensitivity and respect for individual requirements and needs, and good health and well-being. These values are reinforced in other curriculum areas, as well as by society itself.

The curriculum expectations are age-related but not age-dependent – the readiness of students to learn will depend on their individual physical and emotional development.

They should also ensure that all students – students of all cultures, abilities, genders, and sexual orientations – feel included and recognized in all activities and discussions.

Students therefore need to be aware of points of view (e.g., those of parents and students), the context (e.g., the beliefs and practices of the time and place in which a text is read or written), the background of the person interacting with the text (upbringing, friends, school and other communities, education, experiences) ...and silences in the text (e.g., voices of a person or group not heard).

Human Development and Sexual Health

The Healthy Living strand in the health and physical education curriculum helps students develop an understanding of the factors that contribute to healthy development, a sense of personal responsibility for lifelong health, and a respect for their own health in relation to others and the world around them. Students will learn skills they need to develop, maintain, and enjoy healthy living as well as to solve problems, make decisions, and set goals that are directly related to their personal health and mental health and well-being. Learning how to establish, monitor, and maintain healthy relationships is a key part of this strand. The focus of the learning in this strand is not merely on health knowledge but rather on higher-level thinking connected to the application of skills for healthy living.

Human development and sexual health education is more than simply teaching young people about the anatomy and physiology of reproduction. For example, sexual health education focuses on an understanding of sexuality in its broadest context—sexual development, reproductive health, choice and sexual readiness, consent, abstinence, and protection, to interpersonal relationships, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, affection, love, pleasure, body image, and gender roles. Acquiring information and skills and developing attitudes, beliefs, and values related to identity and relationships are lifelong processes.

Parents and guardians are the primary educators of their children. As children grow and develop relationships with family members and others, they learn about appropriate behaviours and values, as well as about sexuality.

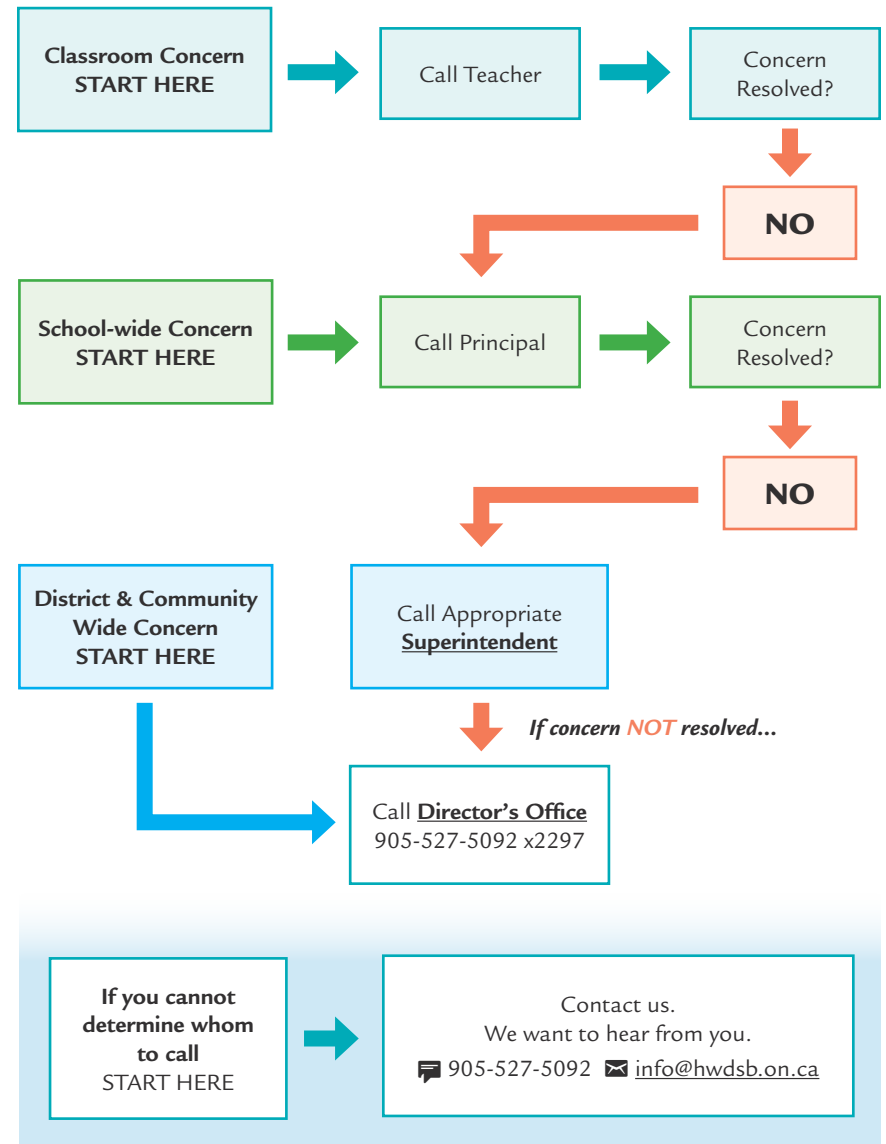
The overall and specific expectations in this strand are age-appropriate and should be addressed with sensitivity and respect for the uniqueness of each individual. Because of the sensitive nature of these topics, parents or guardians, as always should be informed about the content of the curriculum and time of delivery. Teachers and learners must develop a comfort level with these topics so that information can be discussed openly, honestly, and in an atmosphere of mutual respect. The “human development and sexual health” expectations should be addressed only after teachers have developed rapport with their students.

Notifying Families of Health Topics being Taught

As in previous years, families will be notified when the Human Development and Sexual Health components of the curriculum will be addressed. This communication will come from the school at least 20 school days before the subject matter is taught. We will exempt students from instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health when a parent/caregiver completes the HWDSB Health and Physical Education Exemption Form, found at the back of this guide. In keeping with our commitment to effective communication and building strong relationships, we encourage families to contact the classroom teacher with questions or concerns. Our Addressing Concerns at HWDSB chart provides more direction on who to speak to and when.



Addressing Concerns @HWDSB



Your **Trustee** can guide you through this process.

Find your Trustee and/or Superintendent by calling the Officer of Trustee Services at 905-527-5092 x2279, or go online to your school's website: www.hwdsb.on.ca/your-school-name/contact



Grade 1 Curriculum

Healthy Living

Healthy Eating:

- Food for healthy bodies and minds
- Canada's Food Guide
- Hunger and thirst cues

Personal Safety and Injury Prevention:

- Safe practices - personal safety
- Caring versus exploitative behaviours and feelings, including bullying; consent
- Safety at school
- Staying safe at home, in the community, outdoors and online

Substance Use, Addictions and Related Behaviours:

- Unhealthy habits, healthy alternatives

Human Development and Sexual Health:

- Proper names of body parts, including genitalia
- Using positive language when describing their bodies
- The five senses and their functions
- Good hygiene habits

Mental Health Literacy:

- Mental health and overall health; care and appreciation for their body and mind
- Thoughts, emotions and actions

Grade 2 Curriculum

Healthy Living

Healthy Eating:

- Healthy eating patterns
- Food choices (snacks, meals)

Personal Safety and Injury Prevention:

- Personal safety – at home, online and outdoors
- Food allergies
- Consent, standing up for yourself and others
- Relating to family, caregivers and others

Substance Use, Addictions and Related Behaviours:

- Prescription / non-prescription medicines
- Medication, healthy alternatives

Human Development and Sexual Health:

- Stages of development
- Appreciating how the body works and what it can do
- Oral health (for example, brushing and flossing)

Mental Health Literacy:

- Body and brain – responses and feelings
- Knowing when to seek help

Grade 3 Curriculum

Healthy Living

Healthy Eating:

- Food origins, nutritional value and environmental impact
- Oral health, food choices
- Local and cultural foods, eating choices

Personal Safety and Injury Prevention:

- Concussion awareness
- Safety guidelines for online and outside of class
- Real and fictional violence

Substance Use, Addictions and Related Behaviours:

- Impact of use of legal / illegal substances
- Decision making – substance use / behaviours

Human Development and Sexual Health:

- Healthy relationships, caring behaviours, bullying, consent
- Physical and social-emotional development, building a healthy body image
- Visible / invisible differences, respect

Mental Health Literacy:

- Brain stress response system
- External factors that contribute to stressful feelings

Grade 4 Curriculum

Healthy Living

Healthy Eating:

- Nutrients
- Personal eating habits
- Healthier eating in various settings

Personal Safety and Injury Prevention:

- Safe use of technology (online safety)
- Bullying, abuse and non-consensual behaviour (consent)
- Decision making – assessing risk

Substance Use, Addictions and Related Behaviours:

- Tobacco and vaping
- Decisions about smoking and vaping
- Short- and long-term effects of smoking and vaping

Human Development and Sexual Health:

- Puberty – physical changes; emotional and social impact
- Puberty – personal hygiene and care

Mental Health Literacy:

- Making healthy choices to support mental health
- Stress management (cognitive, behavioural)

Grade 5 Curriculum

Healthy Living

Healthy Eating:

- Nutrition facts, food labels
- Media influences – food choices

Personal Safety and Injury Prevention:

- Supports – injury prevention, responding to emergencies, bullying, violence, consent
- Strategies – online safety, responding to threats to personal safety
- Affect of actions, including homophobic comments, on feelings, well-being

Substance Use, Addictions and Related Behaviours:

- Short- and long-term effects of alcohol use
- Refusal skills – alcohol use and other behaviours
- Decisions to drink alcohol or use cannabis, influences

Human Development and Sexual Health:

- Reproductive system
- Menstruation, sperm production
- Factors affecting their understanding of themselves and personal identity, including sexual orientation
- Puberty – emotional, interpersonal stresses; communicating with family

Mental Health Literacy:

- How to help others, when to seek help
- Stigma awareness

Grade 6 Curriculum

Healthy Living

Healthy Eating:

- Influences on healthy eating
- Eating cues and guidelines
- Benefits of healthy eating / active living

Personal Safety and Injury Prevention:

- Benefits of inclusion, respect and acceptance
- Safe and positive social interaction, conflict management – in person and online
- Responsibilities, risks – care for self and others, safety practices

Substance Use, Addictions and Related Behaviours:

- Effects of cannabis, drugs
- Strategies, safe choices, influences: tobacco, vaping, alcohol, cannabis, other drugs

Human Development and Sexual Health:

- Impacts of viewing sexually explicit media
- Understanding of changes that occur during adolescence
- Decision making, healthier relationships, consent
- Challenging various stereotypes (for example, based on sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, culture, mental health and abilities)

Mental Health Literacy:

- Seeking help – professional help
- Connecting thoughts, emotions and actions

Grade 7 Curriculum

Healthy Living

Healthy Eating:

- Eating patterns and health problems
- Personal, external factors in food choices

Personal Safety and Injury Prevention:

- Benefits and dangers – technology (for example, online safety, sexting)
- Impact – of bullying / harassment, including bullying based on sexual orientation (homophobia)

Substance Use, Addictions and Related Behaviours:

- Mental health, problematic substance use, including cannabis
- Healthy body image, problematic substance use
- Implications of substance use, addictions and related behaviours (for example, being online too much, or viewing pornography)

Human Development and Sexual Health:

- Delaying sexual activity; consent, communication
- Preventing sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections (STBBIs) and pregnancy (for example, abstinence, contraception, condom use)
- Sexual health and decision making
- Relationship changes (for example, with family, peers, others) at puberty

Mental Health Literacy:

- Mental health, mental illness

Grade 8 Curriculum

Healthy Living

Healthy Eating:

- Personal eating behaviours
- Promoting healthy eating

Personal Safety and Injury Prevention:

- Concussions — signs and symptoms
- Reducing risk of injuries, death
- Assessing situations for potential danger, in person and online
- Impact of violent behaviours (including bullying); supports

Substance Use, Addictions and Related Behaviours:

- Warning signs, consequences of problematic substance use, including cannabis

Human Development and Sexual Health:

- Decisions about sexual activity and sources of support related to sexual health (for example, parents, family, health professionals)
- Gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, knowing and appreciating oneself (to be addressed in the second part of the year)
- Consent, sexual health and safety, including abstinence, contraception, condom use and other forms of protection to prevent sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections (STBBIs) and becoming a parent before you're ready
- Healthy relationships and considerations related to intimacy

Mental Health Literacy:

- Routines and habits for mental health
- Societal views, impact of stigma

Exemption Process

Schools will exempt students from instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health when a parent/caregiver completes the HWDSB Health and Physical Education Exemption Form.

Exemptions require the following:

- Completion of the HWDSB Health and Physical Education Exemption Form, in writing, by the deadline established by the school;
- Parents/caregivers identify one of three options:

Their child remains in class during instruction, but completes learning unrelated to Human Development and Sexual Health;

OR

Their child leaves the classroom and is provided activities within the school under the supervision of an educator;

OR

Their child is released into the care of their parent/caregiver or approved designate and excused from school.

The exemption does not result in an academic penalty

Exemption Form

HWDSB 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.

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 _____ and end on _____. The daily schedule for this instruction is attached.

I understand and agree with the following statements:

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;

- 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;
- my child will continue to receive instruction related to all other elementary health and physical education curriculum expectations;
- requests for exemption made by phone, or exemption forms or written requests that do not have a parental signature, will not be accepted;
- this exemption form must be returned by _____ 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*.

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Exemption Form

HWDSB Exemption from Instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health

Child's Last Name

Child's First Name

Parent's Name (print)

Parent's Signature

Grade and Class

Date

PLEASE NOTE:

You will receive an acknowledgement from the school by letter by _____.

If you do not receive an acknowledgement, please contact the school.

Please return this signed form no later than: _____

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