# **APH Health Education for Students with Visual Impairments: A Guidebook for Teachers**

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# **Working Together to Provide Meaningful Sex Education Instruction to Students with Visual Impairments: A Presentation of Recommended Resources and Materials for Parents of Students with Visual Impairments and School Personnel**

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# **Session Overview**

## **Goal:** The learners will be able to overview methods, materials, and resources for families of students with visual impairments and school personnel to work together to provide meaningful sex education instruction to students with visual impairments.

## **Target Audience:** Parents of children with visual impairments, caregivers of children with visual impairments, teachers of students with visual impairments, and other school personnel who work with students who are visually impaired

## **Primary Core or ECC Area:** Independent Living Skills, Social Skills, Self-Determination, Assistive Technology

## **Pre-requisite knowledge:**  None

##

# **Session Learning Objectives**

## Participants will overview the general need for meaningful sex education instruction for students with visual impairments.

## Participants will explain how parents and caregivers of students with visual impairments can use methods, materials, and resources to work together with school personnel to provide meaningful sex education instruction to students with visual impairments.

## Participants will explain how school personnel (such as teachers of students with visual impairments) can use methods, materials, and resources to work together with parents and caregivers of students with visual impairments to provide meaningful sex education instruction to students with visual impairments.

# **Session Purpose**

## This presentation emphasizes:

#### research,

#### materials,

#### methods, and

#### resources

### To support families of students with visual impairments and school personnel in working together to provide meaningful sex education instruction to students with visual impairments.

# **Research….**

## In reviewing the literature, it is found that the positive effects of well-designed sex education instruction far outweigh the supposed disadvantages.

## Researchers have consistently found that when young people have undergone well-designed sex education instruction, the benefits are numerous.

# **Research Supported by the U.S Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and others…**

## Promoting and implementing well-designed sexual health education programs positively impacts student health in a variety of ways.

## Students who participate in these programs are more likely to:

##  Delay initiation of sexual intercourse

##  Have fewer sex partners

##  Have fewer experiences of unprotected sex

##  Increase their use of protection, specifically condoms

##  Improve their academic performance.

# **Research…**

## All of these advantages occur because the teenagers possess the requisite knowledge to maintain their safety and health as they mature (Fox, Himmelstein, Khalid, & Howell, 2019; Kirby, 2011; Unis, 2020).

## These advantages are supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2020) and the Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine (2017).

## The reader can easily discern that the authors believe that there are only “pros” in judging the effects of sex education!

## We believe that there are no “cons” and the CDC (2020) indicates the same.

# **Addressing Missed Incidental Learning…**

## Another point which can be made in the argument for well-designed sex education for youngsters who cannot see well is that the social milieu is replete with sexually-oriented information which can be gleaned only by sight.

## This too is well documented by the literature (Kapperman & Kelly, 2013, 2014; Kelly & Kapperman, 2012, 2019).

## Youngsters who cannot use their eyesight to gather that information are at a distinct disadvantage compared to youngsters who gather that information on a daily basis starting at an early age.

# **Addressing Missed Incidental Learning…**

## There are major disadvantages borne by youngsters who cannot see as a result of their inability to comprehend the all-pervasive information that is available to everyone else in society.

## One of the major disadvantages is the knowledge they gain simply by living adds to their ability to maintain their personal safety.

## Youngsters who are blind of course do not have that advantage without having undergone well-designed instruction.

# **Addressing Missed Incidental Learning…Together!**

## The capability necessary for providing youngsters who are blind or severely visually impaired with the requisite knowledge requires much more skill and sophistication than the provision of sexually-oriented knowledge for youngsters who are sighted.

## It requires much more sophisticated knowledge on the part of the teacher who is responsible for the education of youngsters who are blind or visually impaired than that which is required of individuals who provide the requisite information to sighted youngsters in pictures and drawings.

## Translating the information shown in pictures into a form that is comprehensible by a youngster who cannot see requires much more skill and knowledge.

# **Working Together**

## Goal 2 of *the National Agenda for the Education of Children and Youths with Visual Impairments, Including Those with Multiple Disabilities, Revised* (2004) is for **Parent Participation**.

## The fact that no one knows a child better than that child's family has guided the educational plans for students with visual impairments for many years (Huebner, Merk-Adam, Stryker, & Wolffe, 2004).

## Thus, we have known for a long time the positive impact of parent participation and equal partnership in the education process.

# **Working Together**

## Back in the 2004 *National Agenda* it was said… “it is time for parents and educators to join in a common purpose, namely, the jointly shared responsibility for achieving educational excellence in our schools (Huebner et al., 2004).”

## This educational excellence includes all common core and expanded core curricular areas. Sexual health education is included.

# **Preteaching Considerations and Guidance for Parents and School-Based Professionals**

## Preteaching is an important component of sex education for students with visual impairments.

## Students with visual impairments must have the opportunity to learn about instructional content in sex education presented to them before formal instruction takes place.

## Preteaching should also include explicit language that frankly describes many of the concepts related to sex education that sighted students learn simply by watching others.

# **Preteaching Considerations and Guidance for Parents and School-Based Professionals**

## For a sex education unit, students with visual impairments should be given special hands-on instruction privately in a secluded area with two adults present and not in the regular classroom with sighted peers.

## Such preteaching should take place before regular sex education instruction occurs.

## A student who is visually impaired should not be removed from the classroom when sex education takes place unless his or her parents refuse to give permission.

# **Working Together continued…**

## Meaningful materials available at a low-cost and readily available online resources available at no cost

## Acquire these materials and resources to use as part of the preteaching experience for students with visual impairments.

## Facilitate meaningful preteaching experiences for students with visual impairments when all educational team members work together.

# **Preteaching Material Example: Modeling Clay**

## For the preteaching of male and female anatomy studied in school-based sex education programming

## What: Crayola Model Magic Modeling Compound

## Cost range: $5 for 4 oz. bag or $25 for 2 lb. container

## Where to purchase: Michaels, Wal-Mart, Amazon

## What to do with the clay: Create low-cost meaningful models of external male and female anatomy studied in school-based sex education programming

## Alternative material/substitute: Play-Doh

# **Preteaching Material Example: Low-Cost Anatomically Correct Model**

## For the preteaching of the complex internal male anatomy studied in school-based sex education programming

## What: Famemaster 4D-Vision Human Male Reproductive Anatomy Model

## Cost: $25

## Where to purchase: Amazon

## https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B003TJAEUK/ref=ppx\_yo\_dt\_b\_asin\_title\_o05\_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1

## What to do with the model: Used as meaningful models of the more complex internal human anatomy.

# **Preteaching Material Example: Low-Cost Anatomically Correct Model**

## For the preteaching of the complex internal female anatomy studied in school-based sex education programming

## What: Famemaster 4D-Vision Human Female Reproductive Anatomy Model

## Cost: $25

## Where to purchase: Amazon

## https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B003TJAEUA/ref=ppx\_yo\_dt\_b\_asin\_title\_o05\_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1

## What to do with the model: Used as meaningful models of the more complex internal human anatomy.

# **Preteaching Free Online Resource Example: Described and Captioned Videos**

## For the preteaching of a wide range of topics addressed by school-based sex education programs.

## What: Described and Captioned Media Program (DCMP)

## https://dcmp.org/

## Cost: Free of charge, fully funded by the U.S. Department of Education

## Purpose of DCMP: To educate students with sensory disabilities, along with their parents and teacher with major network-produced educational content carefully customized to serve the needs of K-12 students.

## Create a free account today!

# **Described and Captioned Videos Used to Support School-Based Sex Education Curricula**

## Recommendation to search “sex education” videos available on DCMP as an accessible (described and captioned) source of excellent information. There are many videos available—all DCMP videos are major network-produced and only include educationally based content.

## Parents/caregivers and teachers can determine which videos are appropriate for a child’s developmental stage and present those videos to the child.

## The student can view the selected videos on his or her own with his or her own computer and/or with parents/caregivers.

## This updated instructional strategy allows students with visual impairments to stream the described and captioned videos. This is an updated version of the suggestion of watching the Emmy Award winning “*Miracle of Life*” DVD in audio described format.

# **Preteaching Online Resource Example: Bookshare as a Resource**

## We recommend that youngsters who are blind or visually impaired should have available to them appropriate reading material to accompany their instruction in sex education.

## Several books which focus on the changes that boys and girls experience as they progress through puberty are available from Bookshare, the very well-known online depository of hundreds of thousands of accessible books.

## To become familiar with the services that this organization offers, we recommend that the reader go to www.bookshare.org

## Detailed descriptions of the procedures for gaining access to the books in the library can be found on the Bookshare website.

# **Accessible Books and Bookshare Used to Support School-Based Sex Education Curricula**

## We would recommend one or more of the following 4 books which a resident in the library. These 4 books are as follows:

## The Boy's Body Book most recent edition published in 2019

## 5th Edition

## ISBN: 978160433824

## Author: Kelli Dunham

##

## The Girl's Body Book most recent edition published in 2019

## 5th Edition

## ISBN: 9781604338331

## Author: Kelli Dunham

# **Accessible Books and Bookshare Used to Support School-Based Sex Education Curricula**

## It's Perfectly Normal Changing Bodies, Growing Up, Sex, and Sexual Health the New Edition 20th Anniversary Edition which is the 4th edition published in 2014

## ISBN: 9780763668723

## Author: Robie H. Harris and Michael Emberley

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## The Period Book updated edition published in 2017

## ISBN: 9781619636620

## Author: Karen Gravelle

## **Note: Available from National Braille Press**

## What's Going on Down There? A Boy's Guide to Growing Up most recent edition published in 2017

## ISBN: 9781681193618

## Author: Karen Gravelle

# **Accessible Books and Bookshare Used to Support School-Based Sex Education Curricula**

## We find these books are very appropriate for youngsters who are about to begin the various stages of puberty or who are currently experiencing the many changes which take place when youngsters find themselves on the developmental journey to adulthood.

## **Additional note:**

## The library has the older editions of the books listed here. We would not recommend them should they still be available when the newer editions are available.

## For example, the older editions possess outdated information regarding HIV in which at the time of the writing of those books, there was no treatment for that infection.

# **Accessible Books and Bookshare Used to Support School-Based Sex Education Curricula**

## A second point along these lines is that the older editions make no mention of HPV.

## Thus, we recommend highly that only the newer editions of the books should be sought out.

## When searching for books on Bookshare, one can easily determine the copyright date of the book.

## Thus, any book which has the same title as listed above but has an older copyright date should not be read by the student if the newer edition is available because of the outdated information which it may contain.

# **Working Together through the IEP Process**

## Parent-professional partnerships make a difference!

## This includes the IEP process.

## Consideration of special factors on the IEP: Require preteaching using meaningful (fully accessible) methods and materials across various content areas including but not limited to school-based sexual health education.

## Goals and objectives: Written to support age-appropriate use of assistive technology to access readily available free online resources that support content presented in the general education curriculum (e.g., DCMP and Bookshare).

# **Working Together: Required Procedures for School-Based Health Education**

## Policies and procedures on sex education can vary significantly among school districts that are located within the same state.

## Therefore, it is not enough for parents or school personnel to be familiar with sex education policies for a given state where students who are visually impaired attend school.

## All school district policies and procedures must be followed. The specific school district and/or school agency policies and procedures on sex education must be followed by everyone involved.

## Parents can request information about school district policies and procedures for sex education from the school districts and/or school agencies where their students attend.

# **Bonus Resources on *FamilyConnect***

## It’s a matter of safety: What kinds of touch are okay? *Family Connect for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments.* Retrieved from https://familyconnect.org/browse-by-age/grade-schoolers/its-a-matter-of-safety-what-kinds-of-touch-are-okay/

## Knowledge is power for children with visual impairments. *Family Connect for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments.* Retrieved from

## https://familyconnect.org/browse-by-age/teenagers/growth-and-development-teenagers/knowledge-is-power-for-children-with-visual-impairments/

# **Summary**

## The CDC and other highly regarded sources show the lifelong benefits of high-quality sex education far outweigh anything else.

## Incidental learning experiences related to our bodies and how they work can go misunderstood by students with visual impairments without the direct meaningful instruction.

## Parents and caregivers of students with visual impairments can work together with school personnel (and vise versa) to provide this instruction.

## Recommendations for low-cost materials and readily available free online resources to support this meaningful and collaborative instruction.

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# Thank you for your interest. If you have further questions, please contact:Gaylen Kapperman: gkapperman@niu.edu Stacy Kelly: skelly@niu.edu