



## Information For Parents

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Some of the material in *Helping Teens To Make Healthy Decisions About Sex and Relationships* will likely lead students to initiate conversations with parents, teachers, guardians or other trusted adults. This educational unit includes an important document for parents. By sending the document home, parents, caregivers and guardians will have the opportunity to contact you with any concerns they may have concerning the upcoming curriculum.

The document for parents is a letter that students may take home (optional). \*The letter that follows is a template. It may be used as it is, or you may want to adapt it for use in your school or classroom.

While The Ontario Ministry of Education's curriculum guidelines include healthy sexuality and adolescent development as mandatory topics of study, they remain subjects that are fraught with controversy. In certain cultures, discussion about the human body and sexuality is considered inappropriate. Some students may not be able to discuss these issues with their parents or guardians. In certain instances, some parents may request that their child(ren) be withdrawn from classes during which sexuality are discussed.

\*The letter for parents and the curriculum expectations are based on information found in the OPHEA curriculum support document entitled, [The Ontario Health and Physical Education Association Curriculum Support: Kindergarten to Grade Ten](#) (2000).



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The best way to ensure that your class runs smoothly, despite your discussion of sensitive topics, is to acquire parental support. One of the ways to achieve this support is to reassure parents, caregivers and guardians that the values presented in the *Helping Teens* unit are inclusive and that the unit is designed to assist their adolescent through a potentially difficult time. The philosophical belief behind the lessons is that all teens should have access to appropriate information about their bodies and their health. It is also important to note that every effort has been made to be respectful of students' cultural differences. The unit is based on the principle that each student has equal dignity and worth, regardless of his/her gender, sexual orientation, social class, racial, cultural, ethnic or religious background. The activities encourage conversation and varying opinions must be respected. Students should be encouraged to discuss topics that are value-laden with their family members.

The *Helping Teens* educational unit emerges from the conviction that students benefit from talking openly about sexuality issues with their parents, as well as with their peers and trusted adults such as teachers. It also encompasses a number of expectations from the grade nine curriculum for Health and Physical Education. This is designed to assist classroom teachers with the responsibility of presenting parents, caregivers and guardians with comprehensive information prior to beginning the *Helping Teens* unit.