

Toronto District School Board

Operational Procedure PR727

Title: **EXEMPTION FROM INSTRUCTION IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND SEXUAL HEALTH EXPECTATIONS IN THE HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM, GRADES 1 TO 8**

Adopted: November 21, 2019

Effected: November 30, 2019

Revised: N/A

Reviewed: N/A

Authorization: Executive Council

1. RATIONALE

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) affirms the Ontario Human Rights Commission's statement in relationship to The Ontario Curriculum for Health and Physical Education, Grades 1 to 8. *It states that all students deserve to see themselves and their families reflected in The Ontario Curriculum, and should receive information necessary to protect their health and well-being.*

Board staff are committed to creating inclusive learning environments where all students' identities and lived experiences are respected and ensuring principles of safety, access, human rights, equity, acceptance, health and well-being.

TDSB acknowledges the importance of a child's understanding of human development and sexual health and that students are best served when schools and parents work together to support learning about healthy living.

Education related to Human Development and Sexual Health will be taught in a developmentally appropriate manner and delivered to meet the learning needs of students at different ages. The goal of this learning is to help students build the skills they need to develop personal responsibility for lifelong health, contribute to an inclusive school culture and make responsible choices that protect themselves from potential harms.

In response to the Ontario Ministry of Education's [Policy/Program Memorandum \(PPM\) No. 162](#), the Exemption from Human Development and Sexual Health Instruction Procedure was developed. This procedure allows students to be exempted at the request of their parent/guardian, 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* (the “Curriculum”).

The Ministry of Education recognizes that the exemption does not include topics raised outside of the Curriculum and that the Board, aligned with its commitment to equity and human rights, will continue to focus on respecting diversity, promoting inclusive education and identifying and eliminating discriminatory bias in other school programs and activities.

2. OBJECTIVE

To comply with the terms set out by the Ministry of Education in Policy/Program Memorandum 162 (Appendix A) which allows for parents/guardians to have their child exempted from instruction (on an individual basis) in all of the expectations related to Human Development and Sexual Health found in Strand D of the Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1 to 8 (2019).

3. DEFINITIONS

Board is the Toronto District School Board, which is also referred to as “TDSB”.

Curriculum is the Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019, specifically Strand D.

Excursion Management System (EMA) is a software application which is being developed to facilitate effective and timely communication about this procedure between the school and parents/guardians. It is anticipated to be ready for use in the fall of 2020. Until that time, schools will use the standard templates found in the appendices associated with this Procedure.

Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM), for the purpose of this Procedure, refers to Ontario Ministry of Education’s [Policy/Program Memorandum No. 162: Exemption from Instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations in The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019](#), which is the governing legislation for this Procedure.

Strand D, also known as the Healthy Living strand, 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. This Procedure focuses only on the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in this Strand.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

Associate Director, Equity, Well-being and School Improvement.

5. APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This Procedure applies to all TDSB staff, Grade 1 to 8 students and their parents/guardians.

Important Note: 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. For example: this may include, but is not limited to, an unplanned discussion prompted by a student's question.

In accordance with the directions as outlined in PPM 162, 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 expectations found in Healthy Living Strand D.

6. PROCEDURES

6.1. Notice and Communications

Role of the Principal

- 6.1.1 The school will inform parents/guardians 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.
- 6.1.2 The school will notify all parents/guardians at least twenty (20) school days before the start of the period of instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations. Within this notification, parents/guardians will be provided with a list of all Human Development and Sexual Health expectations by grade for Grades 1 to 8 from the Ministry Health and Physical Education Curriculum.
- 6.1.3 The principal will make the standard Exemption Form (Form 727C/ Appendix C) available to all parents/guardians every school year using EMA or by hardcopy.
- 6.1.4 The school will inform parents/guardians of the date by which the completed Exemption Form must be submitted in order for their child to be exempted from instruction related to the expectations in Human Development and Sexual Health.
- 6.1.5 Principals will inform parents/guardians if there is any change to the intended start date or period of instruction and will give notice as soon as reasonably possible.

Role of Parent/Guardian

- 6.1.6 Each year and for every child, parents/guardians will notify the principal of their request for exemption using the standard hardcopy Form (Form 727C) or EMA.
- 6.1.7 Parents/Guardians will be required to submit their completed Exemption Form to the principal no later than five (5) school days before the start of the period of instruction.
- 6.1.8 Parents/Guardians must submit their request using the Exemption Form in Appendix C (Form 727C).
- 6.1.9 Verbal requests for exemptions will not be accepted.

6.2. Process for Exemptions

- 6.2.1 An exempted student's grade in Health and Physical Education will be determined on the basis of the overall expectations in Strand D without consideration of the specific expectations under Human Development and Sexual Health. There will be no assessment, evaluation, or reporting of an exempted student's achievement in Human Development and Sexual Health. There will not be an academic penalty for those students who are exempted.
- 6.2.2 Teachers will inform the principal when they intend to teach the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations found in Strand D of the Curriculum.
- 6.2.3 The principal will issue a letter (Appendix B) every school year to parents/guardians to indicate when instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations will occur, including topics by grade, and their option to exempt their child/children from Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in Strand D of the Curriculum.
- 6.2.4 The principal will facilitate a student's exemption from instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health without academic penalty when a request has been made: a) by the parent/guardian; b) within the timelines stated in this Procedure; and c) using the appropriate form.
- 6.2.5 The principal will acknowledge receipt of all completed Exemption Forms using EMA or the Principal Acknowledgement of Exemption Request (Appendix D). The acknowledgement notice will be signed and dated by the school principal in acknowledgement and returned to the parent/guardian.
- 6.2.6 Principals will make the final decision to accept or reject a late request under the following conditions:

- (i) The Exemption Form is not returned prior to the notice period of five (5) school days before the start of the period of instruction;
- (ii) The Exemption Form is incomplete (e.g., no signature) or is not on the standard form;
- (iii) The Exemption Form is returned to the school during the period of instruction;
- (iv) The Exemption Form includes an option that is not one of the three options outlined in 6.3.1 and found in PPM 162;
- (v) The specific request made by the parent/guardian falls outside of the terms specified in this Procedure and/or the PPM 162.

6.3. Supervision of Exempted Students

6.3.1 Parents/guardians will be required to choose one of three options, as outlined on the Exemption Form. They are as follows:

- a) Option 1: The student will remain in the classroom during the exemption without taking part in instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health, and will be assigned work or activities to be determined by the teacher which are unrelated to Human Development and Sexual Health.
- b) Option 2: The student will leave the classroom for the duration of the instruction and will remain in the school under supervision. The student's activities during the exemption period will be at the discretion of the teacher or principal.
- c) Option 3: The student will be released into the care of the parent/guardian or approved designate for the duration of the exemption period.

6.3.2 The principal will make alternative arrangements for children whose parents/guardians who chose Option 2 (above) in consultation with classroom teachers and other educators, and where required, the Superintendent of Education.

7. EVALUATION

This Procedure will be reviewed as required, at a minimum every four (4) years after the effective date.

8. APPENDICES

- Appendix A: PPM 162 Ontario Ministry of Education's [Policy/Program Memorandum No. 162](#): Exemption from Instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations in The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019
- Appendix B: Principal Letter re: Notice of Period of Instruction
- Appendix C: Parent/Guardian Exemption FORM for Human Development and Sexual Health Instruction, Grades 1 to 8 – Form 727C
- Appendix D: Principal Acknowledgement of Exemption Request
- Appendix E: Principal's Checklist for the Exemption Process

9. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Policy /Program Memorandum:

- Ontario Ministry of Education's [Policy/Program Memorandum No. 162](#): Exemption from Instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations in The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019.

TDSB Policies:

- Equity Policy (P037)
- Human Rights Policy (P031)

Date of Issue:	August 21, 2019
Effective:	Until revoked or modified
Subject:	Exemption from Instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations in <i>The Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1–8, 2019</i>.
Application:	Directors of Education Supervisory Officers and Secretary-Treasurers of School Authorities Superintendents of Schools Principals of Elementary Schools Principals of Provincial and Demonstration Schools

Introduction

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform school boards¹ that they must develop and implement a policy or procedure that allows for students to be exempted, at the request of their parents,² from 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*.

The Education Act authorizes the Minister of Education to establish policies with respect to issuing curriculum guidelines.³

The policy/procedure to be implemented by school boards will allow for students to be exempted from instruction on an individual basis, according to the following conditions:

- 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 expectations.

1. In this memorandum, *school board(s)* and *board(s)* refer to district school boards and school authorities.

2. In this memorandum, *parent(s)* refers to parent(s) and guardian(s).

3. Education Act, subsection 8(1), paragraph 3.

- 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 policy/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.

As part of the implementation of this policy/procedure, school boards and/or schools may choose to hold meetings with parents and other community members to describe the purpose and scope of the policy/procedure. Such meetings would assist parents in deciding if they wish to remove their children from instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health.

Context – Roles and Responsibilities

Parents play an important role in their children's learning. They are the primary educators of their children with respect to learning about values, appropriate behaviour, and ethno-cultural, spiritual, and personal beliefs and traditions, and are their children's first role models. It is therefore important for schools and parents to work together to ensure that home and school provide a mutually supportive framework for young people's education.

Parents who become familiar with the health and physical education curriculum can better appreciate what is being taught in each grade and what their children are expected to learn. This awareness will enhance parents' ability to discuss their children's learning with them, to communicate with their children's teachers, and to ask relevant questions about their children's progress. It could also inform their decision making about seeking an exemption under their school board's policy/procedure. Parents must be informed of the school board policy/procedure that allows for students to be exempted, at their parents' request, from instruction related to the Grade 1 to 8 Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in strand D.

Teachers are responsible for using appropriate and effective teaching strategies to help students achieve the health and physical education curriculum expectations. They bring enthusiasm and varied teaching and assessment approaches to the classroom, addressing individual students' needs and ensuring sound learning opportunities for

every student. The attitude with which teachers approach student learning in health and physical education is critical, as teachers are important role models for students.

To increase their comfort level and their skill in teaching health and physical education and to ensure effective delivery of the curriculum, teachers are expected to reflect on their own attitudes, biases, and values with respect to the topics they are teaching and seek out current resources, mentors, and professional development and training opportunities, as necessary.

As part of effective teaching practice, teachers communicate with parents about what their children are learning. Communication enables parents to work in partnership with the school, promoting discussion, follow-up at home, and student learning in a family context.

Teachers must follow their school board's policy/procedure that allows for students to be exempted, at their parents' request, from instruction related to the Grade 1 to 8 Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in strand D.

Principals are community builders who create a healthy and safe school environment that is welcoming to all, and who ensure that all members of the school community are kept well informed.

Principals work in partnership with teachers and parents to ensure that each student has access to the best possible educational experience. They can provide support for the successful implementation of the health and physical education curriculum by emphasizing the importance of the curriculum within the framework of a healthy, safe, inclusive, and accepting school.

Principals must follow their school board's policy/procedure that allows for students to be exempted, at their parents' request, from instruction related to the Grade 1 to 8 Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in strand D.

Minimum Requirements of School Board Exemption Policies/Procedures

School board policies and implementation plans should take into account local needs and circumstances. When developing their policies, school boards are encouraged to consult with local partners, as appropriate. However, each school board policy/procedure must include the following requirements, under three distinct headings: Notice and Communications; Process; and Supervision of Exempted Students.

1. Notice and Communications

The school board policy/procedure will require schools to:

- provide parents with a list of all Human Development and Sexual Health expectations *by grade*;
- inform parents 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;
- make a standard exemption form available to parents every school year, accommodating the timelines specified below. The school may use the sample form provided in the Appendix to this memorandum or create their own form, provided that it contains, at a minimum, all the elements of the sample form. Schools may also choose to accept separate written requests for an exemption;
- notify all parents at least twenty school days before the start of the “period of instruction”⁴ related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations;
- inform parents 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 parents 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;
- make clear that, in the case of an unforeseen event,⁵ school boards and 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 parents as soon as reasonably possible.

2. Process

The school board policy/procedure will require schools to:

- 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 in writing in accordance with this memorandum;
- develop a process to acknowledge the receipt of exemption forms from parents;

4. In this memorandum, the *period of instruction* refers to the period, including the beginning and end dates, during which instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health during health and physical education classes is delivered. This period could extend over several days or weeks, depending on individual schools’ calendars and teachers’ lesson plans.

5. In this memorandum, an *unforeseen event* refers to an event that impairs a school’s ability to administer the “period of instruction”.

- 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 memorandum (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).

3. Supervision of Exempted Students

Because school boards are responsible for student safety and well-being during instructional time, options for supervision must be offered. The school board policy/procedure will require that parents be given the choice of how their exempted child will be supervised during the exemption period. Parents must 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. The supervision of the student will be determined by the school according to the board's policy/procedure; *or*
- to be released into the care of the parent or the parent's approved designate.

Implementation

School boards must implement their exemption policy/procedure and make it publicly available on their website *before* the period of instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health in the 2019–20 school year, and no later than November 30, 2019. It is expected that the communications to parents required by this memorandum will be issued within stated timelines every school year.

If an exemption policy/procedure is not implemented in a school board by November 30, 2019, then the provisions outlined in this memorandum can be used on a temporary basis until the school board's policy/procedure is in place.



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APPENDIX: Sample Exemption Form

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 _____ [*insert date*] and end on _____ [*insert date*].

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

* In this form, the *period of instruction* refers to the period, including the beginning and end dates, during which instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health during health and physical education classes is delivered. This period could extend over several days or weeks, depending on individual schools' calendars and teachers' lesson plans.



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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 _____ [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 Name (print)

Parent'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]



Grade 1 Letter to Parents/Guardians re: Human Development and Sexual Health Instruction

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This letter is to inform you about instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health which is component of Healthy Living Strand of the 2019 Ontario Curriculum for Health and Physical Education for Grades 1 to 8.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission has stated that all students deserve to see themselves and their families reflected in Ontario's mandatory curriculum, and should receive the information necessary to protect their health and well-being. We are committed to creating inclusive learning environments where all students' identities and lived experiences are respected and ensuring principles of safety, access, human rights, equity, acceptance, health and well-being.

Education related to Human Development and Sexual Health is taught in a developmentally appropriate manner and delivered to meet the learning needs of students at different ages. The goal of this learning is to provide students with accurate information and to help them build the skills they need to develop personal responsibility for lifelong health, contribute to an inclusive school culture and make responsible choices that protect them from potential harm.

Families are encouraged to have regular conversations with their children about healthy living and make discuss the topics listed below with their child during the period of instruction.

The Ministry of Education requires all school boards to inform parents/guardians when instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health will occur in the event that parents want to exempt their child from this instruction. Your child's class will begin instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health on or about **DATE** and end on **DATE** for the **20YEAR - YEAR** school year.

The Ministry of Education's Expectations for Human Development and Sexual Health

Children in Grade 1 will learn to:

- identify body parts, including genitalia (e.g., penis, testicles, vagina, vulva), using correct terminology and body-positive language
- identify the five senses and describe how each functions
- demonstrate an understanding of and apply proper hygienic procedures for protecting their own health and preventing the transmission of disease to others

The Ministry of Education provides additional information about Human Development and Sexual Health on their website at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/health.html>.

It is important to note that the exemption does not include topics raised outside of the health curriculum and that the Board, aligned with its commitment to equity and human rights, will continue to



focus on respecting diversity, promoting inclusive education and identifying and eliminating discriminatory bias in other school programs and activities.

We encourage you to ask any questions about instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health to your child's teacher or principal before deciding to exempt your child.

Complete the Exemption Form (attached) if you decide to exempt your child from learning the expectations listed in this letter. Return the form to the school prior to five days before instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health is scheduled to begin in your child's classroom.

Sincerely,

Principal



Grade 2 Letter to Parents/Guardians re: Human Development and Sexual Health Instruction

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This letter is to inform you about instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health which is component of Healthy Living Strand of the 2019 Ontario Curriculum for Health and Physical Education for Grades 1 to 8.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission has stated that all students deserve to see themselves and their families reflected in Ontario's mandatory curriculum, and should receive the information necessary to protect their health and well-being. We are committed to creating inclusive learning environments where all students' identities and lived experiences are respected and ensuring principles of safety, access, human rights, equity, acceptance, health and well-being.

Education related to Human Development and Sexual Health is taught in a developmentally appropriate manner and delivered to meet the learning needs of students at different ages. The goal of this learning is to provide students with accurate information and to help them build the skills they need to develop personal responsibility for lifelong health, contribute to an inclusive school culture and make responsible choices that protect them from potential harm.

Families are encouraged to have regular conversations with their children about healthy living and make discuss the topics listed below with their child during the period of instruction.

The Ministry of Education requires all school boards to inform parents/guardians when instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health will occur in the event that parents want to exempt their child from this instruction. Your child's class will begin instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health on or about **DATE** and end on **DATE** for the **20YEAR - YEAR** school year.

The Ministry of Education's Expectations for Human Development and Sexual Health

Children in Grade **2** will learn to:

- outline the basic stages of human development (e.g., infant, child, adolescent, adult, older adult) and related changes, and identify physical, mental, social, and environmental factors that are important for healthy growth and living throughout life
- demonstrate the ability to identify and appreciate aspects of how their bodies work and describe what they can do to ensure that they will continue to appreciate their bodies as they grow and change
- demonstrate an understanding of and apply practices that contribute to the maintenance of good oral health

The Ministry of Education provides additional information about Human Development and Sexual Health on their website at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/health.html>.



It is important to note that the exemption does not include topics raised outside of the health curriculum and that the Board, aligned with its commitment to equity and human rights, will continue to focus on respecting diversity, promoting inclusive education and identifying and eliminating discriminatory bias in other school programs and activities.

We encourage you to ask any questions about instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health to your child's teacher or principal before deciding to exempt your child.

Complete the Exemption Form (attached) if you decide to exempt your child from learning the expectations listed in this letter. Return the form to the school prior to five days before instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health is scheduled to begin in your child's classroom.

Sincerely,

Principal



Grade 3 Letter to Parents/Guardians re: Human Development and Sexual Health Instruction

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This letter is to inform you about instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health which is component of Healthy Living Strand of the 2019 Ontario Curriculum for Health and Physical Education for Grades 1 to 8.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission has stated that all students deserve to see themselves and their families reflected in Ontario's mandatory curriculum, and should receive the information necessary to protect their health and well-being. We are committed to creating inclusive learning environments where all students' identities and lived experiences are respected and ensuring principles of safety, access, human rights, equity, acceptance, health and well-being.

Education related to Human Development and Sexual Health is taught in a developmentally appropriate manner and delivered to meet the learning needs of students at different ages. The goal of this learning is to provide students with accurate information and to help them build the skills they need to develop personal responsibility for lifelong health, contribute to an inclusive school culture and make responsible choices that protect them from potential harm.

Families are encouraged to have regular conversations with their children about healthy living and make discuss the topics listed below with their child during the period of instruction.

The Ministry of Education requires all school boards to inform parents/guardians when instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health will occur in the event that parents want to exempt their child from this instruction. Your child's class will begin instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health on or about **DATE** and end on **DATE** for the **20YEAR - YEAR** school year.

The Ministry of Education's Expectations for Human Development and Sexual Health

Children in Grade **3** will learn to:

- identify the characteristics of healthy relationships (e.g., accepting and respecting differences, avoiding assumptions, being inclusive, communicating openly, establishing and respecting personal boundaries, listening, showing mutual respect and caring, being honest) and describe ways of responding to bullying and other challenges (e.g., exclusion, discrimination, peer pressure, abuse) and of communicating consent in their interactions with others
- identify factors (e.g., sleep, food, physical activity, heredity, environment, support from a caring adult, sense of belonging, peer influence) that affect physical development (e.g., of hair, skin, teeth, body size and shape), social-emotional development (e.g., of self-awareness, adaptive skills, social skills), and the development of a healthy body image (e.g., of the ability to enjoy,



respect, and celebrate one's body, to acknowledge one's thoughts and feelings about it, to accept its shape and size and to focus instead on what it can do)

- describe how visible differences (e.g., skin, hair, and eye colour; facial features; body size and shape; physical aids or different physical abilities; clothing; possessions) and invisible differences (e.g., learning abilities, skills and talents, personal or cultural values and beliefs, mental illness, family background, personal preferences, allergies and sensitivities) make each person unique, and identify ways of showing respect for differences in others

The Ministry of Education provides additional information about Human Development and Sexual Health on their website at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/health.html>.

It is important to note that the exemption does not include topics raised outside of the health curriculum and that the Board, aligned with its commitment to equity and human rights, will continue to focus on respecting diversity, promoting inclusive education and identifying and eliminating discriminatory bias in other school programs and activities.

We encourage you to ask any questions about instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health to your child's teacher or principal before deciding to exempt your child.

Complete the Exemption Form (attached) if you decide to exempt your child from learning the expectations listed in this letter. Return the form to the school prior to five days before instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health is scheduled to begin in your child's classroom.

Sincerely,

Principal



Grade 4 Letter to Parents/Guardians re: Human Development and Sexual Health Instruction

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This letter is to inform you about instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health which is component of Healthy Living Strand of the 2019 Ontario Curriculum for Health and Physical Education for Grades 1 to 8.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission has stated that all students deserve to see themselves and their families reflected in Ontario's mandatory curriculum, and should receive the information necessary to protect their health and well-being. We are committed to creating inclusive learning environments where all students' identities and lived experiences are respected and ensuring principles of safety, access, human rights, equity, acceptance, health and well-being.

Education related to Human Development and Sexual Health is taught in a developmentally appropriate manner and delivered to meet the learning needs of students at different ages. The goal of this learning is to provide students with accurate information and to help them build the skills they need to develop personal responsibility for lifelong health, contribute to an inclusive school culture and make responsible choices that protect them from potential harm.

Families are encouraged to have regular conversations with their children about healthy living and make discuss the topics listed below with their child during the period of instruction.

The Ministry of Education requires all school boards to inform parents/guardians when instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health will occur in the event that parents want to exempt their child from this instruction. Your child's class will begin instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health on or about **DATE** and end on **DATE** for the **20YEAR - YEAR** school year.

The Ministry of Education's Expectations for Human Development and Sexual Health

Children in Grade 4 will learn to:

- describe the physical changes that occur at puberty (e.g., growth of body hair, breast development, changes in voice and body size, production of body odour, skin changes) and the emotional and social impacts that may result from these changes
- demonstrate an understanding of personal care needs and the application of personal hygienic practices associated with the onset of puberty (e.g., increased importance of regular bathing/showering and regular clothing changes; use of hygiene products; continuing importance of regular hygiene practices, including hand washing, oral health care, and care of prosthetic devices and residual limbs)

The Ministry of Education provides additional information about Human Development and Sexual Health on their website at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/health.html>.



It is important to note that the exemption does not include topics raised outside of the health curriculum and that the Board, aligned with its commitment to equity and human rights, will continue to focus on respecting diversity, promoting inclusive education and identifying and eliminating discriminatory bias in other school programs and activities.

We encourage you to ask any questions about instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health to your child's teacher or principal before deciding to exempt your child.

Complete the Exemption Form (attached) if you decide to exempt your child from learning the expectations listed in this letter. Return the form to the school prior to five days before instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health is scheduled to begin in your child's classroom.

Sincerely,

Principal



Grade 5 Letter to Parents/Guardians re: Human Development and Sexual Health Instruction

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This letter is to inform you about instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health which is component of Healthy Living Strand of the 2019 Ontario Curriculum for Health and Physical Education for Grades 1 to 8.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission has stated that all students deserve to see themselves and their families reflected in Ontario's mandatory curriculum, and should receive the information necessary to protect their health and well-being. We are committed to creating inclusive learning environments where all students' identities and lived experiences are respected and ensuring principles of safety, access, human rights, equity, acceptance, health and well-being.

Education related to Human Development and Sexual Health is taught in a developmentally appropriate manner and delivered to meet the learning needs of students at different ages. The goal of this learning is to provide students with accurate information and to help them build the skills they need to develop personal responsibility for lifelong health, contribute to an inclusive school culture and make responsible choices that protect them from potential harm.

Families are encouraged to have regular conversations with their children about healthy living and make discuss the topics listed below with their child during the period of instruction.

The Ministry of Education requires all school boards to inform parents/guardians when instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health will occur in the event that parents want to exempt their child from this instruction. Your child's class will begin instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health on or about **DATE** and end on **DATE** for the **20YEAR - YEAR** school year.

The Ministry of Education's Expectations for Human Development and Sexual Health

Children in Grade **5** will learn to:

- identify the parts of the reproductive system, and describe how the body changes during puberty
- describe the processes of menstruation and spermatogenesis, and explain how these processes relate to reproduction and overall development
- identify intersecting factors that affect the development of a person's self-concept, including their sexual orientation (e.g., self-awareness, self-acceptance, social environment, opinions of others who are important to them, influence of stereotypical thinking, awareness of their own strengths and needs, social competency, cultural identity, availability of support, body image, mental health and emotional well-being, physical abilities), and how these factors can support their personal health and well-being



- describe emotional and interpersonal stresses related to puberty (e.g., questions about changing bodies and feelings, adjusting to changing relationships, crushes and more intense feelings, conflicts between personal desires and cultural teachings and practices), recognize signs that could indicate mental health concerns, and identify strategies that they can apply to manage stress, build resilience, keep open communication with family members and caring adults, and enhance their mental health and emotional well-being (e.g., being active, writing feelings in a journal, accessing information about their concerns, taking action on a concern, talking to a trusted peer or adult, breathing deeply, meditating, seeking cultural advice from Elders, Métis Senators, knowledge keepers or knowledge holders)

The Ministry of Education provides additional information about Human Development and Sexual Health on their website at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/health.html>.

It is important to note that the exemption does not include topics raised outside of the health curriculum and that the Board, aligned with its commitment to equity and human rights, will continue to focus on respecting diversity, promoting inclusive education and identifying and eliminating discriminatory bias in other school programs and activities.

We encourage you to ask any questions about instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health to your child's teacher or principal before deciding to exempt your child.

Complete the Exemption Form (attached) if you decide to exempt your child from learning the expectations listed in this letter. Return the form to the school prior to five days before instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health is scheduled to begin in your child's classroom.

Sincerely,

Principal



Grade 6 Letter to Parents/Guardians re: Human Development and Sexual Health Instruction

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This letter is to inform you about instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health which is component of Healthy Living Strand of the 2019 Ontario Curriculum for Health and Physical Education for Grades 1 to 8.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission has stated that all students deserve to see themselves and their families reflected in Ontario's mandatory curriculum, and should receive the information necessary to protect their health and well-being. We are committed to creating inclusive learning environments where all students' identities and lived experiences are respected and ensuring principles of safety, access, human rights, equity, acceptance, health and well-being.

Education related to Human Development and Sexual Health is taught in a developmentally appropriate manner and delivered to meet the learning needs of students at different ages. The goal of this learning is to provide students with accurate information and to help them build the skills they need to develop personal responsibility for lifelong health, contribute to an inclusive school culture and make responsible choices that protect them from potential harm.

Families are encouraged to have regular conversations with their children about healthy living and make discuss the topics listed below with their child during the period of instruction.

The Ministry of Education requires all school boards to inform parents/guardians when instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health will occur in the event that parents want to exempt their child from this instruction. Your child's class will begin instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health on or about **DATE** and end on **DATE** for the **20YEAR - YEAR** school year.

The Ministry of Education's Expectations for Human Development and Sexual Health

Children in Grade **6** will learn to:

- demonstrate an understanding of the impacts of viewing sexually explicit media, including pornography (e.g., leads to a limited or distorted understanding of relationships; reinforces harmful gender norms; promotes an unrealistic or idealized body image)
- describe how they can build confidence and lay a foundation for healthy relationships by acquiring a clearer understanding of the physical, social, and emotional changes that occur during adolescence (e.g., physical: voice changes, skin changes, body growth; social: changing social relationships, increasing influence of peers; emotional: increased intensity of feelings, new interest in relationships, confusion and questions about changes)
- assess the 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, and propose appropriate ways of



responding to and changing harmful assumptions and stereotypes that can lead to destructive social attitudes including homophobia and racism

The Ministry of Education provides additional information about Human Development and Sexual Health on their website at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/health.html>.

It is important to note that the exemption does not include topics raised outside of the health curriculum and that the Board, aligned with its commitment to equity and human rights, will continue to focus on respecting diversity, promoting inclusive education and identifying and eliminating discriminatory bias in other school programs and activities.

We encourage you to ask any questions about instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health to your child's teacher or principal before deciding to exempt your child.

Complete the Exemption Form (attached) if you decide to exempt your child from learning the expectations listed in this letter. Return the form to the school prior to five days before instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health is scheduled to begin in your child's classroom.

Sincerely,

Principal



Grade 7 Letter to Parents/Guardians re: Human Development and Sexual Health Instruction

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This letter is to inform you about instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health which is component of Healthy Living Strand of the 2019 Ontario Curriculum for Health and Physical Education for Grades 1 to 8.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission has stated that all students deserve to see themselves and their families reflected in Ontario's mandatory curriculum, and should receive the information necessary to protect their health and well-being. We are committed to creating inclusive learning environments where all students' identities and lived experiences are respected and ensuring principles of safety, access, human rights, equity, acceptance, health and well-being.

Education related to Human Development and Sexual Health is taught in a developmentally appropriate manner and delivered to meet the learning needs of students at different ages. The goal of this learning is to provide students with accurate information and to help them build the skills they need to develop personal responsibility for lifelong health, contribute to an inclusive school culture and make responsible choices that protect them from potential harm.

Families are encouraged to have regular conversations with their children about healthy living and make discuss the topics listed below with their child during the period of instruction.

The Ministry of Education requires all school boards to inform parents/guardians when instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health will occur in the event that parents want to exempt their child from this instruction. Your child's class will begin instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health on or about **DATE** and end on **DATE** for the **20YEAR - YEAR** school year.

The Ministry of Education's Expectations for Human Development and Sexual Health

Children in Grade **7** will learn to:

- explain the importance of having a shared understanding with a partner about the following: delaying sexual activity until they are older (e.g., choosing to abstain from any genital contact; choosing to abstain from vaginal or anal intercourse; choosing to abstain from oral-genital contact); 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
- identify sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections (STBBIs), and describe their symptoms



- identify ways of preventing STBBIs and/or unplanned pregnancy, such as delaying first intercourse and other sexual activities until a person is older and using condoms and other forms of protection consistently
- demonstrate an understanding of physical, emotional, social, and cognitive factors that need to be considered when making decisions related to sexual health (e.g., sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections [STBBIs], possible side effects of contraceptives, pregnancy, protective value of vaccinations, social labelling, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, self-concept issues, relationships, love, respect, desire, pleasure, cultural teachings)
- explain how relationships with others (e.g., family, peers) and sexual health may be affected by the physical and emotional changes associated with puberty (e.g., effect of physical maturation and emotional changes on family relationships; effect of growing interest in intimate relationships on peer relationships; increased risk of STBBIs and/or pregnancy with onset of sexual activity)

The Ministry of Education provides additional information about Human Development and Sexual Health on their website at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/health.html>.

It is important to note that the exemption does not include topics raised outside of the health curriculum and that the Board, aligned with its commitment to equity and human rights, will continue to focus on respecting diversity, promoting inclusive education and identifying and eliminating discriminatory bias in other school programs and activities.

We encourage you to ask any questions about instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health to your child's teacher or principal before deciding to exempt your child.

Complete the Exemption Form (attached) if you decide to exempt your child from learning the expectations listed in this letter. Return the form to the school prior to five days before instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health is scheduled to begin in your child's classroom.

Sincerely,

Principal



Grade 8 Letter to Parents/Guardians re: Human Development and Sexual Health Instruction

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This letter is to inform you about instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health which is component of Healthy Living Strand of the 2019 Ontario Curriculum for Health and Physical Education for Grades 1 to 8.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission has stated that all students deserve to see themselves and their families reflected in Ontario's mandatory curriculum, and should receive the information necessary to protect their health and well-being. We are committed to creating inclusive learning environments where all students' identities and lived experiences are respected and ensuring principles of safety, access, human rights, equity, acceptance, health and well-being.

Education related to Human Development and Sexual Health is taught in a developmentally appropriate manner and delivered to meet the learning needs of students at different ages. The goal of this learning is to provide students with accurate information and to help them build the skills they need to develop personal responsibility for lifelong health, contribute to an inclusive school culture and make responsible choices that protect them from potential harm.

Families are encouraged to have regular conversations with their children about healthy living and make discuss the topics listed below with their child during the period of instruction.

The Ministry of Education requires all school boards to inform parents/guardians when instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health will occur in the event that parents want to exempt their child from this instruction. Your child's class will begin instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health on or about **DATE** and end on **DATE** for the **20YEAR - YEAR** school year.

The Ministry of Education's Expectations for Human Development and Sexual Health

Children in Grade **8** will learn to:

- identify and explain factors that can affect an individual's decisions about sexual activity (e.g., previous thinking about reasons to wait, including making a choice to delay sexual activity and establishing personal limits; perceived personal readiness; peer pressure; desire; curiosity; self-concept; awareness and acceptance of gender identity and sexual orientation; physical or cognitive disabilities and possible associated assumptions; legal concerns such as the legal age of consent; awareness of the risk of sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections [STBBIs]; concerns about the risk of becoming a parent; use of alcohol or drugs; personal or family values; religious beliefs; cultural teachings; access to information; media messages), and identify sources of support regarding sexual health (e.g., a health professional [doctor, nurse,



public health practitioner], a teacher, a guidance counsellor, a religious leader, a parent or other trusted adult, a reputable website)

- demonstrate an understanding of gender identity (e.g., male, female, Two-Spirit, transgender), gender expression, and sexual orientation (e.g., heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual), and identify factors that can help individuals of all identities and orientations develop a positive self-concept
- demonstrate the ability to assess situations for potential dangers (e.g., getting into a car with a stranger or an impaired, unlicensed, or inexperienced driver; dependencies or coercion in dating relationships; joining gangs; participating in violence; attending a party where alcohol or drugs are being used; using cosmetic procedures or treatments such as piercing, tattooing, crash diets, or tanning without exploring potential health risks; exposure to infectious diseases through direct contact, sneezing, or coughing), and apply strategies for avoiding dangerous situations
- analyse the attractions and benefits associated with being in a healthy relationship (e.g., support, understanding, camaraderie, pleasure), as well as the benefits, risks, and drawbacks, for themselves and others, of relationships involving different degrees of sexual intimacy (e.g., hurt when relationships end or trust is broken; in more sexually intimate relationships, risk of STBIs and related risk to future fertility, becoming a parent before you are ready, sexual harassment and exploitation; potential for dating violence)

The Ministry of Education provides additional information about Human Development and Sexual Health on their website at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/health.html>.

It is important to note that the exemption does not include topics raised outside of the health curriculum and that the Board, aligned with its commitment to equity and human rights, will continue to focus on respecting diversity, promoting inclusive education and identifying and eliminating discriminatory bias in other school programs and activities.

We encourage you to ask any questions about instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health to your child's teacher or principal before deciding to exempt your child.

Complete the Exemption Form (attached) if you decide to exempt your child from learning the expectations listed in this letter. Return the form to the school prior to five days before instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health is scheduled to begin in your child's classroom.

Sincerely,

Principal

I have reviewed the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in the elementary Ontario Health and Physical Education curriculum for my child's grade, and 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**]:

- Option 1:** 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.*)
- Option 2:** 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. Note: While the school will make every effort to accommodate your request, a school's ability to effectively supervise students may not be operationally feasible.*)
- Option 3:** be released into my care as parent/guardian or the care of my approved designate.

PARENT/GUARDIAN AGREEMENT

As the child's parent/guardian, I understand and agree with the following statements:

- the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations in strand D of the Ministry of Education's 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 parent/guardian signature, will not be accepted; and
- 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.

Last Name of Student:	First Name of Student:
Parent/Guardian Name:	Parent/Guardian Signature:
Grade and Class:	Date:

Please return this signed and completed form by: _____ . This date must be no later than **five (5) school days before** the start of the period of instruction.

If you do not receive an acknowledgment, please contact your school principal at:

[Principal to insert contact information]

Notice of Collection Statement:

The Toronto District School Board (the "TDSB") collects, uses, retains, and shares personal information for the purposes of planning, administering, and delivering its educational programs and services. The purpose of this collection is to provide parents/guardians with an opportunity to opt out of instruction in the Human Development and Sexual Health Strand of Grade 1-8 Ontario Health Curriculum.

**Principal Acknowledgement of Exemption Request for Human Development and
Sexual Health Education**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This is to acknowledge that I am in receipt of your request for exemption.

Please note your requested option will be confirmed prior to instruction.

Sincerely,

[insert name]



PPM162: Exemptions from Instruction Related to Human Development and Sexual Health

Principal Checklist

- Inform parents/guardians of revised Health and Physical Education Curriculum
- Align long-range plans with teachers who report on “Health and Physical Education”
- Consult with teachers to determine the dates of instruction on the topic of Human Development and Sexual Health
- Approve electronic or hard-copy form to be sent to parents/guardians
- Inform parents/guardians of selected dates, a minimum of 20 days prior to instruction in Human Development and Sexual Health. (letter)
- Inform parents/guardians that they can choose to have their child exempted from instruction related to Human Development and Sexual Health expectations. (Form 727C)
- Acknowledge receipt of parent/guardian requests for exemption
- Make final decision about whether to accept or reject a request that does not fall within the parameters of PPM162
- Confirm with the parents/guardians on decision and a plan of action
- Make plans for exempted students in consultation with the Superintendent of Education, considering the total number of exempted students, accommodation and operational feasibility.

