



### Human Growth and Development Teachers,

We greatly appreciate your efforts in providing instruction to students on learning standards related to Human Growth and Development. As you know, Sexual Health Education plays an invaluable role in promoting the overall wellness of individual students and the broader community. These materials are in alignment with the Washington State Standards and ensure compliance with the Healthy Youth Act.

As you prepare please review the following aspects for your lesson planning and preparation:

- **Remember to keep clear messaging around 'acceptance'.** Students now, more than ever, are grappling and internalizing outside messaging about who they are and how the world values them. It is our role to support all students and encourage open dialogue around differences. This curriculum is designed to involve young people in discussing personal, sometimes sensitive, topics. To do this effectively, it is important to create and maintain a safe, respectful environment in which participants can share freely. You can create and maintain a safe, respectful environment by introducing and reinforcing ground rules. Engage all participants in creating, understanding, agreeing to, and respecting the ground rules. Post the ground rules on a wall for every session. Remind students, when necessary, that everyone has agreed to abide by the ground rules.
- **As the facilitator of learning around these particular Health Standards,** it is also key to reflect on your own values and beliefs and be cognizant that they not infiltrate the experience for students. Our role is to deliver factual, accurate information and then to allow students to think critically and apply their own world view to the materials in a respectful manner.
- **Students will come to this set of learning experiences with their own unique history and understanding.** At times, sensitive materials, such as these, can be triggers for students who have experienced different levels of trauma. It is important that we stay in tune to students and how they are feeling as well as partnering with the counseling department to let them know of the impact this might have on their department as well.
- **Confidentiality, which has often been described as "what is said in this room stays in this room."** This is not an effective description of confidentiality for a classroom for a few reasons. First, it can raise anxiety among parents and other adults in the community who may be concerned that the teacher is trying to keep whatever is discussed about sexuality secret from them. Second, it is inaccurate. As teachers you know well, there are situations under which confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, or must be broken. As mandated reporters, teachers are required to report situations in which a student is at risk to hurt themselves or others. Telling students that the discussions will be confidential, therefore, becomes problematic if their confidentiality must be broken. Finally, true confidentiality is impossible to enforce. Believing that what is shared will be kept confidential may lead a student to share something deeply personal that may likely get "leaked" by someone in the class. Thus, while it is important to include "confidentiality" in the ground rules, an effective way a teacher can include this is to write it up on the list and say, "To keep something confidential means that it's kept private or secret. I certainly don't want you to keep the information we talk about here private from anyone. In fact, the more you talk with your friends about it, the better! What is important, however, is that we all agree not to share anything personal that someone in the class may have shared. That's disrespectful, and unfair to that person. Instead, you can simply say, 'I know someone who...' if you want to share a good point someone made. Also, you may know already that there are some things that I, as a teacher, cannot keep private. If a student were to come to me and say that someone is hurting them, or that they were thinking of hurting themselves or someone else, I'd have to tell someone about it, so that this student could get some help."