

**Q. Does the curriculum teach about love, or is it only about the act of sex?**

The HPE Curriculum identifies and presents knowledge and skills that help students develop and maintain healthy relationships. In Catholic schools, the Family Life Education curriculum teaches a distinctively Catholic view of human life, sexuality, marriage, and family. Students are called to reflect the love of God by creating, protecting, and sustaining life, and by exploring the ways in which human sexuality is a gift from God. They are encouraged to reflect upon, respond to, and analyze the ways in which human sexuality, as it is related to identity, is personally relevant in their lives.

**Q. Is abstinence education a part of the revised HPE curriculum?**

Yes. In Catholic schools, abstinence education is associated with the virtue of chastity. Students learn that chastity calls them to treat their bodies and the bodies of others with the respect and dignity they deserve as temples of the Holy Spirit. It calls them to abstain from all sexually intimate acts outside of marriage, including those that may not involve intercourse but are part of giving themselves bodily to another person in a way that should be reserved for the intimacy of marriage.

**Q. Are students taught about contraception and sexually transmitted infections?**

In Catholic elementary schools, the moral teachings of the Church with respect to human sexuality and sexual morality are presented clearly, and faithfully, in language appropriate to the students' age and level of maturity.



**For More Information:**

TCDSB Religion Department -  
<https://www.tcdsb.org/ProgramsServices/BoardServices/ReligionFamilyLife/Pages/Default.aspx>

Archdiocese of Toronto  
<https://www.archtoronto.org>

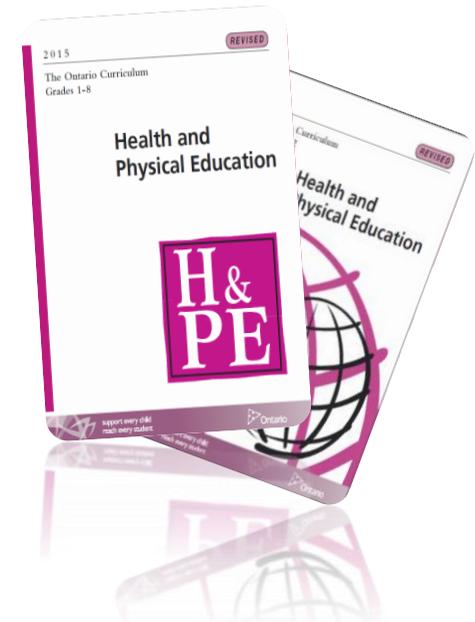
Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario -  
<http://acbo.on.ca/englishweb/>

Catholic Association of Religious and Family Life  
Educators of Ontario  
<http://www.carfleo.org/>

Institute for Catholic Education  
<http://www.iceont.ca/>



## Understanding Ontario's Health & Physical Education (HPE) Curriculum, 2016 Frequently Asked Questions



\*Adapted from materials provided by the Institute for Catholic Education

## HPE Summary

- ❖ The Catholic education community, under the guidance of the Catholic Bishops of Ontario, collaborated to develop resources that will support our Catholic teachers as they work to meet the needs of students in Catholic schools across the province.
- ❖ These resources will ensure that the revised Health & Physical Education (HPE) curriculum, delivered as part of the Family Life program in Catholic classrooms, is consistent with Church teachings and our faith tradition.
- ❖ Both the HPE Curriculum and the Family Life Education curriculum recognize the crucial role of parents in educating their children.

### **Role of Parents**

- Parents and guardians are the primary educators of their children. Parents who are responsible for sharing their values, morals, cultural and religious beliefs with their children
- The role of parents in the teaching of family life issues is crucial to both parish and school work.

### **Role of Parish**

- Pastors provide spiritual direction, support and guidance to the members of the Catholic community. Bishops have teaching authority over matters of faith and morals for the Catholic faithful.
- To support the Catholic School Curriculum, the Catholic Bishops of Ontario published the 'Guidelines for Family Life Education' in 1978 and developed a Family Life program in 1989.

### **Role of Catholic Schools**

- Catholic schools follow the curriculum set by the Ministry of Education, but curriculum is taught in a way that reflects a Catholic world view.
- Catholic schools work with parents and parishes to ensure that the Gospel message of Jesus is lived in our school communities and shared with our students guided by the moral teaching and faith tradition of the Catholic Church.

## Some Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q. Does the Catholic system have a separate health curriculum?**

No. There is one Ontario curriculum for both the public and Catholic systems. Teachers in the Catholic system are required to teach all of the same learning expectations as the public system but do so through the lens of the Catholic faith, according to Catholic teachings. In Ontario Catholic elementary schools, all expectations of the Human Development and Sexual Health strand of the HPE Curriculum are met through the existing *Fully Alive* program and supplemental program materials. In secondary schools, Family Life is taught in both Religious Education and HPE classes presenting a distinctively Catholic view of human life, sexuality, marriage and the family.

### **Q. How will what is taught in Catholic schools differ from what is taught in public schools?**

Catholic schools have a responsibility to teach all curriculum set out by the Ministry of Education in education policy, including the revised Health and Physical Education curriculum, but have always done so in a manner that conveys, respects and models our Catholic values to our students.

### **Q. Can the revised HPE curriculum really be presented from a Catholic perspective?**

Yes. The pre-existing *Fully Alive* program already addressed over 90% of the specific expectations now included in the Human Development and Sexual Health strand of the HPE curriculum. At the request of the Bishops, the Institute for Catholic Education (ICE) have chosen carefully designed resources to ensure that they are developmentally appropriate to the age and maturity of students. The Ministry acknowledges that curriculum in Catholic schools is adapted to reflect a Catholic world view, while addressing the content and learning expectations prescribed by the Ministry of Education.

## More Frequently Asked Questions (Content Specific)

### **Q. Why is information on the body parts (including genitalia) included in the revised curriculum?**

The Ministry of Education is responsible for developing for curriculum policy, which identifies what students learn in each grade and subject. In Catholic elementary schools, the "Created Sexual: Male and Female" strand of the *Fully Alive* program presents, in a developmentally appropriate way, what it means to be created sexual.

### **Q. Why does the curriculum address same-sex relationships?**

The Ontario Government, through the Health and Physical Education curriculum, has students learn to understand themselves, treat others with respect and to celebrate inclusivity.

In Catholic schools, the *Fully Alive* program, allows students to explore our belief that all humans are created in the image of God and that God knows and loves each person. Students understand that treating others with equity, dignity, and respect is a necessity as they strive to lead fully human lives.

### **Q. Why do students learn about masturbation and at what age should they learn it?**

Students learn it is natural to be curious about the body and its new sensations. It is also necessary to develop habits of self-discipline. As people mature they grow in their understanding that sexuality is relational, not solitary. In Ontario Catholic elementary schools, students are introduced to the term masturbation in the Grade 7 and 8 *Fully Alive* program when learning about changes in puberty, including sexual attraction and feelings.

