

List of Controversial Topics in the 2019 Ontario Primary HPE Curriculum

The following table guides parents about the ages at which the 2019 Health and Physical Education (HPE) Curriculum, Grades 1-8 introduces topics parents may find sensitive.

Each subject entry lists the mandatory prompts which are required learning first, and includes non-compulsory Teacher or Student prompts if they add additional information.

Gr. 1

<p><i>Body parts</i> identify body parts, including genitalia (e.g., penis, testicles, vagina, vulva), using correct terminology and body-positive language</p>	<p>D1.3, p. 105</p>
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Gr. 2

<p><i>Consent</i> explain the importance of consent and demonstrate the ability to stand up for themselves and others, to enhance well-being and safety (e.g., speaking confidently; stating boundaries, whether in person or online; saying no; respecting the right of a person to say no and encouraging others to respect that right also; reporting exploitative behaviours, such as improper touching of their bodies or others' bodies)</p>	<p>D2.3, p. 128</p>
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Gr. 4

<p><i>Sexting</i> identify risks associated with the use of communications technology, including Internet use, texting, and gaming (e.g., difficulty developing healthy interpersonal skills and relationships offline; spending too much time online and not enough with family and friends; exposure to online predators; experiencing social isolation, depressed mood, preoccupation with comparing themselves to others and seeking validation, unhealthy sleeping patterns, and other risks to mental health), and describe precautions and strategies for using these technologies safely Teacher prompt: But with these benefits come risks and potential dangers as well, such as exposure to people who ask you for sexual pictures or want you to share personal information.</p>	<p>D1.2, p. 172</p>
<p><i>Online safety</i> apply a decision-making process (e.g., identify potential dangers and risks, consider ways to stay safe, consider the pros and cons of each option, consider whether they need to check with an adult, choose the safest option, act, reflect on their decision, consider whether there is anything they could improve for next time) to assess risks and make safe decisions in a variety of situations (e.g., when using a wheelchair, cycling, preparing food, going online)</p>	<p>D2.2, pp. 176-77</p>

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<p>Student prompt: I need to realize that some websites are unsafe. They can be unsafe if they are asking for personal information or have pop-ups or links that lead to unexpected sites. Some websites are unsafe because they have very negative information, show violence, promote hate, or have images that make me feel confused or uncomfortable. Some websites encourage users to engage in scams or other illegal activities. If I'm not sure, I should ask a parent or trusted adult to guide me to the best sites, and always let them know about the sites I visit.</p>	
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Gr. 5

<p><i>Sexual orientation</i> 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, Teacher prompt: A person's self-concept and mental health and well-being can be affected by a number of internal and external factors that work together. Internal factors come from within yourself. They include having a sense of purpose in life, being able to arrive at and sustain a clear sense of who you are, having a strong sense of cultural identity, feeling that you have the right – and the ability – to take steps to make things better, having clear boundaries, being optimistic, having high expectations of yourself, and having the skills you need to solve problems. Sexual orientation refers to a person's sense of sexual attraction to people of the same or different sex. Having an understanding of your sexual orientation is an important part of developing your sense of self and well-being.</p>	<p>D2.4, p. 201</p>
<p><i>Sexual orientation</i> 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) Student prompt: "Things I can control include whether I have a positive or negative attitude about things, how I show respect for myself and others,</p>	<p>D2.5, p. 202</p>

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<p>whether I ask for help when I need it, whether I am involved in activities at school and in my community, the actions I take, whether I am open to new ideas, and whether I make my own decisions about things or let myself be influenced by others. Things I cannot control include what others may think about where I was born, who is in my family, how much money my family has, and personal characteristics such as my skin colour, hair colour, sexual orientation, and body shape and structure, or whether I have a learning disability, a physical disability, or a health issue. All of these things are a part of who I am. I cannot control how others see these aspects of me, but I can control what I do and how I act.</p>	
<p><i>Sexting</i> 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) Student prompt: "...Sharing private sexual photos with others or posting sexual rumours online is hurtful, unacceptable, and illegal." 203</p>	<p>D2.5, p. 203</p>

Gr. 6

<p><i>Same sex families</i> demonstrate ways of being inclusive, respectful, and accepting, and describe how this benefits everyone, including themselves Student prompt: "We can get to know each other better and not make assumptions based on what we think we know." "We take turns and listen respectfully to each other. We don't interrupt." "To remove barriers, our school has an elevator to make sure students can get around easily if they cannot take the stairs." "When we are working in groups, the teacher makes sure that everyone has a chance to partner with others." "Everyone has someone to play with, or talk to at recess, if they want." "We read books and use materials in class that describe various types of families and relationships. We know that not everyone has a mother and a father – someone might have two mothers or two fathers (or just one parent or a grandparent, a caregiver, or a guardian). Reading books and using materials that show this can make everyone feel included."</p>	<p>D1.1, p. 222</p>
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<p><i>Pornography</i> 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)</p>	<p>D1.3, p. 223</p>
<p><i>Masturbation</i> 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) Teacher prompt: Things like ejaculating when you are asleep (wet dreams) or experiencing vaginal lubrication are normal and happen as a result of physical changes that come with puberty. Exploring one’s body by touching or masturbating is something that many people do because it feels good. It is common and is not harmful and is one way of learning about your body.”</p>	<p>D2.5, p. 228</p>
<p><i>Consent</i> make informed decisions that demonstrate respect for themselves and others and an understanding of the concept of consent to help build healthier relationships, using a variety of social-emotional learning skills (e.g., self-awareness and identity skills; emotion management skills; critical and creative thinking skills; skills based on First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultural teachings, such as medicine wheel teachings connected to the life cycle, the seven-grandfather teachings, or other cultural teachings) Teacher prompt: What communication skills can help you send information, receive information, and interpret information in an effective way in a relationship? Student prompt: Being respectful but clear about your ideas and feelings; listening actively; interpreting body language, tone of voice, and facial expressions; respecting signals of agreement or disagreement and consent or lack of consent – all these are important skills. A clear, specific, and enthusiastic ‘yes’ that is ongoing and given freely is a signal of consent. A response of ‘no’, an uncertain response, or silence needs to be understood as no consent. It is important to remember that a person can change their mind and say no at any time to something that they said yes to before.</p>	<p>D2.6, p. 229</p>
<p><i>Use the word ‘partner’ instead of ‘husband’ or ‘wife’</i> 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</p>	<p>D3.3, p. 232</p>

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<p>Student prompt: “Stereotypes are usually formed when we do not have enough information and we make assumptions. They can also come from widely held societal beliefs. One way we can start to address stereotypes is by finding out more about people. By being open-minded, observing and listening, asking questions, getting more information, and considering different perspectives, we can work to change stereotypes. We know that not all couples are male-female, and we show this by the words we use. For example, we could use a word like ‘partner’ instead of ‘husband’ or ‘wife’. We need to be inclusive and welcoming.”</p>	
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Gr 7

<p><i>Requesting sexts</i> describe benefits and dangers, for themselves and others, that are associated with the use of computers and other digital technologies (e.g., benefits: efficiency and time savings; increased access to information; improved communication, including global access; dangers: misuse of private information; negative impact on mental health, including possible social isolation, feelings of depression, and addiction; identity theft; cyberstalking; exposure to online predators, including those involved in sex trafficking and/or soliciting explicit sexual images; hearing damage and/or traffic injuries associated with earphone use; financial losses from online gambling), and identify protective responses</p>	<p>D1.1, p. 252</p>
<p><i>Making decisions about sexual activity</i> 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</p>	<p>D1.3, p. 254</p>
<p><i>Abstinence</i> 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 Teacher prompt: The term abstinence can mean different things to different people. People can also have different understandings of what is meant by having or not having sex. Be clear in your own mind about what you are</p>	<p>D1.3, p. 254</p>

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comfortable or uncomfortable with. Being able to talk about these boundaries with a partner is an important part of sexual health...	
<p><i>Sex can be an enjoyable experience</i> 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</p> <p>Teacher prompt: ...Having sex can be an enjoyable experience. It can also be an important part of a close, loving, and committed relationship, such as marriage or a long-term, healthy relationship, when you are older.</p>	D1.3, p. 254
<p><i>Identify STIs</i> 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</p>	D1.4, p. 255
<p><i>Anal sex</i> 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</p> <p>Teacher prompt: Engaging in sexual activities like oral sex, vaginal intercourse, and anal intercourse means that you can contract an STBBI.</p>	D1.5, p. 255
<p><i>Condom use</i> 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</p> <p>Student prompt: People who think they will be having sex sometime soon should keep a condom or other effective and suitable form of protection with them so they will have it when they need it</p>	D1.5, p. 255
<p><i>HIV</i> 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</p> <p>Student prompt: One of the best things you can do to stop HIV is to stop the stigma that is associated with having the infection.</p>	D1.5, p. 256
<p><i>Gender identity</i> 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</p>	D2.4, p. 260

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orientation, self-concept issues, relationships, love, respect, desire, pleasure, cultural teachings)	
<p><i>Pornography</i> analyse the personal and societal implications of issues related to substance use, addictions, and related behaviours (e.g., effects of technology dependence on school and workplace performance, personal relationships, and physical health; impacts of pornography viewing patterns on relationships; risks associated with vaping and chewing tobacco; effects of second-hand smoke on non-smokers and children; legal and health implications of underage drinking and cannabis use; body damage and reputation loss among athletes as a result of the use of steroids and other performance-enhancing drugs; risk of HIV/AIDS with intravenous drug use; risk of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder [FASD] as a result of alcohol use during pregnancy Teacher prompt: What are some of the potential negative impacts of viewing of sexually explicit media such as pornography and certain video and online games?</p>	D3.2, p. 262

Gr 8

<p><i>Reasons to consider when getting sexually involved</i> “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)</p>	D1.4, pp. 281-82
<p><i>Gender identity</i> 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</p>	D1.5, p. 282
<p><i>Pregnancy prevention</i> demonstrate an understanding of abstinence, contraception and the use of effective and suitable protection to prevent pregnancy and STBBIs, and the concept of consent, as well as the skills (e.g., self-awareness,</p>	D2.3, pp. 284-85

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<p>communication, assertiveness, and refusal skills) they need to apply in order to make safe and healthy decisions about sexual activity (e.g., delaying first intercourse; establishing, discussing, and respecting boundaries; showing respect; opting to seek additional information and support; having safer sex)</p>	
<p><i>Analyze risks and benefits of being in a relationship</i> 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 STBBIs and related risk to future fertility, becoming a parent before you are ready, sexual harassment and exploitation; potential for dating violence</p>	<p>D3.3, p. 289</p>