

List of Controversial Topics
in the 2019
Ontario Secondary HPE Curriculum

The following table guides parents about the ages at which the 2019 Health and Physical Education (HPE) Curriculum, Grades 9-12 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. 9, Open

<p><i>Contraception</i> describe the relative effectiveness of various methods of preventing unintended pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDS (e.g., avoiding oral, vaginal, and anal intercourse; delaying first sexual intercourse; using protection, including barrier and hormonal methods, to prevent unintended pregnancy; using condoms and dental dams to protect against STIs), and identify sources of information and support (e.g., doctor, nurse practitioner, public health unit, parents, credible and accurate websites)</p> <p>Teacher prompt: “If you are thinking about having sex, you need to know how to avoid unintended pregnancy or STIs. What factors may influence whether a person uses protection? How effective are condoms in preventing pregnancy or STIs?”</p> <p>Student prompt: “Sometimes people don’t use condoms because they don’t understand how common STIs like HPV, herpes, and chlamydia really are, and they don’t know that you can’t always tell when a person has an STI. Sometimes people feel shy about talking to their partner about why protection is important. Sometimes people get pressured into not using condoms because their partner says you don’t need to and it feels better without one. But because the consequences can be so serious, you need to talk to your partner about using condoms if you are thinking about having sex. Using a condom every time is one of the most effective methods of birth control and will reduce your chances of getting an STI, including HIV.”</p> <p>Teacher prompt: “What forms of support can sexual health clinics provide?”</p> <p>Student prompt: “They can provide no-hassle counselling and confidential services ranging from birth control advice and pregnancy tests to advice on relationships and testing and treatment for STIs and HIV/AIDS.”</p>	<p>C1.4, pp. 103- 104</p>
<p><i>Gender identity</i> demonstrate an understanding of factors (e.g., acceptance, stigma, culture, religion, media, stereotypes, homophobia, self-image, self-awareness) that can influence a person’s understanding of their gender identity (e.g., male, female, two-spirited, transgender, transsexual, intersex) and sexual orientation (e.g., heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual), and identify sources of support for all students</p>	<p>C1.5 p. 104</p>

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<p>Teacher prompt: “Gender identity refers to a person’s sense of self, with respect to being male or female, both, or neither, and may be different from biological or birth-assigned sex. Sexual orientation refers to how people think of themselves in terms of their sexual and romantic attraction to others. What determines a person’s sense of self? How do social expectations and stereotypes about gender and sexuality influence how a person may feel about their gender identity or sexual orientation?”</p> <p>Student prompt: “A person’s sense of self is affected by the person’s cultural and family background, religion, and what they have come to value. Media images, role models, support systems, and acceptance or lack of acceptance by others could influence how different people feel about their gender identity or sexual orientation.” “Expectations or assumptions about masculinity and femininity and about heterosexuality as the norm can affect the self-image of those who do not fit those expectations or assumptions. This can make it difficult for a person to feel accepted by others.”</p> <p>Teacher prompt: “What are some sources of support for students who may be questioning their gender identity or sexual orientation?”</p> <p>Student prompt: “Talking to other young people dealing with the same issues can be a great start. It’s important to know that you are not alone. Many communities have organizations that provide services for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth, as well as for those who are questioning their gender identity or sexual orientation and for allies who support them. School guidance counsellors, health professionals, and trusted adults and friends can also help.” “Student-led clubs, such as gay-straight alliances, can make a big difference. As individuals, we can help by always treating each other fairly and with respect. In our society it is important to respect and accept the rights of all.”</p>	
<p><i>Factors to be considered when deciding to have sex</i> apply their knowledge of sexual health and safety, including a strong understanding of the concept of consent and sexual limits, and their decision-making skills to think in advance about their sexual health and sexuality</p> <p>Teacher prompt: “As their bodies continue to grow and change and their understanding of themselves and their bodies continues to develop, some teenagers are thinking about becoming sexually active. What should you keep in mind when making decisions about sexual activity?”</p> <p>Student prompt: “There are a lot of different things to think about. You can start with considering how having sex fits in with the values that you and your family respect.” “As a Métis woman, I was taught by my aunties about my ability to create life and how important it is to respect that gift. The decisions I make about sex depend greatly on how much I respect myself and respect being a woman. It’s important to take the time to find a partner who respects me as well, and my body.” “Having a clear understanding of consent is important. When making decisions about sexual activity, both</p>	<p>C2.3, p. 105</p>

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<p>people need to say yes. Silence does not mean yes; only yes means yes. Consent needs to be ongoing throughout the sexual activity.” “For some teens the most important question is whether they feel comfortable, ready, and mature enough to have sex. It helps to know yourself well, to know your body, and to know what makes you feel good – and safe – and what doesn’t. You also need to think about your health and whether you are in a relationship where both partners trust and care for each other. If you are not ready to take responsibility to protect yourself and your partner from STIs or an unintended pregnancy, you’re not ready to have sex.” “People should remember that everyone needs information, and different people may need different information. As a teen with a physical disability, I have had difficulty finding information about sexual health that meets my needs. People think that because I’m in a wheelchair, I don’t need this kind of information, but that’s not true!”</p> <p>Teacher prompt: “One of the best ways to take care of your sexual health is to do some thinking in advance about your health and safety and also about your needs, your values, and your limits when it comes to sexual activity. It is important to think about what you are comfortable with and what you are not comfortable with at this point in your life. This can include choosing not to be sexually active. Thinking about your sexual health involves planning for a regular medical check-up, regular breast or testicular self-examinations, and STI and Pap tests if you are sexually active. Another part of thinking in advance to take care of your sexual health involves collecting information. For example, you need information about what’s involved in using condoms – checking the expiry date on the box, learning how to put one on, and planning for the possibility of one breaking. That’s the medical side of thinking about your sexual health. What about the emotional side? How does thinking ahead help you when you need to make decisions about sex?”</p>	
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Gr. 10, Open

<p><i>Factors to consider when deciding whether to have sex</i> describe factors that influence sexual decision making (e.g., personal values, having limits and being able to communicate them, being aware of and respecting the limits set by others, peer and family expectations, having physical and emotional desires, media messages, myths and norms related to sexual activity or safer sex practices, participation in activities such as substance use that impair judgement), and demonstrate an understanding of how to use decision-making and communication skills effectively to support choices related to responsible and healthy sexuality</p> <p>Teacher prompt: “What are some factors to consider when deciding whether or not to be involved sexually with someone?”</p> <p>Student prompt: “I need to make sure it’s my choice. Being sexually active is not something that you should feel pressured into doing. I would think about the benefits and consequences of a sexual relationship. I need to</p>	<p>C2.5, p, 124</p>
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<p>consider my values and beliefs to be sure my actions are consistent with them. I want to make sure that my relationship with my partner is affectionate and respectful and that we feel comfortable discussing what we find pleasurable and what our sexual limits are. I must be confident that we would use safer sex practices, such as using condoms to protect against unintended pregnancy or STIs, which are much more common than most people think they are. It's important to know that it's okay to delay having sex with my partner until both of us feel ready, so that we're able to enjoy sex without regrets."</p>	
<p><i>Gender identity</i> Describe some common misconceptions about sexuality in our culture, and explain how these may cause harm to people and how they can be responded to critically and fairly Teacher prompt: "Heterosexism is the assumption that if someone is in a romantic or sexual relationship, it is with someone of the opposite sex. Think about the effect this might have on a person who is questioning his or her gender identity or sexual orientation. Heterosexism is often seen in our use of language. By using more inclusive language ourselves, and supporting its use in literature and the media, we can create an environment that is comfortable for all and where all feel they are a part. What are some other ways in which we can reduce homophobia, increase understanding, and support those who are questioning their gender identity or sexual orientation?"</p>	<p>C3,4, p.126</p>

Gr. 11, Open

<p><i>Gender identity</i> explain how sex, gender identity, and social and cultural background can influence health (e.g., social and cultural influences on dietary practices, methods of treating illnesses, gender expectations; gender- and sex-based influences on medical treatment, access to jobs, education, and physical activity) Teacher prompt: "What is understood to be normal behaviour is neither fixed nor universal. It can vary from person to person and with time and place. What we think of as 'normal' behaviour and appropriate jobs and activities for males and females is very much influenced by our social and cultural backgrounds. Many of the assumptions that we make about normal behaviour can exclude people who identify as transmale, transfemale, or two-spirited, or who identify in other non-binary ways. People can have difficulty with family, peers, and others when they don't conform to these assumptions. They may be teased, isolated, threatened, or exposed to violence, and the resulting stress can affect their self-worth, sense of well-being, and overall health. Behavioural differences related to gender expression can also have health implications, and so can differences in the ways that people of different sexes are affected by various diseases.</p>	<p>A2.3, p. 165</p>
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Provide some other examples of how gender- and sex-related differences can affect a person's health and well-being."	
<i>Sexual orientation</i> describe how to use personal and interpersonal skills to deal with personally stressful situations or to help others deal with stressful situations (e.g., mental and physical illness, death of a family member, abusive relationships, understanding and accepting sexual orientation, separation/divorce, suicide, unemployment/underemployment, substance abuse)	C3.4, p. 144

Gr 12, Open

<i>Factors to consider when having sex</i> demonstrate an understanding of how relationships develop through various stages, and describe the skills and strategies needed to maintain a satisfactory relationship as the relationship evolves (e.g., communication and interpersonal skills, adaptive and coping skills, conflict resolution strategies) Teacher prompt: "A couple may date without having a sexual component in their relationship, but over time the relationship may become more intimate. If that happens, the couple will have to make decisions about sexual activity. What should be discussed, and what is required for a couple to discuss sexual intimacy in their relationship?" Student prompt: "It can be hard to talk about sexuality, but it's important for each partner to know what the other thinks and values so they can both agree on what is pleasurable and on how they will avoid unintended pregnancy or STIs. This kind of discussion requires open communication, mutual respect, and trust. If you're not comfortable talking about sex with your partner, you shouldn't be having sex."	C1.3, p. 156
<i>Gender identity</i> analyse the occurrence of harassment, violence, and abuse in relationships (e.g., domestic, intimate, work-related) in their community and around the world, and describe the resources and supports that are available and actions that can be taken to deal with these problems Teacher prompt: "Problems such as harassment or abuse in relationships happen all over the world. Provide examples of ways in which harassment and abuse might occur in a school setting, in our community, in other countries. How can we respond to harassment and abuse in our school or community? What is being done to deal with harassment and abuse in other parts of the world?" Student prompt: "Some common types of harassment and abuse in a school setting are sexual and gender-based harassment, racial or ethnocultural harassment, and bullying. Common forms of harassment and abuse in our community include abuse within families and workplace harassment. In some parts of the world, there are serious problems of abuse against women and children, and people can be persecuted for their political	C3.2, pp. 158- 159

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beliefs or because of their race, culture, gender expression, or sexual orientation.” “In school we can respond by starting programs to prevent bullying, building awareness among staff, students, and parents, providing counselling and support, and helping students develop skills and values that discourage harassment and create a more positive atmosphere.” “In our community there are programs for dealing with domestic abuse and violence. There are also laws against workplace harassment, and workers can take complaints to human rights councils.” “Around the world, human rights organizations help to expose social, political, and racial persecution by governments. Education and microfinancing programs are also helping to increase the independence of women and girls in developing countries and make them less vulnerable to harassment and abuse.”	
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