





The image features a stage-like setting with teal-colored curtains pulled back to reveal a plain white background. The curtains are hung from a black rod at the top. The floor at the bottom of the frame appears to be made of light-colored wood.

# **Unveiling New K-12 Sex Education Standards**

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# NEW K-12 Standards for Optimal Sexual Development

*Founded on Positive Character and Healthy Relationships*



MEDICAL INSTITUTE  
FOR SEXUAL HEALTH

FIRST EDITION, 2021



# Webinar Objectives

- Introduce the new *K-12 Standards for Optimal Sexual Development*
- Provide background and context information and key distinctives
- Equip you to use *K-12 Standards* to fortify and justify education and prevention programs promoting optimal sexual development
- Encourage you with this critically-needed tool “for empowering health and wholeness”





# WHO developed the K-12 Standards?

- Medical Institute for Sexual Health



MEDICAL INSTITUTE  
FOR SEXUAL HEALTH





**MEDICAL INSTITUTE**  
FOR SEXUAL HEALTH

Advancing wholeness by  
empowering optimal  
sexual health

- Founded in 1992
- Science-based public health
- STD/STI Online Course (and Slides)

[www.medinstitute.org](http://www.medinstitute.org)  
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# WHO developed the K-12 Standards?

- Medical Institute for Sexual Health
- National coalition- November 2017
- Cultural fallout of the sexual revolution
- Strategic direction to develop new standards for sex education
- Framework for empowering health and wholeness



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# WHAT are the K-12 Standards?

- K-12
- STANDARDS
- OPTIMAL SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT
- FOUNDED ON POSITIVE CHARACTER
- HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS





# DISTINCTIVES

- Clear guidance and support for all school-aged children to promote positive life goals and wholeness
- Inherent value of every student upheld
- Content is inclusive of all students- irrespective of their sexual orientation or gender identity, or their past sexual experience (whether chosen or forced upon them)
- Medically accurate, research-aligned, age-appropriate and educationally sound
- Based on primary prevention and optimal health
- Parents and family affirmed as primary influence



# KEY THEMES

- Resilience and overcoming challenges
- Refusal skills and boundary setting
- Positive and negative influence of peers and culture
- Positive and negative influence of technology and social media
- Prosocial value of healthy marriage and family formation
- Prevention of sexual abuse
- Information on pregnancy, STDs/STIs and emotional risks of teen sexual activity, along with accurate information about contraception



# FEATURES

- Four key topics



KEY TOPIC

1

# Positive Character

**POSITIVE CHARACTER STRENGTHS**

**DECISION-MAKING**

**COMMITMENT AND GOAL SETTING**

**REFUSAL AND CESSATION SKILLS**



KEY TOPIC

2

# Healthy Relationships

**FAMILY**

**FRIENDSHIPS**

**DATING**

**MARRIAGE**

**PARENTHOOD**



KEY TOPIC

3

# Optimal Sexual Development

**PUBERTY**

**HUMAN REPRODUCTION**

**OPTIMAL SEXUAL ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS**



KEY TOPIC

4

# Sexual Risks

**AVOIDING SEXUAL RISKS**

**TEEN PREGNANCY**

**STDs/STIs**

**EMOTIONAL RISKS**

**SEXUAL ABUSE**



# FEATURES

- Four key topics
- Four grade-level groupings







# FEATURES

- Four key topics
- Four grade-level groupings
- Adaptable learning objective language



## A. FAMILY

### STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- 2.A.1. Identify factors that contribute to the success and legacy of the family, such as empathy, kindness, honesty, respect, trust, overcoming adversity, patience and forgiveness.
- 2.A.2. Explain how healthy families typically share values, provide love and emotional support, set boundaries and limits, and help members achieve their full potential.
- 2.A.3. Identify parents, family members and trusted adults with whom to discuss the life cycle, (i.e., birth, growing, aging, and death).

EARLY ELEMENTARY	LATE ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL
●	●	●	●
●	●	●	●
●	●	●	●



# FEATURES

- Four key topics
- Four grade-level groupings
- Adaptable learning objective language
- Supporting references



## A. AVOIDING SEXUAL RISKS

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*Sexual activity outside of marriage can have harmful physical and emotional consequences.*

*References: [19, 93, 143-174]*

## B. TEEN PREGNANCY

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*Teens who face a pregnancy before they are married encounter a number of physical, emotional, social, educational and financial challenges.*

*References: [11, 175-190]*

## C. STDs/STIs

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*Sexually Transmitted Diseases/Sexually Transmitted Infections can have harmful physical, emotional and social consequences and can be prevented by avoiding nonmarital sexual activity.*

*References: [7, 19, 191-217]*

## D. EMOTIONAL RISKS

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*Nonmarital sexual activity can have negative emotional consequences.*

*References: [218-224]*



# Healthy Marriage

## D. MARRIAGE

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*Healthy, strong marriages contribute to healthy families and communities.*

*References: [95-110]*

### **STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO:**

- 2.D.1. Define a healthy marriage as the mutually-committed, monogamous union of a couple, intended to be lifelong, that is granted rights and responsibilities by law.

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- 2.D.2. Name qualities of a healthy marriage, such as mutual commitment, fidelity, respect, trust, compatibility, giving, service, effective communication, ability to resolve conflict, and sharing of values and goals.



# Defining Sexual Activity

## A. AVOIDING SEXUAL RISKS

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*Sexual activity outside of marriage can have harmful physical and emotional consequences.*

*References: [19, 93, 143-174]*

### **STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO:**

- 4.A.1. (Middle School) Explain that sexual activity includes physical contact between individuals involving intimate/private areas of the body that can potentially result in pregnancy, STDs/STIs and/or emotional risks.
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- 4.A.1. (High School) Explain that sexual activity includes physical contact between individuals involving intimate/private areas of the body (such as outercourse, mutual masturbation, oral sex, anal sex, and vaginal intercourse) that can potentially result in pregnancy, STDs/STIs and/or emotional risks.



# Refusal Skills/ Consent

- 4.A.6. Describe the value of setting, communicating and respecting boundaries in order to avoid sexual activity.
- 4.A.7. Discuss refusal skills and behaviors that are required for avoiding nonmarital sexual activity, such as mutual respect, communication and assertiveness skills, impulse control, and the ability to maintain boundaries.
- 4.A.10. Review applicable state laws governing the age of sexual consent and how violating such laws can lead to serious legal consequences.
- 4.E.2. Define sexual abuse as (1) any adult sexual contact with a minor below the legal age of consent, or (2) sexual contact between adults or minors involving coercion, threat, or force, or (3) taking advantage of an individual's inability or ignoring their unwillingness to give consent.



**SEXUAL CONSENT** is the permission granted by an individual to willingly engage in a specific sexual activity. However, legal sexual consent is more complicated than just giving permission. The legal definition varies from state to state and may depend on the age of the person giving consent, the age difference between the sexual partners, and the balance or imbalance of power between the parties. Also, a person's ability to give consent may be hindered by their physical or mental incapacitation. See also *Consent, Refusal Skills*.

**REFUSAL SKILLS** are practical ways to avoid, resist or refuse to engage in unwanted or risky behaviors. Refusal skills include establishing, clearly communicating, and maintaining personal boundaries. Refusal skills help a person move away from unwanted or risky behavior, whereas consent implies directionally moving toward a behavior. In this document, refusal skills are emphasized for avoiding nonmarital sexual activity, resisting sexual coercion, and developing healthy relationships. See also *Consent, Sexual Consent*.



# Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

**K-12 Standards are written for classroom instruction, as opposed to individual counseling and clinical intervention. While some of the topics addressed are personal, they are written to be taught in a public setting. . . . They were developed for all students, irrespective of their sexual orientation, gender identity or sexual experience. Some subjects are sensitive or complex and may be better addressed with individual attention to maintain student privacy and confidentiality. Students are always encouraged to discuss sexual topics further with parents and their family members, and to seek individual counseling or clinical help when needed.**



# WHERE will the K-12 Standards be used?



**GOVERNMENT/POLICY-** local, state, federal, international



**SCHOOLS-** administrators, teachers



**CURRICULUM-** writers, publishers



**FAITH COMMUNITIES**



**PARENTS**



# WHEN should the K-12 Standards be used?

 **NOW!**





# WHY are the K-12 Standards needed?

- Expand the conversation around what is included in optimal health/primary prevention/SRA education
- Expand the reference base for medically-accurate, research-aligned, educationally-sound information
- Expand opportunities to build consensus in the often-contentious debate over sex education





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# NATIONAL SEX EDUCATION STANDARDS

CORE CONTENT AND SKILLS, K-12

*SECOND EDITION*





## Endorsing Organizations





**Sex ed is a vehicle for social change. Full stop.**





While sex education is a necessary sexual health tool, it can (and should) be so much more than that. With sex education, we have a golden opportunity to create a culture shift—tackling the misinformation, shame, and stigma that create the basis for many of today's sexual and reproductive health and rights issues, like:

- **Reproductive justice**
- **LGBTQ equality**
- **Sexual violence prevention**
- **Gender equity**
- **Dismantling white supremacy**

[www.siecus.org](http://www.siecus.org)



# HOW should the K-12 Standards be used?

- **CREDIBILITY**

Lead with confidence and objectivity

- **COMPASSION**

Love every person, Uphold  
dignity of every individual

- **COLLABORATION**

Look for ways to work  
together





# HOW should the K-12 Standards be used?

- **FORTIFY-** Develop and/or improve curriculum
- **JUSTIFY-** Add evidence-informed credibility to sexual risk avoidance/abstinence programs
- **CLARIFY-** Inform the dialogue among key stakeholders setting sex education policy





**We have an incredible OPPORTUNITY to reach today's young people!**





TO DOWNLOAD THE STANDARDS, GO TO:

**[www.newsexedstandards.org](http://www.newsexedstandards.org)**



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QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?

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