

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS GRADE EIGHT FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION (FLE) OBJECTIVES

The Prince William County Public Schools FLE curriculum complies with Virginia General Assembly legislation and the *Standards of Learning for Family Life Education* and guidelines established by the Virginia Department of Education.

FLE instruction in Grades 6-7 is delivered by science teachers and by health and physical education teachers at grade 8. The program builds upon concepts introduced at the elementary level. Students continue their study of reproductive anatomy and physiology and learn about common sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Instruction includes an examination of physical, psychological, and social changes that occur as part of adolescent development and sexuality as an evolving component of personality. Students explore the benefits of postponing sexual activity and learn that abstinence from sexual activity is the only way to guarantee the prevention of pregnancy and STIs. Students learn about types of exploitation and identify techniques used by sexual predators to exploit teens.

Parents/guardians may opt their child out of all or any part of FLE instruction. Students who are opted out will be provided with non-punitive health activities during FLE instruction. Further information can be found in the parent letter and opt out form that are included in the Code of Behavior distributed at the beginning of the school year and are posted on the PWCS website (www.pwcs.edu).

Human Sexuality/Growth and Development

8.1 **Students will identify the stages of human development and describe the social and emotional changes that occur throughout the lifespan.**

Descriptive Statement: Students learn that people change as they age and go through physical, mental, social, and emotional developmental levels. Physical development and anatomy are reviewed. Stages of mental and emotional development are presented in relation to students' present developmental level with the goal of increasing their self-understanding and self-acceptance, now and in the future. Commonly accepted theories of personal development are presented as they relate to students' own development.

8.2 **Students will recognize the development of sexuality as an aspect of the total personality.**

Descriptive Statement: Students will learn that sexuality is a component of personality that begins before birth and is a lifelong learning process. Sexuality describes the way a person goes about expressing himself or herself as a sexual being and includes intimacy and relationships; gender/sexual identity; sensuality; and sexual health. The primary factor to be presented is the development of one's own sexual identity (biological gender, gender identity, gender role, and sexual orientation.)

8.3 **Students will identify the causes, symptoms, treatment, prevention, and transmission of sexually transmitted infections (STIs).**

Descriptive Statement: Instruction includes a review of common bacterial (chlamydia, syphilis, gonorrhea) and viral (genital herpes, human papillomavirus [HPV], HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B and C) STIs presented in grade 6. A primary focus is on risk factors for the transmission of STIs, including penetrative sex and intravenous (IV) drug use, and how the use of alcohol and drugs affects decision making. Abstinence from unprotected sexual activity and IV drug use are emphasized as the only way to eliminate the risk of contracting STIs.

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8.4 **Students will describe the signs and symptoms of pregnancy.**

Descriptive Statement: Students briefly review the processes involved in human reproduction (ejaculation, intercourse, ovulation, fertilization, implantation) and prenatal development. Instruction includes physical and psychological changes that occur during pregnancy and the need for early detection of pregnancy through medical testing and prenatal care to ensure a healthy and successful pregnancy.

Social and Emotional Health

8.5 **Students will analyze issues related to teen pregnancy.**

Descriptive Statement: Students review the physical, emotional, financial, educational, psychological, and nutritional implications of teen pregnancy. Instruction includes the roles and responsibilities of the mother and father and the parenting skills necessary to raise a child. The dramatic changes a child has on the parents' lives is emphasized, and students consider the potential risks involved in teen marriage.

8.6 **Students will recognize that sexual behaviors are conscious decisions and describe strategies one can use to abstain from sexual activity.**

Descriptive Statement: Emphasis is on strengthening self-confidence and reinforcing assertive skills and decision-making skills. The impact of present decisions on future opportunities and personal development is stressed. Students learn why and how to say no to sexual relations and situations that challenge their personal and family values, as well as how to manage peer pressure and their own sexual feelings. Students identify positive alternatives to sexual activity.

8.7 **Students will recognize the nature of dating during adolescence.**

Descriptive Statement: Instruction includes the need for belonging, love, and affection, and the search for one's own identity. Students examine the difference between love and infatuation and become aware that one learns about oneself from every relationship, and these experiences prepare one for the challenges and responsibilities of marriage. It is emphasized that families and cultures may have different values and expectations about dating and that the age at which people become interested in dating varies among individuals.

8.8 **Students will identify the effects and prevention of sexual assault and dating violence (including date rape).**

Descriptive Statement: Content includes use of assertive communication skills and refusal strategies, conflict resolution, and avoidance of situations that are possibly dangerous. Students recognize warning signs and characteristics of potentially abusive dating relationships and the role of electronic media in sexual harassment and unhealthy dating relationships. Emphasis is placed on the importance of telling a trusted adult about personal safety concerns or the safety of others and seeking support services.