

# REGULATION **MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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**Related Entries:** ABA-RA, ABC, BMA, IFA, IFA-RA, IIB, IIB-RA

**Responsible Office:** Curriculum and Instructional and Programs

## **Implementation of Programs on Family Life and Human Development**

### **I. PURPOSE**

To outline procedures for implementing the Family Life and Human Development Program as required by state law, COMAR 13A.04.18, Program in Comprehensive Health Education

### **II. BACKGROUND**

#### **A. Goals and Objectives**

The MCPS Family Life and Human Development Program is part of the total MCPS health education program providing students the ability to recognize the family as a basic unit of society that perpetuates life and promotes healthy growth and development. Students will learn to:

1. Identify the roles and responsibilities of family members throughout the life cycle that maintain the family unit
2. Examine differences in family structures, customs, and values
3. Explain the effects of dating and marriage on the individual, family, and society
4. Analyze the effects of parenthood on the individual, marriage partners, and the family
5. Describe the anatomy and physiology of the human reproductive system and the reproductive process
6. Examine relationships among physical, emotional, and psychological development

7. Examine factors that influence the development of interpersonal relationships and sexual behavior
8. Develop and use skills for making responsible decisions about sexual behavior based on its consequences for the individual and others
9. Develop and use skills for making responsible decisions about family planning and preventing pregnancy

**B. Organization of the Program Content**

In accordance with state regulation, the content of the program is organized around three areas of focus: interpersonal relationships, physiological and personality changes, and advanced physiology and psychology of human sexual behavior. The focus areas are described below:

**1. Interpersonal Relationships (Focus Area One)**

- a) The emphasis of the program in this focus area is a consideration of family life and interpersonal relationships, both within and outside the family, including the following areas:
  - (1) Self-respect
  - (2) Mutual respect
  - (3) Consideration of the needs of others
  - (4) Affection and love
  - (5) Variety of family structures and roles of family members
  - (6) Male and female roles in society
  - (7) Moral and ethical implications of behavior
- b) The content is a part of the regular curriculum for all students in all grades and will differ in kind and design according to the maturity of students.

2. Physiological and Personality Changes (Focus Area Two)
  - a) The physiological and personality changes related to maturation and human reproduction are initially taught in the Family Life and Human Development Unit in Grade 5 and reinforced in Grades 6-8 Health Education. The content also is included in high school comprehensive health education.
  - b) The following areas of emphasis are included in this focus area:
    - (1) Physical maturation
    - (2) Emotional maturation
    - (3) Human reproduction
    - (4) The birth process
    - (5) Infant care
    - (6) Growth and development during early childhood
    - (7) The physiology of aging
  - c) When these topics are taught within the context of "the physiological and personality changes related to maturation and human reproduction," they must be within an identifiable unit or course and follow established procedures.
  - d) Students may be excused from the unit on physiological and personality changes upon the written request of their parent/guardian. Students excused from this unit must be provided with other worthwhile learning activities. An alternative program must be offered students whose parents request they not receive Focus Area Two instruction.
  - e) Girls excused from the unit on physiological and personality changes should be provided access to instruction concerning menstruation.
3. Advanced Physiology and Psychology of Human Sexual Behavior (Focus Area Three)

- a) Written permission of a parent/guardian is required prior to a student receiving instruction in advanced physiology and psychology of human sexual behavior. A student who is 18 years of age or older may exercise the rights of the age of majority.
- b) The following areas of emphasis are included in this focus area:
  - (1) Maturation
  - (2) The reproductive process
  - (3) Sexual variations
  - (4) Contraception
  - (5) Premarital intercourse
  - (6) Marriage and family responsibilities
  - (7) Family planning
  - (8) Sexually transmitted diseases (STD's)
- c) Most areas of emphasis are included in the identifiable units of family life and human sexuality and disease prevention and control in both middle and high schools.
- d) Instruction will at all times be objective and in accordance with state regulation.
- e) When topics listed under advanced physiology and psychology of human sexual behavior are taught, they must be taught in identifiable units, except
  - (1) When topics such as disease organisms (including those causing sexually transmitted diseases) are studied in microbiology or bacteriology or when human population density, growth curves, and natural or imposed controls are part of the scientific study of genetics, animal behavior, and zoogeography, but not for purposes of instruction in advanced physiology and psychology of human sexual behavior.

- (2) When instruction in home economics deals with the topics of marriage and family responsibilities from the standpoint of family decision making and budget planning rather than from the standpoint of human sexual behavior.
- (3) When the instruction does not fall within the scope of the state regulation or this MCPS regulation and prior parental consent is not required.

C. Citizens' Advisory Committee

The Montgomery County Citizens' Advisory Committee on Family Life and Human Development was established by the Montgomery County Board of Education in 1970. Members of the committee are appointed by the Board of Education and serve as advisors to the Board and to the superintendent on matters relating to the countywide program on family life and human development. The curriculum shall be developed by MCPS staff. The Citizens' Advisory Committee shall consult with these educators on developing, implementing, and evaluating the countywide program.

The committee examines and recommends to the superintendent, and through the superintendent to the Board, all books, videos, and other material that are designated as "restricted use" for instruction in physiological and personality changes and advanced physiology and psychology of human sexual behavior that have been evaluated and approved by the Evaluation and Selection Committee in accordance with Policy IIB: *Evaluation and Selection*, and Regulation IIB-RA: *Evaluation and Selection of Instructional Materials and Library Books*.

The committee will produce a final report that will be submitted to the Board of Education by the superintendent when recommendations are presented to the Board for the adoption of curriculum.

D. School-Community Planning Group

A local school-community planning group is established in each school and is composed of parents, teachers, local school administrators, and student representatives, where appropriate. The committee is appointed by the principal in consultation with the president of the PTA, PTSA, or a similar group. Members of the PTA or PTSA executive board may comprise the nucleus of this committee, and continuity of the group may be maintained by appointing members to overlapping terms. Regulation ABA-RA: *Community Participation in Decision-Making at the Local School* provides guidelines for PTA/PTSA and other community participation in this program. Student suggestions and recommendations concerning course

offerings, their content, and the instructional materials used will be permitted and will be actively solicited by the faculty and administration when appropriate. The planning group will assist in planning for program evaluation and provide annual progress reports to those parents whose children might enroll in the course. When there are material changes in the program, they must be reviewed by the planning group before they are introduced.

### III. PROCEDURES

#### A. General

##### 1. Protection of Privacy

The MCPS curriculum is examined carefully to ensure that none of the activities suggested will invade the privacy of any student or family. Discussions are to encourage respect for personal relationships within a student's family and may not invade the privacy of the family.

##### 2. Parent Notification

- a) Parents of all Grade 5, 6, and 7 students must be notified by the principal before students begin the health education units on family life and human sexuality or HIV prevention. Parents choosing to have their children receive alternative instruction must notify the school in writing.
- b) Parents of Grade 8 or high school students must give their written permission before the student can participate in units dealing with advanced physiology and the psychology of human sexual behavior. However, a student who is 18 years of age or older may exercise the rights of the age of majority.

##### 3. Teacher Selection and Training

Teachers providing family life and human development instruction in physiological and personality changes and advanced physiology and psychology of human sexual behavior will have

- a) Both behavior and temperament considered by the principal to be suitable for conducting such a program
- b) At least two years of successful teaching experience and appropriate specialized training, such as college or in-service courses, workshops,

or seminars. Teachers of Grade 8 or high school health education must have successfully completed the MCPS Continuing Professional Development course HE-06: Family Life and Human Sexuality or equivalent training. Teachers holding state certification in health education are not required to have had the two years of successful teaching experience in order to provide instruction in the above referenced areas, but must have successfully completed a college course in human sexuality that is listed on their college transcript.

- c) The trust and respect of parents/guardians
- d) Good rapport with students

#### 4. Instructional Materials

- a) Books, videos, and other materials used in the instructional program are approved in accordance with the procedures outlined in MCPS Policy IIB: *Evaluation and Selection*, and Regulation IIB-RA: *Evaluation and Selection of Instructional Materials and Library Books*.
- b) Only MCPS-approved materials are to be used in the Family Life and Human Development Program.
- c) Restricted-use family life materials for physiological and personality changes and advanced physiology and psychology of human sexual behavior (Focus Areas Two and Three) are NOT to be used in any other instructional program of the school.
- d) Physiological and personality changes and advanced physiology and psychology of human sexual behavior materials used in identifiable units and courses are reviewed and recommendations to the Board of Education are made by the Citizens' Advisory Committee on Family Life and Human Development.

#### 5. Program Assistance

Assistance to teachers and principals in planning and conducting programs is available upon request from the Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

B. Implementing the Family Life and Human Development Program in a School

1. Interpersonal Relationships

The principal will assure that:

- a) Instruction is based on the MCPS curriculum
- b) Teachers use only MCPS-approved materials and county or state instructional guides

2. Physiological and Personality Changes (Focus Area Two) and Advanced Physiology and Psychology of Human Sexual Behavior (Focus Area Three)

- a) Procedures and responsibilities for implementing the Family Life and Human Development Program are set forth below for
  - (1) Grades 5, 6, and 7 (physiological and personality changes)
  - (2) Grade 8 and high school Health Education (physiology and personality changes and advanced physiology and psychology of human sexual behavior)
  - (3) Other high school courses that include physiological and personality changes and advanced physiology and psychology of human sexual behavior
- b) In planning for instruction each year, the principal will
  - (1) Become familiar with the appropriate section of the curriculum, all applicable MCPS instructional guides, all instructional materials to be considered for use in the school, and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) regulation (COMAR 13A.04.18).
  - (2) Keep informed about any changes in curriculum materials, state laws, etc.
  - (3) Identify instructors who are qualified to teach the program
  - (4) Organize and maintain an active local school-community planning group in cooperation with the president of the

PTA/PTSA, or a similar group, inform members of their responsibilities and provide assistance to them

- c) The Local School-Community Planning Group will
  - (1) Review the program and instructional plans, the MSDE regulation, the curriculum, instructional materials to be used in the program, and plan for program evaluation
  - (2) Announce one or more parent information meetings through the school's regular channels of communication with the parents and conduct meetings to
    - (a) Inform the parents of the objectives of the unit, dates of instruction, and the names and qualifications of the teachers
    - (b) Provide an opportunity for review of the instructional methods and materials to be used
    - (c) Explain the rights of parental choice and the plans for safeguarding family privacy
  - (3) Record minutes of its meetings
  - (4) Help prepare an annual report for distribution to parents of children who may enroll in the program in subsequent years
- d) After consultation with the planning group, the principal, using the regular means of school-parent communication (e.g., PTA/PTSA newsletter, school bulletin, letter, or announcement sheet), provides the following information to parents at least three weeks prior to the parent information meeting:
  - (1) What will be taught, when and by whom, and the objectives and length of instruction
  - (2) That an alternative program will be available for students whose parents do not wish them to participate in Physiological and Personality Changes or Advanced Physiology and Psychology of Human Sexual Behavior

- (3) When parents may come to the school to examine materials and discuss the program with the principal or teachers. (In middle and high school, this session may either be held prior to or after registration but must be held at least two weeks prior to the delivery of instruction.)
- e) During and following instruction, the principal will
  - (1) Maintain a file of signed parental consent forms for students enrolled in the program during the current school year or requests for an alternative program for students in Grade 5
  - (2) Assure that only MCPS-approved materials are used in the program and that restricted family life materials are ONLY used in approved family life and human development units and courses
  - (3) Supervise the instructional program. In Grade 5, boys and girls may be taught together or separately, but the same material will be presented to both.

3. Parental Consent

a) Grade 5, 6, and 7 (Focus Area Two)

Parents who do not wish their children to participate in the physiological and personality changes instructional program or in HIV prevention must submit a written request to the principal for the student to have an alternative program.

b) Grade 8 and High School Programs

Parental consent must be obtained prior to participation of a student in the Family Life and Human Development Program Physiology and Personality Changes and Advanced Physiology and Psychology of Human Sexual Behavior. However, a student who is 18 years of age or older may exercise the rights of the age of majority.

- (1) Grade 8 students must have written parental consent on file before participating in the following sections of Grade 8

Health Education: Family Life and Human Sexuality, and HIV/STD Prevention as part of the unit on Disease Prevention and Control.

- (2) High school students must have written parental consent on file in order to receive instruction on Family Life and Human Sexuality, and HIV/STD Prevention as part of the unit on Disease Prevention and Control. If this unit is offered as part of any other high school course, the same regulation will apply.
- (3) Written parental consent is required for any home economics course in the area of personal and family living or for any health education course which contains advanced physiology and psychology of human sexual behavior information.
- (4) The parental consent form and appropriate information are distributed to the parents. The most recent planning group report or a similar statement in regard to the program may be distributed with the consent form or at another appropriate time.

**Regulation History:** Formerly Regulation No. 360-1, January 24, 1978 (directory information updated), revised August 1984, revised December 1986, revised December 18, 1992; revised June 14, 2004; revised September 20, 2005.