

HOW YOUR SEX EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCES AFFECT HOW YOU TEACH SEX EDUCATION

Looking back to the messages you received growing up, and thinking about how they may impact your feelings regarding sex, sexuality and sexual health, consider how this will influence who, what, why, when and how you teach sexual health in the classroom.

Sometimes we subconsciously acquire messages without questioning them or recognizing that we have done so. This often happens when we are young but continues to happen throughout our lives. The media also plays a role in the messages we acquire.

Family of Origin

- What were the dynamics of the family you were raised in? Two parent home, single parent home, did your parents' divorce, did you have siblings, was there a large extended family etc.
- Did you spend time together doing family activities?
- What role did religion play in your family, if any?
- What role did culture and tradition play in your family?
- What values and beliefs were you taught about sex and sexuality?
- Was sexual orientation discussed?
- Did you receive any messages, verbal or non-verbal, about sexual orientation?

Language

- What words were used in your family to describe genitals, if any?
- Were there gender differences in the language that was used and who was allowed to use it?
- What words were used for bathroom activities?
- Were there special slang words or names for genitals or bathroom activities?

Nudity

- Were family members ever nude in front of each other?
- In what situations was nudity ok?
- How were bodies talked about? In a positive or negative way?

Affection

- How did your family show affection?
- Were there gender differences in the way affection could be showed?

Gender Roles

- Did the adults in your family have different expectations for children based on gender? If so, how did you feel about this?
- Were there things you were allowed or not allowed to do based on your gender?
- Were there gender expectations?
- How did gender influence relationship and sexual expectations?

Sex Education

- Did your family discuss sex or sexuality in the home? If so, what was discussed?
- Did you have sex education in grade school? High school? If so, what was taught, and by who? Was it taught at an appropriate age, and was it beneficial?
- What did you learn about sex from the media growing up?
- What did you learn about sex from your friends growing up?
- What do you wish you had learned that you did not?
- What do you wish you had learned at an earlier age?

Why should Sex Education be taught throughout life and in school?

- Sexual Health is part of overall health and well-being
- We all participate in relationships and want those relationships to be healthy
- We all have bodies that we want to understand and keep healthy
- We are all sexual beings from birth to death - Sexuality is a fundamental part of human existence and affects all aspects of our lives
- Sex Education will benefit all students throughout their entire lives
- Children and teens have the right to know about sexuality and have their questions answered. Unanswered questions can lead to confusion, fear, hate and inaccurate information acquired through unreliable sources.

Parents are the first educators of their children but teachers can play a large role when it comes to sex education. Reflecting on your own experiences can enhance your teaching skills and create a better understanding of how your students feel.

Teachers' responsibilities:

- Accurate and up-to-date, facts
- Critical thinking skills, media literacy

Parents' responsibilities:

- cultural, religious & family values, beliefs & traditions