



Dear Parents/Guardians,

As you may be aware, the NC General Assembly passed into law the Healthy Youth Act in 2009. With this legislation, significant changes were implemented regarding the instruction of reproductive health and safety. In 2015, the law was updated to include sex trafficking prevention and awareness, which will be implemented in our lessons for the current school year. Starting in the 2025-2026 School year Carteret County Public Schools will utilize the abstinence based program “Choosing the Best” Curriculum in grades 7 and 8. Part of the curriculum will include an anonymous survey to be given at the end of the lessons. A copy of the survey questions is attached to this letter.

The North Carolina Essential Standards in Middle School Health Education include the following:

Sixth Grade Students will:

- Use skills for communicating effectively with family, peers, and others to enhance health.
- Apply strategies and skills for developing and maintaining healthy relationships.
- Summarize the changes that occur during puberty and adolescence.

Seventh Grade Students will:

- Understand healthy and effective interpersonal communication and relationships.
- Explain the physical, social, and emotional benefits of choosing to abstain from sexual activity until marriage.
- Explain strategies that develop and maintain reproductive and sexual health.

Eighth Grade Students will:

- Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Explain how avoiding sexual activity is the most effective way to prevent pregnancy and STIs.
- Identify strategies that maintain reproductive and sexual health.

Clarifying objectives, more specific information for each standard, can be found on the back of this letter. Further information regarding the NC Healthful Living Essential Standards may be found at the NC Department of Public instruction website: <http://ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/healthfulliving/scos>

If you would like to review the curriculum you may do so in the following ways:

- Sixth grade resources are available on our website.
- Seventh and eighth grade resources are available in the principals office.

During the month of January, your student will participate in reproductive health lessons. These lessons will be taught by our school’s healthful living staff. Guest speakers may support the lessons on specific topics. If you have questions regarding these lessons, please call our office to talk with our healthful living staff. The class materials are also available for your review in the school office.

We value your partnership in providing our students with this information and encourage you to have follow up discussions with your student. If you choose to opt out of the lessons, alternate health activities will be provided. Please sign and return the bottom portion of this letter. A reminder, including specific dates for reproductive health education lessons will be sent home with your student (or be listed in your student’s agenda)

Sincerely,

Healthful Living Staff

Names and Email addresses

Sixth Grade Students will:

- **Use skills for communicating effectively with family, peers, and others to enhance health.**
 - Distinguish when individual or collaborative decision making is appropriate.
 - Demonstrate the use of verbal and nonverbal communication skills.
 - Demonstrate how to effectively communicate kindness, empathy, compassion, and respect for others.
- **Apply strategies and skills for developing and maintaining healthy relationships.**
 - Explain how the physical and hormonal changes during puberty affect social relationships, and physical, mental, and emotional health.
 - Identify trusted resources to report sexual harassment and bullying.
 - Summarize strategies for predicting and avoiding conflict.
 - Design productive and positive solutions to conflicts based on an understanding of the perspectives of those involved in the conflicts.
 - Compare and contrast the signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships.
 - Summarize the changes that occur during puberty and adolescence.
 - Discuss the maturing of body systems during puberty.
 - Examine the responsibilities of parenthood or guardianship.
 - Demonstrate refusal skills that avoid or reduce health risks.
- **Summarize the changes that occur during puberty and adolescence.**
 - Discuss the maturing of body systems during puberty.
 - Examine the responsibilities of parenthood or guardianship.
 - Demonstrate refusal skills that avoid or reduce health risks.

Seventh Grade Students will:

- **Understand healthy and effective interpersonal communication and relationships.**
 - Contrast characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships.
 - Predict short-term and long-term consequences of violence to perpetrators, victims, and bystanders.
 - Demonstrate safe and effective ways to manage and resolve conflict.
 - Identify risks of becoming a perpetrator or victim of bullying via social media.
 - Recognize that all people have inherent value and dignity and contribute much in life, regardless of differences.
 - Discuss the appropriate role of bystander in preventing and stopping bullying and violence.
- **Explain the physical, social, and emotional benefits of choosing to abstain from sexual activity until marriage**
 - Explain how family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors can affect sexual health decisions including remaining abstinent from sexual activity until marriage.
 - Analyze the meaning of the term abstinence in the context of sexual health and living a healthy life.
 - Explain that sexual activity includes physical contact between individuals involving intimate/private areas of the body that can potentially result in pregnancy, STIs, and/or emotional consequences.
- **Explain strategies that develop and maintain reproductive and sexual health.**
 - Recognize common STIs (including HIV & HPV), modes of transmission, symptoms, effects if untreated, and FDA-approved methods of prevention.
 - Summarize the FDA-approved methods for avoiding unwanted pregnancy.
 - List ways that different forms of sexual assault and sexual abuse can physically, mentally, or emotionally harm a person.
 - Explain sex trafficking and the ways victims are groomed and recruited.
 - Explain the importance of reporting actual or suspected sexual abuse of self or others to a parent, guardian, trusted adult, or local authority.
 - Recognize abstinence is the only certain means of avoiding pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and other associated health and emotional problems.

Eighth Grade Students will:

- **Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.**
 - Contrast characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships for friendships and for dating.
 - Create strategies to communicate personal boundaries and show respect for the boundaries of others.
 - Identify potential consequences of unhealthy relationships and intolerance which can lead to dating violence, discrimination, and hate crimes.
 - Demonstrate communication skills that build and maintain healthy relationships.
 - Use decision-making strategies appropriate for responding to unknown people via social media, digital messaging, or other means to avoid sexual trafficking.
 - Explore resources for safe and respectful ways to end an unhealthy or unwanted relationship.
- **Explain how avoiding sexual activity is the most effective way to prevent pregnancy and STIs.**

- o Compare and contrast sexual risk avoidance versus sexual risk reduction as they relate to pregnancy, STI, and other risks.
- o Discuss refusal skills and behaviors that are required for delaying sexual activity.
- **Identify strategies that maintain reproductive and sexual health.**
 - o Discuss the emotional, social, educational, and financial impact of teen pregnancy on teen parents and their families.
 - o Analyze methods of FDA-approved contraceptives in terms of their safety and their effectiveness in preventing unintended pregnancy.
 - o Explore family, school, and community resources for the prevention of sexual risks through abstinence, postponed sexual activity, and safer sex practices.
 - o Examine examples of how media, social media, and technology can positively or negatively influence sexual attitudes and behaviors.

Please complete this permission slip and return it to your student's healthful living teacher.

___ Yes, I give my permission for _____ to attend reproductive health education classes.

___ No, I do not give my permission for _____ to attend reproductive health education classes and choose the alternate classroom activities.

___ I'm unsure at this time as I would like to review the materials. I understand I have sixty days to do so. Upon review, I will return notify the healthful living teacher of my decision.

(Parent Signature)

Date

(Parent Signature)

Please return this to your student's healthful living teacher.