

Authentic Sexual Risk Avoidance (SRA) Curricula

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In addition to evidence showing positive behavioral impact for students, SRA curricula selection must be assessed to ensure all topics have solid alignment with a primary emphasis on risk elimination and normalizing the avoidance of non-marital sexual activity for optimal sexual health of youth.

Sexual health professionals who want to provide optimal sexual health messages for youth seek curricula that:

- Has evidence of effectiveness (evidence based)
- Provides clear risk avoidance information and skills (prioritizes a ‘wait for sex’ message)

This document summarizes authentic SRA curricula that have research showing positive behavioral impact for the students who they serve. Of course, Ascend does not endorse any curriculum but provides the following information so that organizations have a starting point for selecting a curriculum that is research-based and that meets the needs for their community and the students they serve. Medical accuracy of curriculum content should be confirmed directly through the curriculum publisher. Ascend recommends that organizations are deliberate and intentional in the selection of curriculum.

Disclaimer. *Other curricula may be promising or may have research showing effectiveness prior to 2000. Additional curriculum is included in Ascend’s SRA Works that does not promote a clear “waiting for sex until marriage” message and is therefore not included in this document. The inclusion of curricula in this document shall not be interpreted to be an endorsement by Ascend.*

Steps in the Curriculum Selection Process

1. Learn more about various curricula by consulting the websites of the curricula publishers.
2. Request a preview copy of the curricula of greatest interest.
3. Ask publisher how they assure that their curriculum is medically accurate.
4. Review each requested curriculum, evaluating how it fits the needs, educational style and age appropriateness for your targeted student population.
5. Evaluate your top selections against the parameters detailed in the SMARTool evaluation tool, which can be accessed at <http://www.myrelationshipcenter.org/-SMARTool>
6. Select the curriculum that best fits your needs.
7. It is strongly recommended that your educators be trained to correctly implement the curriculum. Most publishers offer such training.
8. It is also strongly recommended that all leadership and educator staff positions receive the SRAS (Sexual Risk Avoidance Specialist) certification from Ascend prior to implementing an SRA program in the community.

Curricula with Research of Effectiveness

The following SRA curricula have recent* independent research of effectiveness. Consult the Ascend publication *SRA Works* for more detail on research.

Curricula is listed in alphabetical order.

Note: *All descriptions are from the providers.*

Aspire

Aspire is an evidence-based curriculum that helps students understand the benefits of reserving all sexual activity and childbearing for marriage. Aspire helps teens consider their future hopes and dreams using an inductive method that encourages interaction and greater understanding. Students learn the difference between risk reduction and risk elimination, providing a clear emphasis on the importance of Sexual Risk Avoidance in protecting their future goals. Aspire encourages academic excellence and includes healthy decision-making skills for avoiding drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and pornography. Aspire is

regularly updated with the latest information from the Centers for Disease Control. Includes full PowerPoint presentation and activities. Grades 9-12.

Publisher

Abstinence & Marriage Education Partnership www.ampartnership.org

Contact Information

Scott Phelps 411 Business Center Drive, Suite 103
scott@abstinenceandmarriage.com Mount Prospect, IL 60056
Office: (224) 735-3622

Best Friends

The Best Friends Foundation provides an educational curriculum designed for classroom use for 6th-12th grades to help them avoid the risk behaviors of sex, drugs, alcohol, and violence. It is presented through DVDs and group discussion questions provided in individual student journals. The topics are Friendship/Relationships, Love and Dating, Self-Respect, Decision-making, Alcohol Abuse, Drug Abuse, STDs, and Health and Fitness. These topics are designed for (but not limited to) female-only and male-only groups in middle school and for co-ed sessions in high school. The Foundation has significant independent research that demonstrates the effectiveness of its risk avoidance model. All curriculum materials may be reviewed at no cost.

Publisher

Best Friends Foundation www.bestfriendsfoundation.org

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Choosing the Best

Choosing the Best, a leader in school-based, SRA-centered curricula, has educated over 4,000,000 students nationwide. A peer-reviewed, published study showed that students who received Choosing the Best were 1.5 times more likely to delay sex than control group students. Five age-appropriate, medically accurate programs empower students in grades 6-12 to make the healthiest choices, by covering the emotional and physical risks of premarital sex, dangers of social media/sexting, the rewards of waiting, and refusal skills. Programs consist of eight 50-minute lessons (except WAY, 6 lessons) that utilize high-impact videos of real-life teens, a Leader's Guide, and Student Manuals.

Publisher

Choosing the Best Publishing

www.choosingthebest.com**Contact Information**

1-800-774-BEST (2378)

For Keeps

For Keeps is a 5-day (40-minute sessions) classroom-based curriculum that stresses waiting for sex until marriage and focuses on the benefits of waiting and the physical, emotional, psycho-logical, and economic consequences of early sexual activity. The curriculum emphasizes character development, how STDs and pregnancy can interfere with life goals, and that condoms are not 100% effective in preventing disease and pregnancy and do not protect adolescents from emotional consequences of sexual activity. Finally, the curriculum is designed to address both the sexually experienced and inexperienced by emphasizing the value of choosing to discontinue sex for those who are sexually experienced.

Publisher

Operation Keepsake

www.operationkeepsake.com**Contact Information**

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Twinsburg, OH 44087

Game Plan

Game Plan is an evidence-based curriculum that tells the story of three-time NBA Champion A.C. Green of the L.A. Lakers. Game Plan uses a sport-themed approach as A.C. Green teaches teens that Sexual Risk Avoidance is the safest, healthiest lifestyle and the only sure way to avoid the consequences of premarital sexual activity. Teens are encouraged to avoid sexual pressure with lessons on goal setting, refusal skills, healthy relationships, and media literacy. Game Plan is a research-based curriculum that is regularly updated with the latest information from the Centers for Disease Control. Includes PowerPoint and activities. Grades 6-9.

Publisher

Abstinence & Marriage Education Partnership

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411 Business Center Drive, Suite 103
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Healthy Futures

Healthy Futures is a school-based, comprehensive sex education program for middle school students. The three-year program uses a relationship education curriculum, Nu-CUL-TURE, that includes 24 lessons (eight per year in grades sixth, seventh, and eighth). Each grade level of the program also provides students with access to virtual classrooms, after-school and summer programs, and a website and workshops designed for parents. In a cluster randomized controlled trial involving 2,346 students from 15 middle schools in three cities in northeastern Massachusetts, researchers found that at the end of eighth grade, female adolescents in the schools that delivered the intervention were significantly less likely to report ever having vaginal sex.

Publisher

Healthy Futures Healthy-Futures.org

Contact Information

Rhea Gordon, Executive Director (978)-458-6064 or (978) 399-8302

Heritage Keepers

Heritage Keepers® SRA Education is the only curriculum on the federal "Evidence-Based List" for middle and high schools that is consistent with all of Title V, Section 510 A-H. A year after Heritage Keepers® program, students initiated sex at a rate 67% lower than comparison students. Certified "medically accurate" by the Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention and Medical Institute for Sexual Health, the program (450 minutes) effectively targets scientifically derived predictors of teen sex. Follow-up curricula include Level II (600 minutes) and five Life Skills curricula. Resources include workbooks, media spots, a book for parents and one for teens.

Publisher

Heritage Community Services www.heritageservices.org

Contact Information

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PEERS

The PEERS Project is a peer-facilitated, youth development program entitled Peers Educating Peers About Positive Values© (PEP), a primary prevention, health-enhancing program for schools.

PEERS curriculum includes research-based, scripted sessions for peers to teach, original video vignettes, and interactive games and discussions. Teens have a powerful influence over other young people because they “walk the talk” by having healthy relationships, and avoiding alcohol, drugs, and sex.

50-60-minute peer-facilitated sessions.

Sixth Grade/11-12

- Media influence
- Friendship and Peer Pressure
- Assertiveness Techniques

Seventh Grade/12-13

- Teen Pregnancy and Parenthood
- STDs
- Linking Drugs to Sex

Eighth Grade/13-14

- Healthy Relationships
- Risky Behaviors
- Learning to Lead

High School/15-18

- Love That Lasts a Lifetime
- STDs

Publisher

Peers Project <http://www.peersproject.org>

Contact Information

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Contact Elise to receive a sample of The PEERS Project curriculum

Positive Potential

Grade 6. Positive Potential Be The Exception (Positive Potential) is a school-based, youth development program developed primarily for adolescents attending middle school in rural communities. The Positive Potential program is offered as a supplemental program to the health and physical education curricula adolescents receive as part of their middle school education. The program offers five 45- to 50-minute classroom sessions on consecutive days during the 6th grade and includes one class assembly at the end of 6th grade. The program was evaluated in a randomized controlled trial involving 1,438 sixth grade students in 14 public middle and elementary schools in northwestern Indiana. The study found that in schools that delivered the program both the full sample of students and the subgroup of

males were significantly less likely to have had sexual intercourse (ever and in the last three months) at the beginning of the seventh grade.

Publisher

Path Inc.

Contact Information

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Pure & Simple

Pure & Simple Health Education, Inc. offers a three-video series, each with six to eight lessons including discussion questions and activities. Lessons follow a storyline where the choices/consequences of high school friends inspire the audience. Each program can be used independently or consecutively in grades ranging sixth through tenth. Curriculum can satisfy a classroom or after-school program and takes 45-50 minutes per lesson. A parent session is conducted as part of the program. All content reflects the federal A-H criteria. Teacher training is offered.

In addition, we offer curricula for learning disabilities, puberty transition awareness, and a range of seminars on related topics.

Publisher

Pure & Simple <https://www.pureandsimpletruthforyouth.org/>

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REAL Essentials

REAL Essentials (formerly WAIT Training) has 8 units covering impulse-control, self-regulation, and personal power. It seeks to reduce poverty by decreasing non-marital childbearing and increasing future, safe, stable family formation. It includes activities about self-discovery, intentionality, expectations, life goals, decision-making, refusal skills, resisting peer pressure, increasing protective factors, positive youth development, building assets and healthy relationships. REAL Essentials is appropriate for diverse populations and settings, covering alcohol, drugs, tobacco use, bullying and early sexual debut. The curriculum was developed utilizing theoretical frameworks and characteristics of effective

programs. It is evidenced based, medically accurate, research informed, inclusive, culturally sensitive and age appropriate.

Publisher

The Center for Relationship Education www.myrelationshipcenter.org

Contact Information

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Denver, CO 80237

Relationships Under Construction (RUC)

Relationships Under Construction (RUC) curriculum is a five day program designed for in classroom use with developmentally appropriate lessons for grades 6 through high school. RUC teaches healthy relationships and the consequences of risk behaviors including non-marital sexual activity focusing on primary prevention to achieve optimal health for all students. Relationships Under Construction teaches from the perspective that health is defined as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” according to the World Health Organization.

Additionally, Constructing Safe Relationships (CSR) curriculum teaches the dangers of unhealthy relationships, pornography use and addiction that can lead to dating violence and human trafficking. RUC was recently found to meet the definition of medical accuracy with no changes needed by the Federal Family and Youth Services Bureau, FYSB December 2023. Furthermore, an article in The Journal of School Health, January 2024, details how RUC and CSR significantly reduced sexual activity ten percent (odds ratio = 0.56, p = .046) and pornography viewing use by 15 percent (OR = 0.62, p = .04) among participants.¹ The results of the findings concur that RUC and CSR curriculum presented with fidelity reduce teen sexual activity by 10% and reduce pornography viewing by 15% even at a 3 month follow-up.

1.Ashley O, Shamblen SR, Gluck A, Wood C. A group randomized controlled trial of Relationships Under Construction sexual risk avoidance education. J Sch Health. 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josh.13441>.

Publisher

ATM Education RUCInc.org

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* Recent research is defined as research after the year 2000.