

A Parent's Guide to Understanding Family Life Education in Catholic Schools

(and how it connects with Ontario's
Health and Physical Education Curriculum)



**Institute for
Catholic Education**

Fall 2019

A Message from the Bishops of Ontario

Following a process of consultation with parents and educators, the Ministry of Education has released a revised Health and Physical Education Curriculum (2019), which includes content that addresses human development and sexuality.

As Catholics, we believe that parents and guardians are the primary educators of their children. The parental role in the teaching of family life issues is vital. Publicly funded Catholic schools in our province have provided a family life curriculum consistent with our faith for more than 30 years. Family Life education is an important part of the Religious Education program offered in Catholic classrooms

Fully Alive/Vivre Pleinement is the family life program sponsored and developed with the approval of the Catholic Bishops of Ontario in collaboration with educators and families, and ensures that the family life curriculum in Ontario's Catholic schools is consistent with our Catholic teachings, appropriate within the context of our Catholic classrooms, and complementary to the efforts of parents to guide their children to full Christian maturity. Catholic teachers will continue to present the issue of human sexuality within the fullness of a faith-based family life curriculum that teaches the content of our faith, the value of persons, human relationships, commitment, and social responsibility.

I encourage parents to continue modelling Catholic principles for their children at home. They remain the primary educators of our Catholic students.

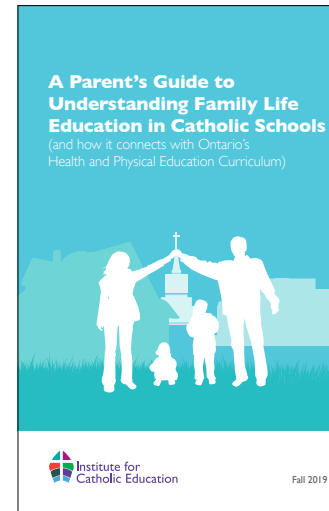
Most Reverend Bishop Ronald P. Fabbro, CSB
President of the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario

In August 2018, the Ontario Ministry of Education released an interim Health and Physical Education (HPE) Curriculum on an interim basis and committed to a process of public consultation. In August 2019, a revised Health and Physical Education Curriculum was released.

This revised curriculum includes much of the content first introduced in 2015. The curriculum continues to address a number of important topics including mental health, online safety and the risks of sexting, respect for self and consent within healthy relationships.

The revised curriculum will be implemented in the 2019-2020 school year.

This booklet will explain how the changes in the “sex ed” component of the HPE curriculum impact on the Family Life curriculum offered in Catholic schools.



The Role of ICE

Established by the Ontario Bishops in 1986, the Institute for Catholic Education (ICE) brings together 7 partners in the English Catholic educational community that work together and share responsibility for Catholic education in Ontario.

ICE coordinates the work of Catholic associations and organizations in writing Catholic curriculum within the guidelines established by the Ministry of Education.

The Bishops of Ontario have asked ICE to oversee the development of resources to implement the revised HPE curriculum as part of the Family Life program in Catholic schools.

The Revised Health and Physical Education (HPE) Curriculum

Students are expected to apply a range of social-emotional learning skills as they acquire knowledge and skills in connection with the expectations in Active Living, Movement Components on Healthy Living strands for each grade level.

The *Active Living* strand consists of:

- Active Participation
- Physical Fitness
- Safety (e.g., bike safety, concussions)

The *Movement Competence* — *Skills, Concepts and Strategies* strand consists of:

- Physical Activity and Sports Skills

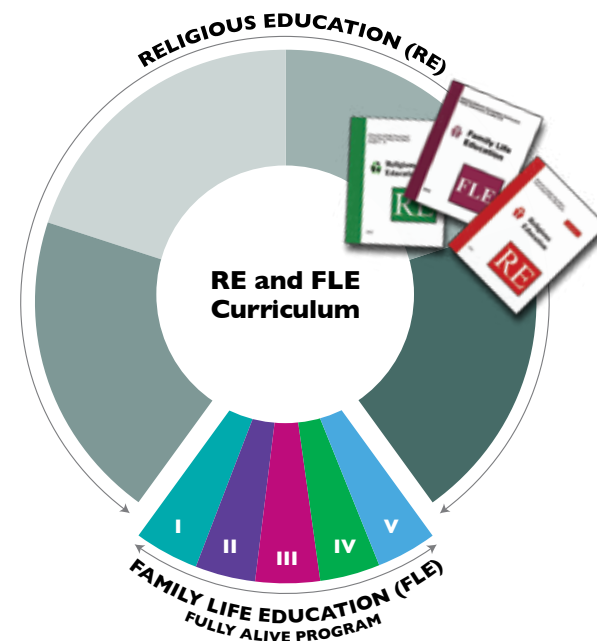
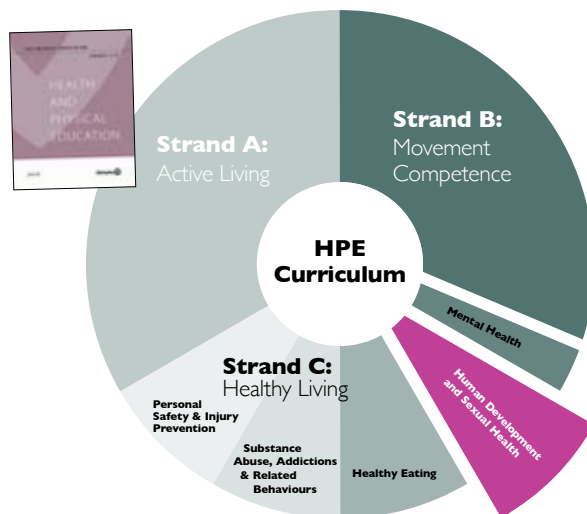
The *Healthy Living* strand consists of:

- Healthy Eating/Nutrition
- Personal Safety and Injury Prevention
- Substance Abuse, Addictions and other behaviour (e.g., gaming, screen time)
- Human Development
- Mental Health

There continues to be 28 specific learning expectations that address Human Development and Human Sexuality Health.

In order to understand how the revised HPE curriculum will be taught in our Catholic classrooms, we must first understand what curriculum looks like in Catholic schools.

"In Catholic schools, the Family Life Education (FLE) curriculum is an opportunity for parents and teachers to talk to students about a distinctively Catholic view of human life, sexuality, marriage and family."



- **The 28 specific learning expectations that address human development and human sexuality represent approximately 10% of the overall Health and Physical Education Curriculum.**
- **The human development component of the Healthy Living strand represents approximately 10% of the overall Health and Physical Education Curriculum.**
- **In Catholic schools, the expectations of HPE curriculum are addressed through the Family Life Education curriculum.**
- **These expectations are incorporated across all themes, but most especially the third theme of the Fully Alive program — Created Sexual: Male and Female.**
- **Catholic schools will address all the curriculum expectations established by the Ministry of Education in the Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2019, in a way that conveys, respects and models Catholic principles to our students.**

- **Catholic schools provide a Religious Education and Family Life Program in addition to curriculum established by the Ministry of Education.**
- **The content and structure of the Religious Education Curriculum, including the Family Life Education curriculum is developed by the Catholic Educational community with the guidance and approval of the Bishops of Ontario.**
- **The Family Life Curriculum, using the Fully Alive resource series, makes up 20% of the Religious Education program in Catholic schools, and is usually taught one day a week.**
- **Issues of human sexuality are addressed within this curriculum that teaches the content of our faith, the value of person, human relationships commitment and social responsibilities.**
- **In some cases the content addressed as part of this Religion and Family Life Program goes beyond that which is covered in the Health and Physical Education curriculum, but that has been the case for over 30 years.**

Catholic Curriculum and the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations

In 1998, ICE developed the *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations*, which identified 7 expectations, or desired outcomes of a Catholic education:

	A DISCERNING BELIEVER formed in the Catholic faith community who celebrates the signs and sacred mystery of God's presence through word, sacrament, prayer, forgiveness, reflections and moral living.
	AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR who speaks, writes, and listens honestly and sensitively, responding critically in light of gospel values.
	A REFLECTIVE, CREATIVE AND HOLISTIC THINKER who solves problems and makes responsible decisions with an informed moral conscience of the common good.
	A SELF-DIRECTED, RESPONSIBLE LIFELONG LEARNER who develops and demonstrates their God-given potential.
	A COLLABORATIVE CONTRIBUTOR who finds meaning, dignity and vocation in work which respects the rights of all and contributes to the common good.
	A CARING FAMILY MEMBER who attends to family, school, parish, and the wider community.
	A RESPONSIBLE CITIZEN who gives witness to Catholic social teaching by promoting peace, justice and the sacredness of human life.

The Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations (OCSGEs) provide the framework for designing Catholic curriculum and resource materials at all grade levels in Ontario. Teachers in Catholic schools use the OCSGEs to guide their work and make curriculum decisions related to instructional planning, strategies, assessment, and evaluation.

Learning in Catholic Classrooms

The relationship between learning and believing is fundamental to our Catholic schools. We focus not only on student knowledge and skills, but also on values and actions.



The Lens of Faith

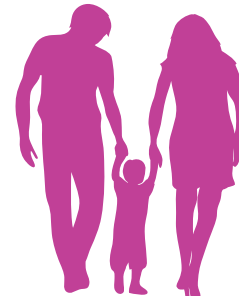


As a publicly funded Catholic school system in Ontario, we teach the curriculum established by the Ministry of Education. While curriculum across all

subject areas is adapted so that it can be taught through the lens of faith, some subject areas, such as Religious Education and Family Life Education, deal more directly with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

What is Family Life Education?

In 1978, the bishops of Ontario published the 'Guidelines for Family Life Education' to affirm and support Catholic parents in the important role of raising their children according to the faith. The Bishops did so because they believe that family life education should be an important part of the Religion Education program offered in Catholic classrooms.



In Ontario Catholic schools, the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values acquired in the Family Life Education program complement those instilled by families, and reflect a distinctively Catholic view of human life, sexuality, marriage and family.

The Family Life Curriculum (FLE), using the resource series, *Fully Alive*, is broken down into 5 themes.

I CREATED AND LOVED BY GOD

Created and Loved by God, is the foundation of the curriculum and affirms the Christian belief that each person is made in the image of a loving God as the starting point in the search for answers about human existence.

II LIVING IN RELATIONSHIP

In the Living in Relationship theme, the exploration of the meaning of human existence continues with a focus on the significant relationships of family and friendship.

III CREATED SEXUAL: MALE AND FEMALE

Human sexuality is a precious gift from God, intended for life and love, and is a fundamental dimension of human identity.

IV GROWING IN COMMITMENT

The Growing in Commitment theme is concerned with the integrity of our daily lives as persons who live in relationship with others.

V LIVING IN THE WORLD

Students are encouraged to recognize that they have a unique contribution to make to the world, one that cannot be made by anyone else.

Expectations addressing human development and sexuality within the HPE curriculum are taught across all the themes, most especially the third theme of the *Fully Alive* Program — Created Sexual: Male and Female.

A detailed breakdown of the focus of learning for the *Fully Alive* Program is provided for each grade level in the chart that appears on the flipside of this document.

I**Created
and Loved
by God****Grade 1 students:**

- explore the gifts of creation, and especially, the gift of people
- discover that each person is unique and has likes and dislikes
- learn that all humans have feelings and all humans grow and develop

Grade 2 students:

- discover some ways in which they are a unique person who God created and loves
- explore their past growth and development and look ahead to the coming year
- learn more about feelings and the ways they choose to express those feelings

Grade 3 students:

- continue to explore what it means to be known and loved by God — known so well that God calls each one of us by name

- find out more about what it means to be a person — to be unique, but also alike in many ways; to have feelings and to make choices about the way we express them; and to have talents and gifts that need to be developed
- discover that when talents and gifts are shared with each other, they are sharing themselves

II**Living in
Relationship****Grade 1 students:**

- describe their family and the activities their family enjoys together
- explore the changes in families (a new baby), the strength of family love, and the special place of each person in the family
- discover more about what it means to be a friend

Grade 2 students:

- explore the uniqueness of each family, including their own
- explores signs of love in families, how a change (moving) affects family members, and the relationship between brothers and sisters
- discover more about friendship, and learn about the meaning of cooperation

Grade 3 students:

- talk about family names, some family customs, and how family love is open to others, especially when we celebrate special occasions
- discuss how a family responds to the death of a family member
- explore different positions in the family (oldest, middle, youngest, only child)
- discover the importance of learning how to compromise with friends and being friendly and open to others

III

Created Sexual: Male and Female

Grade 1 students:

- discover that husbands and wives share their love by becoming parents
- learn about the development of babies before birth and about the care and love they need after they are born
- learn that God made boys and girls physically different

Grade 2 students:

- discover more about the development of babies before birth and especially how the baby breathes and receives nourishment in the uterus
- learn about the importance of respect and care for the body, which is a gift from God

Grade 3 students:

- learn more about life before birth, and how all of a baby's needs are met in the uterus
- discover that life begins at the moment of conception as a single cell
- explore the amazing growth and development of babies in their first year of life



IV**Growing in
Commitment****Grade 1 students:**

- explore the world as an amazing place to be and to learn about
- learn about some of the ways people care for God's creation and discover some of the kinds of work that adults do to contribute to making the world a good place to be

Grade 2 students:

- explore aspects of the world that make it a good place for them
- learn about some natural resources of the world, which are gifts of creation
- discover some of the work that people do to transform God's gifts for our use

Grade 3 students:

- explore some of the differences and similarities of people from all over the world, and recognize how much they have in common, no matter where they live
- discover more about human work and its importance for human society
- learn that doing good work requires effort and patience

V**Living in
the World****Grade 1 students:**

- explore the world as an amazing place to be and to learn about
- learn about some of the ways people care for God's creation and discover some of the kinds of work that adults do to contribute to making the world a good place to be

Grade 2 students:

- explore aspects of the world that make it a good place for them
- learn about some natural resources of the world, which are gifts of creation
- discover some of the work that people do to transform God's gifts for our use

Grade 3 students:

- explore some of the differences and similarities of people from all over the world, and recognize how much they have in common, no matter where they live
- discover more about human work and its importance for human society
- learn that doing good work requires effort and patience

**I
Created
and Loved
by God****Grade 4 students:**

- recognize and appreciate the gift of love God has given each person, the gift of our lives
- continue to explore the value of similarities and differences among people begun in the primary grades
- learn about the early stages of human development (prenatal, infancy, and childhood) and discuss the need for other people to help with human growth and development
- examine the impact that words and actions have on others, and the importance of awareness of other people's feelings

Grade 5 students:

- continue to recognize and appreciate God's everlasting love for them
- explore the importance of respect for self and for others

- examine the many ways humans develop during life's journeys, including learning about the end of life journey on earth and the beginning of a new life with God
- discover that they are connected to many people, both living and dead, through their influence on their family members

Grade 6 students:

- explore how love is able to transform people's lives and reflect on the way in which God created humans to be people of love
- recognize the presence of life-giving people in their lives and examine some of the ways in which they can be life givers and make a difference in other people's lives
- recognize the harm caused by bullying and the need to seek adult help for serious problems

II

Living in
Relationship**Grade 4 students:**

- explore the value of time together, whether enjoying an ordinary family activity or a special occasion
- examine some of the day-to-day signs of family love
- begin to examine some of the feelings children experience as a result of separation and divorce
- learn that families have many responsibilities, and that each member has a special contribution to make
- discover that learning to be a friend is the way to have friends

Grade 5 students:

- consider some of the ways that families are both unique and alike
- examine the purpose of rules, and role of family rules
- explore some of the ways families change, and discuss the importance of family members helping each other during times of change

- learn more about the qualities of true friendship and examine possible solutions to friendship difficulties
- learn about the responsibility to help those, such as their peers, who are being mistreated

Grade 6 students:

- explore the need for relationships in their lives, especially with family and friends
- discuss the importance of family histories and customs
- examine some day-to-day stresses that all families experience and consider strategies to manage them
- learn about common communications problems and ways to overcome them
- analyze how friendships change as they grow up and learn more about how to handle stressful situations with friends

III

Created Sexual: Male and Female

Grade 4 students:

- learn that husbands and wives participate in God's power to create new life
- explore some of the gifts they receive at conception as well as the gift after birth of ongoing love and care from family, friends, and others
- discover more about the development and birth of babies, and learn the difference between identical and fraternal twins
- explore the stages of human development, including adolescence and adulthood

Grade 5 students:

- explore the idea that they do not have bodies, they are bodies; God created humans as body/spirit persons
- consider the major systems of the body, and learn that the reproductive system has unique characteristics
- learn about the adult female and male reproductive systems and human fertility in adult women and men

- discuss the physical changes of puberty, as well as some of the related emotional and social changes

Grade 6 students:

- explore some of the ways in which they learn about sexuality and develop their ideas about what it means to be male or female
- review the main features of adult female and male fertility
- learn about the first minutes and days of a new human life, the development of the new life during each trimester of a pregnancy, and the baby's birth
- continue to explore the physical, emotional and social changes related to puberty
- examine how both heredity and environment influence their development as persons and learn about the choices they can make as they develop

IV**Growing in
Commitment****Grade 4 students:**

- continue to explore the meaning of commitment
- identify some of their commitments
- explore the process of making a commitment and consider the questions that have to be answered before making a commitment
- examine the pleasures and difficulties of keeping a commitment and recognize the value of keeping commitments

Grade 5 students:

- discover the importance of accepting responsibility for their actions, and of recognizing that actions have consequences for themselves and others
- learn that to make a commitment to themselves means to make a commitment to be the person God created them to be
- examine the commitments they have that involve other people: families, friends, being a student and a classmate, special activities, and their communities

Grade 6 students:

- continue to explore the meaning of commitment and how they learn to be committed persons
- examine the qualities and accomplishments of people, both famous and unrecognized, who are models of commitment
- explore commitments in their own lives and reflect on the rewards and difficulties of becoming a committed person



V

Living in the World

Grade 4 students:

- learn to consider the world as their home and discover the importance of being good caretakers of their earthly home
- explore the contribution of human work and recognize that people participate in building God's world, their home, through their work

Grade 5 students:

- explore the meaning of community through the example of the family
- discuss examples of strong communities and identify some of the signs that are present in good communities: respect, communication, sharing resources, and depending on each other
- explore the common needs of all people and the importance of using their gifts to make the world a better place

Grade 6 students:

- analyze the human capacity to influence others and to be influenced by others
- explore the meanings of values and virtues
- examine the influence of television, advertising and stereotypes on values
- discuss human influence on the natural and social environment of the world and the responsibility to be a positive influence



INTERMEDIATE Grades 7 and 8

**I
Created
and Loved
by God****Grade 7 students:**

- students continue to explore what it means to be a person who is made in God's image
- examine self-concept, personality traits, and human emotions and learn more about the influence of heredity and environment on individuals
- explore some of the strengths and limitations that are part of each person and discuss the importance of self-honesty and self-discipline

Grade 8 students:

- consider the human person as the wonder of creation, made in the image of God and given the powers of human intelligence and free will
- examine the human abilities to learn, to remember, to reason, to create, to feel and to act freely
- explore the concept of character (i.e., the moral self) and discuss the importance of the four cardinal virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance) for moral growth

II**Living in
Relationship****Grade 7 students:**

- explore three aspects of relationships: intimacy, choice, and quality
- discuss the importance of communication in their relationships with family members and friends
- examine the experience of living in a family from the perspective of family structure, the birth order of children, and challenges that are part of being a family
- explore the relationship of friendship, including what they learn from it, the qualities of healthy relationships, and the challenges that are part of all relationships

Grade 8 students:

- consider the significance of human relationships and the unique contribution they make in each person's life
- examine the importance of families and their contribution to providing children with secure roots for their lives
- explore some of the challenges of adolescence for both parents and young people and the need to resolve conflicts in a respectful way
- discuss the qualities of true friendship and consider some attitudes and behaviours that cause friendship difficulties
- reflect on the virtue of mercy, which is essential for living in relationship with others

III

Created Sexual:
Male and Female**Grade 7 students:**

- examine some aspects of sexuality, including sexual characteristics, sexual identity and sexual roles
- review the changes of puberty and the development of male and female fertility
- explore the responsibility of caring for their health, including sexual health, and of developing a realistic body image during adolescence
- discuss the experience of sexual attraction and feelings, and examine the need for self-discipline and patience to reach the goal of becoming fully mature males and females
- learn about chastity and the attitudes and behaviours that reflect their virtue and show respect for the gift of sexuality

Grade 8 students:

- reflect on the gift of sexuality and God's plan for them to be loving and life-giving persons

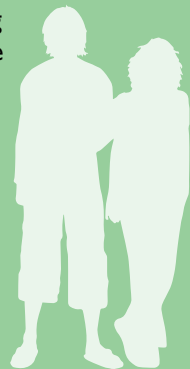
- explore the role of sexuality within marriage and for those who are single and reflect on the virtue of chastity, which helps them to honour the gift of sexuality and live according to God's plan
- review some aspects of adolescence, including changing appearance, moods, stress and sexual attraction
- examine some of the pressures on young people to become involved in exclusive male-female relationship at an early age and discuss some serious abuses of sexuality
- review basic information on sexually transmitted infections and their potential impact on fertility
- introduce the topic of family planning from the perspective of living in harmony with the gift of fertility
- complete the strand with a reflection on the meaning of true love as it is expressed in the enduring commitment of marriage

IV**Growing in
Commitment****Grade 7 students:**

- discuss some of the feelings they have about growing up and examine the relationship between freedom and responsibility
- analyze and practice the process of making decisions
- explore the connection between commitments and responsibilities
- reflect on what it means to be authentic people and to create balance in their lives

Grade 8 students:

- examine the meaning of commitment as a choice to be involved, to give themselves to other people and to their activities
- explore their commitments to others, especially family members and friends
- consider the meaning of a commitment to the future, the challenges of meeting their commitments and the significance of moral development as they grow



V**Living in
the World****Grade 7 students:**

- examine the social nature of persons, which motivates people to join together in groups, both small and large
- explore four significant reasons for gathering with others: to celebrate; to support each other in times of difficulty; to create needed changes in responsibilities as members of groups, including the creation of a sense of community that respects and appreciates the uniqueness of each person

Grade 8 students:

- discuss a common project, shared by all people, to build a society that reflects human dignity and value
- examine the characteristics of just behaviour, the meaning of social justice, and the necessary qualities and skills to do the work of social justice
- reflect on the virtue of solidarity, which is commitment to the common good of all people
- analyze two issues related to social justice: poverty and respect for life

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

GRADE 9

By the end of the course, students will:

- examine intellectual growth and ways of learning
- explain how a wide range of emotions can influence personal decisions, actions, and relationships
- evaluate emotions in the light of good or evil actions
- recognize the importance of a healthy positive acceptance of self, with strengths and weaknesses
- recognize and compare the signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships (e.g., bullying)
- explain the difference between forgiveness and reconciliation in relationships
- examine the meaning of the word 'love' in light of the Gospel meaning and its use in society
- define chastity and understand why it is a Christian virtue
- analyze sexual decision-making in relation to the meaning of chastity
- demonstrate a respect for the human body, in light of the sacredness of human life created by God
- recognize authentic authority as worthy of honour and respect
- describe the Christian family as the basis of society and as domestic Church
- describe symptoms, treatments, and prevention of major sexually-transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS, and their effect on human fertility and life

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

GRADE 10

By the end of the course, students will:

- describe stages of cognitive and affective (emotional) development throughout the human life span, with a focus on adolescence
 - demonstrate awareness of the experience of anger, its expression, management strategies and sources of help
 - describe the ways in which human growth is distorted by relationships that involve exploitative, harassing or abusive behaviours
 - explore the issues of sexual attraction and sexual decision-making in the light of chastity and the consequences of premarital sexual activity
 - explore aspects of the family life cycle (including marriage, birth, raising children, children leaving home, old age, death) as well as the impact on families of premature death, separation or divorce, and the situation of blended families
- demonstrate an understanding of the skills needed to resolve conflict in a Gospel-centred manner
 - articulate the qualities which are essential to the building of healthy relationships, with a particular focus on the positive impact of intimacy and mutuality
 - evaluate healthy and unhealthy attitudes to the human body and physical appearance
 - define and discuss the importance of sexuality and sexual attraction as gifts from God
 - explore the meaning of respect for life from conception until natural death
 - explore the effects of HIV and its potential stages of infection
 - describe how sexual decision-making is guided by the virtue of chastity, with a particular focus on identifying the physical, emotional, social and spiritual consequences of premarital sexual activity
 - explain the moral implications and the unadvertised risk involved in the use of condoms to fight HIV infection

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

GRADE 11

By the end of the course, students will:

- examine the role of family within other world religions
 - describe various models of family
 - explore the differentiation between gender roles within Canadian society and the world's major religious traditions
 - analyze the impact of the family on the individual
 - demonstrate skills contributing to the development of inclusive community whose hallmark is hospitality
 - identify the beliefs of the world's major religious traditions that inform their understanding of the dignity of the person and the sacredness of the sexual act
 - critique the depersonalizing attitudes and behaviours associated with sexuality (e.g., masturbation, pornography, promiscuity, prostitution, homophobia)
 - explain the message of the Catholic bishops of the nation and/ or the local bishops, concerning HIV/AIDS
- critically assess the distorting messages of contemporary culture on the development of a positive Christian anthropology
 - use various forms of media to create positive images of the person and of human sexuality that reflect a sense of shared values between the major world religious traditions

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

GRADE 12

By the end of the course, students will:

- identify the many facets of humans — rational, emotional, physical, social, aesthetic, moral and spiritual in nature, and discuss how this impacts on moral living
- describe ways in which the limits of human freedom can be challenging but can also offer opportunities for personal growth and fulfillment (e.g., living with a disability, rejection)
- describe ways of forming healthy and appropriate intimate relationships as long-range preparation for marriage and parenthood
- examine the role of chastity in the personal integration of sexuality and in the expression of sexuality in relationships and marriage
- articulate a Christian understanding of the family as domestic Church and the manner in which it participates in and contributes to a healthy and just society
- identify the elements of a strong family
- describe the impact of secularism on a contemporary

understanding of family (e.g., decline in size, definition of what constitutes family, role of family members, bereavement, mental illness, economic issues)

- describe the role Church encyclicals and letters play in teaching about and guiding Family Life concerns
- demonstrate an understanding and profound respect for the sacred gift of human procreation, the gift of children, the experience of parenting
- describe the manner in which the sacred gift of human procreation and life itself can be protected (including a description and moral assessment of the impact of natural family planning, contraception, reproductive and genetic technologies and STIs on human life and fertility)
- research and apply the Church's teaching on the sacredness of human life from conception to natural death to issues such as euthanasia, stem cell research, the impact of STIs, contraception including natural family planning, genetic and reproductive technology and assisted suicide

Detailed information can be found at:
www.iceont.ca

Parent resources for the Fully Alive program are found on
the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario website at:
www.acbo.ca

The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education (2019).

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