

**Better Than a Band-Aid:
A Planning Resource
for Teachers
Implementing High School
Health Education**

**A Companion Document to the Resource
“High School Health Education:
Rationale and Plan”
for Superintendents, Curriculum Directors,
and Building Principals**

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Better Than a Band-Aid: A Planning Resource for Teachers Implementing High School Health Education

A Companion Document to the Resource “High School Health Education: Rationale and Plan” for Superintendents, Curriculum Directors, and Building Principals

Purpose

High school health education instructors often ask the following questions:

- What should be included in a semester health course at the high school level?
- How can I fit everything into ninety days of instruction?
- What are the most important health topics to include?
- What aspects of health education are most likely to result in positive health behaviors?

This document is designed to help answer these questions. The answers are not simple or easy. However, health research, current statistics, health experts, educators, families, and students have provided us with guidelines to follow as we plan for effective high school health education. The good news is that most high schools offer health education for their students. In fact, according to the School Health Education Profile (SHEP) report, over ninety percent of high schools require health education for graduation.



Using the Michigan Model® High School Modules

Sequence Chart

The chart below provides the recommended sequencing of the current Michigan Model high school modules.

Title of Module	Number of Lessons	Rationale
<i>Managing Conflicts and Preventing Violence</i>	16	We recommend beginning with this module for two reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This module provides skill development in communication, conflict resolution, and avoiding and escaping violent situations. The communication and conflict resolution skills will help to develop a positive classroom environment.• Students are typically motivated to examine the topic of violence. Consequently, this module offers one way to engage students in the exploration of health-related topics.
<i>Teens Campaign Against Tobacco</i>	6	We recommend this module be taught second for three reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The module begins by exploring the Health Belief Model for behavior change. The Health Belief Model can act as a foundation for future modules.• The communication skills learned in the Managing Conflicts and Preventing Violence module can be practiced as students review pertinent information and use peer education to prevent and reduce the use of tobacco.• It provides an opportunity to join together to take action to prevent tobacco use.

Title of Module	Number of Lessons	Rationale
<p><i>Teens Voice Solutions to Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs</i></p>	<p>15</p>	<p>We recommend this module be taught immediately after the module on tobacco for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The module continues the focus on substance use and abuse. • The module provides another opportunity for students to take action to reduce substance use among peers. • The module begins with a review of the skills taught and reinforced in the previous two modules. <p>This module includes three lessons which involve students investigating research topics and preparing a small group report for the class. If class time is limited, the research could be an out-of-class assignment, lowering the number of class periods for this module to twelve.</p>
<p><i>Help Yourself to Good Nutrition</i></p>	<p>12</p>	<p>We recommend this module be taught later in the semester for the following reason:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This module begins with a focus on body image and a simple formula for weight management. Body image and weight may be sensitive topics best addressed in a classroom environment where trust has been established. A comfortable environment will also help students apply functional nutrition knowledge and skills to situations they currently face or may face in the future (e.g., fast food restaurants, physical performance, pregnancy). <p>This module includes three lessons which involve students researching information on a nutrition topic of their choice and writing a paper. If class time is limited, the paper could be an out-of-class assignment, lowering the number of class periods for this module to nine.</p>

Title of Module	Number of Lessons	Rationale
<i>Stay Physically Active– For Life</i>	4	<p>We recommend this module as the fifth module to be taught for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nutrition and physical activity modules should be taught back-to-back due to the relationship between the two topic areas and weight management. • Students are asked to keep a log of their physical activity for at least one week prior to beginning this module. Teaching this module at this point in the semester will allow for this preliminary assignment.

These modules, totaling 53 lessons, provide students with functional knowledge and skills in five of the six CDC categories of health risk behaviors. The Youth Risk Behavior Survey identifies two other essential health topics that are not currently addressed in the state curriculum resources. They are:

- Sexuality Education, including HIV and Other STDs
- Mental Health Issues, including building healthy relationships, stress management, and suicide prevention

Given a ninety-day semester, this leaves 37 days to cover the above two topic areas and any other topic areas of local concern.

These modules can be obtained from your Regional Comprehensive School Health Coordinator. Contact your Intermediate School District or Regional Educational Service Agency for the name and phone number of the person servicing your district.

How to Begin Planning

High school health education instructors can take these recommendations and begin teaching. However, in planning a semester course, educators will need to assess their students and the kindergarten through eighth grade health education taught in their district to determine previously acquired knowledge and skills.

Since learners respond differently to information and skills at various developmental levels, review and/or reteaching may be appropriate for some topics or skills addressed in the elementary or middle school. However, the extent of the time spent on previously learned information or skills should be examined.

Another factor to consider when planning for high school health education is the potential for some health topics to be covered in other subject areas. For example, some science programs often offer units on tobacco use; some life management programs offer units on nutrition. A survey of the other subject areas may help to avoid duplication of content.

It is also important to consider the percentage of students who register for various classes. Is health required? Is life management required? How can the greatest percentage of students receive health education? Ideally, all students should be required to receive health education in the critical health areas.

Is One Semester of Health Education Sufficient?

Most high school health education is a one semester course at the ninth grade level. National and state statistics show an increase in health risk behaviors as students progress from ninth grade to graduation. Consider the following 1999 Michigan statistics:

Behavior	% of Students: 9th Grade	% of Students: 12th Grade
Smoked cigarettes on 20 or more of the past 30 days	13	20
Smoked 2 or more cigarettes per day on the days they smoked	19	26
Smoked cigarettes regularly, that is, at least one cigarette every day for 30 days	23	30
Had 5 or more drinks of alcohol in a row, that is, within a couple of hours, on one or more of the past 30 days	23	37
Exercised or participated in sports activities for at least 20 minutes that made them sweat and breathe hard on 3 or more of the past 7 days	70	59
Did exercises to strengthen or tone their muscles on 3 or more of the past 7 days	62	44
Used a condom during last sexual intercourse (of those who had sexual intercourse during the past 3 months)	70	52

There are many reasons for the increase in risk behaviors. However, we must consider the fact that reinforcement of previously learned health knowledge and skills rarely occurs in our high schools. This increase in health risk behaviors alone supports the offering of a second semester health course in the eleventh or twelfth grade.

If your school district chooses to implement a second semester of health education at the high school level, the following topics should be considered:

- Reinforcement of previously taught knowledge and skills, with special emphasis on communication skills, conflict resolution skills, and domestic violence
- Family and Community Health
- Legal Aspects of Adolescent Sexual Behavior
- Health Care: Accessibility, Costs, and Insurance
- Environmental Issues

These topics are important to the health and well-being of youth and the choices they make as adults. Consequently, if your district chooses not to offer a second semester of health education, advocate for integration of these topics into other subject areas. For example, “Legal Aspects of Adolescent Sexual Behavior” or “Health Care: Accessibility, Costs, and Insurance” might be included in a government or social studies course. A unit on “Environmental Issues” could be a part of a science course.

Michigan Content Standards and Benchmarks for High School Health Education

The Michigan Department of Education has approved Content Standards and Benchmarks for Health Education. These standards and benchmarks provide schools with guidance regarding which health education content areas to include at different grade levels. Use the following as a check list to begin assessing your district's high school health education:

Content Standard 1: All students will apply health promotion and disease prevention concepts and principles to personal, family, and community health issues.

Students will:

- ___ 1. Explain the impact of personal health behaviors on the functioning of body systems.
- ___ 2. Analyze how behavior can impact health maintenance and disease prevention.
- ___ 3. Describe the interrelationship of physical, intellectual, emotional, and social health during childhood.
- ___ 4. Analyze how the family, peers, and the community influence the health of individuals.
- ___ 5. Analyze how the environment influences the health of people in a community.
- ___ 6. Analyze the risks of potential health problems during adulthood.
- ___ 7. Analyze the role of public health policies and laws in the prevention and control of disease and other health problems.
- ___ 8. Chronicle the historical impact of disease and other health problems on contemporary health practices.
- ___ 9. Describe how the prevention and control of health problems are influenced by research and medical advances.

Content Standard 2: All students will access valid health information and appropriate health promoting products and services.

Students will:

- ___ 1. Evaluate the validity of health information, products, and services.
- ___ 2. Demonstrate the ability to evaluate resources from home, school, and community that provide accurate health information.
- ___ 3. Evaluate factors that influence personal selection of health products and services.
- ___ 4. Analyze the cost and accessibility of health care services.
- ___ 5. Demonstrate the ability to access school and community health services for self and others.

Content Standard 3: All students will practice health enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks.

Students will:

- ___ 1. Analyze the role of individual responsibility for enhancing health.
- ___ 2. Analyze the short-term and long-term consequences of safe, risky, and harmful behaviors.
- ___ 3. Demonstrate strategies to positively manage stress.
- ___ 4. Evaluate a personal health assessment to determine strategies for health enhancement and risk reduction.
- ___ 5. Develop strategies to improve personal, family, and community health.
- ___ 6. Demonstrate ways to avoid threatening situations and reduce conflict.

Content Standard 4: All students will analyze the influence of cultural beliefs, media, and technology on health.

Students will:

- ___ 1. Analyze how cultural diversity enriches and challenges health behaviors.
- ___ 2. Evaluate the effect of media and other factors on personal, family, and community health.
- ___ 3. Evaluate the impact of technology on personal, family, and community health.
- ___ 4. Analyze how information from the community influences health.
- ___ 5. Demonstrate the ability to use computer technology to locate health information.

Content Standard 5: All students will use goal setting and decision-making skills to enhance health.

Students will:

- ___ 1. Demonstrate the ability to utilize various strategies when making decisions related to health needs of young adults.
- ___ 2. Implement and evaluate a plan for achieving a personal health goal.
- ___ 3. Demonstrate the ability to ask for assistance when making health-related decisions.
- ___ 4. Analyze health issues that require collaborative decision making.
- ___ 5. Predict immediate and long term impact of health decisions on the individual, family, community, and the environment.
- ___ 6. Evaluate their (students) ability to make health decisions.

Content Standard 6: All students will demonstrate effective interpersonal communication and other social skills which enhance health.

Students will:

- ___ 1. Demonstrate skills for communicating effectively with family, peers, and others.
- ___ 2. Demonstrate how support and respect for family members of all ages can be communicated.
- ___ 3. Demonstrate strategies for solving interpersonal conflicts without harming self or others.
- ___ 4. Analyze how interpersonal communication affects relationships.
- ___ 5. Demonstrate ways to communicate care, consideration, empathy, and respect for self and others.
- ___ 6. Demonstrate attentive listening skills.
- ___ 7. Demonstrate refusal, negotiation, and collaboration skills to avoid potentially harmful situations.
- ___ 8. Analyze the possible causes of conflict in schools, families, and communities.
- ___ 9. Demonstrate strategies used to prevent violence.

Content Standard 7: All students will demonstrate advocacy skills for enhanced personal, family, and community health.

Students will:

- ___ 1. Evaluate the effectiveness of communication methods for accurately expressing health information and ideas.
- ___ 2. Demonstrate the ability to influence and support others in making positive health choices.
- ___ 3. Demonstrate the ability to work cooperatively with others to advocate for healthy individuals, families, and communities.
- ___ 4. Express information and opinions about health issues.
- ___ 5. Demonstrate the ability to adapt health messages and communication techniques to the characteristics of a particular audience.

Assess Your Comprehensive Health Education Program and Curriculum Grades 9-12

Comprehensive Health Education Program

Yes	Needs to Improve	No	Don't Know	
				Our district has a clear goal for its health education instructional program. Our goal is clearly stated, widely accepted, and commonly shared.
				Our Board of Education has shown sufficient support for health education.
				Our district requirements for health education are sufficient.
				Our district's policies support the health education provided.
				Our district has a plan for coordination of our school health program.
				Our district has an Advisory Committee for health education with representation from health professionals, civic leaders, family members, and students.
				There is a continuity of curricular programming beginning in kindergarten and continuing through the twelfth grade.
				Our district's elementary health education provides adequate background for our middle school and high school programs.
				Our district's middle school health education provides adequate background for our high school program.
				Our district involves parents/family members, community members, and students in the planning and implementation of comprehensive school health education.
				Our health courses/units include all of the students at the _____ grade level(s).



Yes	Needs to Improve	No	Don't Know	
				Our health teachers have received sufficient training in health education and place a value on continuing to strengthen their knowledge and skills to teach health education.
				Our district allocates sufficient dollars for health education materiation and staff development.
				Our district has a mechanism for periodic review of the curriculum.

Comprehensive Health Education Curriculum

Consider the following criteria as you assess the quality of your health education curricula:

Yes	Needs to Improve	No	Don't Know	
				Our health education curricula addresses the major categories of health risk behaviors.
				Our health education curricula emphasizes acquisition of “functional” knowledge versus “nice to know” knowledge.
				Our health education curricula contains age-appropriate knowledge and skills.
				Our instructional methodology reflects a desirable balance between information and skill development, including opportunities for students to practice using the knowledge and skills gained.
				Our health education curricula utilizes instructional strategies proven to be effective.
				Our health education curricula provides ways to encourage family and community involvement.
				Enough time is allocated for health in our instructional program.
				Our health education curricula accounts for the special needs of our district’s student population.