



Developing capacity to promote youth sexual health and well-being



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## Legislative Requirements

The [legislative requirements](#) for school districts not yet teaching sexual health education, or not teaching it in all grades, are:

- Grades 6-12 by 2021-22
- Grades 4-5 by 2022-23
- Grades K-3 (SEL only) by 2022-23

For more detailed information, please use our [new legislative alignment tool](#).

## New Tool & Resources

Need support assuring your district's sexual health education is consistent with the new legislation? We are here to help.

With this [new tool](#), find the situation that best describes your current CSHE implementation status and follow the instructions to identify all the steps needed to align with the [legislation](#).

Whether you are currently implementing CSHE or are just beginning to develop a plan to meet the [Washington State requirements](#), we have resources to support you. Our expert team is available to support with curriculum selection, working with your school board, educating parents/caregivers and community, providing curriculum walk-throughs and core skills training for teachers, and more.

Contact Emily at [emerson@cardeaservices.org](mailto:emerson@cardeaservices.org) for more information.

## **Connect and Learn!**

### **Network Meetings for School District Administrators**

Join WA PREP staff and school district administrators from across the state for quarterly network meetings to:

- Discuss and share updates on sexual health education requirements and related policies
- Share successes and lessons learned
- Develop/get feedback on plans to support institutionalizing CSHE in your district
- Share strategies for parent/caregiver engagement and community outreach

[Click here to register](#) for the August 20<sup>th</sup> Network Meeting on curriculum adoption.

## **Join Us for Let's Talk About Sex...Education!**

Join other teachers/educators to hear about new teaching practices and receive updates on current research in the sexual health education field. Upcoming dates and topics will be announced in our next eBlast.

Contact Emily at [emerson@cardeaservices.org](mailto:emerson@cardeaservices.org) for more information.

## **Sexting, Sexually Explicit Media, and Internet Safety – A Primer for Sexual Health Educators**

Summer is here! As we know, this means even more time for youth to be on the internet and social media platforms. As trusted adults, sexual health educators are well-positioned to engage students in conversations about sexting, porn, and internet safety.

### **Did you know?**

- Young people's screen time doubled between 2019 and 2020. [\[1\]](#)
- In 2018, a study of teens worldwide reported that one in seven said they had sent a sext, and one in four said they had received at least one sext. [\[2\]](#)
- In the US, 42% of 10- to 17-year-olds have seen pornography online, with 27% saying they intentionally viewed such materials. [\[3\]](#)
- According to a 2019 study by the Center for Cyber Safety and Education, 40 percent of kids in grades 4-8 reported that they connected or chatted online

with a stranger.<sup>[4]</sup>

- Of those surveyed, 1 in 5 kids aged 13–17 and 1 in 4 LGBTQ+ kids said it is okay to share a nude as long as you sent it over an app that doesn't save it.<sup>[5]</sup>

Sexual health topics such as media literacy, consent and boundaries, sexual decision making, and healthy relationships, provide ideal opportunities to talk about cyber-safety.

### What does this mean for sexual health educators?

- Engage in frequent discussions with youth about internet safety (Adapted from [Amaze.org](#) - Being Safe on the Internet)
  - Think carefully before sharing personal information.
  - If you wouldn't want a grandparent to see it, don't post it.
  - Trust your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable with an online interaction, stop communication and tell an adult.
  - Do not meet an online acquaintance in person.
  - If you decide to meet an online acquaintance in person, never do it alone, be sure others know where you are meeting, and meet in a public place.
  - Pressure to send or receive an image is bullying. Block or delete, rather than respond, and get help from an adult.
  - It is always wrong to send an image of a person without their consent.
  - Check your privacy settings – only share your posts with friends.

**Sexting:** “Sexting” refers to the sharing of sexually explicit images via mobile phones or other devices. [Research](#) shows that most teens do not share sexually explicit images. However, there are personal and legal risks associated with sending and receiving sexts.

Young people report sending sexts for a variety of reasons.

- Flirting
- Intimacy without the risk of transmitting STIs or unintended pregnancy
- Showing interest in dating
- Peer pressure
- Bullying or coercion
- Fun (They haven't thought about possible consequences.)

### What does this mean for sexual health educators?

- Be an [askable adult](#).
  - Start conversations early
  - Listen well and often
  - Reassure the young person that you will not judge or shame them
- Talk with students about the risks of sexting.
  - Sending or owning naked photos of a person under 18 is [illegal](#).
  - Sexts can be shared, and an image may end up being widely viewed.
  - Being pressured to send a sext is a sign of an unhealthy relationship.
  - An individual always has the right to say no.

- Once a person hits “send,” there is no way to get the images back.
- Talk with students about what to do should they receive a sext.
  - Don’t share it with anyone
  - Seek help from an adult
  - Delete the image as soon as possible
  - Talk to friends about why sexting is not a good idea
- Create a classroom culture based on consent, openness, and respect. Sexual health educators have the very special opportunity to be a trusted adult who can make all the difference in students’ lives.

**Sexually Explicit Media (SEM):** What youth see when they encounter SEM can be confusing, challenging, and disturbing. Many students encounter SEM the first time by stumbling upon it. Perhaps they misspell a search term or enter an incorrect URL. Other times students seek it out. Sexually explicit media has the allure of the forbidden, is ubiquitously available, and youth are naturally curious about sexuality and their bodies. Without guidance, most students do not understand that media portrayal of sexual behavior is fantasy material, created to entertain.

SEM is not an appropriate source of sexual health education. In fact, the ease and frequency of access highlights another strong argument in favor of comprehensive, age-appropriate sexual health education.

#### **What does this mean for Sexual Health Educators?**

- Tell students that it is normal to be curious, and that if they encounter SEM they have done nothing wrong.
- When working with parents, encourage parents to share their values and to set limits about internet use. Encourage them to place their kids’ computers in a public space to monitor use.
- Support and advocate for comprehensive, medically-accurate, inclusive sexual health education.
- Include media literacy education in your sexual health curriculum.

As sexual health educators, we can equip youth with tools to navigate the online world with awareness, critical-thinking, and responsibility.

<sup>1</sup> <https://tinyurl.com/44u9pfc5>

<sup>2</sup> [JAMA Pediatrics](#), April 2018

<sup>3</sup> <https://tinyurl.com/5d592fjx>

<sup>4</sup> <https://tinyurl.com/sv3xkwx5>

<sup>5</sup> <https://tinyurl.com/af7jpaem>

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