

What's Religious about Sexuality Education?

In liberal religious sexuality education, we seek to provide roots and wings for program participants. The roots are our Unitarian Universalist religious traditions and values, which accept participants and value them for who they are so they feel good about themselves and their sexuality. The wings are the freedom they have to make meaning of their own lives; the opportunity to clarify their own values and apply them to their own experiences; and the strength to develop into their own true, best selves.

The *Our Whole Lives* curricula help transform a cultural climate of fear and confusion into a new reality of lives lived congruent with the values of the inherent worth and dignity of each and every person.

When supplemented by the *Sexuality and Our Faith* curriculum, *Our Whole Lives* is religious because it seeks to nurture:

- religious community
- spiritual depth
- prophetic vision and action for justice
- values congruent with participants' religious beliefs and the skills, attitudes, and knowledge to live out those values
- the worth and dignity of every participant

Our Whole Lives Assumptions

- All persons are sexual.
- Sexuality is a good part of the human experience.
- Human beings are sexual from the time they are born until they die.
- It is natural to express sexual feelings in a variety of ways.
- People engage in healthy sexual behavior for a variety of reasons, including to express caring and love, to experience intimacy and connection with another, to share pleasure, to bring new life into the world, and to experience fun and relaxation.
- Sexuality in our society is damaged by violence, exploitation, alienation, dishonesty, abuse of power, and the treatment of persons as objects.
- It is healthier for young adolescents to postpone sexual intercourse.



Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education

Our Whole Lives is a lifespan sexuality education curricula for six age groups: grades K-1, grades 4-6, grades 7-9, grades 10-12, young adults (ages 18-35), and adults.

Widely regarded as the Gold Standard for comprehensive sexuality education, *Our Whole Lives* helps participants make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior.

Grounded in a holistic view of sexuality, *Our Whole Lives* provides accurate, age-appropriate factual information while also helping participants clarify their values, build interpersonal skills, and understand the spiritual, emotional, and social aspects of sexuality.

Our Whole Lives uses approaches that work. The curricula are based on the Guidelines for Comprehensive Sexuality Education produced by the National Guidelines Task Force, a group of leading health, education, and sexuality professionals assembled by the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS).

Our Whole Lives Values

The content of each age level of the series embodies these values:

Self-Worth
Sexual Health
Responsibility
Justice and Inclusivity

Our Whole Lives Offers

- Honest, age-appropriate answers to all participants' questions
- Activities to help participants clarify values and improve decision-making skills
- Effective group-building to create a safe and supportive peer group
- Education about sexual abuse, exploitation, and harassment
- Opportunities to critique media messages about gender and sexuality
- Acceptance of diversity
- Encouragement to act for justice
- A well designed, easy-to-use facilitator's guide
- Parent orientation programs that affirm and support parents as the primary sexuality educators of their children
- *Sexuality and Our Faith*, an optional religious component for Unitarian Universalist and United Church of Christ settings
- Facilitator trainings offered across the United States

Who Uses *Our Whole Lives*?

Our Whole Lives is appropriate for use in congregational, school, and community settings, including classrooms, after-school programs, home school associations, religious organizations, and youth groups. The curricula cover topics and skills that schools are less likely to cover, despite parent and youth interest.

The secondary and adult curricula flexible, allowing users the ability to implement all or some of the lessons and/or activities in the workshop plans.

Although developed by two religious organizations, *Our Whole Lives* contains no religious references or doctrine. Religious references are provided in a companion volume, *Sexuality and Our Faith*, for Unitarian Universalist and United Church of Christ congregations.

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