Our Whole Lives Update and Ways You Can Support Parents and Caregivers as Sexuality Educators

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Online…

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Sexuality Education Curricula

• **Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education**
  Grades K-1, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12, Young Adult, Adult

• **Sexuality and Our Faith**
  Religious companion manual for every age level;
  Optional DVD visuals for Grades 7-9 and 10-12
Newly Revised Curriculum

Our Whole Lives
SEXUALITY EDUCATION FOR
GRADES 7–9
SECOND EDITION
PAMELA M. WILSON

SEXUALITY and
OUR FAITH
accompanying to
OUR WHOLE LIVES
grades 7–9
SECOND EDITION
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
Melanie Davis
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Ann Hanson & Melissa Lopez

uua.org
The Circles of Sexuality

Sexuality encompasses nearly every aspect of our being, from attitudes and values to feelings and experiences. It is influenced by the individual, family, culture, religion/spirituality, laws, professions, institutions, science and politics.

Sexualization involves the use of sexuality to influence, control, and/or manipulate others.

Sensuality involves our level of awareness, acceptance and enjoyment of your own or others’ bodies.

Intimacy is the experience of mutual closeness with another person.

Sexual health and reproduction focuses on attitudes and behaviors related to the sexual and reproductive systems, including health and hygiene, the health consequences of sexual behaviors, and the biology of producing children.

Values

Sexual Identity
- Biological sex
- Gender identity
- Gender expression
- Gender role
- Sexual orientation

Sexual Health & Reproduction
- Anatomy & physiology
- Sexual/reproductive systems
- Intercourse
- Contraception/abortion
- Sexually transmitted infections

*Circles of Sexuality,* adapted from *Life Planning Education,* 1995, Advocates for Youth, Washington DC, advocatesforyouth.org, based on the original work of Dennis M. Dailey, Professor Ementus, University of Kansas.
Our Whole Lives’ Impact

- 9,000+ trained facilitators
- 200+ OWL trainers (116 currently active)
- More than 50% of UU congregations have offered ≥ 1 OWL level
- 92% of OWL users are UU congregations
- 52,588 views of OWL pages on www.uua.org/re/owl in 2014
Taking a Special Education Approach to Sexuality Education

“Youth with autism spectrum disorders or attention-related, intellectual, or learning disabilities need comprehensive sexuality education as much as their peers do. Indeed, aspects of these disabilities create particular sexual health challenges.”

--Melissa Keyes DiGioia
Pornography Workshop in Sexuality & Our Faith
Welcome New Additions
Questions?
What challenges do parents and caregivers face, related to being sexuality educators?
Did you know you play an important role in helping parents be their children’s primary sexuality educators?
Help Parents and Caregivers Gain Comfort With a Child’s Unique Sexual Identity
What do restrooms have to do with sexuality education?
Build a Sex-Positive Library and Sunday Story Time
“Parents as Sexuality Educators”
Curriculum Field Test Opportunity

Features:

• Eleven 90-minute sessions (10 workshops; 1 guest panel)
• Ideal for two facilitators; no training required
• Accommodates 8 to 20 parents/guardians of children ages 12-14
• Compatible with OWL, but can be used independently

Field test begins
September 2015
Contact: owl@uua.org
How might you use the Parents & Caregivers as Sexuality Educators program in your setting?
How to Help First-Year College Students Be Sexually Smarter

By Melanie Davis

Many parents will spend the next few months packing college dorm-bound boxes with bed linens, ramen noodles, and laundry soap. I hope they will also include condoms, dams, and personal lubricant; a book on sexuality; and encouragement to make smart sexual decisions as well as smart academic choices.

A few years ago, a college first-year and Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education program graduate told me: “Living in a dorm gives you a live lesson in how STIs (sexually transmitted infections) can spread. In the first week, one person on my floor slept with four people!”

A parent may consider their live-away college freshman a newly minted adult, but, biologically, teens remain in adolescence until about age 25. While their brains are still developing, they are more likely to take risks, use poor impulse control, and be self-conscious. These are all risk factors for unhealthy sexual decisions.

But, there is good news: College offers a time of great learning, exploration, and social development, all of which contribute to healthy sexuality.

Parents often warn their children to “stay safe” or “be smart” about college drinking and sex, but I have yet to meet a student whose

Social Media Privacy: It Begins at Home

By Melanie Davis

In the October 5, 2014 New York Times article, We Want Privacy but Can’t Stop Sharing, Kate Murphy writes, “The problem is that if you reveal everything about yourself or it’s discoverable with a Google search, you may be diminished in your capacity for intimacy” because relationships develop through gradual and mutual self-disclosure of increasingly private and sensitive personal information.

Murphy notes that the data mining of social media by advertisers has led many adult users to become more circumspect about how much they share online. She posits that the new trend toward more privacy helps our social relationships.

But how about children whose parents share moments as personal as an ultrasound image of a fetus captioned “We’re having a boy!” or “We’re having a girl!” Or a photo of a toddler wearing a potty seat? Then there are the bad haircuts, first menstrual periods, questionable clothing choices, first dates, and more. For many parents, the urge to share seems to have usurped any concern over their children’s right to control which stories, and when, to share with friends and future romantic partners.

Do Children Have a Right to Privacy?

Many people cheered the blogger who wrote about teaching her daughter that masturbation is a private, rather than public, activity. I wasn’t cheering; in fact, I was angry. Yes, parents should teach their children that masturbation is a healthy, normal feel-good activity. And yes, parents need to teach children about social boundaries related to sexual activity. But this child’s behavior, which her mother insisted should remain private, has now been made public. By whom? Her mother!

Masturbation is a harmless, healthy sexual activity, and the little girl’s behavior was completely typical. But it’s mentally fast-forward. In adolescence, when even the most confident, happy young person can be crushed by peer ridicule, how might she feel if someone unearths that old blog post about her young fascination with masturbation? Will she feel that her inherent worth and dignity were respected by the person who published that blog post?

The blogger could have shared her sex ed. advice (which was quite good) without exposing her child’s private behavior. She, like other parents who over-share online, failed to respect and protect her daughter’s privacy.
Families
WEAVE A TAPESTRY OF FAITH

Every Body Is Beautiful

by Melanie Davis

Spring 2014

When I was young, I played snow, ski, basketball, and played basketball, volleyball, and softball. I was a great athlete. I set a school record in the high jump. But when I grew up, I was 5’7”, and I was proud of myself.

Unfortunately, my self-confidence didn’t matter to a few of my middle school classmates. They teased me because my body was changing more slowly than theirs. I looked like a young girl when the others were starting to look like adolescents. Everyone was talking about me, and I was miserable.

Eventually, I grew up. I found someone to share my life with, and we had three daughters. One of them, Talia, was born with bilateral hip dysplasia. Her pelvis was missing the deep muscles on each side that would have held her thigh bones in place. The problem had to be fixed surgically or she wouldn’t walk comfortably.

Talia was three, she had operations that left her with two long scars on each leg and two long scars on each hip. She was in a cast from her shoulders to her ankles for three months. When the cast was removed, she was terrified of the scar. But her dad told her they were beautiful badges of courage. She must have had belief in her, too, because she became a confident, active, happy little girl.

One day, a girl at school pointed at Talia’s scars and said, “Even. What are those?” I knew Talia’s feelings were hurt, even though she didn’t let the girl see her eyes until she was enough.

Talia, who was 22 now, said, “When I was younger, I thought my scars were big and ugly. But by high school, I didn’t care about them until someone asked. I realized it only mattered because people were judging me. Mainly, they thought the scars were cool looking. Now, I’m in college and I work together.”

Feeling Good in Your Body

What does your body do that makes you happy?

Search for Beauty

Our bodies are amazing! But sometimes we take them for granted. Can we include our physical bodies when we consider our first Principle, that each and every one of us is important? And our second Principle, which asks us to treat ourselves and each other fairly and kindly? Acceptance, responsibility, and respect are three more words from our UU Principles. Let’s celebrate our bodies in a UU Principled way!

What does beauty mean to you? Does it change as you grow up?

Who decides what beauty is? Can we decide for ourselves?
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 treatment of persons as objects.
- It is healthier for young adolescents to postpone sexual intercourse.
Sexuality Education Resources to Help You Implement OWL

Facilitator Training Calendar: www.uua.org/re/owl/trainings
Promotional flyers: www.uua.org/re/owl/281084.shtml
Facilitator Resources: www.uua.org/re/owl/facilitator-resources
Training event Planning Guide: www.uua.org/re/owl/planning-guide
FAQs online: www.uua.org/re/owl/faq
Sexuality is Honored Here brochure: www.uua.org/files/brochureallagespdf
Facilitator email lists: www.uua.org/lists
UUA OWL Program Associate: owl@uua.org and mjdavis@uua.org
Phone: 617-948-6423

www.uua.org/re/owl/
Upcoming FDO Webinars

July, 2015
Cultural Competence With Disability: Conversations for Access and Possibility

Tuesday, July 14, 1 p.m. Eastern or Wednesday, July 15, 9 p.m. Eastern

Presenter: Theresa I. Soto, ministerial intern at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem (OR) and vice president of EqUUal Access.
What puzzles you about OWL?