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Alignment of TEKS Objectives Safer Choices

Safer Choices

Curriculum Overview

Safer Choices is an evidence-based program that uses theory, parent-child communication, and skill building to reduce teen pregnancy and STIs/HIV in high schoolers. It is based on Social Cognitive Theory, Social Influence Theory, and Models of School Change. The curriculum is 2 years long, consisting of 21 modules. Unique features of the program include interactive lessons, 5-8 class-elected peer leaders used to facilitate some lessons, and skill training. Topics covered include making choices about having safer sex or safest sex (abstinence), pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, condom use, and refusal skills.

Program Components

Students

- Grades covered: 9th and 10th (2-year curriculum)
- Lessons:
 - 11 lessons in level 1 (9th grade)
 - 10 lessons in level 2 (10th grade)
 - 45-minute lessons, taught 2-3 times per week
 - In-person instruction by instructor and peer educators
- Learning activities include roleplays, games, demonstrations, and guided discussion.
- Lesson topics include HIV and STD knowledge, refusal and communication skills training, increasing communication with parents, and positive peer norms about abstinence and condom use.

Parents

- Parents will be provided a newsletter containing background knowledge and tips on talking to teens, and student/parent homework activities will be assigned.

Teacher and School Staff

- Authors suggest establishing a site coordinator, a student health promotion council, and a peer team (of 5-8 students from each classroom) for proper implementation of the program. Family and community involvement are also recommended. The Basic Set includes teacher's guides, a peer leader training guide, peer leader workbooks, and an implementation manual. ETR also offers a three-day training of educators program, which includes skill-based instruction and follow-up support.

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Program Logistics

- Where to purchase: <https://www.etr.org/store/curricula/safer-choices/>
- Cost:
 - Basic set: \$349.99
 - Enhanced set: \$549.99
 - Level 1 OR Level 2 student workbooks: \$90.00 for 30
 - Level 1 OR Level 2 peer leader workbooks: \$15.00 for 5
- Format:
 - Basic set includes 30 student workbooks and 5 peer workbooks at each level, as well as a *Blood Lines* DVD, *STD Facts for Teens* pamphlets, and an implementation manual.
 - Enhanced set includes everything in the basic set, plus a variety of pamphlets and laminated posters, the *How to Use a Condom* DVD, and supporting LGBTQ Youth supplement.
- Program contact info:
 - Program help request: <https://www.etr.org/ebi/about-us/program-support-help-request/>

Summary of Evaluation Findings

In a randomized trial of 20 schools in Texas and California over three years, students who participated in Safer Choices reported fewer acts of intercourse without a condom at the 7- and 31-month follow-ups and fewer partners with whom they had intercourse without a condom at the 31-month follow-up. Additionally, at the 7-, 19-, and 31-month follow-ups, students who participated in Safer Choices scored higher on HIV and STD knowledge, condom use norms and self-efficacy, and parent-child communication.

Key reference:

Coyle, K., K. Basen-Engquist, D. Kirby, G., Parcel, S. Banspach, J. Collins, E. Baumler, S. Carvajal, R. Harrist. 2001. Safer Choices—Reducing teen pregnancy, HIV, and STDs. *Public Health Reports* 116 (Suppl. 1): 82-93.

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Table 1. Program Overview: Level 1 (9th Grade)

Lesson	Activity
1: Not Everybody's Having Sex!	1. Why Young People Choose to Have or Not Have Sex
	2. Influences on Decisions
	3. Expressing Affection
	4. Homework- Then and Now
2: The SAFEST Choice: Deciding Not to Have Sex	1. Correcting Misperceptions of the Norm
	2. Effective No Statements
	3. Student Skill Practice
3: Saying NO to Having Sex	1. Review of Clear NO Statements
	2. More Ways to Say NO
	3. Refusal Roleplays
4: Understanding STD and HIV	1. STD Posters
	2. Homework- Calling a Hotline
5: Examining the Risk of Unsafe Choices- Part 1	1. How Number of Partners Affects STD Risk
	2. Rate the Risk
6: Examining the Risk of Unsafe Choices- Part 2	1. Homework Review- Calling a Hotline
	2. Homework Review- Then and Now
	3. How Behaviors Affect HIV Risk
	4. Dealing with a Pregnancy
7: Teens with HIV: A Reality	1. Young People with HIV
	2. Personalizing the Impact
8: Practicing the SAFEST Choice	1. Refusal Skills Review
	2. Responding to Lines
	3. Refusal Skills Roleplays

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	4. What Not Having Sex Means to Me
	5. Homework- What Do You Think?
9: SAFER Choices: Using Protection- Part 1	1. Methods of Protection
	2. Clarifying UNSAFE, SAFER and SAFEST Methods
	3. Homework- Researching Methods of Protection
10: SAFER Choices: Using Protection- Part 2	1. Condom Demonstration
	2. Practicing Proper Use of Condoms
	3. Barriers to Using Protection
	4. Condom Negotiation Roleplays
11: Knowing What You Can Do	1. Homework Review- Researching Methods of Protection
	2. Homework Review- What Do You Think?
	3. Closure- What You Can Do

Table 2. Program Overview: Level 2 (10th Grade)

Lesson	Activity
1: Making SAFER Choices	1. Reintroducing Safer Choices
	2. What Would Happen If...?
	3. Homework- Talk About It!
2: The Safer Choices Challenge	1. Safer Choices Challenge Game
	2. Homework- Visit or Call a Clinic
	3. People with HIV

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3: Talking with a Person with HIV	1. Talking with a Person with HIV
	2. Homework- Re-Thinking My Feelings
4: Personalizing the Risk for Pregnancy	1. Homework Review
	2. Pregnancy Risk Activity- Round 1
	3. Pregnancy Risk Activity- Round 2
	4. The Impact of a Pregnancy
5: Avoiding UNSAFE Choices	1. Homework Review- Talk About It!
	2. Avoiding UNSAFE Choices
	3. Analyzing the Situation
	4. My Personal Limits
6: Sticking with Your Decision	1. Review of Refusal Skills
	2. Wishing and Hoping
	3. Student Skill Practice
	4. Real Situations: Unscripted Roleplays
7: Using Condoms Consistently and Correctly	1. Completing Class 6 Roleplays
	2. Condom Demonstration
	3. Practicing Proper Use of Condoms
	4. Challenges and Solutions for Condom use
8: Resources	1. HIV, STD and Pregnancy Testing
	2. Accessing Resources
	3. Homework Review- Visit or Call a Clinic
	4. Homework- What Do You Think?
9: Media Influences	1. Media Influences
	2. Developing Positive Media Messages

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10: Making a Commitment

1. Homework Review- What Do You Think?

2. Media Presentations

3. Making a Commitment

TEKS Objectives

- Coverage of the Texas Education Agency’s Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, Reproductive and Sexual Health objectives is provided in the following pages. Tables 1 and 2 (above) indicate the lessons and activities for each level of the Safer Choices program. Table 3 (below) indicates the percentage of TEKS coverage across all lessons for level 1 (Health I) and level 2 (Health II), respectively.
- Definitions:
 - “Full TEKS coverage” indicates that the entire student expectation (SE) is explicitly covered, as written, in the curriculum.
 - “Partial TEKS coverage” indicates that at least one aspect of the SE is not covered or not explicitly covered in the curriculum.
- TEKS coverage was determined by consensus from two reviewers with relevant subject-matter knowledge. The full review protocol and a detailed review document for each curriculum is available upon [request](#).

**Table 3. Health TEKS Objectives, Reproductive & Sexual Health Strand
Full or Partial Coverage – All Lessons**

Level 1 (9th – 12th Grade, Health I)	45%
Level 2 (9th – 12th Grade, Health II)	50%

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Level 1 (9th Grade)

High School (9th – 12th Grade, Health I – One-Half Credit) Reproductive and Sexual Health TEKS Objectives Review

Table 4a. (18) Reproductive and sexual health--healthy relationships, Health I.

TEKS Objectives	TEKS Coverage (All Lessons)		Notes
	Full	Partial	
(18) Reproductive and sexual health--healthy relationships. The student understands the characteristics of healthy romantic relationships. The student is expected to:			
(A) analyze how friendships provide a foundation for healthy dating/romantic relationships			Instructor must cover this Student Expectation (SE).
(B) identify character traits that promote healthy dating/romantic relationships and marriage			Instructor must cover this SE.
(C) describe how a healthy marriage can provide a supportive environment for the nurturing and development of children			Instructor must cover this SE.

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Table 4b. (19) Reproductive and sexual health--personal safety, limits, and boundaries, Health I.

TEKS Objectives	TEKS Coverage (All Lessons)		Notes
	Full	Partial	
(19) Reproductive and sexual health--personal safety, limits, and boundaries. The student understands how to set and respect personal boundaries to reduce the risk of sexual harassment, sexual abuse, and sexual assault. The student is expected to:			
(A) describe the characteristics of sex trafficking such as grooming, controlling behavior, exploitation, force, fraud, coercion, and violence			Instructor must cover this SE.
(B) analyze the characteristics of harmful relationships that can lead to dating violence			Instructor must cover this SE.
(C) analyze healthy strategies for preventing physical, sexual, and emotional abuse			Instructor must cover this SE.
(D) analyze how a healthy sense of self and making and respecting decisions about safe boundaries and limits promote healthy dating/romantic relationships			Instructor must cover this SE.
(E) explain and demonstrate how refusal strategies can be used to say "no" assertively to unhealthy behaviors in dating/romantic relationships	X		
(F) examine factors, including alcohol and other substances, that increase sexual risk and that affect setting, perceiving, respecting, and making decisions about boundaries			Instructor must cover this SE.
(G) examine and discuss influences and pressures to become sexually active and why it is wrong to violate another person's boundaries and manipulate or threaten someone into sexual activity		X	Instructor must provide an explanation of why it is wrong to violate another person's boundaries and manipulate or threaten someone into sexual activity.

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(H) explain the importance of reporting to a parent or another trusted adult sexual harassment, sexual abuse, sexual assault, and dating violence involving self or others

Instructor must cover this SE.

Table 4c. (20) Reproductive and sexual health—anatomy, puberty, reproduction, and pregnancy, Health I.

TEKS Objectives	TEKS Coverage (All Lessons)		Notes
	Full	Partial	
(20) Reproductive and sexual health—anatomy, puberty, reproduction, and pregnancy. The student analyzes adolescent development, the process of fertilization, and healthy fetal development. The student is expected to:			
(A) analyze the importance of telling a parent or another trusted adult, obtaining early pregnancy testing, and seeking prenatal care if signs of pregnancy occur			Instructor must cover this SE.

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Table 4d. (21) Reproductive and sexual health--sexual risk, Health I.

TEKS Objectives	TEKS Coverage (All Lessons)		Notes
	Full	Partial	
(21) Reproductive and sexual health--sexual risk. The student understands that there are risks associated with sexual activity and that abstinence from sexual activity is the only 100% effective method to avoid risks. The student is expected to:			
(A) research and analyze the educational, financial, and social impacts of pregnancy on teen parents, the child, families, and society, including considering the effects on one's personal life goals		X	Instructors must ensure that the students A.) research the SE, and B.) analyze the impacts of teen pregnancy on the child and society.
(B) describe various modes of transmission of STDs/STIs	X		
(C) investigate and summarize the statistics on the prevalence of STDs/STIs among teens by referencing county, state, and/or federal data sources			Instructor must cover this SE.
(D) describe signs and symptoms of STDs/STIs , including human papillomavirus (HPV), human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), chlamydia, syphilis, gonorrhea, herpes, and trichomoniasis, and identify that not all STDs/STIs show symptoms		X	Instructor must cover the signs and symptoms of trichomoniasis.
(E) analyze the importance of STD/STI screening, testing, and early treatment for sexually active people, including during yearly physicals or if there is a concern		X	Instructor must provide additional instruction as to the importance of STD/STI screening, testing, and early treatment at yearly physicals or if there is a concern.
(F) analyze emotional risks that can be associated with sexual activity for unmarried persons of school age, including stress, anxiety, and depression	X		

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(G) analyze the importance and benefits of abstinence from sexual activity as it relates to emotional health and the prevention of pregnancy and STDs/STIs	X		
(H) identify support from parents and other trusted adults and create strategies, including building peer support, to be abstinent or for return to abstinence if sexually active		X	Instructor must provide additional instruction regarding building peer support and returning to abstinence if sexually active.
(I) analyze the effectiveness and the risks and failure rates (human-use reality rates) of barrier protection and other contraceptive methods, including how they work to reduce the risk of STDs/STIs and pregnancy		X	Instructor must provide failure rates (human-use reality rates) for barrier protection and other contraceptive methods.
(J) explain the legal responsibilities related to teen pregnancy, including child support and acknowledgement of paternity			Instructor must cover this SE.

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Level 2 (10th Grade)

High School (9th – 12th Grade, Health II – One-Half Credit) Reproductive and Sexual Health TEKS Objectives Review

Table 5a. (19) Reproductive and sexual health--healthy relationships, Health II.

TEKS Objectives	TEKS Coverage (All Lessons)		Notes
	Full	Partial	
(19) Reproductive and sexual health--healthy relationships. The student understands the characteristics of healthy romantic relationships. The student is expected to:			
(A) compare and contrast effective and ineffective methods of communicating emotions in healthy dating/romantic relationships and marriage		X	Instructor must clarify that the communication methods can be used within marriage.
(B) analyze behaviors in romantic relationships that enhance dignity and respect	X		
(C) examine how a healthy marriage can provide a supportive environment for the nurturing and development of children			Instructor must cover this SE.

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Table 5b. (20) Reproductive and sexual health--personal safety, limits, and boundaries, Health II.

TEKS Objectives	TEKS Coverage (All Lessons)		Notes
	Full	Partial	
(20) Reproductive and sexual health--personal safety, limits, and boundaries. The student understands how to set and respect personal boundaries to reduce the risk of sexual harassment, sexual abuse, and sexual assault. The student is expected to:			
(A) identify community resources to support individuals who have experienced sexual harassment, sexual abuse, sexual assault, dating violence, and sex trafficking			Instructor must cover this SE.
(B) evaluate the importance of reporting to a parent or another trusted adult sexual harassment, sexual abuse, sexual assault, and dating violence involving self or others			Instructor must cover this SE.
(C) discuss how refusal skills can be used to set limits and boundaries to avoid behaviors that increase sexual risk	X		
(D) analyze factors, including alcohol and other substances, that increase sexual risk and that affect setting, perceiving, respecting, and making decisions about boundaries	X		
(E) evaluate influences and pressures to become sexually active and why it is wrong to violate another person's boundaries and manipulate or threaten someone into sexual activity	X		

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Table 5c. (21) Reproductive and sexual health—anatomy, puberty, reproduction, and pregnancy, Health II.

TEKS Objectives	TEKS Coverage (All Lessons)		Notes
	Full	Partial	
(21) Reproductive and sexual health—anatomy, puberty, reproduction, and pregnancy. The student analyzes adolescent development, the process of fertilization, and healthy fetal development. The student is expected to:			
(A) analyze the significance of hormonal, physical, emotional, and social changes in males and females and their relationship to sexual health			Instructor must cover this SE.
(B) list factors such as heredity, environment, STDs/STIs, and the mother's health and nutrition that can affect fetal development from conception through birth			Instructor must cover this SE.
(C) describe the emotional changes that may occur during and after pregnancy, including postpartum depression, and identify resources for support and treatment			Instructor must cover this SE.

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Table 5d. (22) Reproductive and sexual health--sexual risk, Health II.

TEKS Objectives	TEKS Coverage (All Lessons)		Notes
	Full	Partial	
(22) Reproductive and sexual health--sexual risk. The student understands that there are risks associated with sexual activity and that abstinence from sexual activity is the only 100% effective method to avoid risks. The student is expected to:			
(A) analyze the options available to teenage parents such as parenting or the process of adoption and the legal rights of parties involved			Instructor must cover this SE.
(B) evaluate long-term or lifetime effects of bacterial and viral STDs/STIs, including infertility and cancer		X	Instructor must evaluate infertility and cancer as possible long-term or lifetime effects.
(C) identify community resources, minors' right to consent under certain circumstances, and the importance of parent or other trusted adult support for STD/STI testing and treatment	X		
(D) analyze the effectiveness and the risks and failure rates (human-use reality rates) of barrier protection and other contraceptive methods, including how they work to reduce the risk of STDs/STIs and pregnancy		X	Instructor must discuss failure rates (human-use reality rates) of barrier protection and other contraceptive methods.
(E) identify the effectiveness of vaccines in preventing the transmission of the most common types of HPV, a virus that may cause genital warts and head and neck cancer, cervical cancer, anal cancer, or other cancers that may occur in males and females			Instructor must cover this SE.
(F) analyze the benefits of abstinence from sexual activity, including focusing on personal development and encouraging individuals to build healthy relationships not complicated by sexual involvement	X		

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(G) assess support from parents and other trusted adults and create strategies, including building peer support, to be abstinent or for return to abstinence if sexually active		X	Instructor must provide additional instruction regarding building peer support and returning to abstinence if sexually active.
(H) investigate and summarize legal aspects of sexual activity with a minor person, including the legal age of consent, statutory rape, aggravated sexual assault, sexual assault, and indecency with a child			Instructor must cover this SE.
(I) investigate and summarize current laws relating to sexual offenses such as sexual harassment, abuse, and assault			Instructor must cover this SE.

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Texas Education Code §28.004 Statutory Compliance

Texas Education Code §28.004 lays out requirements for human sexuality instruction. These requirements (see table 6) are reflected in the above TEKS Objectives and in our assessment of their coverage in this program.

Table 6. Texas Education Code §28.004 Statutory Compliance

Course materials and instruction must:

- (1) Present abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice of behavior in relationship to all sexual activity for unmarried persons of school age;
- (2) Devote more attention to abstinence from sexual activity than to any other behavior;
- (3) Emphasize that abstinence from sexual activity, if used consistently and correctly, is the only method that is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, infection with human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immune deficiency syndrome, and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity;
- (4) Direct adolescents to a standard of behavior in which abstinence from sexual activity before marriage is the most effective way to prevent pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and infection with human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immune deficiency syndrome; and
- (5) Teach contraception and condom use in terms of human use reality rates instead of theoretical laboratory rates, if instruction on contraception and condoms is included in curriculum content.