Prepare >>>> Identifying Good Health Educators

Choosing a Sexual Health Educator

It is important to select the right sexual health educator to maintain **program fidelity** and to ensure that students feel they are in a safe learning environment (i.e., a teaching space where students are respected and can approach the adult with questions or concerns without judgment or punishment.) An effective sexual health educator may be a science teacher, a physical education teacher, or a support staff member such as a school nurse or counselor, as long as they possess many of the qualities listed below. Consider hiring a designated health educator from an outside organization, for one or multiple campuses, if you believe no one in the district meets the qualifications of an effective sexual health educator. Listed below are characteristics or traits to keep in mind when you are deciding who should implement your program.
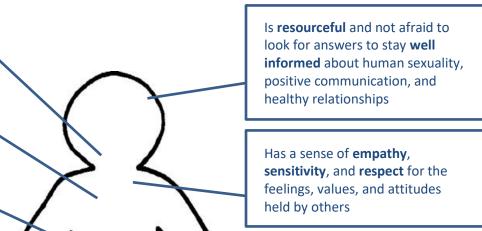
An effective sexual health educator:

Can **communicate** positively and effectively both verbally and non-verbally with students

Finds the job of being a sexual health educator **rewarding** and **enjoyable**

Is **comfortable** with their own sexuality and sense of self

Is capable of:

-**helping** students learn to understand and tolerate different opinions, attitudes, and values regarding sexuality

-**reassuring** students that past sexual behavior does not determine one's future behavior

-**creating** a positive class environment where students feel comfortable and safe to express their opinions and feelings without being threatened or rejected

- **empathizing** with their students while maintaining a professional attitude

Is **resourceful** and not afraid to look for answers to stay **well informed** about human sexuality, positive communication, and healthy relationships

Has a sense of **empathy**, **sensitivity**, and **respect** for the feelings, values, and attitudes held by others

Is able to **safeguard** with strict confidentiality personal and private information shared with them by the students, within the boundaries of the law (e.g. notifying authorities in suspected cases of abuse)

Does not maintain a bias toward a particular gender's viewpoints

Does not maintain a bias toward a particular religion's point of view regarding sexuality