



Our Whole Lives (OWL) Sexuality Education for Children: Philosophy and Goals

The *Our Whole Lives for Grades 4-6*¹ program nurtures and supports the "three R's" of childhood sexuality education - Respect, Relationships and Responsibility - by helping children gain self-respect and respect for others, build relationships with people of all genders and with many kinds of families, and understand their responsibilities regarding their own health and that of others.

The messages that children receive through touch, talk, and behaviour affect their future attitudes, values and actions. This curriculum helps participants integrate the values of the program with their own system of values within an open, affirming and anti-bias environment and a community of trust, confidence and authenticity.

The goals of Our Whole Lives are:

- To strengthen and support each child's sense of self and self-esteem;
- To help children understand the place of sexuality in human life and loving.
- To encourage children to appreciate their bodies as good and beautiful, private and special.
- To provide children with accurate, developmentally appropriate information about human sexuality, reproduction and gender identification.
- To prepare children for the normal changes they will experience as they grow and develop

¹ Although the curricula is developmentally appropriate for participants in Grades 4, 5 or 6, it is recommended that congregations run the program for 2 of the 3 age groups. The main reason is the age gap between a Grade 4 and Grade 6 participant is too large to allow the group to bond as a cohesive group. Our congregation has made it a practice to run this program specifically for our **Grade 5 and 6** children.

- To help children develop interpersonal skills - including communication, decision-making and problem solving - that will help keep them safe and healthy.
- To help children learn to make responsible decisions that show respect for themselves and others.
- To help families communicate openly about all life questions.
- To strengthen parents' role as their children's most important sexuality educator.

Our Whole Lives Content

- *Sexuality and Values* - Session 1 helps participants clarify, support and communicate their values about sexuality
- *Family Relationships* - Session 2 helps participants explore the concepts of family and intimacy in relation to friends and family.
- *Puberty: Physical and Emotional Changes* - Session 3 helps participants understand the physical and emotional changes of puberty.
- *Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation* - Session 4 expands participants' understanding of gender identity and sexual orientation and promotes advocacy skills to combat social injustice.
- *Lovemaking and Reproduction* - Session 5 expands participants' understanding of lovemaking, reproduction and how families change when new siblings arrive.
- *Health and Safety* - Session 6 provides participants with accurate and age-appropriate information about sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and skills for protecting them from sexual abuse.
- *Communication* - Session 7 helps participants become more comfortable using accurate sexual terminology and develop effective communication skills.
- *Decision Making* - Session 8 raises awareness of the messages they receive from family, peers, faith communities and the media about sexuality and how these messages influence their decisions.

Our Whole Lives Parent Commitment Form

I/We give _____

(child(ren)'s name(s))

permission to participate in *Our Whole Lives: Sexuality Education for Grades 4-6*, part of the education program at North Shore Unitarian Church.

I/We have been offered the opportunity to view the materials to be used in this program.

I/We have attended a parent/child orientation for this program.

I/We will do my/our best to read and discuss each week's topics and HomeLinks.

Becoming responsible partners in sexuality education requires leaders and parents to create a safe and healthy environment of trust and respect. *Our Whole Lives* leaders agree to abide by this organization's code of ethics, which include this Province's mandate to report cases of abuse. I/We understand that appropriate feedback will be provided to me/us should the need arise and that all such exchanges will include the appropriate professional leaders of this organization.

Signed _____
(parent/guardian)

Signed: _____
(parent/guardian)

Name: _____
(print)

Name: _____
(print)

Address: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number
Daytime _____
Evening _____

Phone Number
Daytime _____
Evening _____

Date Signed _____

Date Signed _____