

## Minnesota Sexuality Education Resource Review Panel

Summary of Panel Review  
Review Date: September 2004

### *Making Smart Choices About Sex* (2004)

Format: Curriculum

Target Audience: Grades 7-8 (or younger)

Cost: \$299.00

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The Minnesota Sexuality Education Resource Review Panel **Recommends** the use of this curriculum for the following reasons and with the following reservations:

#### Review Summary:

Making Smart Choices about Sex is a three-session curriculum that focuses on postponing sexual behaviors that put a person at risk for pregnancy and /or sexually transmitted infections. The curriculum is built upon the belief that the decision to wait to have sex is a positive, life-enhancing decision young adolescents can make.

The stated program goals are to:

- Help students recognize that waiting to have sex is a “smart” choice.
- Provide students with a model for making healthy decisions about sexual activity.
- Provide students with skills that will enable them to sustain their commitment to wait to have sex.
- Support and reinforce the overall message, “Not Me, Not Now.”

The curriculum deals not only with prevention of pregnancy and STDs but also with the promotion of healthy behaviors. It sends a clear, consistent message to wait to have sex until you are older, and does so in a way that is both positive and empowering to young people. The panel felt that the curriculum would be a good supplement to a larger, comprehensive curriculum that includes information about birth control and condoms.

The curriculum contains a good introduction to comprehensive sexuality education, the theories upon which the curriculum is based, and instructions for implementing each lesson and the curriculum as a whole. One weakness cited by the panel is that the curriculum relies heavily on discussion-based activities. This could pose a problem with a group that does not easily engage in discussion. The panel felt the leader would need to have strong content knowledge and group leading skills.

The panel expressed concern about the price. It is expensive and may be prohibitive for some districts and programs.

Overall, the panel **recommends** the use of *Making Smart Choices About Sex*.

*Making Smart Choices About Sex (2004)*

<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Accuracy of Information</b> - Provides basic, accurate information about teen sexual health, e.g., risks of teen sexual activity, ways to avoid intercourse or use methods of protection against pregnancy and STDs, human growth and development, relationships, etc.	4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There are few numbers and little specific information, but what is included is accurate.</li> <li>▪ Not just about prevention of pregnancy and STDs but promotion of healthy behaviors</li> <li>▪ Defines “sex” as oral, anal, or vaginal sex</li> <li>▪ Contains good introduction to comprehensive sexuality education, the theories upon which the curriculum is based, and how to prepare for implementation.</li> </ul>
<b>Focus</b> - Focuses on ways to promote sexual health e.g., reducing one or more sexual behaviors that lead to unintended pregnancy or HIV/STD infection; understanding healthy physical/emotional development; developing healthy relationships, etc.	4.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Clear focus on postponing sexual behaviors that put a person at risk for pregnancy and /or sexually transmitted infections.</li> <li>▪ Presents a positive view of sexuality</li> <li>▪ Only discusses abstinence. There is no information on condoms or birth control.</li> </ul>
<b>Messages</b> - Delivers and consistently reinforces a clear message, e.g., states message multiple times in multiple ways.	4.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Message to wait to have sex until you are older is consistently reinforced throughout the curriculum in ways that are both positive and empowering.</li> </ul>
<b>Addresses Social Pressures</b> - Includes activities that address social pressures that influence sexual behavior.	4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Includes many activities that address decision-making and how it can be affected by social and internal pressures</li> </ul>
<b>Communication Skills</b> - Provides examples of and practice with being assertive, using negotiation and refusal skills, making decisions, etc.	4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Explains different modes of communication, i.e. passive, aggressive, assertive and their relative effectiveness.</li> <li>▪ Provides homework to reinforce lessons on good communication</li> </ul>
<b>Teaching Methods</b> - Employs a variety of teaching methods designed to involve participants and have them personalize the information.	3.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relies heavily on discussion. May be a problem if group does not easily engage in discussion.</li> <li>▪ Employs a variety of methods, including role-play, homework, and reflection.</li> </ul>
<b>Appropriateness for Audience</b> - Incorporates behavioral goals, teaching methods, and materials that are appropriate to the age, sexual experience, and culture of the students (as stated by publisher.)	4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Good for 7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Could be difficult to do with younger audiences. Written at high reading level. May be too sophisticated for some.</li> <li>▪ If paired with information on safer sex and birth control, could use with older students.</li> </ul>
<b>Multicultural Perspective</b> - This resource is most appropriate for the following audiences.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Curriculum is gender neutral and GLBT inclusive.</li> <li>▪ Curriculum is appropriate for broad audience including: urban, suburban and rural youth; GLBT youth; and youth from multiple racial/ethnic groups and socio-economic classes.</li> </ul>
<b>Teacher-Friendly</b> - Is well organized with clear, thorough instructions or discussion guide. Minimal assembly or preparation time required.	4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Curriculum is very expensive.</li> <li>▪ Requires minimal prep time.</li> <li>▪ Contains very good introduction, background information, and instructions for the curriculum as a whole and for each lesson.</li> </ul>
<b>Facilitation Skills Required</b> - How knowledgeable and skilled must the facilitator be to use this resource effectively?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Because the curriculum relies so heavily on group discussion, curriculum requires a leader with strong content knowledge and group skills.</li> <li>▪ Leader will need some background on sexual health.</li> </ul>
<b>Presentation Quality</b> - How appealing is the product (e.g. visual quality, sound quality, graphics, etc.)?	4.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Good looking. Very slick packaging.</li> <li>▪ Layout and order may be confusing to some.</li> </ul>
<b>Overall Recommendation</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Recommend Highly - 3</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Recommend - 9</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Reject - 5</b></li> </ul>