**Guidelines for Providing *Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education***

Our Whole Lives (OWL) is a lifespan sexuality education program jointly developed by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and the United Church of Christ (UCC). Sexuality and Our Faith curricula, provided in companion manuals to each level of Our Whole Lives, put the material covered in Our Whole Lives into a UU or UCC faith context.

There are seven levels of Our Whole Lives and Sexuality and Our Faith: Grades K-1, Grades 4-6, Grades 7-9, Grades 10-12, Young Adult, Adult and Older Adult. Each level features:

* Evidence-informed content and instructional methods;
* Developmentally appropriate content for the age and life stage of the participants;
* Material for children and youth material that meets or exceeds the National Sex Education Standards Core Content and Skills, Grades K-12;
* Comprehensive and inclusive sexuality education.

The Grades K-1 and Grades 4-6 material is based on the following values:

* Respect
* Responsibility
* Relationship

The Grades 7-9, Grades 10-12, Young Adult, Adult, and Older Adult programs are based on the following values:

* Self-worth
* Responsibility
* Sexual health
* Justice & inclusivity

Our Whole Lives is appropriate for many settings, though it is most often used in UUA and UCC congregations. The curriculum is experiential and interactive. Activities foster critical thinking skills and informed decision-making. It is also fun and memorable. Years after completing an Our Whole Lives program, participants recall activities, conversations, and the comfort of a supportive, welcoming space in which to learn about themselves and others.

#### **Trained Facilitators**

We strongly recommend that your program be co-facilitated by two or more adults (21 or over) who have successfully completed an Our Whole Lives Facilitator Training for the level(s) of the curriculum you are offering. Trainings are listed on calendars maintained by the UUA and the UCC. These events address the curriculum content as well as facilitator boundaries, harm reduction, facilitation skills, and the role of parents and caregivers. Diversity of voices (age, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in facilitation pairs is preferred.

**Parent Orientation for Participants Under Age 18**

Curriculum for participants under age 18 include instructions for a parent orientation. This session introduces parents and caregivers to the curriculum and the co-facilitators. It also allows parents to receive answers to their questions. Afterwards, adults choose whether to register their children in the program. If they opt-in, they must sign a permission slip.

**Use of the Our Whole Lives Name**

When you offer an Our Whole Lives program as it was designed – including all of the workshops and implementing the content as written – you may promote it using the Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education name. If, however, you adapt or modify the content, you no longer have permission to use the name. You may mention in your marketing that you incorporate materials from the curriculum, but you may not imply that you are offering an Our Whole Lives program. Our Whole Lives and Sexuality and Our Faith are recognized as belonging to the Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ.

#### **Whole Congregation/Organization Engagement and Support**

Our Whole Lives programs are most successful when they include the support of the wider church, congregations, or other organization in which they are offered. This can include approval/endorsement by a board or council, related educational opportunities for the congregation’s members and/or staff, and sermons, prayers, or liturgy that reflect or intersect with topics covered in Our Whole Lives.

#### **Transparency**

To promote trust and transparency, make copies of the curriculum available for review by parents and caregivers. The curriculum is essentially a contract between you and parents and caregivers, stating what you will be teaching their children.

Do not add, omit or significantly modify the curriculum or the ways it is designed to be presented. Such adaptations break the contract you have with parents and caregivers about what you will teach. You may make the following modifications:

* Update language about identities to respect and include members in your group or congregation/organization;
* Update factual statements, such as information about contraceptive methods or sexually transmitted infections.

#### **Ensuring Developmentally Appropriate Sexuality Education**

Each level of Our Whole Lives meets or exceeds the National Sex Education Standards Core Content and Skills, Grades K-12; therefore, in order for your program to be developmentally appropriate, you must use it with participants at the ages for which it was written.

**Do not allow children to enroll in a program for older participants** (e.g., do not enroll 6th graders in a program for 7th-9th graders). You may allow children slightly older than the stated age range to join a younger cohort (e.g., a 2nd grader could enroll in a program for grades K-1). If you have questions about this recommendation, please contact [OWL@uua.org](mailto:OWL@uua.org) or [OWL@ucc.org](mailto:OWL@ucc.org).