

2025 Michigan Health Education Standards Guidelines

Sex Education Standards (Sections 1 and 3)

Aligned to *Puberty: The Wonder Years* for Grades 4, 5, and 6

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About This Document

This document is designed for curriculum directors, sex education advisory boards (SEABs), and school health committees evaluating *Puberty: The Wonder Years* (2021 edition) for alignment with the **2025 Michigan Health Education Standards Guidelines**, approved by the Michigan State Board of Education on November 13, 2025. These standards replace the previous 2007 Health Education Content Expectations (GLCEs) and represent a significant update in structure, organization, and expectations for health education in Michigan.

The 2025 standards are organized into three sections. **Section 1** covers content required by state law (including HIV/AIDS education). **Section 2** provides the general health education standards. **Section 3** provides sex education standards for districts that choose to offer sex education. Within each section, content is organized by grade span, then by **practice** (skill area), then by **topic**. This document focuses on the sex education indicators in Sections 1 and 3 that are addressed by *Puberty: The Wonder Years* at grades 4, 5, and 6.

Key Context for Curriculum Directors and SEABs

Local Control: Michigan is a local control state. Districts determine whether to include sex education in their health education program. If a district chooses to offer sex education, these standards provide guidance on what to teach. A sex education advisory board (SEAB) must be established with at least 50% parent membership (MCL 380.1507).

Parent Choice: Parents must receive prior notification, have the right to review curriculum, and may opt their child out of sex education without penalty or loss of academic credit (MCL 380.1507).

Grade Spans, Not Grade Levels: The 2025 standards use grade spans (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12) rather than individual grade levels. Indicators are learning goals to be achieved by the end of each grade span. *Puberty: The Wonder Years* provides lessons at grades 4, 5, and 6, which map to the 3-5 and 6-8 grade spans.

Practices: The 2025 standards organize indicators by six skill-based practices aligned with the National Health Education Standards: (1) Self-Awareness and Analyzing Influences, (2) Social Awareness, Relationship, and Communication Skills, (3) Information and Resource Seeking, (4) Decision Making and Problem Solving, (5) Self-Management and Goal Setting, and (6) Advocacy and Health Promotion.

Required Content (Section 1): HIV/AIDS instruction is required by law (MCL 380.1169), even for districts that do not offer broader sex education. Parent opt-out still applies. *Puberty: The Wonder Years* addresses this through Add-On Lesson H: HIV and STIs.

Add-On Lessons: *Puberty: The Wonder Years* includes eight Add-On Lessons (A through H) that extend the core lessons into additional topics. These lessons are included with the curriculum subscription and are designed to be used as supplements to the core lessons. Several Add-On Lessons are referenced in the alignment tables below.

Indicator Coding: Each indicator uses a code such as 5.3.SE.1, where "5" refers to the 3-5 grade span, "3" refers to Practice 3, "SE" indicates Sex Education, and "1" is the indicator number. Indicators that appear in both Section 1 (required by law) and Section 3 (sex education) are noted in the table.

Sex Education Standards: Grade Span 3-5 (by the end of Grade 5)

The table below maps each sex education indicator for the 3-5 grade span to the specific *Puberty: The Wonder Years* lesson(s) where it is addressed. Indicators from both Section 1 (required by law) and Section 3 (sex education) are included. The Section column indicates whether the indicator appears in Section 1, Section 3, or both.

Code	Sec.	Practice	2025 Standard Indicator	Grade 4	Grade 5
5.3.SE.6	1 & 3	3	Define communicable diseases, including Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), and identify how they are and are not transmitted.	Add-On H	Add-On H
5.3.SE.1	3	3	Identify valid and reliable information, products (deodorant, period products, medicine for cramps, etc.), and resources related to growth and development, puberty, and personal hygiene.	4-6	5-5
5.3.SE.2	3	3	Locate resources from home, school, and community that provide medically accurate sources of information about puberty, personal hygiene, and growth and development.	4-1, 4-6	5-1
5.3.SE.3	3	3	Use valid, reliable, and medically accurate resources to find information about the human reproductive systems, growth and development, and the effects of hormones.	4-4, 4-5	5-2, 5-3, 5-5
5.3.SE.4	3	3	Explain human reproduction and identify valid and reliable resources for additional information.	<i>n/a</i>	5-4
5.3.SE.5	3	3	Identify parents, guardians, or other trusted adults (e.g., counselors and other health care professionals) whom students can ask questions about puberty, abstinence, and adolescent health issues (including abuse and neglect).	4-1, 4-4, Add-On F	5-1, 5-5, Add-On F
5.5.SE.1	3	5	Describe the range of physical, social, and emotional changes during puberty and adolescence and the individual variations in puberty timelines and experiences.	4-3, 4-4, 4-5	5-2, 5-3, 5-4, 5-6
5.5.SE.2	3	5	Explain various health-promoting practices to manage the social, physical, and emotional changes associated with puberty and adolescence, as well as when help or support might be needed.	4-6	5-5, 5-6, 5-7
5.5.SE.3	3	5	Describe health-promoting behaviors during menstruation, including ways to cope with emotional changes, manage pain, and identify when help or support is needed.	4-5, 4-6	5-3, 5-4, 5-5
5.5.SE.4	3	5	Practice healthy habits related to puberty and personal hygiene.	4-6	5-5

Practice Key: 3 = Information and Resource Seeking; 5 = Self-Management and Goal Setting

Section Key: 1 & 3 = appears in both Section 1 (required by law) and Section 3 (sex education); 3 = Section 3 only

n/a = not applicable at this grade level

Sex Education Standards: Grade Span 6-8 (by the end of Grade 8)

The table below maps each sex education indicator for the 6-8 grade span to the specific *Puberty: The Wonder Years* Grade 6 lesson(s) and Add-On Lesson(s) where it is addressed. Indicators from both Section 1 (required by law) and Section 3 (sex education) are included.

Code	Sec.	Practice	2025 Standard Indicator	Grade 6 / Add-On Lessons
8.2.SE.4	1 & 3	2	Discuss signs, symptoms, and potential effects of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV.	6-7
8.4.SE.3	1 & 3	4	Analyze ways to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including strategies that can be used before becoming sexually active (e.g., abstinence, communicating with a partner, HPV vaccine, contraception).	6-6, 6-7, Add-On G
8.4.SE.6	1 & 3	4	Articulate the benefits of abstinence, postponing sexual activity, and setting personal limits (e.g., aligning with personal or family values, understanding the changing nature of relationships, avoiding early or unintended pregnancy, reducing risk of STIs) based on individual beliefs and values.	6-5, 6-6
8.5.SE.3	1 & 3	5	Determine strategies, including abstinence, that will reduce the risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy.	6-6, 6-7
8.2.SE.1	3	2	Define gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, and explain that they are distinct components of every individual's identity.	Add-On E
8.2.SE.2	3	2	Explain how biological sex, gender identity, and gender expression are distinct concepts and how they interact with each other.	Add-On E
8.2.SE.3	3	2	Explain that romantic, emotional, and/or sexual attractions can be toward an individual of the same and/or different gender(s), and that attractions can change over time.	6-4, Add-On E
8.3.SE.1	3	3	Analyze the validity of claims for health information, products (e.g., period products, personal hygiene, over-the-counter pain medications), services, and resources about sexual and reproductive health.	6-9
8.3.SE.2	3	3	Access credible sources of information about sexual and reproductive health.	6-9
8.3.SE.3	3	3	Locate valid and reliable information on puberty, personal hygiene, menstruation, and personal health products from various resources in one's home, school, and community.	6-1, 6-9
8.4.SE.1	3	4	Analyze personal and family values related to relationships, abstinence, sexual behaviors, and sexual health.	6-1, 6-6, 6-10
8.4.SE.2	3	4	Identify valid and reliable sources of information and resources to inform and support sexual health decisions, including abstinence.	6-1, 6-6, 6-9
8.4.SE.4	3	4	Describe possible short- and long-term impacts of engaging in sexual activity and identify ways to avoid negative or potentially harmful consequences.	6-6, 6-7, Add-On G
8.4.SE.5	3	4	Explain the importance of, and ways to identify, setting personal limits to avoid unintended outcomes from risky or unwanted sexual behavior and to make sexual health decisions.	6-5, 6-6, 6-7, 6-8
8.4.SE.7	3	4	Describe strategies that can be used to make decisions that adhere to personal and family values.	6-6, 6-10

8.4.SE.8	3	4	Apply an effective decision-making process in situations related to sexual health.	6-6
8.5.SE.1	3	5	Examine various considerations (e.g., personal and/or family values, cultural and societal norms, and beliefs) for determining emotional readiness for sexual behaviors.	6-4, 6-5, 6-6
8.5.SE.2	3	5	Assess personal health practices and develop short- and long-term goals that support healthy sexual behaviors (e.g., abstinence, delay, use of contraception, use of barriers, giving and obtaining consent).	6-10
8.5.SE.4	3	5	Describe how sexual health values and priorities may change with age, maturity, knowledge, and responsibilities.	6-6
8.6.SE.1	3	6	Demonstrate ways to show courtesy and respect for others when aspects of their sexuality or gender are different from one's own.	6-4, 6-5, Add-On E
8.6.SE.2	3	6	Practice skills to intervene if teasing or bullying based on sexuality is occurring, and how to support those affected.	6-8
8.6.SE.3	3	6	Encourage others to refrain from teasing or bullying others based on their sexuality (e.g., sexual activity [including abstinence], sexual orientation) or gender (e.g., gender expression, gender identity).	6-8
8.6.SE.4	3	6	Identify behaviors, policies, and practices in the school community that promote or hinder dignity and respect for all individuals.	6-1, 6-10

Practice Key: 2 = Social Awareness, Relationship, and Communication Skills; 3 = Information and Resource Seeking; 4 = Decision Making and Problem Solving; 5 = Self-Management and Goal Setting; 6 = Advocacy and Health Promotion

Section Key: 1 & 3 = appears in both Section 1 (required by law) and Section 3 (sex education); 3 = Section 3 only

n/a = not addressed by the curriculum at this grade level

MCL 380.1507b Curriculum Requirements (a to k)

Michigan public schools that choose to teach sex education must meet Michigan's legal requirements for sex education curriculum as stated in section 380.1507b of the Michigan Compiled Laws. The following chart outlines the curriculum requirements listed in section 1507b (a to k) and how to meet them using *Puberty: The Wonder Years* 2021 edition lessons for grades 4, 5, and 6. Materials and instruction in the sex education curriculum shall be **age-appropriate**, shall **not be medically inaccurate**, and shall do at least all of the following:

Curriculum Requirements	Age Appropriate?*	Where Addressed
(a) Discuss the benefits of abstaining from sex until marriage and the benefits of ceasing sex if a pupil is sexually active.	<p>Yes (benefits of abstaining): This age group is receptive to abstinence messages and respects limits set by adults.</p> <p>No (until marriage): This is a shame-based message. Instead, students identify benefits of abstaining and importance of talking to adults.</p> <p>No (ceasing sex): The vast majority of this age group has not had sex, so instructing them to cease would give them the impression of a false norm in their group.</p>	<p>Grade 4: Lessons 4-4, 4-5</p> <p>Grade 5: Lessons 5-5, 5-7</p> <p>Grade 6: Lessons 6-6, 6-10</p>
(b) Include a discussion of the possible emotional, economic, and legal consequences of sex.	Yes: At the age sex is explained, the consequences are discussed.	<p>Grade 4: Sex is not explained.</p> <p>Grade 5: Lessons 5-4, 5-5, 5-7</p> <p>Grade 6: Lesson 6-6</p>
(c) Stress that unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases are serious possibilities of sex that are not fully preventable except by abstinence.	Yes: At the age sex is explained, possible negative consequences and how to avoid them are discussed.	<p>Grade 4: Sex is not explained.</p> <p>Grade 5: Lessons 5-4, 5-5, 5-7</p> <p>Grade 6: Lessons 6-6, 6-7</p> <p>Add-On Lessons: G, H</p>
(d) Advise pupils of the laws pertaining to their responsibility as parents to children born in and out of wedlock.	No: Most students in this age group are not bearing children.	-
(e) Ensure that pupils are not taught in a way that condones the violation of the laws of this state pertaining to sexual activity (list omitted).	Yes: Instruction of this age group can avoid discussion of the issues in these laws.	<p>Grade 4: All Lessons</p> <p>Grade 5: All Lessons</p> <p>Grade 6: All Lessons</p>
(f) Teach pupils how to say "no" to sexual advances and that it is wrong to take advantage of, harass, or exploit another person sexually.	<p>No (sexual advances): Most students in this age group are developmentally not interested in sexual advances.</p> <p>Yes (harassment): This age group needs skills to deal with situations involving harassment.</p>	<p>Grade 4: no**</p> <p>Grade 5: Lessons 5-6, 5-7</p> <p>Grade 6: Lessons 6-4, 6-5, 6-8</p> <p>Add-On Lesson: F</p>

(g) Teach refusal skills and encourage pupils to resist pressure to engage in risky behavior.	Yes: Refusal skills help equip this age group to avoid risky situations.	Grade 4: no** Grade 5: Lesson 5-7 Grade 6: Lessons 6-5, 6-8
(h) Teach that the pupil has the power to control personal behavior. Pupils shall be taught to base their actions on reasoning, self-discipline, a sense of responsibility, self-control, and ethical considerations such as respect for self and others.	Yes: This age group is becoming more autonomous and independent and able to accept personal responsibility for their behavior.	Grade 4: Lesson 4-3 Grade 5: Lessons 5-5, 5-6, 5-7 Grade 6: Lessons 6-4, 6-5, 6-6, 6-8, 6-9, 6-10
(i) Provide instruction on healthy dating relationships and on how to set limits and recognize a dangerous environment.	No: Most students in this age group are not ready for dating.	Grade 6: Lesson 6-4 (healthy relationships) Lesson 6-8 (refuse or report risky situations)
(j) Provide information for pupils about how young parents can learn more about adoption services and about the provisions of the safe delivery of newborns law.	No: Most students in this age group are not bearing children.	-
(k) Include information clearly informing pupils that having sex or sexual contact with an individual under the age of 16 is a crime punishable by imprisonment and that 1 of the other results of being convicted of this crime is to be listed on the sex offender registry on the internet for up to 25 years.	No: Most students in this age group have not had sex voluntarily, and criminalizing sex would negatively impact their initial learning about sex.	-

* Whether or not these criteria are age appropriate is the author's opinion, which may differ from the conclusions of the sex education advisory board.

** Teach refusal skills using a health education curriculum, such as the Michigan Model for Health, to equip students to resist pressure to engage in risky behavior as required by criteria g.

Lesson Reference

Grade 4: "I Wonder What's Happening to Me"

4-1: A Climate for Growth | 4-2: Families and Roles | 4-3: Respecting Our Friends: Gender | 4-4: Puberty in Male-Bodied People | 4-5: Puberty in Female-Bodied People | 4-6: Caring for the Changes

Grade 5: "I Wonder What's Happening to My Body"

5-1: Ready, Set, Grow! | 5-2: Puberty and the Male Reproductive System | 5-3: Puberty and the Female Reproductive System | 5-4: Reproduction | 5-5: Personal Hygiene and Healthy Habits | 5-6: Social and Emotional Changes | 5-7: Consent

Grade 6: "I Wonder What Happens Next"

6-1: Growing Together | 6-2: How My Body Works | 6-3: Changing as We Grow | 6-4: Healthy Relationships | 6-5: Relationship Challenges | 6-6: Making Responsible Decisions | 6-7: Sexually Transmitted Infections | 6-8: Refuse or Report | 6-9: Media and Information Literacy | 6-10: Future Me

Add-On Lessons (included with curriculum subscription)

A: Building Blocks of Life | B: Dominant or Recessive? Identical or Fraternal? | C: Fetal Development | D: New Life | E: Understanding Ourselves and Others: Gender and Sexual Orientation | F: Safe and Nurturing Touches Only | G: Preventing Pregnancy and STIs | H: HIV and STIs

About the Author

Puberty: The Wonder Years was developed by **Wendy Sellers, MPH, MCHES**, a Michigan resident with over 30 years of experience in health education and curriculum development. Ms. Sellers is a co-author of the *Michigan Model for Health*, Michigan's comprehensive health education curriculum, and has extensive experience working with Michigan schools and districts on health education programming.

References and Resources

Michigan Department of Education. (2025). *Michigan Health Education Standards Guidelines*. Approved by the Michigan State Board of Education, November 13, 2025. Available at michigan.gov/healthed

Michigan School Health Coordinators' Association (MiSHCA). (2025). *Sortable Spreadsheet of Practices, Topics, and Indicators*. Developed in consultation with the Michigan Department of Education Safe and Supportive Schools unit.

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