

Intro: Public health agencies stress the importance of school health education, including family, social and sexual health. The Schoolhouse Learning Center, a private Vermont elementary school with grades K-5, wishes to implement a social health curriculum guided by the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS).

Objective: To identify Schoolhouse community perceptions to inform development of a social health curriculum.

Methods: Schoolhouse families were surveyed about a family, social and sexual health curriculum, included 41 questions, and included topics from the SIECUS curriculum. A faculty focus group was held to identify topics covered in the current curriculum and faculty perceptions about social health education.

Results: 40 families received surveys and 34 were returned and included in the analysis. 97% of parents agreed that social health education should be provided in school, and that parents and schools should share responsibility for the education. 70% of parents agreed that school-based curriculum should begin in grades K-2. Of 33 potential topics, parents rated diversity, communication, and body image as the most important, and masturbation, abstinence, and marriage and lifetime commitment as least important. Schoolhouse staff views were similar. About 25% of parents reported they were uncertain if a given topic was addressed in pediatrician visits.

Discussion: Results showed convergence between parents and educators on many current curricular topics. As compared to SIECUS curriculum, gaps in sexual health and sexual behavior education remain. Results suggest needs for faculty development. Further study is needed to define pediatrician involvement in social health education.