

**Ontario Catholic Elementary Curriculum  
Policy Document, Grades 1-8**



# **Family Life Education**



**2012**

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**Ontario Catholic Elementary Curriculum Policy Document, Grades 1-8: Family Life Education**

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# INTRODUCTION

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The Institute for Catholic Education gratefully acknowledges the support of the Ontario Ministry of Education in the creation of this policy document. With permission, the content and structure of *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised)* [© Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 2010. Reproduced with permission.] has been used throughout the *Ontario Catholic Elementary Curriculum Policy Document, Grades 1-8: Family Life Education, 2012*. Direct excerpts from the ministry document are indicated by indented formatting and parenthetical page references. Where excerpted content directly supports this document, “health and physical education” is replaced by an italicized “family life education”. Content specific to this document generally follows these excerpts and is most often prefaced by the phrase, “In Ontario Catholic schools,…”

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Ontario elementary schools strive to support high-quality learning while giving every student the opportunity to learn in the way that is best suited to his or her individual strengths and needs. The Ontario curriculum is designed to help every student reach his or her full potential through a program of learning that is coherent, relevant, and age-appropriate. It recognizes that, today and in the future, students need to be critically literate in order to synthesize information, make informed decisions, communicate effectively, and thrive in an ever-changing global community. It is important that students be connected to the curriculum; that they see themselves in what is taught, how it is taught, and how it applies to the world at large. The curriculum recognizes that the needs of learners are diverse, and helps all learners develop the knowledge, skills, and perspectives they need to be informed, productive, caring, responsible, healthy, and active citizens in their own communities and in the world.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 3)*

Ontario Catholic schools recognize the dignity and value of each student, created by God and lovingly called to the wonder of life, sustained by the power of the Holy Spirit, throughout life’s journey, into eternal life. Catholic education addresses the human search for meaning, the desire of the person to understand human life as an integration of body, mind, and spirit. Rooted in this vision, Catholic education fosters the search for meaning as a lifelong spiritual and academic quest. The curriculum in Ontario Catholic schools is understood not only in terms of knowledge and skills, but necessarily in terms of values, attitudes and actions informed by reason and faith. The critical relationship between learning and believing, between knowledge and faith, is fundamental to understanding the mandate of our Catholic schools.

*(Institute for Catholic Education, Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations, Second Edition, 2011)*

## VISION AND GOALS OF THE FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION CURRICULUM

*“The glory of God is man and woman fully alive,  
but life for them consists in seeing God revealed in his Word.”*  
(St. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, IV.20.7)

The family life education curriculum is based on the vision that the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values acquired in the program will benefit students throughout their lives and help them to thrive in an ever-changing world by enabling them to acquire a Christian vision of personhood, relationships, and sexuality and to develop the comprehension, capacity, and commitment needed to lead fully human lives.

The goals of the family life education program are as follows:

Students will develop:

- an appreciation of God’s love for them, and the love they receive from their family members, friends and others;
- the skills needed to express themselves to their parents, other family members, friends and trusted adults;
- an understanding of fertility as a blessing from God, and a sense of awe and respect for new human life from the moment of conception;
- a positive sense of their developing sexuality.

In Ontario Catholic schools, the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values acquired in the family life education program complement those instilled by families, and reflect a distinctively Catholic view of human life, sexuality, marriage, and family. The focus of family life education is the developing person, its content is an extended exploration of what it means to be human, and its core message is hope: The God who created you, the Son who redeemed you, and the Holy Spirit who lives within you will not abandon you.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION IN THE CURRICULUM

In 1989, the Bishops of Ontario presented a challenge to those charged with educating students in Ontario Catholic schools. According to the Bishops’ counsel:

...although Catholic education must prepare students to live in this culture and to embrace all that is good in it, this effort should not be reduced simply to learning how to adapt to the world. While we are called to be constructive and creative in our contribution to society, we must also be critical of those aspects of our culture which are contrary to the values of our faith tradition.

- In a world which ignores the human thirst for God, we are called to share the living waters of our faith.

- In a time when there is little reverence for the image of God in the human person, we are summoned to care for human life with an ultimate respect.
- In a culture where communication is increasingly commercialized, we are invited to prayer and to worship.
- In a world marked by poverty, oppression and war, we are commanded to work for justice and peace.
- In a society marked by personality cults, we are called to bear witness to Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord, and to reverence him in the poor, the lowly, and the marginalized.
- In a time which often seems to be without goals or ennobling aspirations, we are challenged to declare ours and to dedicate our lives to their achievement.
- In an age which seems more fearful of the future, we are directed to give an account of the hope that is within us. (I Peter 3, 15).

(Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario, *This Moment of Promise*, 1989)

The Bishops urged all members of the Catholic community to support students in Ontario Catholic schools to live according to faith values which are often at odds with the prevailing values of society.

The family life education curriculum promotes important educational values and goals that support the development of Catholic character. These include recognizing each person as a gift of God's love, respecting the uniqueness of each person, employing the conscience for moral decisions, participating in building a just society, and responsibly stewarding the gifts of creation. Many of these values are reinforced in other curriculum areas, as well as by society itself. Working together, homes, schools, churches, and communities can be powerful allies in motivating students to achieve their God-given potential and lead lives reflective of their inherent dignity – lives that are fully human.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

### Students

Students' responsibilities with respect to their own learning develop gradually and increase over time, as they progress through elementary and secondary school. With appropriate instruction and with experience, students come to see how an applied effort can enhance learning and improve achievement. As they mature and develop their ability to persist, to manage their behaviour and impulses, to take responsible risks, and to listen with understanding, students become better able to take more responsibility for their learning and progress. Learning to take responsibility for their improvement and achievement is an important part of every student's education.

Mastering the skills and concepts connected with learning in the *family life education* curriculum requires ongoing practice, an effort to respond to feedback, personal reflection, and commitment from students... Through ongoing practice and reflection

about their development, students deepen their appreciation and understanding of themselves and others, and of their health and well-being.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 9)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, students continue to grow in the acquisition of the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values articulated by the *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations*. The family life education curriculum not only fosters in each student a deeper understanding of what it means to be a human person, made in the image of God to live in relationship, but it also supports the ongoing development of each student who, upon graduation, is expected to be:

- *a discerning believer* formed in the Catholic Faith community who celebrates the signs and sacred mystery of God's presence through word, sacrament, prayer, forgiveness, reflection and moral living;
- *an effective communicator* who speaks, writes, and listens honestly and sensitively, responding critically in light of gospel values;
- *a reflective, creative and holistic thinker* who solves problems and makes responsible decisions with an informed moral conscience for the common good;
- *a self-directed, responsible, lifelong learner* who develops and demonstrates their God-given potential;
- *a collaborative contributor* who finds meaning, dignity and vocation in work which respects the rights of all and contributes to the common good;
- *a caring family member* who attends to family, school, parish, and the wider community;
- *a responsible citizen* who gives witness to Catholic social teaching by promoting peace, justice and the sacredness of human life.

In the early grades, the achievement of these expectations may seem very far off, but the journey toward Christian maturity begins at birth and continues long after formal education has been completed.

With teacher support and encouragement, students learn that they can apply the skills they acquired in one subject to various other contexts and subjects. For example, they can take financial literacy concepts learned in other curricular areas and apply these to the concepts of family life education, and they can apply the decision making process and critical thinking skills learned in family life education to their study of health and physical education, or to analyzing media texts, or to reflecting on the impact of humans on the environment in science, thereby also making faith connections in these other contexts and subjects. They can also apply the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values they acquire in family life education to make better choices in all aspects of their lives. They can apply the understanding of what it means to live in relationship to recognize healthy friendships, communicate more effectively, and manage stress, and they can apply their learning about human sexuality to make healthy choices related to nutrition, exercise, sleep, the protection of sexual health, and fostering a realistic body image.

## Parents

Parents<sup>1</sup> play an important role in their children's learning. Studies show that students perform better in school if their parents are involved in their education. By becoming familiar with the *family life education* curriculum, parents can better appreciate what is being taught in each grade and what their children are expected to learn. This awareness will enhance parents' ability to discuss their children's work with them, to communicate with teachers, and to ask relevant questions about their children's progress. Knowledge of the expectations will also help parents to understand how their children are progressing in school, to interpret teachers' comments on student progress, and to work with teachers to improve their children's learning.

Parents are the primary educators of their children with respect to learning about values, appropriate behaviour, and ethnocultural, spiritual, and personal beliefs and traditions, and they act as significant role models for their children. It is therefore important for schools and parents to work together to ensure that home and school provide a mutually supportive framework for young people's education.

Effective ways in which parents can support their children's learning include the following: attending parent-teacher interviews, participating in parent workshops and school council activities (including becoming a school council member), and encouraging their children to practise at home and to complete their assignments.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), pp. 9-10)*

Catholic parents are aware of their great responsibility as their children's first and most important teachers. They know that it is through them that their children first learn of God's love of life. Within the family, the generous and unselfish love of parents provides children with lessons in life that cannot be learned anywhere else. Catholic schools, in partnership with the Bishops of Ontario, want to do all that they can to help parents fulfill their great responsibilities.

In Ontario Catholic schools, teachers regularly send home parent letters prior to beginning a new strand of the family life education program to inform parents of the upcoming material that their children will be learning. Parents may also become familiar with the family life education curriculum by accessing the Online Family Resource of the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario ([www.acbo.on.ca/englishweb/fullyalive.htm](http://www.acbo.on.ca/englishweb/fullyalive.htm)). The Online Family Resource supports and encourages parents in their special role as the first teachers of their children. Here, parents are provided an overview of the curriculum as well as detailed descriptions of the content of each of the family life education strands, grades 1 to 8.

Indeed, family life education would be incomplete without such resources for families. For although family life education is part of the Ontario Catholic school curriculum, the participation of parents is essential for its success. Parents are the first and most important teachers of their children and no place is this statement more true than in the areas that are introduced and explored in family life education. Parents, however, do not teach in the same way that classroom teachers do. Their teaching is informal rather than formal. It is a normal part of raising children.

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<sup>1</sup> In this document, *parent(s)* is used to refer to parent(s) and guardian(s).

Meal time, grocery shopping, setting the table, a special trip, family prayers, a hug and a kiss after an argument, looking at a book together, bedtime chats — all of these are occasions when parents are teaching and children are learning. In fact, there is very little that happens within the family that does not provide a lesson of one kind or another.

The Online Family Resource provided by the Bishops of Ontario offers numerous suggestions to parents seeking to support their child's learning in the area of family life education. Parents will likely find some of its suggestions more useful than others. Each parent is different and each child is different. Parents will bring to family life education their own talents and experiences, and will adapt and use this Online Family Resource in their own way. Parents are encouraged to explore the Online Family Resource and its associated suggestions for home use for the following reasons:

- Family life education creates special opportunities for parents to talk to their children about the things that matter. In particular, it encourages parents to talk about their faith, and about God and prayer, in the natural setting of the family.
- Intimate talks between parents and children create an atmosphere of trust. Children learn that they can talk to their parents about anything.
- It is important for parents to pick the right time for special talks – when the occasion comes up naturally, and when parents and children are relaxed and not distracted by other matters.
- Parents should have faith in themselves. They are better able than anyone else to talk to their children about many of the topics in family life education. Their special relationship and their deep understanding of their children and of their children's lives make parents the true experts.
- Many of the topics in family life education can be explored more deeply at home than at school. This is because of the number of children in the classroom, and also because teachers are concerned to respect the privacy of the home.

## Teachers

Teaching is key to student success. Teachers are responsible for using appropriate and effective instructional strategies to help students achieve the *family life education* curriculum expectations, as well as appropriate methods for assessing and evaluating student learning. Teachers bring enthusiasm, addressing individual students' needs and ensuring high-quality learning opportunities for every student. The attitude with which teachers approach *family life education* is critical, as teachers are important role models for students.

Teaching *family life education* provides unique opportunities and challenges for teachers. ...discussions related to health topics will be closely tied to students' personal lives. These factors allow teachers to learn about their students in different ways and also require that the learning is structured in a way that protects the self-respect and promotes the well-being of all students.

Teachers should follow the principle of "first, do no harm" and ensure that the learning setting is always physically and emotionally safe. It is important to be aware of and

carefully observe how students feel about various requirements of the program... It is also critical to student success to create an atmosphere in which students of all body shapes and sizes, abilities, gender identities and sexual orientations, and ethnocultural, racial, and religious backgrounds can feel accepted, comfortable, and free from harassment.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 11)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, the family life education curriculum attempts to reflect both the learning needs of students and the special roles of parents and teachers in family life education. Classroom activities should be student-centred and attempt to draw upon each student's unique life experience. The teacher needs to ensure that there is a careful balance between inviting students to share their special perspective and respecting family privacy. Activities that involve the participation of the home should be a regular feature of the family life education program. These are intended to support and enhance communication within the family.

As a part of good teaching practice, teachers should inform parents about what their children are learning and when various topics are to be addressed. Such practices allow parents to work in partnership with the school, providing opportunities for discussion and follow-up at home and for reinforcing the student's learning in a family context.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 11)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, parent letters have been provided to educators to be sent home prior to the commencement of each strand in the family life education curriculum. These letters provide an overview of the content to be discussed in the particular strand and provide parents "Working together at home and at school" suggestions so that parents may support and extend opportunities for family life education. Parents and educators may access these letters on the ACBO website and, as such, the home, school and church provide a mutually supportive framework for young people's education.

Learning in *family life education* can play a key role in shaping students' views about life, relationships, healthy development, physical activity, and how they learn. Teachers can reinforce this learning in many different ways.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 11)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, teachers can integrate family life education with aspects of learning from other areas of the curriculum. They can acknowledge each student's dignity by providing praise and encouragement to help students achieve their personal goals. They can remind students of the need to practise in order to improve skills and attitudes – appreciating their personal qualities and gifts, and those of others; demonstrating open and respectful communication; recognizing common sources of stress; recognizing that actions have consequences for ourselves and others; and practising a process for decision making – and they can provide students with opportunities to do these things within instructional time.

By using all of these strategies, teachers can help students develop a positive attitude towards *family life education*, and support their understanding of the role of healthy active living concepts in their lives. Teachers can help students see connections between what they learn and their ability to make important decisions related to various aspects of their health and well-being, and they can remind students of the importance of thinking carefully about decisions that could have a major impact on all parts of their lives – physical, emotional, social, mental, and spiritual.

Teachers provide students with frequent opportunities to communicate, practise, and apply *family life education* concepts and, through regular and varied assessment, give them the specific, descriptive feedback they need in order to further develop and refine their learning. By assigning tasks that promote the development of critical and creative thinking skills, teachers also enable students to become thoughtful and effective communicators. Opportunities to relate knowledge and skills in *family life education* learning to wider contexts – across the curriculum, within the context of a healthy school, and in the world beyond the school – motivate students to learn and to become lifelong learners.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 12)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, the family life education curriculum serves as an opportunity for students to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values identified by the *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations* – that each will be a discerning believer; an effective communicator; a reflective, creative and holistic thinker; a self-directed, responsible, lifelong learner; a collaborative contributor; a caring family member; and a responsible citizen.

### **Principals**

The principal works in partnership with teachers and parents to ensure that each student has access to the best possible educational experience. The principal is a community builder who creates a healthy and safe school environment that is welcoming to all, and who ensures that all members of the school community are well informed.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 12)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, principals can provide support for the successful implementation of the family life education curriculum by emphasizing the importance of this curriculum within the distinctive Catholic culture of the school. The principal, and those who are called to share leadership in Catholic schools, model the core concepts of the family life education curriculum by:

- creating a school environment that reflects the value and dignity of each individual;
- striving to fulfill the responsibilities of his or her role in a conscientious and wholehearted manner;
- cooperating with one another out of a spirit of mutual respect as sisters and brothers in Christ;
- recognizing the power of day-to-day personal encounter as a witness to faith;

- communicating the joy and hope of our Catholic faith.  
(Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario, *Fulfilling the Promise*, 1993)

To support student learning, principals ensure that the Ontario curriculum is being properly implemented in all classrooms through the use of a variety of instructional approaches, and that appropriate time and resources are made available for teachers to allow all students to participate fully in the *family life education* program. To enhance teaching and student learning in all subjects, including *family life education*, principals promote learning teams and work with teachers to facilitate teacher participation in professional development activities. Principals are also responsible for ensuring that every student who has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is receiving the modifications and/or accommodations described in his or her plan – in other words, for ensuring that the IEP is properly developed, implemented, and monitored.

(*The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised)*, p. 12)

In Ontario Catholic schools, the principal is responsible for ensuring that all students have the opportunity to participate in family life education. It is the principal's responsibility to ensure that adequate time for family life education is included in the timetable. Family life education is intended to supplement the religious education curriculum. The principal will ensure that there will be at least four religious education classes for every one in family life education. Timetables should have sufficient flexibility to allow the use of some same-sex and some coeducational groupings for curriculum delivery where appropriate or needed.

### **Community Partners**

In Ontario Catholic schools, community partners can be an important resource for a school's family life education program. They can provide support for students in the classroom, and can be models of how the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values acquired through the study of the curriculum relate to life beyond school. As mentors, they can enrich not only the educational experience of students, but also the life of the community. Schools and school boards can play a role by coordinating efforts with community partners to provide in-class presentations and workshops for students that support Catholic teaching and are based on topics, concepts, and skills from the family life education curriculum. For example, schools can make use of community groups that support the dignity of persons, especially those who are marginalized or who are most vulnerable in our society. Schools may also access groups who promote environmental stewardship and work for justice or those who participate in efforts to protect human rights.

# THE PROGRAM IN FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

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## CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

The *Ontario Catholic Elementary Curriculum Policy Document, Grades 1-8: Family Life Education*, 2012 identifies the expectations for each grade and describes the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that students are expected to acquire, demonstrate, and apply in their class work and activities, on tests, in demonstrations, and in various other activities on which their achievement is assessed and evaluated.

Two sets of expectations are listed for each grade in each *strand*, or broad area of the curriculum, in family life education for Grades 1 to 8 – overall expectations and specific expectations.

The *overall expectations* describe in general terms the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that students are expected to demonstrate by the end of each grade.<sup>2</sup> There are three overall expectations for each strand in family life education.

In family life education, the overall expectations outline the types of skills, concepts, and values that are required for students to lead fully human lives at any age or stage of development. For this reason, the overall expectations are repeated in constant terms for each strand from grade to grade. The family life education curriculum focuses on developing, reinforcing, and refining the students' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values associated with each of these key overall expectations over time. This approach reflects and accommodates the developmental nature of the family life concepts at each stage along the student's journey.

The *specific expectations* describe the expected knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values in greater detail. The specific expectations are organized under numbered subheadings (sometimes referred to as “subgroups” or “suborganizers”), each of which indicates the overall expectation to which the group of specific expectations corresponds. The organization of expectations into groups is not meant to imply that the expectations in any one group are achieved independently of the expectations in the other groups. The numbered headings are used merely to help teachers focus on particular aspects of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values as they develop various lessons and learning activities for their students.

Taken together, the overall and specific expectations represent the mandated curriculum. The diagram on page 11 shows all of the elements to be found on a page of curriculum expectations.

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<sup>2</sup> While it is *expected* that students will demonstrate the knowledge and skills described by the overall expectations in family life education, it is *hoped* that students will demonstrate the attitudes and values associated with these expectations. These attitudes and values are part of faith and constitute the Catholic stance within the world. Because they depend on the interaction between God's Spirit and the freedom of the individual student, they cannot be evaluated or used for assessment purposes.

Expectations in family life education are organized into five **strands**, numbered A, B, C, D, and E.

The **overall expectations** describe in general terms the knowledge, skills and values students are expected to demonstrate by the end of each grade. The numbering of overall expectations indicates the strand to which they belong (e.g., A1-A3 are the overall expectations for strand A).

## A. CREATED AND LOVED BY GOD

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

**A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** demonstrate an appreciation that humans have been created in the image of a loving God. (CCC 299, 325-327; CCCC 59; GDC 116-117, 123; GS 12)

**A2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans are both unique and share a common human nature with each other. (CCC 299, 1699-1715; CCCC 358; FC 11)

**A3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the unique and shared aspects of human nature in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 229, 337-349, 353-354; CCCC 43, 63, 66-67; GS 4)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

#### A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**A1.1** express through prayer their appreciation for the gifts of creation

**A1.2** express through prayer their appreciation for the gift of life

**A1.3** appreciate that we are all special people whom God sees and loves

#### A2. Exploring Human Nature

**A2.1** recognize that our lives are gifts from God

**A2.2** recognize that everyone has likes and dislikes

**A2.3** recognize that everyone has feelings

**A2.4** recognize that they will continue to grow and change

#### A3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**A3.1** identify and describe some of the gifts of God’s creation

**A3.2** describe some of the ways in which their physical appearance is unique

**A3.3** identify and record some of their likes and dislikes

**A3.4** identify and name some common feelings

**A3.5** identify and describe some of the ways they have grown and changed

A **numbered subheading** introduces each overall expectation. The same heading is used to identify the group of specific expectations that relates to the particular overall expectation (e.g., “A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness” relates to overall expectation A1).

The **specific expectations** describe the expected knowledge, skills, and values in greater detail. The expectation number identifies the strand to which the expectation belongs and the overall expectation to which it relates (e.g., A3.1, A3.2, A3.3, and so on, relate to the third overall expectation in Strand A).

## THE STRANDS IN THE FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The expectations for family life education are organized into five distinct but related strands – Created and Loved by God, Living in Relationship, Created Sexual: Male and Female, Growing in Commitment, and Living in the World.

The expectations for each strand are grouped under three subheadings, as follows:

***Appreciating God’s Goodness*** focuses on the students’ awareness and appreciation that humans have been created in the image of a loving God. Students will explore the ways in which they image the love of God by living in relationship with others; by creating, protecting, and sustaining life; by committing to faithful relationships; and by caring for all of God’s gifts of creation.

***Exploring Human Nature*** focuses on the students’ awareness and understanding of the ways in which humans are both unique and share a common human nature with each other. Students will explore how the bonds of family and friendship are central to human life and shape human identity and development; how human sexuality is a gift from God, a fundamental dimension of human identity, and intended for life and love; how humans grow in their ability to develop committed and trustworthy relationships; and how humans participate in society and fulfill the responsibility to care for and build God’s world.

***Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing*** focuses on the students’ awareness and application of the unique and shared aspects of human nature in personally relevant contexts. Students will make personal connections to the role of relationships in shaping human identity and development; to the way that human sexuality is related to identity; to the role of commitment in human relationships; and to the global dimension of human nature.

The three groups of expectations are closely interrelated, and the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values described in the expectations in each group are interdependent and complementary. Teachers should plan activities that blend expectations from these three groups in order to provide students with the kinds of experiences that promote meaningful learning and that help them understand the conditions necessary to lead fully human lives.

The five strands of the family life education curriculum provide the organizing structure for the curriculum expectations. The expectations are sequential both within each grade and between the grades. It is recommended that the strands be taught sequentially, that is, Strand A, followed by Strand B, etc. In the Appendix, a Grade 1-8 learning summary chart is provided for each strand, which demonstrates the sequential and developmental presentation of the concepts grade-by-grade.

### **Strand A – Created and Loved by God<sup>3</sup>**

What does it mean to be human? To be human is to be part of God’s gift of creation. It means to love and be loved, to live in a family, to have friends, to be male or female, to make choices and

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<sup>3</sup> The strand descriptors in this section find their source in the Grade 1 to 8 *Fully Alive – Renewal Edition*, Pearson Canada Inc.

promises, to be happy and sad, to work, to succeed and to fail, to participate in society. The list is endless. All of these facets of human life are explored in the family life education curriculum. The first strand of the curriculum, Created and Loved by God, is the foundation of the curriculum and affirms the Christian belief that each person is made in the image of a loving God as the starting point in the search for answers about human existence. Everything that is said in later strands about living in a family, learning to be a friend, the dignity of the body, commitment, and participation in human society is informed and inspired by the message of this first strand.

We are not independent of our Creator. We come from God, live in God's presence, and look for the Kingdom to come. We are prone to sin, yet redeemed by Christ, and inspired by the Holy Spirit. We share with others the priceless dignity of our human nature, yet the gifts of creation are expressed in us in endless variety. Our challenge is to live in such a way that our lives reflect the profound mysteries of creation and redemption.

It is within this context that the Created and Love by God strand begins to explore this question – what does it mean to be a person? The dignity and value of each individual, the complexity of our nature, human growth and development, and, above all, the wonder of being a unique and irreplaceable person whom God loved into existence, are addressed in this first strand.

Since primary-age children are at the beginning of a long journey outward from the self, the emphasis at this level is on the uniqueness of each child. Nevertheless, awareness of others, of what we all share, is introduced and encouraged. As the issues of identity and freedom become more pressing in later grades, the Created and Loved by God strand challenges the students to deepen their understanding of themselves, to struggle with limitations and disappointments, and to accept the responsibility of being fully human.

As Created and Loved by God is considered to be the foundational strand of the family life education curriculum, it is recommended that these curriculum expectations be presented first. In each grade, students will appreciate that humans have been created in the image of a loving God; explore the ways in which humans are both unique and share a common human nature with each other; and reflect upon, respond to, and analyze the ways in which the unique and shared aspects of human nature are personally relevant in their lives. Consult the Grade 1-8 learning summary chart in the Appendix to see how the core concepts of Strand A – Created and Loved by God build developmentally each year.

### **Strand B – Living in Relationship**

Human existence is lived out with others. We are so deeply social by nature and so profoundly dependent on each other that we absorb our closest relationships into our very identities. We describe ourselves as husbands and wives, mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, sisters and brothers, and friends. In the Living in Relationship strand, the exploration of the meaning of human existence continues with a focus on the significant relationships of family and friendship.

The relational nature of persons reflects our origin. The mystery of the Trinity tells us that relationship and community are at the very heart of God. To be an image of God is to be an image of love. God is the supreme model for all relationships. To the extent that we are life-

giving in our daily interactions, we are living out the essential vocation of the Christian, which is the vocation to love.

Since the human journey is set in motion with the wordless dialogue of mother and child, this is where the Living in Relationship strand begins – with the family. As the journey continues, other relationships become important, in particular, friendship. Family and friendship are at the core of the Living in Relationship strand, and are explored with increasing complexity across the eight grades of the family life education program.

As students enter the years of late childhood and early adolescence, they are beginning to understand how challenging the vocation to love can be. The world of early childhood in which parents are without limitations and friends are people who are nice to you is changing. Within the family, there are often more frequent disagreements with parents about rules and family responsibilities, as well as the inevitable disappointments and stresses that are part of being a family. Also, the relationship of friendship starts to become more significant, and students are touched more deeply when it fails. These challenging aspects of relationship are addressed at different grade levels within the Living in Relationship strand.

The message of the Living in Relationship strand is intended to be both hopeful and challenging: hopeful, because learning to love is a life-long process and there is always the opportunity for a new beginning; challenging, because the students are urged to recognize the importance of their contribution to the quality of their family life and friendships.

It is recommended that Catholic educators present this strand of the family life education curriculum following Strand A – Created and Loved by God. In each grade, students will appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by living in relationship with others; explore the ways in which the bonds of family and friendship are central to human life and shape human identity; and reflect upon, respond to, and analyze the ways in which the role of relationships in shaping human identity and development is personally relevant in their lives. Consult the Grade 1-8 learning summary chart in the Appendix to see how the core concepts of Strand B – Living in Relationship build developmentally each year.

### **Strand C – Created Sexual: Male and Female**

To be human is to be sexual. Sexuality, expressed in our maleness and femaleness, is an essential component of personhood. For this reason, education in sexuality is education in the whole person. The Created Sexual: Male and Female strand, therefore, must be approached within the context of the previous strands of the family life education curriculum on the value of persons and of human relationships and of the strands that follow on commitment and social responsibility. Without this context, it is only too easy to reduce sexuality to the reproductive system and its functioning.

Human love encompasses the body in its maleness and femaleness. Within the vocation of marriage, this love is expressed in the sexual relationship of husband and wife who give themselves to each other and welcome new human persons into their community of love. Ideally, it is on this foundation of the fruitful love of wife and husband, which is an image of the love of God, that children's early understanding of the meaning of sexuality is developed.

As students approach the life stage of adolescence, they bring with them a variety of ideas about sexuality. First, there is the information they have been given at home and at school. They have learned that males and females are physically different and that these differences are related to our potential for motherhood and fatherhood. Within the relationship of marriage, sexual intercourse between husband and wife expresses a love that is truly life-giving, both spiritually and physically. Parents share in God's creative power, and the children of their marriage are a special sign of their love. The students learn that new human life begins with conception, and they trace its development from a single cell created by the union of sperm and ovum to the birth of a baby.

Beyond this information about sexuality, students of this age also bring with them their attitudes, which are shaped by the home, the school, and the wider society, in particular, by the media. Sexuality is deeply relational, and in homes where parents co-operate, appreciate the work each does for the family, and show their affection and respect for each other and for their children, positive attitudes about the complementarity of males and females are developed. At school, the students are taught that sexuality is one of the marvellous gifts of creation, and they are encouraged to take pride in being males and females. The Catholic understanding of marriage and family, with its stress on commitment and generosity, is also explored.

These have been positive influences on students, influences that lead to attitudes about sexuality that are fully human. But there are other influences in society that degrade sexuality, making us less than we are intended to be. The media often both reflect and create an understanding of sexuality that is less than human. Its relational dimensions appear casual, uncommitted, and frequently exploitive, and its procreational dimensions are either ignored or rejected. All students, to a greater or lesser extent, are exposed to and influenced by this distorted image of sexuality. The Created Sexual: Male and Female strand provides an opportunity for them to examine the messages they are receiving and for teachers to begin speaking about the importance of modesty and chastity. As in the earlier grades, students are encouraged to deepen their understanding of the life-giving and loving dimensions of human sexuality and, as they get older, to grow in their personal commitment to chastity.

It is recommended that Catholic educators present this strand of the family life education curriculum following Strand B – Living in Relationship. In each grade, students will appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by creating, protecting, and sustaining life; explore the ways in which human sexuality is a gift from God, a fundamental dimension of human identity, and intended for life and love; and reflect upon, respond to, and analyze the ways in which human sexuality as it is related to identity is personally relevant in their lives. Consult the Grade 1-8 learning summary chart in the Appendix to see how the core concepts of Strand C – Created Sexual: Male and Female build developmentally each year.

### **Strand D – Growing in Commitment**

To be truly human is to be committed. The first three strands of the family life curriculum have explored ideas about what it means to be a person. In this strand, and in the one that follows, the focus shifts slightly and another question appears – how can we be faithful to the Christian vocation of love? The Growing in Commitment strand is concerned with the integrity of our daily lives as persons who live in relationship with others.

To live in a way that is fully human is a life-long challenge that begins in childhood. Growth toward maturity, toward wholeness, is never a straight path. In the process of learning to make wise decisions about our lives, mistakes are made, often because of lack of reflection or limited life experiences. There are also times when we are unwilling to pay the price demanded by our Christian values. We are created free, but this freedom is best expressed as a freedom *for*, rather than a freedom *from*. We are free so that we can become the people God intends us to be. We are free so that we can follow the example of Christ who is the model of all that is fully human. This freedom to choose and decide is exercised over the course of a lifetime – when there are difficult choices to be made, unexpected consequences to be accepted, significant decisions to think about, and daily responsibilities to be fulfilled. Life makes demands, and as we grow up, we become more aware of these demands and the importance of our response.

At each stage of living we are challenged to commit ourselves to our present roles and relationships and to build the future. We are called to faithfulness to God and to one another. Even young children share in this calling. Young children learn to be dependable, to keep their word and to make wise choices. With the approach of adolescence, decisions become increasingly complex. Parents and teachers can continue to provide guidance and encouragement. They can limit choices, make rules, and apply consequences when responsibilities are neglected. They can serve as models of commitment whose lives reflect Gospel values and the witness of the Church. But within the world of home, school, and community, it is essential for students to begin to recognize their responsibility for their lives as sons and daughters, students, classroom members, and friends. As in the first strand, Created and Loved by God, in which the students are encouraged to recognize the contribution they can make to the lives of others, in the strand, Growing in Commitment, they are invited to see themselves as agents in the process of their growth toward commitment and maturity.

It is recommended that Catholic educators present this strand of the family life education curriculum following Strand C – Created Sexual: Male and Female. In each grade, students will appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by committing to faithful relationships; explore the ways in which humans grow in their ability to develop committed and trustworthy relationships; and reflect upon, respond to, and analyze the ways in which the role of commitment in human relationships is personally relevant in their lives. Consult the Grade 1-8 learning summary chart in the Appendix to see how the core concepts of Strand D – Growing in Commitment build developmentally each year.

### **Strand E – Living in the World**

To be human is to be a member of society. The Living in the World strand continues to explore the meaning of human life but this time from the perspective of the responsibilities we have as members of small communities, brothers and sisters within the whole human family, and caretakers of the earth. The students are encouraged to recognize that they have a unique contribution to make to the world, one that cannot be made by anyone else.

The message of the Growing in Commitment strand is an important foundation for this final strand of the family life education curriculum. When we are part of something, it demands our involvement. Just as commitment is essential for personal integrity and relationships and for

achieving goals in our lives, our membership in human society requires both participation and dedication. There is work to be done, and each person is called to build the Kingdom.

The world in which young children live is that of home, school, and neighbourhood. Their life experiences, in most cases, are still limited and their responsibilities are few. The goal of the Living in the World strand at earlier stages of development is to cultivate the students' awareness of the richness and potential of human activity in the world and of the interdependence of all people in the human family. With this awareness, an attitude of Christian care for the gift of creation and of personal involvement in the world can be nurtured and developed.

The dignity and value of human work, the responsibility to protect the physical environment, and the interdependence of all people within the human family continue to be the core concepts for older students, but are developed in greater depth. There is more emphasis on the students' responsibility to grow in awareness and understanding of human society, to recognize that they live in a complex world that influences them in a variety of ways, and to see themselves as agents for change. Although the analysis of social issues is more critical, the Living in the World strand continues to offer students a message of hope. We know that God's reign is not yet, but we pray for God's Kingdom to come, and wait in hope and unfailing commitment.

It is recommended that Catholic educators present this strand of the family life education curriculum following Strand D – Growing in Commitment. In each grade, students will appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by caring for all of God's gifts of creation; explore the ways in which humans participate in society and fulfill the responsibility to care for and build God's world; and reflect upon, respond to, and analyze the ways in which the global dimension of human nature is personally relevant in their lives. Consult the Grade 1-8 learning summary chart in the Appendix to see how the core concepts of Strand E – Living in the World build developmentally each year.

# ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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## BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

The primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning. Information gathered through assessment helps teachers to determine students' strengths and weaknesses in their achievement of the curriculum expectations in each subject in each grade. This information also serves to guide teachers in adapting curriculum and instructional approaches to students' needs and in assessing the overall effectiveness of programs and classroom practices.

Assessment is the process of gathering information from a variety of sources (including assignments, day-to-day observations, conversations or conferences, demonstrations, projects, performances, and tests) that accurately reflects how well a student is achieving the curriculum expectations in a subject. As part of assessment, teachers provide students with descriptive feedback that guides their efforts towards improvement. Evaluation refers to the process of judging the quality of student work on the basis of established criteria, and assigning a value to represent that quality.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 34)*

In Ontario Catholic elementary schools, there is a range of opinion about assessment and evaluation in the areas of religious education and family life education. All are agreed, however, that it is inappropriate to try to evaluate matters such as a students' spiritual or emotional life, and their progress in moral development. But questions of knowledge and comprehension remain, with some Catholic school boards favouring an approach that treats these areas of the curriculum in the same way as other subject areas, and other boards preferring a less formal approach.

The value assigned to represent the quality of student work, whether formal (letter grades for Grades 1 to 6 and percentage grades for Grades 7 and 8) or informal (anecdotal comments alone), will be based on the assessment and evaluation of curriculum expectations and the achievement levels outlined in this document.

In considering the question of assessment and evaluation, it is also important for all teachers to keep in mind the long-term goals of Catholic education with respect to the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that are described in the *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations*.

The graduate is expected to be:

- *a discerning believer* formed in the Catholic Faith community who celebrates the signs and sacred mystery of God's presence through word, sacrament, prayer, forgiveness, reflection and moral living;
- *an effective communicator* who speaks, writes, and listens honestly and sensitively, responding critically in light of gospel values;
- *a reflective, creative and holistic thinker* who solves problems and makes responsible decisions with an informed moral conscience for the common good;
- *a self-directed, responsible, lifelong learner* who develops and demonstrates their God-given potential;
- *a collaborative contributor* who finds meaning, dignity and vocation in work which respects the rights of all and contributes to the common good;
- *a caring family member* who attends to family, school, parish, and the wider community;
- *a responsible citizen* who gives witness to Catholic social teaching by promoting peace, justice and the sacredness of human life.

In the early grades, the achievement of these expectations may seem far off, but the journey toward Christian maturity begins at birth and continues long after formal education has been completed.

In order to ensure that assessment and evaluation are valid and reliable, and that they lead to the improvement of student learning, teachers must use assessment and evaluation strategies that:

- address both what students learn and how well they learn;
- are based both on the categories of knowledge and skills and on the achievement level descriptions given in the achievement chart on pages 24-25;
- are varied in nature, administered over a period of time, and designed to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of their learning;
- are appropriate for the learning activities used, the purposes of instruction, and the needs and experiences of the students;
- are fair to all students;
- accommodate students with special education needs, consistent with the strategies outlined in their Individual Education Plan;
- accommodate the needs of students who are learning the language of instruction;
- ensure that each student is given clear directions for improvement;
- promote students' ability to assess their own learning and to set specific goals;
- include the use of samples of students' work that provide evidence of their achievement;
- are communicated clearly to students and parents at the beginning of the school year and at other appropriate points throughout the school year.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 34)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, the dignity of the human person created in the image of God is at the core of education. Educators ensure that assessment and evaluation practices are equitable

and inclusive and are founded upon excellent research-based strategies, in recognition of each student's dignity.

### **Evaluation of Achievement of Overall Expectations**

All curriculum expectations must be accounted for in instruction, but evaluation focuses on students' achievement of the overall expectations. A student's achievement of the overall expectations is evaluated on the basis of his or her achievement of related specific expectations. The overall expectations are broad in nature, and the specific expectations define the particular content or scope of the knowledge and skills referred to in the overall expectations. Teachers will use their professional judgement to determine which specific expectations should be used to evaluate achievement of the overall expectations, and which ones will be covered in instruction and assessment (e.g., through direct observation) but not necessarily evaluated.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 35)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, most of the family life education curriculum expectations are of the cognitive domain, though, there are also those of the affective domain. Religious and family life education seeks to develop not only knowledge and disciplinary skills but also to foster in students the attitudes and values that are part of faith and constitute the Catholic stance within the world. Because they depend on the interaction between God's Spirit and the freedom of the individual student, they cannot be evaluated or used for assessment purposes. Yet, they represent some of the ultimate hopes for Catholic educators. They are the seeds we seek to sow or nourish, the holy longings that live in the sacred secrecy of each individual's heart.

In the family life education curriculum, the expectations belonging to the affective domain are generally associated with the first overall expectation, and its related specific expectations, for each strand. It is hoped that students will develop an appreciation of God's infinite goodness, but the extent to which this appreciation is realized in each student is not easily measured. Catholic educators will use professional judgement to determine when it is appropriate, if at all, to formally assess and evaluate the students' acquisition of these particular expectations.

### **Levels of Achievement**

The characteristics given in the achievement chart (pages 24-25) for level 3 represent the "provincial standard" in Ontario Catholic schools for achievement of the expectations. A complete picture of achievement at level 3 in family life education can be constructed by reading from top to bottom in the shaded column of the achievement chart, headed "Level 3". Parents of students achieving at level 3 can be confident that their children will be prepared for work in the next grade.

Level 1 identifies achievement that falls much below the provincial standard in Ontario Catholic schools, while still reflecting a passing grade (either formally or informally reported). Level 2 identifies achievement that approaches the standard. Level 4 identifies achievement that surpasses the standard. It should be noted that achievement at level 4 does not mean that the student has achieved expectations beyond those specified for a particular grade. It indicates that the student has achieved all or almost all of the

expectations for that grade, and that he or she demonstrates the ability to use the knowledge and skills specified for that grade in more sophisticated ways than a student achieving at level 3.

## THE ACHIEVEMENT CHART FOR FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

The achievement chart that follows identifies four categories of knowledge and skills in family life education. This particular achievement chart, though specifically used in Ontario Catholic schools, is modeled upon a standard province-wide guide to be used by teachers. It enables teachers to make judgements about student work that are based on clear performance standards and on a body of evidence collected over time.

The achievement chart is designed to:

- provide a framework that encompasses all curriculum expectations for all grades and subjects represented in this document;
- guide the development of assessment tasks and tools (including rubrics);
- help teachers to plan instruction for learning;
- assist teachers in providing meaningful feedback to students;
- provide various categories and criteria with which to assess and evaluate student learning.

### Categories of Knowledge and Skills

The categories, defined by clear criteria, represent four broad areas of knowledge and skills within which the subject expectations for any given grade are organized. The four categories should be considered as interrelated, reflecting the wholeness and interconnectedness of learning.

The categories of knowledge and skills are described as follows:

**Knowledge and Understanding.** Subject-specific content acquired in each grade (knowledge), and the comprehension of its meaning and significance (understanding).

**Thinking.** The use of critical and creative thinking skills and/or processes.

**Communication.** The conveying of meaning through various forms.

**Application.** The use of knowledge and skills to make connections within and between various contexts.

Teachers will ensure that student work is assessed and/or evaluated in a balanced manner with respect to the four categories, and that achievement of particular expectations is considered within the appropriate categories.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), pp. 35-36)*

## **Criteria**

Within each category in the achievement chart, criteria are provided, which are subsets of the knowledge and skills that define each category. The criteria for each category are listed below:

### ***Knowledge and Understanding***

- Knowledge of content (*e.g., Scripture, creedal statements, facts, terms, definitions, skills, principles and strategies*)
- Understanding of content (*e.g., dogma, doctrine, theories, relationships between concepts, ideas, methodologies, procedures, processes, techniques*)

### ***Thinking***

- Use of planning skills (*e.g., identifying the problem, formulating questions and ideas, gathering and organizing information; selecting strategies*)
- Use of processing skills (*e.g., discerning, selecting, analysing, synthesizing and evaluating information; detecting point of view and bias, forming conclusions*)
- Use of critical/creative thinking processes (*e.g., goal setting, decision making, problem solving; strategizing, reflecting on learning and determining steps for improvement, critiquing, theological reflection*)

### ***Communication***

- Expression and organization of ideas and information (*e.g., clarity of expression, logical organization*) in oral, visual, and written forms (*e.g., prayers, reflections, presentations, reports, role plays, conferences, posters, pamphlets, journals*)
- Communication for different audiences (*e.g., peers, adults*) and purposes (*e.g., to inform, persuade, promote*) and in oral, visual, and written forms
- Use of family life education conventions, vocabulary, and terminology (*e.g., using religious language and symbols; using and interpreting signals and body language; using correct terminology to discuss parts of the body*) in oral, visual, and written forms

### ***Application***

- Application of knowledge and skills (*e.g., concepts related to the Christian vision of personhood, relationship, and sexuality; Scripture, creeds, dogmas, doctrines*) in familiar contexts (*e.g., class discussions*)
- Transfer of knowledge and skills to new contexts (*e.g., transfer knowledge of signs of a good community to a description of requirements of social justice; transfer of decision making skills to the context of caring for creation*)
- Making connections within and between various contexts (*e.g., between learning in family life education and living a fully human life; between family life education, other subjects, and personal experiences in and beyond school*)

## **Descriptors**

A “descriptor” indicates the characteristic of the student’s performance, with respect to a particular criterion, on which assessment or evaluation is focused. In the achievement chart, *effectiveness* is the descriptor used for each criterion in the Thinking, Communication, and Application categories. What constitutes effectiveness in any given performance task will vary with the particular criterion being considered. Assessment of

effectiveness may therefore focus on a quality such as appropriateness, clarity, accuracy, precision, logic, relevance, significance, fluency, flexibility, depth, or breadth, as appropriate for the particular criterion. For example, in the Thinking category, assessment of effectiveness might focus on the degree of relevance or depth apparent in an analysis; in the Communication category, on clarity of expression or logical organization of information and ideas; or in the Application category, on appropriateness or breadth in the making of connections. Similarly, in the Knowledge and Understanding category, assessment of knowledge might focus on accuracy, and assessment of understanding might focus on the depth of an explanation. Descriptors help teachers to focus their assessment and evaluation on specific knowledge and skills for each category and criterion, and help students to better understand exactly what is being assessed and evaluated.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 37)*

### **Qualifiers**

A specific “qualifier” is used to define each of the four levels of achievement – that is, *limited* for level 1, *some* for level 2, *considerable* for level 3, and *a high degree* or *thorough* for level 4. A qualifier is used along with a descriptor to produce a description of performance at a particular level. For example, the description of a student’s performance at level 3 with respect to the first criterion in the Thinking category would be: “The student uses planning skills with considerable effectiveness”.

The descriptions of the levels of achievement given in the chart should be used to identify the level at which the student has achieved the expectations. Students should be provided with numerous and varied opportunities to demonstrate the full extent of their achievement of the curriculum expectations, across all four categories of knowledge and skills.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 37)*

## ACHIEVEMENT CHART – FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION, GRADES 1-8

Categories	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<b>Knowledge/Understanding</b> - Subject-specific content acquired in each course (knowledge), and the comprehension of its meaning and significance (understanding)				
	The student:			
<b>Knowledge of content</b> (e.g., <i>Scripture, creedal statements, facts, terms, definitions, skills, principles and strategies</i> )	demonstrates limited knowledge of content	demonstrates some knowledge of content	demonstrates considerable knowledge of content	demonstrates thorough knowledge of content
<b>Understanding of content</b> (e.g., <i>dogma, doctrine, theories, relationships between concepts, ideas, methodologies, procedures, processes, techniques</i> )	demonstrates limited understanding of content	demonstrates some understanding of content	demonstrates considerable understanding of content	demonstrates thorough understanding of content
<b>Thinking</b> - The use of critical and creative thinking skills and/or processes				
	The student:			
<b>Use of planning skills</b> (e.g., <i>identifying the problem, formulating questions and ideas, gathering and organizing information; selecting strategies</i> )	uses planning skills with limited effectiveness	uses planning skills with some effectiveness	uses planning skills with considerable effectiveness	uses planning skills with a high degree of effectiveness
<b>Use of processing skills</b> (e.g., <i>discerning, selecting, analysing, synthesizing and evaluating information; detecting point of view and bias, forming conclusions</i> )	uses processing skills with limited effectiveness	uses processing skills with some effectiveness	uses processing skills with considerable effectiveness	uses processing skills with a high degree of effectiveness
<b>Use of critical/creative thinking processes</b> (e.g., <i>goal setting, decision making, problem solving; strategizing, reflecting on learning and determining steps for improvement, critiquing, theological reflection</i> )	uses critical/creative thinking processes with limited effectiveness	uses critical/creative thinking processes with some effectiveness	uses critical/creative thinking processes with considerable effectiveness	uses critical/creative thinking processes with a high degree of effectiveness
<b>Communication</b> - The conveying of meaning through various forms				
	The student:			
<b>Expression and organization of ideas and information</b> (e.g., <i>clarity of expression, logical organization</i> ) <b>in oral, visual, and written forms</b> (e.g., <i>prayers, reflections, presentations, reports, role plays, conferences, posters, pamphlets, journals</i> )	expresses and organizes ideas and information with limited effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with some effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with considerable effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with a high degree of effectiveness

Categories	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<b>Communication</b> ( <i>continued</i> )				
	The student:			
<b>Communication for different audiences</b> (e.g., peers, adults) <b>and purposes</b> (e.g., to inform, persuade, promote) <b>and in oral, visual, and written forms</b>	communicates for different audiences and purposes with limited effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with some effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with considerable effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with a high degree of effectiveness
<b>Use of family life education conventions, vocabulary, and terminology</b> (e.g., using religious language and symbols; using and interpreting signals and body language; using correct terminology to discuss parts of the body) <b>in oral, visual, and written forms</b>	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with limited effectiveness	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with some effectiveness	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with considerable effectiveness	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with a high degree of effectiveness
<b>Application</b> - The use of knowledge and skills to make connections within and between various contexts				
	The student:			
<b>Application of knowledge and skills</b> (e.g., concepts related to the Christian vision of personhood, relationship, and sexuality; Scripture, creeds, dogmas, doctrines) <b>in familiar contexts</b> (e.g., class discussions)	uses knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with limited effectiveness	uses knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with some effectiveness	uses knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with considerable effectiveness	uses knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with a high degree of effectiveness
<b>Transfer of knowledge and skills to new contexts</b> (e.g., transfer knowledge of signs of a good community to a description of requirements of social justice; transfer of decision making skills to the context of caring for creation)	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with limited effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with some effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with considerable effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with a high degree of effectiveness
<b>Making connections within and between various contexts</b> (e.g., between learning in family life education and living a fully human life; between family life education, other subjects, and personal experiences in and beyond school)	makes connections between various contexts with limited effectiveness	makes connections between various contexts with some effectiveness	makes connections between various contexts with considerable effectiveness	makes connections between various contexts with a high degree of effectiveness

# SOME CONSIDERATIONS FOR PROGRAM PLANNING IN FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

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When planning a program in family life education, teachers must take into account considerations in a number of important areas, including those discussed below.

## INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACHES AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

### **Effective Lesson Design in All Subjects of the Ontario Curriculum**

When designing lessons, effective teachers consider what they want students to learn, how they will know if students are learning, and how they will respond to students who are not making progress.

As they determine what students will learn, teachers identify the broad ideas associated with the overall expectations, consider the context and the vehicle for learning, and identify and discuss learning goals with their students. Involving students in the process of identifying and clarifying learning goals helps make their learning more personally relevant and thus enhances their engagement with it.

As they look for evidence that students are learning, teachers consider not only what students have learned but also how they are learning. With this information, they can adjust instructional approaches to meet individual students' needs more effectively. It is also important to consider the most appropriate points at which to gather this information and the most appropriate assessment strategies, including guiding questions.

Finally, when determining how to respond to students who are not making progress, teachers think about the most effective ways to activate those students' prior learning, and provide a context that will help engage them in the lesson. Teachers provide the support students need by reviewing and helping them understand the learning goals, and by scaffolding instruction to provide intensive support for struggling students. Teachers then monitor students' achievement of learning goals and provide additional instructional support as needed. Students learn best when instruction and assessment are both differentiated according to their needs, and when approaches and groupings of students best suited to the population of the class are used.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 40)*

### **Effective Instruction in Family Life Education**

*Effective instruction is key to student success. In family life education, instruction is effective if it motivates students and instils positive habits of mind, such as a willingness and determination to explore and persist, to think and to question, to communicate*

clearly, and to take responsible risks. To be effective, instruction must be based on the belief that all students can be successful and that learning in *family life education* is critical for all students.

To provide effective instruction, teachers need to know their students – to be aware of their readiness to learn, understand their interests, and recognize their learning styles and preferences. An understanding of students’ strengths and needs, their backgrounds, and their abilities can help teachers plan effectively for instruction and assessment. As teachers come to understand their students, they can respond to individual students’ needs by effectively differentiating the learning approaches and materials they use, the ways in which they encourage students to demonstrate their learning, and the learning environment itself.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 41)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, the focus of the family life education curriculum is the dignity of the human person. Together, with the efforts of families, Catholic educators hope to instil in students a profound sense of what it means to be created in the image of God; to be fully human. Effective instruction not only supports student success, but is a response to and honours each student’s dignity.

The family life education curriculum provides opportunity for students to appreciate that they have been created in the image of a God who knows and loves them, to learn what it means to be fully human, and to make relevant, personal connections to their own lives. Each year, the curriculum allows students to embark on an ever deeper journey of self-awareness. In Ontario Catholic schools, the teacher accompanies the students on this journey. Through the family life education curriculum, the teacher is also afforded many opportunities to come to know each student more fully. In doing so, the Catholic educator is able to respond accordingly to plan effectively for instruction and assessment across the curriculum, in recognition of each student’s needs and each student’s dignity.

*Students should have opportunities to participate in a wide range of activities and to complete assignments that not only help them master family life education concepts, but also enable them to develop inquiry and research skills and provide opportunities for self-expression and personal choice. Activities should be based on the assessment of students’ individual needs, proven learning theory, and best teaching practices. Effective activities enable both direct teaching and modelling of knowledge and skills and the application of learning strategies that encourage students to express their thinking and that engage them in their learning.*

*To be effective, instruction in family life education must be developmentally appropriate. Many of the expectations in the family life education curriculum are similar from grade to grade, to provide students with the numerous opportunities they need to explore the basic concepts and skills underlying these expectations in a wide variety of age-appropriate ways... As they develop, students also pass through a number of [physical], cognitive and social/emotional developmental stages, which are described in some detail in the*

overviews provided in this document for Grades 1–3, 4–6, and 7–8. To meet the needs of all students at different stages of development, effective teachers provide exposure to a wide range of activities, instruction on skill progressions, opportunities for focused practice, and detailed and supportive feedback and encouragement.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), pp. 41-42)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, the five strands of the family life education curriculum provide the organizing structure for the curriculum expectations. The expectations are sequential both within each grade and between the grades. It is recommended that the strands be taught sequentially, that is, Strand A, followed by Strand B, etc. In the Appendix, a Grade 1-8 learning summary chart is provided for each strand, which demonstrates the sequential and developmental presentation of the concepts grade-by-grade.

### **Planning and Scheduling Instruction**

In Ontario Catholic schools, family life education is intended to supplement but not replace the catechetical program. It is a religious program, but not *the* religious program. It presumes a complete catechetical program and is designed on the basis that there will be at least four religion classes for every one in family life. The family life education curriculum is directed throughout by Catholic teaching, and many truths of faith and morals will be called upon as needed, but none of these will receive the complete treatment that belongs to the catechetical program.

The family life education curriculum has been shown to align well with the Ontario Ministry of Education health and physical education curriculum (See *Curriculum Links Between The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised) and the Fully Alive Program and Other Catholic Education Resources*, Institute for Catholic Education, 2010). As such, planning of the family life education component of the curriculum requires careful consideration of when material should be taught explicitly and when topics and concepts can be integrated with learning in health and physical education and linked to learning in other subjects. Ways of managing instruction will vary from school to school, depending on student needs and timetabling. If more than one teacher is responsible for teaching family life education and health and physical education, communication and collaboration between these teachers for instructional planning, evaluation, and reporting is essential.

### **Coeducational and Same-Sex Classes**

Although all the curriculum expectations can be achieved in either coeducational or same-sex classes, addressing parts of the curriculum in same-sex settings may allow students to learn and ask questions with greater comfort... Such considerations are particularly relevant in the case of adolescent learners.

It is also important to have time for coeducational learning, which can encourage learning about others, and about differences and commonalities among people, and allows for the development of relationship skills. Teachers should base their decisions about teaching in coeducational or same-sex settings on students' needs. Different strategies may be required at different times, so that students have opportunities to learn in a variety of different groupings.

Acknowledgement of and respect for individual differences regardless of sex will encourage student participation and help students learn to collaborate with and respect others. Strategies for encouraging understanding and mutual respect among students include:

- creating an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere in the class;
- providing opportunities for both male and female students to assume leadership roles;
- encouraging and respecting the interests and abilities of both sexes;
- ensuring that responsibilities are shared equally by male and female students;
- expecting all students to be equally active participants.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 45)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, Catholic educators will need to determine when it may be appropriate for male and female students to learn separately. At times, students may become embarrassed about the material being presented in the Created Sexual: Male and Female strand, since the information is personal (e.g., the physical changes of puberty). The Catholic educator could show sensitivity to these feelings by reading the material to students, for example, rather than having them read it aloud. However, this shyness about the body is natural and should not be discouraged. Modesty is the virtue that protects that which is personal and intimate and is directly connected to chastity.

That students might occasionally feel embarrassed should not be the sole determining factor when Catholic educators are considering same-sex settings for learning. It is important for males and females to learn about the changes in each other's body as part of God's design. After the general presentation of material, Catholic educators might arrange for males and females to meet separately to give students the opportunity to talk more freely and to ask questions that they may not want to ask in front of the whole class, or to provide males or females additional information (e.g., for females, hygiene related to menstruation).

## CROSS-CURRICULAR AND INTEGRATED LEARNING

In cross-curricular learning, students are provided with opportunities to learn and use related content and/or skills in two or more subjects. For example, all subjects, including *family life education*, can be related to the language curriculum. In *family life education*, students use a range of language skills: they build subject-specific vocabulary; they use words and their bodies to communicate feelings and share and interpret information; and they read about current *family life* issues and research new information. Teachers can also use reading material about *family life education* in their language lessons. Similarly, *family life education* lessons can be used as a vehicle for instruction in critical literacy. Students can interpret product information on food labels and critique media messages related to gender stereotypes, body image, or alcohol use...

In integrated learning, students are provided with opportunities to work towards meeting expectations from two or more subjects within a single unit, lesson, or activity. By linking expectations from different subject areas, teachers can provide students with

multiple opportunities to reinforce and demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a range of settings. There are clear connections, for example, between the expectations in *family life education* and those in other subject areas, such as language, science, and social studies. *Family life education* can be used to provide other ways of learning and making connections.

In integrated learning, teachers need to ensure that the specific knowledge and skills for each subject are taught...

Integrated learning can also be a solution to problems of fragmentation and isolated skill instruction – that is, in integrated learning, students can learn and apply skills in a meaningful context. In such contexts, students also have an opportunity to develop their ability to think and reason and to transfer knowledge and skills from one subject area to another.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), pp. 47-48)*

Educators in Ontario are guided by the mandate of the Ministry of Education to implement a common curriculum. Catholic educators are further charged to translate the ministry curriculum to more explicitly reflect a Catholic world view.

“A Catholic world view is a way of looking at the world through a Catholic Church lens. This world view is derived from Catholic Church teachings, scripture and Catholic Church traditions. These teachings, scripture and traditions form the basis of what is taught in Catholic schools.

The perspective of the Catholic Church permeates all of the content that teachers present in each subject area. Teachers make the students aware of the Church’s position during lessons, discussions, and other curriculum activities. The integration of our faith into all aspects of our curriculum, demonstrates the oneness of ourselves, our world and God’s vision for us.”

*(Catholic Curriculum Cooperatives of Ontario, Writing Catholic Curriculum, 2006, p. 7)*

The challenge for Catholic educators is to continually seek opportunities in which this vision of Catholic education, viewing human life as an integration of body, mind, and spirit, can be realized in the content and instruction in each subject area.

*To limit curriculum to Ministry definitions such as “a plan for student learning which is implemented in schools” is to reduce curriculum to little more than society’s latest educational menu, solely pragmatic and utilitarian in nature, and void of any effective and convincing interpretation of existence... It (Catholic curriculum) is a distinctive worldview committed to the enterprise of educating the soul.*

*(Institute for Catholic Education, Educating the Soul: Writing Curriculum for Catholic Secondary Schools 1998, p. 12)*

Of note, the family life education curriculum is particularly well suited to supporting the development of learning skills as articulated in *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation,*

*and Reporting in Ontario Schools*, 2010, as well as the integration of the Living Skills expectations and the Healthy Living expectations of *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised)*.

### **Learning Skills and Family Life Education**

The family life education expectations contained in this document provide teachers with the opportunity to develop the learning skills articulated in *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools*, 2010. *Growing Success* states:

The development of learning skills and work habits is an integral part of a student's learning. To the extent possible, however, the evaluation of learning skills and work habits, apart from any that may be included as part of a curriculum expectation in a subject or course, should not be considered in the determination of a student's grades. Assessing, evaluating, and reporting on the achievement of curriculum expectations and on the demonstration of learning skills and work habits *separately* allows teachers to provide information to the parents and student that is specific to each of the two areas of achievement.

It is expected that teachers will work with students to help them develop the learning skills and work habits identified in the following table [see page 32]. For each of the skills and habits, the table provides examples of associated behaviours, which are designed to guide teachers in the instruction, assessment, and evaluation of the learning skills and work habits. The sample behaviours are intended to assist *but not restrict* teachers in their efforts to help students become effective learners, and will look different at the various grade levels.

(Ontario Ministry of Education, *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools*, 2010, p. 10)

In Ontario Catholic schools, the family life education curriculum enables teachers to work with students to help them develop the learning skills and work habits necessary so that they might become more effective learners. For example, in the first strand of the curriculum, Created and Loved by God, students learn the unique gifts and talents they, and others, possess; the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions of human development; the ways in which their development is supported and nurtured by others; the human ability to learn, remember, and reason; and the human ability to act freely. In this context, there are many opportunities for teachers to make connections to the development of learning skills such as, responsibility, organization, independent work, initiative, and self-regulation.

## LEARNING SKILLS AND WORK HABITS IN GRADES 1 TO 12

Learning Skills and Work Habits	Sample Behaviours
Responsibility	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fulfils responsibilities and commitments within the learning environment;</li> <li>• completes and submits class work, homework, and assignments according to agreed-upon timelines;</li> <li>• takes responsibility for and manages own behaviour.</li> </ul>
Organization	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• devises and follows a plan and process for completing work and tasks;</li> <li>• establishes priorities and manages time to complete tasks and achieve goals;</li> <li>• identifies, gathers, evaluates, and uses information, technology, and resources to complete tasks.</li> </ul>
Independent Work	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• independently monitors, assesses, and revises plans to complete tasks and meet goals;</li> <li>• uses class time appropriately to complete tasks;</li> <li>• follows instructions with minimal supervision.</li> </ul>
Collaboration	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• accepts various roles and an equitable share of work in a group;</li> <li>• responds positively to the ideas, opinions, values, and traditions of others;</li> <li>• builds healthy peer-to-peer relationships through personal and media-assisted interactions;</li> <li>• works with others to resolve conflicts and build consensus to achieve group goals;</li> <li>• shares information, resources, and expertise and promotes critical thinking to solve problems and make decisions.</li> </ul>
Initiative	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• looks for and acts on new ideas and opportunities for learning;</li> <li>• demonstrates the capacity for innovation and a willingness to take risks;</li> <li>• demonstrates curiosity and interest in learning;</li> <li>• approaches new tasks with a positive attitude;</li> <li>• recognizes and advocates appropriately for the rights of self and others.</li> </ul>
Self-regulation	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sets own individual goals and monitors progress towards achieving them;</li> <li>• seeks clarification or assistance when needed;</li> <li>• assesses and reflects critically on own strengths, needs, and interests;</li> <li>• identifies learning opportunities, choices, and strategies to meet personal needs and achieve goals;</li> <li>• perseveres and makes an effort when responding to challenges.</li> </ul>

(Ontario Ministry of Education, *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools*, 2010, p. 11)

### **Living Skill Expectations and Family Life Education**

The family life education expectations contained in this document provide teachers with the opportunity to make cross-curricular connections and to integrate learning with the living skills of the *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised)*.

The living skill expectations identify learning that helps students develop a positive sense of self, develop and maintain healthy relationships, and use critical and creative thinking processes as they set goals, make decisions, and solve problems. Living skills are an important aspect of students' overall healthy development, and their application is essential to the achievement of many of the expectations in the Active Living, Movement Competence, and Healthy Living strands. Living skills cannot be taught effectively in isolation; they must be taught and evaluated in conjunction with learning related to all strands of the curriculum, in order to make the learning personally relevant for students. As they develop and apply their living skills, students will build resilience. They will learn to make choices that protect their safety and health and enable them to become independent thinkers and responsible adults who are capable of developing strong relationships and who are committed to lifelong healthy, active living.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 19)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, family life education expectations similarly help students develop an understanding of the self, the way they are called to live in relationship, and the skills required to respond to life's challenges. Teachers are expected to explicitly teach the learning skills in order that they might be evaluated in conjunction with learning across all strands of the health and physical education curriculum. Catholic educators can use the family life education curriculum as the opportunity for this explicit teaching. The specific knowledge and skills of the family life education curriculum can also meet the expectations from the living skills of the health and physical education curriculum while at the same time allowing for an understanding of the living skills grounded in the Christian vision of what it means to lead a fully human life.

### **Healthy Living Expectations and Family Life Education**

The family life education expectations contained in this document provide teachers with the opportunity to make cross-curricular connections and to integrate learning with the healthy living expectations of the *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised)*.

The Healthy Living strand helps students develop an understanding of the factors that contribute to healthy development, a sense of personal responsibility for lifelong health, and a respect for their own health in relation to others and the world around them. Students will develop health literacy as they acquire the knowledge and skills they need to develop, maintain, and enjoy healthy lifestyles as well as to solve problems, make decisions, and set goals that are directly related to their personal health and well-being. Learning how to establish, monitor, and maintain healthy relationships is a key part of this strand.

The focus of the learning in this strand is not merely on health knowledge but rather on higher-level thinking connected to the application of skills for healthy living. Students are learning about health broadly as a resource for living. The emphasis is on why they are learning about healthy living and on what they need to understand about growing and healthy development in order to make informed personal choices and take responsibility for their health now and for the rest of their lives. They are also encouraged to make connections beyond themselves to understand how their health is connected with that of others and is affected by factors in the world around them.

The health content in this strand is divided into four content areas: healthy eating; personal safety and injury prevention; substance use, addictions, and related behaviours; and the Growth and Development component of the 1998 curriculum. These topics have been chosen because they are fundamentally connected to students' daily lives. Concepts tied to mental health and emotional well-being are woven throughout all content areas across all grades.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), pp. 29-30 and 31)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, educators will find that a number of health expectations in the healthy living strand can be met through the family life education curriculum. Though connections may be made across all strands of the family life education curriculum, connections to the health curriculum are perhaps most evident in the Created Sexual: Male and Female strand. Key concepts within this strand include human growth and development, human sexuality, and human fertility and reproduction. A sense of responsibility for lifelong health is understood in the context that human life is a gift from God entrusted to our care.

The health and physical education document (excerpted from the 1998 curriculum document) states:

*Growth and development education is more than simply teaching young people about the anatomy and physiology of reproduction. For example, growth and development education focuses on an understanding of sexuality in its broadest context – sexual development, reproductive health, interpersonal relationships, affection, abstinence, body image, and gender roles. Acquiring information and skills and developing attitudes, beliefs, and values related to identity and relationships are lifelong processes.*

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 33)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, the family life education curriculum also seeks to foster an understanding of sexuality in its broadest context. To be human is to be sexual. Sexuality, expressed in our maleness and femaleness, is an essential component of personhood. For this reason, education in sexuality is education in the whole person. Catholic educators will present human sexuality within the fullness of the family life education curriculum that teaches the value of persons, human relationships, commitment, and social responsibility. Thus, the family life education curriculum may be used to integrate learning with the healthy living expectations of

the health and physical education curriculum while bringing students to an understanding of the ways they may lead healthy lives that are fully human.

Catholic educators who seek additional ways to integrate family life education with the ministry's health and physical education curriculum should consult *Curriculum Links Between The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised)* and the *Fully Alive Program and Other Catholic Education Resources*, Institute for Catholic Education, 2010.

## PLANNING FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

Classroom teachers are the key educators of students who have special education needs. They have a responsibility to help all students learn, and they work collaboratively with special education teachers, where appropriate, to achieve this goal. In recognition of each student's human dignity, they commit to assisting every student to prepare for living with the highest degree of independence possible.

*Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students With Special Education Needs, Kindergarten to Grade 6, 2005* describes a set of beliefs, based in research, that should guide all program planning for students with special education needs.<sup>4</sup> These beliefs have been adapted for use in Ontario Catholic schools. Teachers planning family life education programs need to pay particular attention to these shared beliefs, which are as follows:

- **We believe** that every child is made in the image and likeness of God and that his/her dignity and worth must be respected and valued.
- **We believe** that every child can learn and that, as Catholic educators, we are called to a vocation which values each child's successes, based on his/her level of understanding.
- **We believe** that every child is a unique gift from God and has his/her own way of learning. As Catholic educators, we must plan for this diversity and give students tasks that respect their abilities.
- **We believe** that our Catholic learning communities are places of conversation and support, where educators can reach out to others in the community for ideas and assistance in order to create a learning environment that best supports all students, including students with special education needs.
- **We believe** that all our students have a right to be educated in the manner that best suits them. We therefore understand the importance of universal design and differentiated instruction in order to ensure that our classrooms and other learning environments are as usable as possible to students, regardless of their age, ability, or situation.
- **We believe** that we are all life-long learners and that, as Catholic educators, we are called to continue to develop our pedagogy so that our instruction and professional judgment are supported by good research.

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<sup>4</sup> These same beliefs are stated in the Ontario Ministry of Education draft version of the document *Learning for All: A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12* (2011), p. 6.

- **We believe** that as educators, we have the advantage of knowing the child and the ability to provide valuable feedback in order to support his/her programming and assessment.  
(Catholic Curriculum Corporation, *Sacramental Preparation for Students with Special Needs: A Guide for Catholic Educators*, 2006, p. 4)

In any given classroom, students may demonstrate a wide range of strengths and needs. Teachers plan programs that recognize this diversity and give students performance tasks that respect their particular abilities so that all students can derive the greatest possible benefit from the teaching and learning process. The use of flexible groupings for instruction and the provision of ongoing assessment are important elements of programs that accommodate a diversity of learning needs.

In planning *family life education* programs for students with special education needs, teachers should begin by examining both the curriculum expectations for the appropriate grade level of the individual student and his or her strengths and learning needs to determine which of the following options is appropriate for the student:

- no accommodations<sup>5</sup> or modifications; or
- accommodations only; or
- modified expectations, with the possibility of accommodations; or
- alternative expectations, which are not derived from the curriculum expectations for a grade and which constitute alternative programs.

If the student requires either accommodations or modified expectations, or both, the relevant information, as described in the following paragraphs, must be recorded in his or her Individual Education Plan (IEP). More detailed information about planning programs for students with special education needs, including students who require alternative programs,<sup>6</sup> can be found in *The Individual Education Plan (IEP): A Resource Guide, 2004* (referred to hereafter as the *IEP Resource Guide, 2004*). For a detailed discussion of the ministry's requirements for IEPs, see *Individual Education Plans: Standards for Development, Program Planning, and Implementation, 2000* (referred to hereafter as *IEP Standards, 2000*). (Both documents are available at [www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca).)

(*The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised)*, p. 49)

### **Students Requiring Accommodations Only**

Some students with special education needs are able, with certain accommodations, to participate in the regular curriculum and to demonstrate learning independently. (Accommodations do not alter the provincial curriculum expectations for the grade level.) The accommodations required to facilitate the student's learning must be identified in his or her IEP (see *IEP Standards, 2000*, page 11). A student's IEP is likely to reflect the same accommodations for many, or all, subject areas.

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<sup>5</sup> *Accommodations* refers to individualized teaching and assessment strategies, human supports, and/or individualized equipment.

<sup>6</sup> Alternative programs are identified on the IEP form by the term "alternative (ALT)".

Providing accommodations to students with special education needs should be the first option considered in program planning. Instruction based on principles of universal design<sup>7</sup> and differentiated instruction<sup>8</sup> focuses on the provision of accommodations to meet the diverse needs of learners.

There are three types of accommodations:

- *Instructional accommodations* are changes in teaching strategies, including styles of presentation, methods of organization, or use of technology and multimedia.
- *Environmental accommodations* are changes that the student may require in the classroom and/or school environment, such as preferential seating or special lighting.
- *Assessment accommodations* are changes in assessment procedures that enable the student to demonstrate his or her learning, such as allowing additional time to complete tests or assignments or permitting oral responses to test questions (see page 29 of the *IEP Resource Guide, 2004* for more examples).

If a student requires “accommodations only” in *family life education*, assessment and evaluation of his or her achievement will be based on the appropriate grade-level curriculum expectations and the achievement levels outlined in this document. The IEP box on the student’s Provincial Report Card will not be checked, and no information on the provision of accommodations will be included.<sup>9</sup>

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), pp. 49-50)*

### **Students Requiring Modified Expectations**

In *family life education*, modified expectations for most students with special education needs will be based on the regular grade-level curriculum, with changes in the number and/or complexity of the expectations. Modified expectations must represent specific, realistic, observable, and measurable achievements, and must describe specific knowledge and/or skills that the student can demonstrate independently, given the appropriate assessment accommodations.

Modified expectations must indicate the knowledge and/or skills the student is expected to demonstrate and have assessed in each reporting period (*IEP Standards, 2000*, pages 10 and 11). Modified expectations should be expressed in such a way that the student and parents can understand exactly what the student is expected to know or be able to do, on the basis of which his or her performance will be evaluated and a grade or mark

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<sup>7</sup> The goal of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is to create a learning environment that is open and accessible to all students, regardless of age, skills, or situation. Instruction based on principles of universal design is flexible and supportive, can be adjusted to meet different student needs, and enables all students to access the curriculum as fully as possible.

<sup>8</sup> Differentiated instruction is effective instruction that shapes each student’s learning experience in response to his or her particular learning preferences, interests, and readiness to learn.

<sup>9</sup> NOTE: Neither The Elementary Provincial Report Card, Grades 1-6 – Roman Catholic Schools, nor The Elementary Provincial Report Card, Grades 7 and 8 – Roman Catholic Schools has an IEP box in the Religious and Family Life Education reporting domain.

recorded on the Provincial Report Card. The student's learning expectations must be reviewed in relation to the student's progress at least once every reporting period, and must be updated as necessary (*IEP Standards, 2000*, page 11).

If a student requires modified expectations in *family life education*, assessment and evaluation of his or her achievement will be based on the learning expectations identified in the IEP and on the achievement levels outlined in this document. On the Provincial Report Card, the IEP box must be checked for any subject in which the student requires modified expectations, and the appropriate statement from the *Guide to the Provincial Report Card, Grades 1–8, 1998* (page 8) must be inserted.<sup>10</sup> The teacher's comments should include relevant information on the student's demonstrated learning of the modified expectations, as well as next steps for the student's learning in the subject.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 50)*

### **Guidelines for Meeting Special Needs in Family Life Education**

The following excerpt from the *Health and Physical Education* document is particularly apt for the Created Sexual: Male and Female strand of the family life education curriculum in Ontario Catholic schools:

Depending on the special education needs of the students, some additional considerations may be relevant for their instruction in health education. These considerations may apply to all health topics, but are particularly relevant to topics covered in the Growth and Development component of the Healthy Living strand in the 1998 curriculum document. Some students with intellectual and physical disabilities may be at greater risk of exploitation and abuse. These students may also have had fewer formal and informal opportunities to participate in sexual health education. Teachers need to ensure that these students' privacy and dignity are protected, and that the resources used are appropriate to their physical, intellectual, and emotional development. Different kinds of accommodations and approaches will be required for different students, but it is important to ensure that all students have access to information and support regarding their sexual health.

Some students with special education needs may have difficulty with abstract thinking, including thinking about the consequences of their behaviour, and may have trouble understanding the boundaries between private and public with respect to behaviour or their own bodies. When teaching students with special education needs about sexual health, it is important to teach the information in a variety of ways and to provide ample opportunity for information to be repeated and for skills such as refusal skills to be

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<sup>10</sup> NOTE: Neither The Elementary Provincial Report Card, Grades 1-6 – Roman Catholic Schools, nor The Elementary Provincial Report Card, Grades 7 and 8 – Roman Catholic Schools has an IEP box in the Religious and Family Life Education reporting domain. Regardless, the appropriate statement from the *Guide to the Provincial Report Card, Grades 1–8, 1998* (page 8) must be inserted if the student requires modified expectations.

practised and reinforced. Examples need to be concrete. Students need to be taught about their right to refuse and about ways of showing affection appropriately.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 51)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, the family life curriculum is a life-affirming, developmental program that honours the dignity of every student. Since some of the topics focus on physical appearance, special talents, and on growth and change, there are many opportunities for helping all students to be sensitive to individual differences. Teachers should stress the fact that God made each person unique with strengths and weaknesses, and wants all of us to be patient and helpful with each other.

Students with special education needs, like all children, need to experience success and to develop self-esteem and self-confidence. Even when careful program modifications are made, some students are troubled by their own sense of limitations. Together, sensitive teachers and families can use the family life education program as a special way of reminding these students of how precious they are, of the need to be patient and persevere, and of the love God has for them.

## PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Ontario schools have some of the most multilingual student populations in the world. The first language of approximately twenty per cent of the children in Ontario's English-language schools is a language other than English. Ontario's linguistic heritage includes many First Nation and Inuit languages, the Métis language, and many African, Asian, and European languages. It also includes some varieties of English – also referred to as dialects – that differ significantly from the English required for success in Ontario schools. Many English language learners were born in Canada and have been raised in families and communities in which languages other than English, or varieties of English that differ from the language used in the classroom, are spoken. Other English language learners arrive in Ontario as newcomers from other countries; they may have experience of highly sophisticated educational systems, or they may have come from regions where access to formal schooling was limited.

When they start school in Ontario, many of these children are entering a new linguistic and cultural environment. All teachers share in the responsibility for these students' English-language development.

English language learners (students who are learning English as a second or additional language in English-language schools) bring a rich diversity of background knowledge and experience to the classroom. These students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds not only support their learning in their new environment but also become a cultural asset in the classroom community. Teachers will find positive ways to incorporate this diversity into their instructional programs and into the classroom environment.

Most English language learners in Ontario schools have an age-appropriate proficiency in their first language. Although they need frequent opportunities to use English at school, there are important educational and social benefits associated with continued development of their first language while they are learning English. Teachers need to encourage parents to continue to use their own language at home in rich and varied ways as a foundation for language and literacy development in English. It is also important for teachers to find opportunities to bring students' languages into the classroom, using parents and community members as a resource.

During their first few years in Ontario schools, English language learners may receive support through one of two distinct programs from teachers who specialize in meeting their language-learning needs:

***English as a Second Language (ESL)*** programs are for students born in Canada or newcomers whose first language is a language other than English, or is a variety of English significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools.

***English Literacy Development (ELD)*** programs are primarily for newcomers whose first language is a language other than English, or is a variety of English significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools, and who arrive with significant gaps in their education. These children generally come from countries where access to education is limited or where there are limited opportunities to develop language and literacy skills in any language. Some First Nation, Métis, or Inuit students from remote communities in Ontario may also have had limited opportunities for formal schooling, and they also may benefit from ELD instruction.

In planning programs for children with linguistic backgrounds other than English, teachers need to recognize the importance of the orientation process, understanding that every learner needs to adjust to the new social environment and language in a unique way and at an individual pace. For example, children who are in an early stage of English-language acquisition may go through a "silent period" during which they closely observe the interactions and physical surroundings of their new learning environment. They may use body language rather than speech or they may use their first language until they have gained enough proficiency in English to feel confident of their interpretations and responses. Students thrive in a safe, supportive, and welcoming environment that nurtures their self-confidence while they are receiving focused literacy instruction. When they are ready to participate, in paired, small-group, or whole-class activities, some students will begin by using a single word or phrase to communicate a thought, while others will speak quite fluently.

In a supportive learning environment, most students will develop oral language proficiency quite quickly. Teachers can sometimes be misled by the high degree of oral proficiency demonstrated by many English language learners in their use of everyday English and may mistakenly conclude that these students are equally proficient in their use of academic English. Most English language learners who have developed oral proficiency in everyday English will nevertheless require instructional scaffolding to

meet curriculum expectations. Research has shown that it takes five to seven years for most English language learners to catch up to their English-speaking peers in their ability to use English for academic purposes.

Responsibility for students' English-language development is shared by the classroom teacher, the ESL/ELD teacher (where available), and other school staff... Teachers must adapt the instructional program in order to facilitate the success of these students in their classrooms. Appropriate adaptations for *family life education* include:

- modification of some or all of the subject expectations so that they are challenging but attainable for the learner at his or her present level of English proficiency, given the necessary support from the teacher;
- use of a variety of instructional strategies (e.g., modelling; peer support; use of music, movement, and gestures; open-ended activities; extensive use of visual cues, images, diagrams; visual representations of key ideas; graphic organizers; scaffolding; pre-teaching of key vocabulary; peer tutoring; strategic use of students' first languages);
- use of a variety of learning resources (e.g., simplified text, illustrated guides or diagrams that show how to use equipment or perform skills, word walls with vocabulary specific to *family life education*, food guides and other health resources available in languages that students speak at home, bilingual dictionaries, [Bibles], visual material, displays; music, dances, games, and materials and activities that reflect cultural diversity);
- use of assessment accommodations (e.g., provision of extra time; use of interviews and oral presentations; demonstration of learning through participation in movement activities, songs, or chants; use of portfolios, demonstrations, visual representations or models, or tasks requiring completion of graphic organizers instead of essay questions and other assessment tasks that depend heavily on proficiency in English).

Teachers need to adapt the program for English language learners as they acquire English proficiency. For students in the early stages of language acquisition, teachers need to modify the curriculum expectations in some or all curriculum areas. Most English language learners require accommodations for an extended period, long after they have achieved proficiency in everyday English.

When learning expectations are modified for English language learners, evaluation will be based on the documented modified expectations. This will be noted on the report card and explained to parents... Opportunities to build relationships, interact with other students, play, and cooperate can help students from other countries adjust to their new environment. Some students may need additional support in discussions of topics in the *family life education* program that may conflict with their personal experiences and cultural norms. Sensitivity is required in assessing and addressing these students' individual needs. For further information on supporting English language learners, refer to the following documents:

- *Supporting English Language Learners in Grades 1 to 8: A Practical Guide for Ontario Educators, 2008*

- *Supporting English Language Learners with Limited Prior Schooling: A Practical Guide for Ontario Educators, Grades 3 to 12, 2008*
- *English Language Learners – ESL and ELD Programs and Services: Policies and Procedures for Ontario Elementary and Secondary Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2007*
- *Many Roots, Many Voices: Supporting English Language Learners in Every Classroom – A Practical Guide for Ontario Educators, 2005*  
(*The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised)*, pp. 52-54)

## ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

*Ontario's education system will prepare students with the knowledge, skills, perspectives, and practices they need to be environmentally responsible citizens. Students will understand our fundamental connections to each other and to the world around us through our relationship to food, water, energy, air, and land, and our interaction with all living things. The education system will provide opportunities within the classroom and the community for students to engage in actions that deepen this understanding.*

*(Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow: A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools, 2009, p. 6)*

*Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow: A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools* outlines an approach to environmental education that recognizes the needs of all Ontario students and promotes environmental responsibility in the operations of all levels of the education system.

The three goals outlined in *Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow* are organized around the themes of teaching and learning, student engagement and community connections, and environmental leadership. The first goal is to promote learning about environmental issues and solutions. The second is to engage students in practising and promoting environmental stewardship, both in the school and in the community. The third stresses the importance of providing leadership by implementing and promoting responsible environmental practices throughout the education system so that staff, parents, community members, and students become dedicated to living more sustainably.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), pp. 54-55)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, family life education offers many opportunities for accomplishing these goals. The family life education curriculum seeks to instil in students an appreciation of the gifts of all God's creation. Caring for the goodness of creation is one of the key concepts of the Living in the World strand. From grade one, students recognize the ways in which people care for the Earth. As the curriculum progresses, students identify aspects of the world that make it a good home; the value of the Earth's natural resources; how humans transform the gifts of creation; and the ways in which humans serve as God's stewards of the natural environment. Above all, through the family life education curriculum, students come to an awareness that care

for the environment is not just a matter of responsible citizenship, it is who they are called to be as they strive to lead fully human lives.

## HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AND FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

Every student is entitled to learn in a safe, caring environment, free from violence and harassment. Research has shown that students learn and achieve better in such environments. A safe and supportive social environment in a school is founded on healthy relationships – the relationships between students, between students and adults, and between adults. Healthy relationships are based on respect, caring, empathy, trust, and dignity, and thrive in an environment in which diversity is honoured and accepted. Healthy relationships do not tolerate abusive, controlling, violent, harassing, or inappropriate behaviours. To experience themselves as valued and connected members of an inclusive social environment, students need to be involved in healthy relationships with their peers, teachers, and other members of the school community.

Several provincial policies and initiatives, including the “Foundations for a Healthy School” framework, the equity and inclusive education strategy, and the Safe Schools strategy, are designed to foster caring and safe learning environments in the context of healthy and inclusive schools. These policies and initiatives promote positive learning and teaching environments that support the development of healthy relationships, encourage academic achievement, and help all students reach their full potential.

In its 2008 report, *Shaping a Culture of Respect in Our Schools: Promoting Safe and Healthy Relationships*, the Safe Schools Action Team confirmed “that the most effective way to enable all students to learn about healthy and respectful relationships is through the school curriculum” (p. 11). Teachers can promote this learning in a variety of ways. For example, by giving students opportunities to apply critical thinking and problem-solving strategies and to address issues through group discussions, role play, case study analysis, and other means, they can help them develop and practise the skills they need for building healthy relationships. Co-curricular activities such as clubs and intramural and interschool sports provide additional opportunities for the kind of interaction that helps students build healthy relationships. Teachers can also have a decisive influence on students by modelling the behaviours, values, and skills that are needed to develop and sustain healthy relationships, and by taking advantage of “teachable moments” to address immediate relationship issues that may arise among students.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), pp. 55-56)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, the skills that are needed to build and support healthy relationships can be found throughout the family life education curriculum. Expectations that focus on the characteristics of healthy relationships and on ways of responding to challenges in relationships introduce students, in age-appropriate ways, to the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values they will need to maintain healthy relationships throughout their lives.

All students must be offered, and especially those whose circumstances are far from ideal, a different perspective, a prophetic vision that represents our deepest hopes as a believing community. When Pope John Paul II spoke to young people in Montreal in 1984, he captured this vision with these words:

*Too many of you suffer because of the breakdown of family life, because of separation and divorce, and you have been wounded to the point of sometimes doubting whether a faithful and lasting love is possible.*

*It is not ours to judge those who have been hurt by the upheaval affecting morals and society. But I say to you, do not doubt, you can build a home on the rock of fidelity, because you can count totally on the fidelity of God, who is love.*

The challenges of family life, of which the Pope spoke, are part of the family life education curriculum, from the minor, which virtually all children experience at one time or another, to the serious. Family life education creates opportunities for certain kinds of discussions, such as anti-bullying and sexual abuse prevention. These opportunities should occur regularly. What family life education provides, which is essential to discussions that deal with actions that are exploitive and harmful, is the foundation on which they must be built: respect for self and others as beloved children of God; the development of authentic relationships within the family and with peers; and growth in understanding the gift of sexuality as an expression of life and love.

## EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

The Ontario equity and inclusive education strategy focuses on respecting diversity, promoting inclusive education, and identifying and eliminating the discriminatory biases, systemic barriers, and power dynamics that limit the ability of students to learn, grow, and contribute to society. Antidiscrimination education continues to be an important and integral component of the strategy.

In an environment based on the principles of inclusive education, all students, parents, and other members of the school community – regardless of ancestry, culture, ethnicity, sex, physical or intellectual ability, race, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, or other similar factors – are welcomed, included, treated fairly, and respected. Diversity is valued, and all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable, and accepted. Every student is supported and inspired to succeed in a culture of high expectations for learning. In an inclusive education system, all students see themselves reflected in the curriculum, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment, so that they can feel engaged in and empowered by their learning experiences.

The implementation of antidiscrimination principles in education influences all aspects of school life. It promotes a school climate that encourages all students to work to high levels of achievement, affirms the worth of all students, and helps students strengthen their sense of identity and develop a positive self-image. It encourages staff and students alike to value and show respect for diversity in the school and the broader society.

Antidiscrimination education promotes fairness, healthy relationships, and active, responsible citizenship.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), pp. 56-57)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, the expectations contained throughout the family life education document provide educators with the opportunity to address a number of key issues related to equity, antidiscrimination, and inclusion. In the strand, Created and Loved by God, students explore the Christian belief that all humans are created in the image of God and that God knows and loves each person. They are a very special creation. Because of this, students must respect and value themselves and others. As early as grade one, students learn to appreciate the uniqueness of each person, including their appearance, their likes, and their dislikes, and the key concept of human uniqueness is subsequently explored each year thereafter. The family life education curriculum allows students to not only explore what makes them unique, but also what makes them alike. All humans share a common origin and, therefore, a common nature. The curriculum explores our shared humanity. Students learn that God created them to live in relationship with others and to respond to others with love. Students understand that treating others with equity, dignity, and respect is a necessity as they strive to lead fully human lives.

## LITERACY AND INQUIRY IN FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

Literacy and inquiry and research skills are critical to students' success in all subjects of the curriculum and in all areas of their lives.

*Literacy is defined as the ability to use language and images in rich and varied forms to read, write, listen, view, represent, and think critically about ideas. It involves the capacity to access, manage, and evaluate information; to think imaginatively and analytically; and to communicate thoughts and ideas effectively. Literacy includes critical thinking and reasoning to solve problems and make decisions related to issues of fairness, equity, and social justice. Literacy connects individuals and communities and is an essential tool for personal growth and active participation in a cohesive, democratic society.*

*(Reach Every Student: Energizing Ontario Education, 2008, p. 6)*

“Literacy instruction must be embedded across the curriculum. All teachers of all subjects ... are teachers of literacy” (*Think Literacy Success, Grades 7–12: The Report of the Expert Panel on Students at Risk in Ontario*, 2003, p. 10). This quotation illustrates that literacy instruction takes different forms of emphasis in different subjects and also that literacy needs to be explicitly taught.

Providing a solid foundation of language, communication, and thinking skills on which children and youth can develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that they need to make healthy decisions with competence and confidence is at the heart of *family life education*.

In the *family life education* program, literacy includes researching, discussing, listening, viewing media, communicating with words and with the body, connecting illustrations and text, role playing to create meaning through stories... Students use language to record their observations, to describe their critical analyses in both informal and formal contexts, and to present their findings in oral, written, graphic, and multimedia forms. Understanding in *family life education* requires the understanding and use of specialized terminology. In all *family life education* programs, students are required to use appropriate and correct terminology and are encouraged to use language with care and precision in order to communicate effectively.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), pp. 58-59)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, fostering students' communication skills is an important part of the teacher's role in family life education. In addition to developing reading, writing, and media literacy skills, students in family life education need to be able to communicate orally by listening and speaking. Students identify and describe common communication problems, analyze guidelines for open and respectful communication, and create examples of good communication as part of the family life education curriculum.

Physical communication skills are also developed through family life education.<sup>11</sup> Students not only communicate through listening and speaking, but also physically through body language. The family life education curriculum allows students the opportunity to explore feelings, especially in response to changes within relationships. Students learn to identify feelings, and to identify and manage stress. A fundamental component in such identification is the ability to not only to "read" another's body language for information about feelings or levels of stress, but the ability to recognize the responses of their own bodies to interpret their own feelings and potential stressors.

Oral communication skills... are essential for thinking and learning. Through purposeful talk, students not only learn to communicate information but also to explore and to understand ideas and concepts, identify and solve problems, organize their experience and knowledge, and express and clarify their thoughts, feelings, and opinions. To develop their oral communication skills, students need numerous opportunities to talk about a range of topics in *family life education*. These opportunities are available throughout the curriculum. The expectations in all strands give students a chance to engage in brainstorming, reporting, and other oral activities to identify what they know about a new topic, discuss strategies for solving a problem, present and defend ideas or debate issues, and offer critiques or feedback on work, skill demonstrations, or opinions expressed by their peers.

Whether students are talking, writing, or showing their understanding in *family life education*, teachers can prompt them, through questioning, to explain the reasoning that they have applied to a particular solution or strategy, or to reflect on what they have done. Because rich, open-ended questioning is the starting point for effective inquiry or for

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<sup>11</sup> Oral communication skills are traditionally thought to include using and interpreting body language. In the health and physical education curriculum, this skill is broadened into its own category of "physical communication skills."

addressing a problem, it is important that teachers model this style of questioning for their students and allow students multiple opportunities to ask, and find answers to, their own questions.

The Ministry of Education has facilitated the development of materials to support literacy instruction across the curriculum. Helpful advice for integrating literacy instruction in *family life education* may be found in the following resource materials:

- *Me Read? And How! Ontario Teachers Report on How to Improve Boys' Literacy Skills*, 2009
- *A Guide to Effective Literacy Instruction, Grades 4 to 6, Volume Seven: Media Literacy*, 2008
- *Me Read? No Way! A Practical Guide to Improving Boys' Literacy Skills*, 2004
- *Think Literacy: Cross-Curricular Approaches, Grades 7–12*, 2003
- *Think Literacy: Cross-Curricular Approaches, Grades 7–12 – Subject-Specific Examples: Health and Physical Education, Grades 7–9*, 2004
- *Webcasts for Educators: Critical Literacy, November 29, 2007* (available through [www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca) or on DVD)

Inquiry is at the heart of learning in all subject areas. In *family life education*, students are encouraged to develop their ability to ask questions and to explore a variety of possible answers to those questions. Careful structuring of learning opportunities and teacher questioning can encourage the development of these inquiry skills in students.

As they advance through the grades, students acquire the skills to locate relevant information from a variety of sources, such as books, periodicals, dictionaries, encyclopedias, [Scripture, Church documents], interviews, videos, and the Internet. The questioning they practised in the early grades becomes more sophisticated as they learn that all sources of information have a particular point of view and that the recipient of the information has a responsibility to evaluate it, determine its validity and relevance, and use it in appropriate ways. The ability to locate, question, and evaluate the quality of information allows a student to become an independent, lifelong learner.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), pp. 59-61)*

## CRITICAL THINKING AND CRITICAL LITERACY IN FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

*...Catholic education is imbued by more than just secular knowledge. It is imbued with another wisdom, one that listens to the voice of God's revelation and, in doing so, it glimpses another reality and another possibility for living.*

*This reality is described in a language that is incarnational, sacramental, and ecclesial. It speaks of the human person as religious, upon whose heart is written the desire for God. It recognizes that humanity is not self-sufficient nor its own origin and destiny. It narrates a story*

*of creation, sin, redemption, and hope. The challenge for Catholic secondary schools is to offer curriculum that serves as an alternative way of living to that of the ideology of secularism.*

(Institute for Catholic Education, *Educating the Soul: Writing Curriculum for Catholic Secondary Schools*, 1998, p. 6)

Critical thinking is the process of thinking about ideas or situations in order to understand them fully, identify their implications, make a judgement, and/or guide decision making. Critical thinking includes skills such as questioning, predicting, hypothesizing, analysing, synthesizing, examining opinions, identifying values and issues, detecting bias, and distinguishing between alternatives. It involves an inquiry process of exploring questions about and solutions for issues that are not clearly defined and for which there are no clear-cut answers. Students who are taught these skills become critical thinkers who do not merely accept the obvious as a given.

Students use critical thinking skills in *family life education* when they assess, analyse, and/or evaluate the impact of something and when they form an opinion about something and support that opinion with a rationale. In order to think critically, students need to examine the opinions and values of others, detect bias, look for implied meaning, and use the information gathered to form a personal opinion or stance, or a personal plan of action with regard to making a difference.

As they work to achieve the *family life education* expectations, students frequently need to identify the possible implications of choices. As they gather information from a variety of sources, they need to be able to interpret what they are listening to, reading, or viewing; to look for instances of bias; and to determine why that source might express that particular bias.

In developing critical thinking skills in *family life education*, students must ask good questions to interpret information, detect bias, and consider the values and perspectives of a variety of groups and individuals.

Critical literacy is the capacity for a particular type of critical thinking that involves looking beyond the literal meaning of a text to determine what is present and what is missing, in order to analyse and evaluate the text's complete meaning and the author's intent. Critical literacy goes beyond conventional critical thinking by focusing on issues related to fairness, equity, and social justice. Critically literate students adopt a critical stance, asking what view of the world the text advances and whether they find this view acceptable, who benefits from the text, and how the reader is influenced.

Critically literate students understand that meaning is not found in texts in isolation. People make sense of a text, or determine what a text means, in a variety of ways. Students therefore need to be aware of points of view (e.g., those of parents and students), the context (e.g., the beliefs and practices of the time and place in which a text is read or written), the background of the person interacting with the text (e.g., upbringing, friends, school and other communities, education, experiences), intertextuality (e.g., information that a viewer brings to a text from other texts read

previously), gaps in the text (e.g., information that is left out and that the reader must fill in), and silences in the text (e.g., voices of a person or group not heard).

In *family life education*, students who are critically literate are able, for example, to actively analyse media messages and determine potential motives and underlying messages. They are able to determine what biases might be contained in texts, media, and resource material and why that might be, how the content of these materials was determined and by whom, and whose perspectives might have been left out and why. Students would then be equipped to produce their own interpretation of the issue. Opportunities should be provided for students to engage in a critical discussion of “texts”, which can include television programs, movies, web pages, advertising, music, gestures, oral texts, and other means of expression. This discussion empowers students to understand how the authors of texts are trying to affect and change them as members of society. Language and communication are never neutral: they are used to inform, entertain, persuade, and manipulate.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 61-62)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, the family life education curriculum equips students with the knowledge, skills and values to critique the prevailing culture from a position of faith. As the Ontario Bishops have stated, “although Catholic education must prepare students to live in this culture and to embrace all that is good in it, this effort should not be reduced simply to learning how to adapt to the world. While we are called to be constructive and creative in our contribution to society, we must also be critical of those aspects of our culture which are contrary to the values of our faith tradition” (*This Moment of Promise*, 1989). The critically literate Catholic school student uses the Christian vision of personhood, relationship, and sexuality as a guide to assess the extent to which different contexts and situations are life-affirming.

Metacognition is the process of thinking about one’s own thought processes. Metacognitive skills include the ability to monitor one’s own learning. Acquiring and using metacognitive skills has emerged as a powerful approach for promoting a focus on thinking skills in literacy and across all disciplines. In *family life education*, metacognitive skills are developed in a number of ways. The expectations related to the “Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing” subheading, for example, equip students to make personally relevant connections as they develop knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values in each of the five strands of the curriculum. The strand, Created in God’s Image, provides students with the capacity to recognize their strengths and needs and monitor their progress, while the communication and stress management skills learned in the Living in Relationship strand help them respond to challenges and changes as they learn and develop. Within the Created Sexual: Male and Female strand, students are expected not only to learn about concepts related to the respect and care for their bodies but also to use this information to make personal health choices and to understand the many ways in which their health and well-being are related to the health and well-being of others and to a variety of factors in the broader world. Learning to make these connections helps students move beyond simple content knowledge and apply this information meaningfully as they strive to lead fully human lives.

## THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL LIBRARY IN FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

The school library program can help to build and transform students' knowledge to support a lifetime of learning in an information- and knowledge-based society. The school library program supports student success across the *family life education* curriculum by encouraging students to read widely, teaching them to read many forms of text for understanding and enjoyment, and helping them to improve their research skills and to use information gathered through research effectively. The school library program enables students to:

- develop a love of reading for learning and for pleasure;
- acquire an understanding of the richness and diversity of artistic and informational texts produced in Canada and around the world;
- obtain access to programs, resources, and integrated technologies that support all curriculum areas;
- understand and value the role of public library systems as a resource for lifelong learning.

The school library program plays a key role in the development of information literacy and research skills. In collaboration with classroom or content-area teachers, teacher-librarians design, teach, and provide students with authentic information and research tasks that foster learning, including the ability to:

- access, select, gather, process, critically evaluate, create, and communicate information;
- use the information obtained to explore and investigate issues, solve problems, make decisions, build knowledge, create personal meaning, and enrich their lives;
- communicate their findings for different audiences, using a variety of formats and technologies;
- use information and research with understanding, responsibility, and imagination.

In addition, teacher-librarians can work with teachers of *family life education* to help students:

- develop literacy in using non-print forms, such as the Internet, CDs, DVDs, and videos, in order to access *family life education* information, databases, demonstrations, and a variety of performances;
- design inquiry questions for research for *family life education* projects;
- create and produce single-medium or multimedia presentations.

Teachers of *family life education* are also encouraged to collaborate with both local librarians and teacher-librarians on collecting digital, print, and visual resources for projects (e.g., storybooks on a theme or topic to inspire role play in the primary grades; picture books for inspiration; culture-specific image collections; informational and performance videos). Librarians may also be able to assist in accessing a variety of online resources and collections (e.g., professional articles, image galleries, videos).

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), pp. 63-64)*

In Ontario Catholic schools, educators will find that there are many books, television programs, websites, CDs, and DVDs for students on the topics in family life education. Catholic educators are encouraged to collaborate with school librarians to integrate such materials with the family life curriculum, according to the needs of their classroom and availability, which includes copyright compliance. Since some topics in the family life education curriculum need to be approached with sensitivity, it is important that any additional resources for these topics be carefully screened in recognition of the needs of the learners and the teachings of the Catholic faith.

## THE ROLE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY IN FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

*"Do not be afraid of new technologies! These rank "among the marvelous things" – inter mirifica – which God has placed at our disposal to discover, to use and to make known the truth, also the truth about our dignity and about our destiny as his children, heirs of his eternal Kingdom."*

(John Paul II, *The Rapid Development*, Apostolic Letter, 2005)

Information and communications technology (ICT) provides a range of tools that can significantly extend and enrich teachers' instructional strategies and support students' learning in *family life education*. ICT tools include multimedia resources, databases, the Internet, digital cameras, and an extensive array of specialized software. Computer programs can help students to collect, organize, and sort the data they gather, and to write, edit, and present reports on their findings. ICT can also be used to connect students to other schools, at home and abroad, and to bring the global community into the local classroom.

The integration of information and communications technology into the *family life education* program represents a natural extension of the learning expectations... Whenever appropriate, therefore, students should be encouraged to use ICT to support and communicate their learning. Current technologies are useful both as research tools and as creative media.

(*The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised)*, p. 64)

In Ontario Catholic schools for example, students working individually or in groups can use computer technology and/or Internet websites to gain access to information about organizations that work to protect the gifts of creation, or to view images of the world's varied communities. Students can use digital cameras and projectors to design and present multimedia works or to record role-playing scenarios while practising interpersonal and decision-making skills related to healthy relationships, and for numerous other purposes.

Pope Benedict XVI has stated, "These (new digital) technologies are truly a gift to humanity and we must endeavor to ensure that the benefits they offer are put at the service of all human

individuals and communities, especially those who are most disadvantaged and vulnerable”  
(From the Vatican, 24 January 2009, Feast of Saint Francis de Sales).

“The new digital technologies are, indeed, gifts to humanity. As Catholics involved in the noble endeavor of educating youth, it is incumbent upon us to constantly strive to serve our students better by proactively engaging them in meaningful and ethical ways to incorporate these gifts into their daily lives. This is already occurring in wonderful ways in many classrooms throughout the province, though, rather than the exception, it should be the rule across all school districts. Simply waiting to react to the next inappropriate misuse of technology is no longer an option if all Catholic stakeholders are to leverage and realize the full potential of these technologies in their schools, homes and workplaces.

...as students continue to be immersed in and impacted by technology now and well into the future, success will likely be measured by how effectively Catholic educators can help them to develop and discern what is true, good and beautiful with the human heart, an informed conscience and the critical filter of the Catholic social teachings.”

(Catholic Curriculum Corporation, *Ethical and Responsible Use of Information and Communication Technology: A Guideline for All Stakeholders in Catholic Education*, 2009)

## BUILDING CAREER AWARENESS THROUGH FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

Students plan their pathways through school to postsecondary education, training, and/or work on the basis of their understanding of their personal interests, strengths, competencies, and accomplishments, and their knowledge of education and career opportunities. This understanding begins to develop in Grade 1 and continues through Grade 12, as students make assessments of their own learning and their strengths and interests; take part in explorations of jobs and occupations in the community that relate to their school subjects; and review their choices for secondary and postsecondary courses and pathways.

Career exploration activities provide students with practical applications of classroom experiences, as well as opportunities to make connections between what happens in school and what happens in the workplace or the community. Career exploration activities identify relevant applications of students’ academic studies and provide information about how people are contributing to society and the economy.

Students in Grades 1 to 6 are becoming aware of the people in their community and the work they do – at home, on the job, and as volunteers. Teachers should recognize and encourage this growing interest by teaching students to observe and ask questions – such as: *What does this job involve? Who is doing the job? What skills do they need to perform the task or carry out the job? What are some of the connections between this job and what I am learning at school?*

(*The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised)*, p. 65)

In Ontario Catholic schools, the expectations contained throughout the family life education document provide educators with the opportunity to build career awareness with their students. Beginning in grade one, and continuing thereafter, students develop an understanding of their unique gifts and talents as well as an understanding that their gifts are given by God to be shared with others. This awareness will bring personal relevance to topics involving career exploration. Students learn that being fully human entails growing in commitment. Educators will build career awareness through discussions of the ways in which students will financially provide for themselves and their families in the future. Finally, the family life education curriculum affords opportunity for students to recognize the contributions of human work to the world, the ways in which humans work to transform God's gifts for others, and their responsibility to participate in the work of building a more just society.

## FINANCIAL LITERACY IN FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

Ontario students will have the skills and knowledge to take responsibility for managing their personal financial well-being with confidence, competence, and a compassionate awareness of the world around them.

*A Sound Investment: Financial Literacy in Ontario Schools*, Report of the Working Group on Financial Literacy (Toronto: Ministry of Education, Ontario, 2010)

In Ontario Catholic schools, the family life education curriculum supports this vision articulated by the ministry. For example, students might consider how they understand themselves as “consumers” as one part of their identity; what financial decisions their families make for their well-being; what gender stereotypes exist with respect to money and spending; how a sound decision making model can be applied to financial matters; and how their spending practices have local and global consequences.

# OVERVIEW OF GRADES 1 TO 3

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Children's early learning experiences have a profound effect on their later development. The family life education program for Grades 1 to 3 therefore focuses on the foundational knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that students will need in order to understand what it means to be fully human.

## STUDENT DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRAM IMPLICATIONS

Program design and delivery must take into account the physical, cognitive, and emotional development of students. The following descriptions of the developmental characteristics of students in the primary grades are general in nature, and individual student characteristics will vary depending on the child's age, sex, body size, experience, and background.

### Physical Domain

Students in the primary grades exhibit a number of developmental characteristics that affect their ability to participate in physical activity. Their large muscle movement is more developed than their small muscle movement, and they are still learning to refine basic motor patterns...

As in all elementary programs, those for the primary grades should offer opportunities for all students to participate fully (e.g., by ensuring that each child has a piece of equipment needed to participate in the activity) and explore a wide range of activities. Equipment and activities should be modified as needed to permit students with different developmental needs and physical abilities to take part and allow all children to progress at their own rate. The program should provide opportunities for child-initiated individual expression, and students should be free to use their observations, experiences, and background knowledge when choosing activities and equipment. Activities should promote risk taking in a safe environment.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 67-68)*

### Cognitive Domain

Children at this age have well-developed imaginations and learn best through play and exploration. They are developing thought processes as well as vocabulary, memory, and concepts of time, weight, and space. Their perceptual abilities are also developing rapidly. They tend to be motivated and excited about learning new skills, but their ability to concentrate on a task varies.

Students in the primary grades generally find it easier to learn when learning experiences are divided into manageable pieces. They require concise instructions, short demonstrations, maximum time to explore and create, and opportunities for repetition and

practice. Rules for activities should be simple and set clear boundaries. In addition to learning to follow instructions, students in the primary grades should be challenged to think in more sophisticated ways, and they should be given opportunities to question, integrate, analyse, and apply ideas.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 68)*

### **Affective Domain**

Most students in the primary grades respond well to positive reinforcement and are also learning to respond to constructive feedback. They tend to be egocentric, as their sense of self is still developing, but they are also beginning to develop interpersonal skills and are learning to share and take turns. They are beginning to develop an understanding of game concepts, but winning and losing can be emotionally challenging for them.

Programs for these students should emphasize participatory and inclusive activities that focus on exploration and creativity rather than on game play that involves winning or losing. The children should be able to explore and play in a safe, cooperative environment. To help them develop the skills they need to interact positively with others, they should also have multiple opportunities to interact in different ways in small groups.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 68)*

## **FOCUS OF LEARNING IN FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION FOR THE PRIMARY DIVISION**

### **Strand A – Created and Loved by God<sup>12</sup>**

The first strand is rooted in the Christian belief that God creates, loves, and sustains each person. This belief is the foundation of the family life curriculum. It is the hope that students will marvel at the gift of their lives. The Catholic school encourages them to understand and respect themselves, since without genuine self-acceptance there can be no understanding of others or respect for them.

Educators in Ontario Catholic schools have an extraordinary opportunity to communicate God's love for each student. The role and influence of the Catholic educator at this stage of their lives are second only to that of the family. The Catholic educator's sensitivity to the unique nature of each student, and their support for each student's growth as persons can make an enormous difference, particularly for those living in difficult circumstances. Long after leaving school, many adults can point to a teacher who made them feel valued and capable – an example of God's love in action.

In Grade 1, students explore the gifts of creation, and, especially, the gift of people. They discover that each person is unique and has likes and dislikes and learn that all humans have feelings and that all humans grow and develop.

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<sup>12</sup> The strand descriptors in the overview of grades 1 to 3 find their source in the Grade 1 to 3 *Fully Alive – Renewal Edition*, Pearson Canada Inc.

In Grade 2, students discover some of the ways in which they are each a unique person whom God created and loves. Students explore their past growth and development and look ahead to the coming year. They learn more about feelings and the ways they choose to express those feelings.

In Grade 3, students continue to explore what it means to be known and loved by God – known so well that God calls each one of us by name. They find out more about what it means to be a person – to be unique, but also alike in many ways; to have feelings and to make choices about the way we express them; and to have talents and gifts that need to be developed. Finally, students discover that when talents and gifts are shared with each other, they are sharing ourselves.

### **Strand B – Living in Relationship**

This strand acknowledges the crucial role of the family in shaping the lives of children. This foundational experience in learning how to live with others cannot be replaced. Pope John Paul II put it this way: “The future of humanity passes by way of the family.”

We all experience difficulties and failures in living out our vocation of love within our families, yet we all long for enduring and strong family love. At times, the gap between longing and reality can seem vast. Poverty, divorce, unstable living situations, absent parents, over-burdened single parents, the stress of modern life on all families – all these circumstances are a reality within the Catholic community, and are reflected in Ontario Catholic school classrooms.

The approach of the family life education curriculum at the primary level is one that centres on the student, and the student’s need for secure attachment. Ontario Catholic schools welcome each student and in doing so, also welcome each student’s family. It is unthinkable that any child should feel less worthy or valued because of family circumstances. The Catholic school also recognizes that most families do the very best they can, whatever their circumstances.

But facing realities and responding to the needs of students does not mean abandoning the belief that the “family is rooted in the love that husband and wife have for each other” (OCCB, *Curriculum Guideline for Family Life Education*). The Living in Relationship strand reflects this ideal, not as judgement of alternatives, but as a statement of belief in the possibility of enduring love and as a sign of hope for the future. Catholic educators bring this message to life through their sensitivity to the students and their families, and through their own sense of hope for the future.

In Grade 1, students describe their family and the activities their family enjoys together. They explore the changes in families (a new baby), the strength of family love, and the special place of each person in the family. Students discover more about what it means to be a friend.

In Grade 2, students explore the uniqueness of each family, including their own. They explore signs of love in families, how a change (moving) affects family members, and the relationship between brothers and sisters. Students discover more about friendship, and learn about the meaning of co-operation.

In Grade 3, students talk about family names, some family customs, and how family love is open to others, especially when we celebrate special occasions. They discuss how a family responds to the death of a family member. Students explore different positions in the family (oldest, middle, youngest, only child). They discover the importance of learning how to compromise with friends and of being friendly and open to others.

### **Strand C – Created Sexual: Male and Female**

God created us male and female, and our sexuality is a fundamental component of our identity as persons. Just as students need to learn about their personal characteristics, their feelings, and their relationships within the family and with friends, they also need to learn about sexuality.

Before students begin school, they often ask their parents about where babies come from, how the baby grows inside the mother, and why girls and boys are physically different. They remember the answers to some of their questions, and forget the answers to others. What they do absorb, however, is the adult's attitude toward human sexuality and the gift of new life.

Educating students in this area is a serious responsibility in which families play the primary role. But there is also room for others, in particular, educators. Family life education supports and enriches the early education in sexuality that has already begun in the student's home.

What does this mean for primary-age students? The amount of specific information in the early grades is quite limited. It is important to remember, however, that the context for this information is far more important than the facts themselves. This context is one of love, both marital and familial, and of reverence and awe for the miracle of new life.

Above all, it is hoped that students will understand that we begin life as a result of the love our mothers and fathers shared. No matter what happens later, nothing can change that. It is part of God's plan that we grow and are sheltered in our mother's uterus before birth. After we are born, it is our family that loves and cares for us.

As educators in our Ontario Catholic schools teach this strand, their appreciation of God's plan for human love and new life is communicated to the students. Their own sense of wonder and their sensitivity to the students are the most important ingredients that can be brought to this strand.

In Grade 1, students discover that husbands and wives share their love by becoming parents. They learn about the development of babies before birth and about the care and love they need after they are born. Students also learn that God made boys and girls physically different.

In Grade 2, students discover more about the development of babies before birth and especially about how the baby breathes and receives nourishment in the uterus. They learn about the importance of respect and care for the body, which is a gift from God.

In Grade 3, students learn more about life before birth, and how all of a baby's needs are met in the uterus. They discover that life begins at the moment of conception as a single cell and they explore the amazing growth and development of babies in their first year of life.

### **Strand D – Growing in Commitment**

Each one of us is called to grow in commitment to God and to each other. Even young children share this calling. But as it is with so many aspects of being human, we learn how to be committed from what we experience. Children need and thrive on adult dependability at home and at school.

Together with parents, Ontario Catholic schools share the vital task of helping students learn to be dependable, to keep their word, and to make wise choices. The Catholic educator's role is particularly significant for children living in difficult circumstances. The Catholic educator's commitment to each student is an important model for their future growth. It is also from parents and teachers that students learn to depend on God, who is the supreme model of commitment and will never fail them.

In Grade 1, students examine how they depend on their families, and what it means to be dependable. They discover that *promise* is a special word that has to be used with care. The students begin to explore how they make choices and the meaning of consequences.

In Grade 2, students learn more about being dependable by exploring the commitments of community workers. They examine what it means to keep their word and why it is important. Finally, they analyze situations that involve making decisions.

In Grade 3, students learn more about the commitments that all families have, and how important it is for people to keep their commitments. They discover that they have to think before we make a decision. Students continue to analyze situations involving a decision, and learn that other people can help them when they are making decisions.

### **Strand E – Living in the World**

This final strand affirms the goodness of creation and of our participation in the world. The Christian paradox of involvement yet detachment, as well as adult knowledge of how much suffering and injustice there is in the world, are developments for later years. At the primary level, the students need to experience a simple message of hope that will encourage them to commit themselves to building God's world.

One of the many gifts that children bring to adults is their enthusiasm. There is so much to be discovered about the world, so many questions to ask, and so much to be learned. When Ontario Catholic schools nurture this enthusiasm in the students, the gifts that have been given are returned. When Catholic educators communicate a sense of hope and a belief that individuals can make a difference in the world, they are helping to prepare students to participate wholeheartedly in the human society to which they belong.

In Grade 1, students explore the world as an amazing place to be and to learn about. They learn about some of the ways people care for God's creation and discover some of the kinds of work that adults do to contribute to making the world a good place to be.

In Grade 2, students explore aspects of the world that make it a good place for them. They learn about some natural resources of the world, which are gifts of creation and discover some of the work that people do to transform God's gifts for our use.

In Grade 3, students explore some of the differences and similarities of people from all over the world, and recognize how much they have in common, no matter where they live. They discover more about human work and its importance for human society and learn that doing good work requires effort and patience.



# GRADE 1

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Unless otherwise noted, the following abbreviations are used in the **Overall Expectations**:

**CCC** *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

**CCCC** *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*

**C in V** *Caritas in Veritate* (Love in Truth), 2009

**DV** *Donum vitae* (Instruction on Respect for Human Life in its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation), 1987

**FC** *Familiaris consortio* (On the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World)

**GDC** *General Directory for Catechesis*

**GS** *Gaudium et spes* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)

## A. CREATED AND LOVED BY GOD

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

**A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** demonstrate an appreciation that humans have been created in the image of a loving God. (CCC 299, 325-327; CCCC 59; GDC 116-117, 123; GS 12)

**A2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans are both unique and share a common human nature with each other. (CCC 299, 1699-1715; CCCC 358; FC 11)

**A3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the unique and shared aspects of human nature in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 229, 337-349, 353-354; CCCC 43, 63, 66-67; GS 4)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

#### A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**A1.1** express through prayer their appreciation for the gifts of creation

**A1.2** express through prayer their appreciation for the gift of life

**A1.3** appreciate that we are all special people whom God sees and loves

#### A2. Exploring Human Nature

**A2.1** recognize that our lives are gifts from God

**A2.2** recognize that everyone has likes and dislikes

**A2.3** recognize that everyone has feelings

**A2.4** recognize that they will continue to grow and change

#### A3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**A3.1** identify and describe some of the gifts of God’s creation

**A3.2** describe some of the ways in which their physical appearance is unique

**A3.3** identify and record some of their likes and dislikes

**A3.4** identify and name some common feelings

**A3.5** identify and describe some of the ways they have grown and changed

## **B. LIVING IN RELATIONSHIP**

### **OVERALL EXPECTATIONS**

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

**B1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by living in relationship with others. (CCC 2258-2265, 2318-2320; CCCC 466-467; GS 47-52; FC 11)

**B2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which the bonds of family and friendship are central to human life and shape human identity and development. (CCC 1897-1917; CCCC 405-410; GS 53-56; FC 12)

**B3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the role of relationships in shaping human identity and development in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1877-1880, 1890-1896; CCCC 401-404; GS 57-62; FC 14, 15)

### **SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS**

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

#### **B1. Appreciating God’s Goodness**

**B1.1** celebrate the variety of ways that families share love

**B1.2** appreciate that each child has a special place in the family

**B1.3** celebrate friendship in their lives

#### **B2. Exploring Human Nature**

**B2.1** recognize that we all have families

**B2.2** recognize that families are still a place of love even when there are changes

**B2.3** recognize that brothers and sisters are special people in our lives

#### **B3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing**

**B3.1** introduce their families to the class

**B3.2** identify and describe a favourite family activity

**B3.3** identify and describe some of the feelings that occur when a new baby joins the family

**B3.4** describe some of the experiences of friendship

## C. CREATED SEXUAL: MALE AND FEMALE

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

**C1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by creating, protecting, and sustaining life. (CCC 1601-1605; CCCC 337; GS 12-22; FC 42-43)

**C2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which human sexuality is a gift from God, a fundamental dimension of human identity, and intended for life and love. (CCC 2331-2336; CCCC 487-492; GS 47-52; FC 28-29)

**C3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of human sexuality as it is related to identity in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1652-1653; CCCC 487-492; GS 23-32; FC 32)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

#### C1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**C1.1** appreciate that a baby is God’s special gift of love to a family

**C1.2** appreciate that it is God’s plan for a new baby to grow inside its mother’s body

**C1.3** appreciate God’s design for bringing new people into the world

#### C2. Exploring Human Nature

**C2.1** recognize that in marriage a man and a woman share their love for each other and build a new life together

**C2.2** identify the uterus as the special place inside a mother’s body where a baby grows

**C2.3** recognize that it is part of God’s plan that boys and girls are physically different

#### C3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**C3.1** listen and respond to a story about a relationship between a man and a woman that leads to marriage

**C3.2** listen and respond to a story about a married couple who are beginning their life together

**C3.3** describe some ways in which the uterus is a perfect home for a baby

**C3.4** describe some ways in which babies are cared for after they are born

## **D. GROWING IN COMMITMENT**

### **OVERALL EXPECTATIONS**

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

**D1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by committing to faithful relationships. (CCC 1716, 1776-1780, 1795-1797; CCCC 359; DV 4)

**D2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans grow in their ability to develop committed and trustworthy relationships. (CCC 1790-1794, 1801-1802; CCCC 376; DV 4)

**D3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the role of commitment in human relationships in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1789; CCCC 375; DV 4)

### **SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS**

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

#### **D1. Appreciating God’s Goodness**

**D1.1** recognize the importance of being dependable

#### **D2. Exploring Human Nature**

**D2.1** explain the meaning of the word promise

**D2.2** recognize the need to think carefully before making a promise

**D2.3** recognize that choices based on preferences have consequences

#### **D3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing**

**D3.1** identify some of the ordinary day-to-day ways they depend on their families

**D3.2** examine the process of making choices that are based on preferences

## E. LIVING IN THE WORLD

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

**E1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by caring for all of God’s gifts of creation. (CCC 1881-1885, 1892-1894; CCCC 402, 403; GS 33-39)

**E2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans participate in society and fulfill the responsibility to care for and build God’s world. (CCC 1897-1909, 1910-1917, 1926-1927; CCCC 405-410; GS 40-45)

**E3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the global dimension of human nature in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 268-278, 290-292, 295-301, 316-320, 337-344; CCCC 50, 52, 54, 62; C in V Ch 4; GS 77-92)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

#### E1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**E1.1** recognize the value of human work

#### E2. Exploring Human Nature

**E2.1** recognize that they learn about the world in a variety of ways

**E2.2** recognize that everyone is responsible for caring for the world

#### E3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**E3.1** identify some aspects of the world that they find interesting

**E3.2** identify some of the ways in which people care for their homes

**E3.3** identify some of the kinds of work that adults do

# GRADE 2

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Unless otherwise noted, the following abbreviations are used in the **Overall Expectations**:

**CCC** *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

**CCCC** *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*

**C in V** *Caritas in Veritate* (Love in Truth), 2009

**DV** *Donum vitae* (Instruction on Respect for Human Life in its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation), 1987

**FC** *Familiaris consortio* (On the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World)

**GDC** *General Directory for Catechesis*

**GS** *Gaudium et spes* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)

## A. CREATED AND LOVED BY GOD

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 2, students will:

**A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** demonstrate an appreciation that humans have been created in the image of a loving God. (CCC 299, 325-327; CCCC 59; GDC 116-117, 123; GS 12)

**A2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans are both unique and share a common human nature with each other. (CCC 299, 1699-1715; CCCC 358; FC 11)

**A3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the unique and shared aspects of human nature in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 229, 337-349, 353-354; CCCC 43, 63, 66-67; GS 4)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 2, students will:

#### A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**A1.1** recognize that each of them is a unique person whom God created and loves

**A1.2** express their appreciation of their gifts and those of others

#### A2. Exploring Human Nature

**A2.1** recognize that they will continue to grow and develop

**A2.2** recognize the importance of expressing their feelings

**A2.3** recognize that they have choices in the way they express their feelings

#### A3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**A3.1** identify some of their interests, activities, and preferences

**A3.2** identify some of the ways that they have grown and developed

**A3.3** identify some of their gifts and personal qualities

## **B. LIVING IN RELATIONSHIP**

### **OVERALL EXPECTATIONS**

By the end of Grade 2, students will:

**B1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by living in relationship with others. (CCC 2258-2265, 2318-2320; CCCC 466-467; GS 47-52; FC 11)

**B2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which the bonds of family and friendship are central to human life and shape human identity and development. (CCC 1897-1917; CCCC 405-410; GS 53-56; FC 12)

**B3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the role of relationships in shaping human identity and development in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1877-1880, 1890-1896; CCCC 401-404; GS 57-62; FC 14, 15)

### **SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS**

By the end of Grade 2, students will:

#### **B1. Appreciating God’s Goodness**

**B1.1** recognize that each family member contributes to family love

**B1.2** recognize that families are still a place of love even when there are changes

**B1.3** recognize the importance of friendship in people’s lives

#### **B2. Exploring Human Nature**

**B2.1** recognize that each person’s family is unique

**B2.2** recognize the need for forgiveness among brothers and sisters

**B2.3** explain the importance of co-operation with others

**B2.4** recognize the need to develop a spirit of co-operation in their relationships

#### **B3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing**

**B3.1** introduce their families to the class

**B3.2** identify some of the ways that family members show love for each other

**B3.3** identify and describe some of the feelings that occur when a family moves to a new home

**B3.4** identify some situations that lead to fights among brothers and sisters

**B3.5** describe some of the ways they express friendship with others

## C. CREATED SEXUAL: MALE AND FEMALE

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 2, students will:

**C1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by creating, protecting, and sustaining life. (CCC 1601-1605; CCCC 337; GS 12-22; FC 42-43)

**C2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which human sexuality is a gift from God, a fundamental dimension of human identity, and intended for life and love. (CCC 2331-2336; CCCC 487-492; GS 47-52; FC 28-29)

**C3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of human sexuality as it is related to identity in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1652-1653; CCCC 487-492; GS 23-32; FC 32)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 2, students will:

#### C1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**C1.1** appreciate and respect God’s wonderful plan for new life

**C1.2** appreciate that new babies are a gift from God

#### C2. Exploring Human Nature

**C2.1** recognize that husbands and wives share their lives with each other and with their children

**C2.2** describe some features of prenatal life

**C2.3** recognize that our bodies are gifts from God

#### C3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**C3.1** listen and respond to a story about marriage and family

**C3.2** listen and respond to a story about the beginning of human life inside the uterus

**C3.3** give a simple description of how the human person is born

**C3.4** describe some of the ways they can show respect and care for their bodies

## D. GROWING IN COMMITMENT

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 2, students will:

**D1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by committing to faithful relationships. (CCC 1716, 1776-1780, 1795-1797; CCCC 359; DV 4)

**D2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans grow in their ability to develop committed and trustworthy relationships. (CCC 1790-1794, 1801-1802; CCCC 376; DV 4)

**D3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the role of commitment in human relationships in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1789; CCCC 375; DV 4)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 2, students will:

#### D1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**D1.1** appreciate the value of dependability

#### D2. Exploring Human Nature

**D2.1** recognize that in some situations people have to break their word

**D2.2** recognize that making decisions can be difficult

#### D3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**D3.1** identify and describe some of the commitments of people in their community

**D3.2** explain the importance of keeping their word to others

**D3.3** analyze and compare two situations involving decisions

## E. LIVING IN THE WORLD

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 2, students will:

**E1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by caring for all of God’s gifts of creation. (CCC 1881-1885, 1892-1894; CCCC 402, 403; GS 33-39)

**E2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans participate in society and fulfill the responsibility to care for and build God’s world. (CCC 1897-1909, 1910-1917, 1926-1927; CCCC 405-410; GS 40-45)

**E3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the global dimension of human nature in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 268-278, 290-292, 295-301, 316-320, 337-344; CCCC 50, 52, 54, 62; C in V Ch 4; GS 77-92)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 2, students will:

#### E1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**E1.1** appreciate the goodness of God’s world

**E1.2** appreciate that God has given us what we need to live in the world

#### E2. Exploring Human Nature

**E2.1** recognize the value of human work

#### E3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**E3.1** identify some aspects of the world that make it a good place for them

**E3.2** identify some of the many natural resources of the earth

**E3.3** identify some of the people who work to transform God’s gifts for our use

# GRADE 3

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Unless otherwise noted, the following abbreviations are used in the **Overall Expectations**:

**CCC** *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

**CCCC** *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*

**C in V** *Caritas in Veritate* (Love in Truth), 2009

**DV** *Donum vitae* (Instruction on Respect for Human Life in its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation), 1987

**FC** *Familiaris consortio* (On the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World)

**GDC** *General Directory for Catechesis*

**GS** *Gaudium et spes* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)

## A. CREATED AND LOVED BY GOD

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 3, students will:

**A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** demonstrate an appreciation that humans have been created in the image of a loving God. (CCC 299, 325-327; CCCC 59; GDC 116-117, 123; GS 12)

**A2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans are both unique and share a common human nature with each other. (CCC 299, 1699-1715; CCCC 358; FC 11)

**A3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the unique and shared aspects of human nature in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 229, 337-349, 353-354; CCCC 43, 63, 66-67; GS 4)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 3, students will:

#### A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**A1.1** express through prayer their appreciation for the gift of life and for God’s love for them

**A1.2** recognize and appreciate the variety of people in their classroom

#### A2. Exploring Human Nature

**A2.1** recognize that God knows them and calls them by their names

**A2.2** explain why it is important for people to think about how they express their feelings

**A2.3** recognize that their talents and gifts are meant to be shared with others

#### A3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**A3.1** identify some of their personal characteristics and those of their classmates

**A3.2** describe some differences in the way in which people express feelings

**A3.3** identify some of the talents and gifts that God has given them

## **B. LIVING IN RELATIONSHIP**

### **OVERALL EXPECTATIONS**

By the end of Grade 3, students will:

**B1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by living in relationship with others. (CCC 2258-2265, 2318-2320; CCCC 466-467; GS 47-52; FC 11)

**B2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which the bonds of family and friendship are central to human life and shape human identity and development. (CCC 1897-1917; CCCC 405-410; GS 53-56; FC 12)

**B3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the role of relationships in shaping human identity and development in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1877-1880, 1890-1896; CCCC 401-404; GS 57-62; FC 14, 15)

### **SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS**

By the end of Grade 3, students will:

#### **B1. Appreciating God’s Goodness**

**B1.1** recognize the value of their special family customs

**B1.2** appreciate that family love is open to others

**B1.3** recognize the value of friendship among brothers and sisters

#### **B2. Exploring Human Nature**

**B2.1** recognize and appreciate the need for family members to help each other when change brings sadness to a family

**B2.2** describe some of the pleasures and challenges of friendship

**B2.3** recognize that all people need friends in their lives

**B2.4** recognize the need to be open to other people

#### **B3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing**

**B3.1** describe some unique characteristics of their families

**B3.2** identify some special occasions when their families share love with others

**B3.3** identify some of the feelings that occur in response to a death in the family

**B3.4** identify the advantages and disadvantages of birth order in the family

**B3.5** analyze the concept of friendliness

## C. CREATED SEXUAL: MALE AND FEMALE

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 3, students will:

**C1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by creating, protecting, and sustaining life. (CCC 1601-1605; CCCC 337; GS 12-22; FC 42-43)

**C2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which human sexuality is a gift from God, a fundamental dimension of human identity, and intended for life and love. (CCC 2331-2336; CCCC 487-492; GS 47-52; FC 28-29)

**C3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of human sexuality as it is related to identity in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1652-1653; CCCC 487-492; GS 23-32; FC 32)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 3, students will:

#### C1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**C1.1** express through prayer their appreciation for the gift of life

**C1.2** appreciate the beauty of God’s design for sustaining new human life

#### C2. Exploring Human Nature

**C2.1** recognize that their lives began because of the love their parents shared and because of God’s love

**C2.2** recognize that human life begins at the moment of conception as a single cell

**C2.3** describe some basic features of growth and development between birth and childhood

**C2.4** recognize that they will continue to grow and develop

#### C3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**C3.1** listen and respond to a story about important events in the lives of a family

**C3.2** describe how the developing baby’s needs are met inside the uterus

**C3.3** give a simple description of how a baby is born

**C3.4** describe some of the needs of newborn babies

## D. GROWING IN COMMITMENT

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 3, students will:

**D1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by committing to faithful relationships. (CCC 1716, 1776-1780, 1795-1797; CCCC 359; DV 4)

**D2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans grow in their ability to develop committed and trustworthy relationships. (CCC 1790-1794, 1801-1802; CCCC 376; DV 4)

**D3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the role of commitment in human relationships in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1789; CCCC 375; DV 4)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 3, students will:

#### D1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**D1.1** recognize the importance of family commitments

#### D2. Exploring Human Nature

**D2.1** recognize that decisions need to be made carefully

**D2.2** recognize that other people can help them make good decisions

#### D3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**D3.1** describe a variety of family commitments

**D3.2** examine the process of making a decision

**D3.3** analyze a situation that requires a decision

## E. LIVING IN THE WORLD

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 3, students will:

**E1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by caring for all of God’s gifts of creation. (CCC 1881-1885, 1892-1894; CCCC 402, 403; GS 33-39)

**E2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans participate in society and fulfill the responsibility to care for and build God’s world. (CCC 1897-1909, 1910-1917, 1926-1927; CCCC 405-410; GS 40-45)

**E3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the global dimension of human nature in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 268-278, 290-292, 295-301, 316-320, 337-344; CCCC 50, 52, 54, 62; C in V Ch 4; GS 77-92)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 3, students will:

#### E1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**E1.1** recognize the value of care and effort in their work

#### E2. Exploring Human Nature

**E2.1** recognize and appreciate how much they share with all people

**E2.2** recognize and appreciate that work is an essential and valuable human activity

#### E3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**E3.1** describe some of the differences and similarities of people from all over the world

**E3.2** identify some of the contributions of human work

**E3.3** identify some of the demands of work

## OVERVIEW OF GRADES 4 TO 6

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The expectations for Grades 4 to 6 build on students' experiences in the primary grades and further develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values they need in order to understand what it means to be fully human. Because the base of knowledge, experience, and skills varies from student to student, it is important for instruction to be differentiated to meet a wide range of student needs. The emphasis in the junior grades should be on building students' understanding of themselves in relation to others.

### STUDENT DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRAM IMPLICATIONS

Program design and delivery must take into account the physical, cognitive, and emotional development of students. The following descriptions of the developmental characteristics of students in the junior grades are general in nature, and individual student characteristics will vary depending on the child's age, sex, body size, experience, and background.

#### **Physical Domain**

Students in the junior grades tend to have significant individual differences, reflecting different growth rates and different life experiences. Some may have begun a major growth spurt. Gender-related differences in development are also evident. As they approach puberty, the average weights and heights of the girls will generally be greater than those of the boys. Some students may begin to develop secondary sex characteristics, and some may feel awkward performing skills as they get used to changes in their bodies.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 113)*

#### **Cognitive Domain**

Students in the junior grades show a growing capacity for abstract thought and a greater ability to process visual information rapidly. Their attention spans are increasing, and they demonstrate greater thought retention and increased problem-solving abilities. They tend to enjoy challenges, contests, and intellectual activities. They are also generally less egocentric than students in the primary grades and more conscious of external influences.

Students in the junior grades need opportunities to use their creativity and apply their expanding intellectual capabilities. They like to be involved in making decisions and should be given opportunities... to inquire more deeply about topics that are personally relevant during *family life education* discussions. They should have frequent opportunities to question, integrate, analyse, and apply information.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 114)*

## **Affective Domain**

Peer relationships assume increasing importance in the junior grades. Students are more influenced by their peers and tend to seek peer approval for their actions. They are more likely to become involved in clubs, gangs, and cliques and may sometimes experience tension with adults as they develop closer relations with their peers. They may demonstrate a desire to be popular and to assert themselves and often perceive their ability and success in relation to others rather than themselves. They may be more aware of gender expectations and stereotypes and look to television, movies, the Internet, and the community for role models. Gender relations can become more complex as students develop.

To help students develop their sense of self and an awareness of their own abilities, likes, and dislikes, programs in the junior grades should encourage them to think in terms of self-improvement rather than peer comparison. To help them develop their own rules and value systems, they also need to be exposed to models of fair decision making and be given many opportunities to think about and solve their own problems... Students at this level should be encouraged to ask questions and take responsibility for their learning.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 114)*

## **FOCUS OF LEARNING IN FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION FOR THE JUNIOR DIVISION**

### **Strand A – Created and Loved by God<sup>13</sup>**

As the dignity and worth of each person is explored in this first strand, the students are encouraged to deepen their sense of how valuable they are and to recognize and offer to others their many gifts. A Christian view of self-worth acknowledges the struggle that goes on in each person between genuine self-love and selfishness. This conflict is part of the human condition, and one that each person must face with hope and with faith.

The foundation of genuine self-love, which expresses itself in self-esteem and generosity toward others, is built at home. When children have been well loved, the confidence born of this love appears effortless. They accept themselves and reach out to others because they have been accepted. They acknowledge and struggle with their faults and failings without being overwhelmed by them. They forgive themselves and others because they have received forgiveness. They know in their hearts that their value does not lie in their achievements, appearance, or talents, but in something much deeper.

But for children who have been less fortunate, the role of the Catholic school in conveying the priceless value of each person becomes more vital. The family life education curriculum cannot build self-esteem, but individuals and caring communities can. Catholic educators in Ontario have the extraordinary opportunity to communicate God's love for each child. The role and influence of the Catholic educator at this stage of their lives are second only to that of the family.

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<sup>13</sup> The strand descriptors in the overview of grades 4 to 6 find their source in the Grade 4 to 6 *Fully Alive – Renewal Edition*, Pearson Canada Inc.

The Catholic educator's sensitivity to the unique nature of each student, and their support for each student's growth as persons can make an enormous difference, particularly for those living in difficult circumstances. Long after leaving school, many adults can point to a teacher who made them feel valued and capable – an example of God's love in action.

In Grade 4, students recognize and appreciate the gift of love God has given each person, the gift of our lives. Students continue to explore the value of similarities and differences among people begun in the primary grades. They learn about the early stages of human development (prenatal, infancy and childhood), and discuss the need for other people to help with human growth and development. Finally, students examine the impact that words and actions have on others, and the importance of awareness of other people's feelings.

In Grade 5, students continue to recognize and appreciate God's everlasting love for them. They explore the importance of respect for self and for others. Students examine the many ways humans develop during life's journeys, including learning about the end of life journey on earth and the beginning of a new life with God. They discover that they are connected to many people, both living and dead, through their influence on their family members.

In Grade 6, students explore how love is able to transform people's lives and reflect on the way in which God created humans to be people of love. Students recognize the presence of life-giving people in their lives and examine some of the ways in which they can be life givers and make a difference in other people's lives. Finally, students recognize the harm caused by bullying and the need to seek adult help for serious problems.

### **Strand B – Living in Relationship**

The message of this strand is intended to be both hopeful and challenging: hopeful, because learning to love is a life-long process and there is always the opportunity for a new beginning; challenging because the students are urged to recognize the importance of their contribution to the quality of their family life and friendships.

We all experience difficulties and failures in living out our vocation of love within our families, yet we all long for enduring and strong family love. At times, the gap between longing and reality can seem vast. Poverty, divorce, unstable living situations, absent parents, over-burdened single parents, the stress of modern life on all families – all these circumstances are a reality within the Catholic community, and are reflected in Ontario Catholic school classrooms.

The approach of the family life education curriculum is one that centres on the student, and the student's need for secure attachment. Ontario Catholic schools welcome each student and in doing so, also welcome each student's family. It is unacceptable that any child should feel less worthy or valued because of family circumstances. The Catholic school also recognizes that most families do the very best they can, whatever their circumstances.

There is always a great concern on the part of Catholic educators for those students who are experiencing major family problems with no apparent resolution. This concern is well founded, since these students are vulnerable to feelings of worthlessness and anger, which in turn impairs their ability to form loving and trusting relationships. They deserve attention and compassion,

but they too need a message that is hopeful and challenging. The future is not predetermined for them. They do not have to repeat unhealthy patterns of relating learned in the family.

Learning to love begins in the family, but it does not end there. God's grace is mediated through many people who touch our lives: teachers who believe in us even when we do not believe in ourselves, friends who listen and understand, a neighbourhood family that offers its help during times of difficulties, and even strangers who surprise us with their generosity. The evidence of God's life-giving love is always there when we look for it.

In Grade 4, students explore the value of time together, whether enjoying an ordinary family activity or a special occasion. They also examine some of the day-to-day signs of family love. Students begin to examine some of the feelings children experience as a result of separation and divorce. They learn that families have many responsibilities, and that each member has a special contribution to make. Finally, students discover that learning to be a friend is the way to have friends.

In Grade 5, students consider some of the ways that families are both unique and alike. They examine the purpose of rules, and the role of family rules. Students explore some of the ways families change, and discuss the importance of family members helping each other during times of change. They learn more about the qualities of true friendship, and examine possible solutions to friendship difficulties. Finally, students learn about the responsibility to help those, such as their peers, who are being mistreated.

In Grade 6, students explore the need for relationships in their lives, especially with family and friends. They discuss the importance of family histories and customs. Students examine some day-to-day stresses that all families experience and consider strategies to manage them. They learn about common communication problems and ways to overcome them. Finally, students analyze how friendships change as they grow up and learn more about how to handle stressful situations with friends.

### **Strand C – Created Sexual: Male and Female**

As late childhood gives way to early adolescence, one of the important goals of this strand is to prepare students for a new time of discovery and questioning. It is also a time of reflection, and the issue of identity, which includes sexuality, assumes increasing importance, especially in later adolescence.

At the beginning of puberty, there is a natural focus on the body as the secondary sexual characteristics develop and the first signs of fertility are experienced. This focus is recognized in the Created Sexual: Male and Female strand with topics that address concerns that students have about the timetable of puberty and their place in that timetable. In later grades, issues such as changing relationships with the opposite sex and the new experience of sexual attraction are all part of this strand.

As in the earlier grades, the view of sexuality that is developed in this strand is one that integrates the relational and procreational dimensions of sexuality. Sexual attraction is not only the attraction of bodies, but of persons. Human fertility is a gift to be cherished and protected, an

integral part of our identity as male and female persons. We are embodied spirits, created to be life-giving and loving, called to live in harmony with our physical/spiritual nature, and challenged to understand and follow God's plan for sexuality. The sense of appreciation for the wonder of human life and love, and the sensitivity to the students that educators in Ontario Catholic schools exhibit, are the most important ingredients that can be brought to family life education.

In Grade 4, students learn that husbands and wives participate in God's power to create new life. They explore some of the gifts they receive at conception as well as the gift after birth of ongoing love and care from family, friends, and others. Students discover more about the development and birth of babies, and learn the difference between identical and fraternal twins and they explore the stages of human development, including adolescence and adulthood.

In Grade 5, students explore the idea that they do not *have* bodies, they *are* bodies. God created humans as body/spirit persons. They consider the major systems of the body, and learn that the reproductive system has unique characteristics. Students learn about the adult female and male reproductive systems and about human fertility in adult women and men. Finally, students discuss the physical changes of puberty, as well as some of the related emotional and social changes.

In Grade 6, students explore some of the ways in which they learn about sexuality and develop their ideas about what it means to be male or female. They review the main features of adult female and male fertility. Students learn about the first minutes and days of a new human life, the development of the new life during each trimester of a pregnancy, and the baby's birth. They continue to explore the physical, emotional, and social changes related to puberty. Finally, students examine how both heredity and environment influence their development as persons, and learn about the choices they can make as they develop.

### **Strand D – Growing in Commitment**

The essential message of this strand is that commitment is a personal decision. This decision is made not once but many times throughout the course of each day – the decision to spend time with a friend, to complete a homework assignment, to help in the preparation of a family meal, to participate actively in a classroom discussion or a basketball game, or to avoid an unnecessary argument with a sibling. Commitment is really the free gift of ourselves to being the best person we can be at each stage in our lives. It involves personal effort and determination and is nurtured in young people by families and teachers who recognize and honour their own commitment to be patient, to encourage, to inspire, and to build confidence.

Together with parents, Ontario Catholic schools share the vital task of helping students learn to be dependable, to keep their word, and to make wise choices. The Catholic educator's role is particularly significant for children living in difficult circumstances. The Catholic educator's commitment to each student is an important model for their future growth. It is also from parents and teachers that students learn to depend on God, who is the supreme model of commitment who will never fail them.

In Grade 4, students continue to explore the meaning of commitment, identify some of their commitments, explore the process of making a commitment, and consider the questions that have to be answered before making a commitment. They examine the pleasures and difficulties of keeping a commitment and recognize the value of keeping commitments.

In Grade 5, students discover the importance of accepting responsibility for their actions, and of recognizing that actions have consequences for themselves and others. They learn that, to make a commitment to themselves means to make a commitment to be the person God created them to be. Students examine the commitments they have that involve other people: families, friends, being a student and a classmate, special activities, and their communities.

In Grade 6, students continue to explore the meaning of commitment and how they learn to be committed persons. They examine the qualities and accomplishments of people, both famous and unrecognized, who are models of commitment. Students explore commitments in their own lives and reflect on the rewards and difficulties of becoming a committed person.

### **Strand E – Living in the World**

One of the many gifts children bring to adults is their enthusiasm and idealism. They see the possibilities, and although they lack the experience that leads to patience, they also lack the cynicism that blurs the vision of so many adults. When Ontario Catholic schools nourish this idealism in students, the gifts that have been given are returned. When Catholic educators communicate a sense of optimism and a belief that people can make a difference, they are helping to prepare students to participate whole-heartedly in the human society to which they belong. Hope is the necessary foundation for a personal commitment to build God's world.

In Grade 4, students learn to consider the world as their home and discover the importance of being good caretakers of their earthly home. They explore the contribution of human work and recognize that people participate in building God's world, their home, through their work.

In Grade 5, students explore the meaning of community through the example of the family. They discuss examples of strong communities, and identify some of the signs that are present in good communities: respect, communication, sharing resources, and depending on each other. Students explore the common needs of all people and the importance of using their gifts to make the world a better place.

In Grade 6, students analyze the human capacity to influence others and to be influenced by others. They explore the meaning of values and virtues, and examine the influence of television, advertising, and stereotypes on values. Finally, students discuss human influence on the natural and social environment of the world and the responsibility to be a positive influence.

# GRADE 4

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Unless otherwise noted, the following abbreviations are used in the **Overall Expectations**:

**CCC** *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

**CCCC** *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*

**C in V** *Caritas in Veritate* (Love in Truth), 2009

**DV** *Donum vitae* (Instruction on Respect for Human Life in its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation), 1987

**FC** *Familiaris consortio* (On the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World)

**GDC** *General Directory for Catechesis*

**GS** *Gaudium et spes* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)

## A. CREATED AND LOVED BY GOD

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 4, students will:

**A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** demonstrate an appreciation that humans have been created in the image of a loving God. (CCC 299, 325-327; CCCC 59; GDC 116-117, 123; GS 12)

**A2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans are both unique and share a common human nature with each other. (CCC 299, 1699-1715; CCCC 358; FC 11)

**A3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the unique and shared aspects of human nature in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 229, 337-349, 353-354; CCCC 43, 63, 66-67; GS 4)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 4, students will:

#### A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**A1.1** recognize and appreciate that human life is a gift of love from God

**A1.2** recognize the uniqueness of each person and the shared gift of being human

#### A2. Exploring Human Nature

**A2.1** respond to a story about a special gift

**A2.2** recognize that growing and developing are part of being a person

**A2.3** recognize that all people need others to help them grow

**A2.4** recognize the importance of becoming more sensitive to other people’s feelings

#### A3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**A3.1** identify some similarities and differences among their classmates

**A3.2** identify characteristics of two stages of human development: infancy and childhood

**A3.3** identify some of the people who help them grow and develop

**A3.4** analyze situations in which people can affect others by what they do or say

## **B. LIVING IN RELATIONSHIP**

### **OVERALL EXPECTATIONS**

By the end of Grade 4, students will:

**B1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by living in relationship with others. (CCC 2258-2265, 2318-2320; CCCC 466-467; GS 47-52; FC 11)

**B2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which the bonds of family and friendship are central to human life and shape human identity and development. (CCC 1897-1917; CCCC 405-410; GS 53-56; FC 12)

**B3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the role of relationships in shaping human identity and development in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1877-1880, 1890-1896; CCCC 401-404; GS 57-62; FC 14, 15)

### **SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS**

By the end of Grade 4, students will:

#### **B1. Appreciating God’s Goodness**

**B1.1** recognize the importance of spending time together as a family

**B1.2** recognize and appreciate the signs of love in their families

#### **B2. Exploring Human Nature**

**B2.1** respond to a story by identifying signs of family love

**B2.2** recognize the need to be sensitive to the feelings of those who have recently experienced a separation in their families

**B2.3** recognize that family members share responsibilities and each member of the family has a contribution to make

**B2.4** explain why people have to learn to be a friend in order to have friends

#### **B3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing**

**B3.1** identify some of the regular and special occasions when family members spend time together

**B3.2** identify some of the feelings that children experience as a result of separation and divorce

**B3.3** identify some of the reasons that responsibilities in a family may change

**B3.4** identify and distinguish between effective and ineffective strategies for making friends

## C. CREATED SEXUAL: MALE AND FEMALE

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 4, students will:

**C1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by creating, protecting, and sustaining life. (CCC 1601-1605; CCCC 337; GS 12-22; FC 42-43)

**C2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which human sexuality is a gift from God, a fundamental dimension of human identity, and intended for life and love. (CCC 2331-2336; CCCC 487-492; GS 47-52; FC 28-29)

**C3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of human sexuality as it is related to identity in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1652-1653; CCCC 487-492; GS 23-32; FC 32)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 4, students will:

#### C1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**C1.1** recognize and appreciate the value of loving relationships within families

**C1.2** recognize and appreciate the importance of the love and care they receive from their families and from other people

#### C2. Exploring Human Nature

**C2.1** recognize that children are a special sign of the love between a husband and wife

**C2.2** describe how identical and fraternal twins occur

**C2.3** describe some of the characteristics and needs of new babies

**C2.4** identify characteristics of two stages of human development: adolescence and adulthood

#### C3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**C3.1** examine the ways in which the Casey family members relate to each other

**C3.2** describe the promises that are made in marriage

**C3.3** identify some of the gifts they received from their parents at the moment of conception

**C3.4** explain, using appropriate vocabulary, how a baby’s needs are met in the uterus

**C3.5** explain the main events involved in the birth of a baby

**C3.6** recognize that in a year or so, many of them will enter the stage of adolescence

## D. GROWING IN COMMITMENT

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 4, students will:

**D1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by committing to faithful relationships. (CCC 1716, 1776-1780, 1795-1797; CCCC 359; DV 4)

**D2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans grow in their ability to develop committed and trustworthy relationships. (CCC 1790-1794, 1801-1802; CCCC 376; DV 4)

**D3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the role of commitment in human relationships in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1789; CCCC 375; DV 4)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 4, students will:

#### D1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**D1.1** recognize the value of keeping commitments

#### D2. Exploring Human Nature

**D2.1** explain the meaning of commitment

**D2.2** recognize the need for thought before making a commitment

#### D3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**D3.1** identify some of their commitments

**D3.2** examine the process of making a commitment

**D3.3** identify some of the pleasures and difficulties of keeping commitments

## E. LIVING IN THE WORLD

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 4, students will:

**E1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by caring for all of God’s gifts of creation. (CCC 1881-1885, 1892-1894; CCCC 402, 403; GS 33-39)

**E2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans participate in society and fulfill the responsibility to care for and build God’s world. (CCC 1897-1909, 1910-1917, 1926-1927; CCCC 405-410; GS 40-45)

**E3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the global dimension of human nature in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 268-278, 290-292, 295-301, 316-320, 337-344; CCCC 50, 52, 54, 62; C in V Ch 4; GS 77-92)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 4, students will:

#### E1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**E1.1** recognize and appreciate that the world is a special home

#### E2. Exploring Human Nature

**E2.1** recognize and appreciate the importance of being good caretakers of the physical environment

#### E3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**E3.1** describe some of the ways in which the world is their home

**E3.2** identify some of the ways that people can care for the physical environment

**E3.3** examine some of the ways people contribute to building the world through work

# GRADE 5

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Unless otherwise noted, the following abbreviations are used in the **Overall Expectations**:

**CCC** *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

**CCCC** *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*

**C in V** *Caritas in Veritate* (Love in Truth), 2009

**DV** *Donum vitae* (Instruction on Respect for Human Life in its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation), 1987

**FC** *Familiaris consortio* (On the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World)

**GDC** *General Directory for Catechesis*

**GS** *Gaudium et spes* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)

## A. CREATED AND LOVED BY GOD

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 5, students will:

**A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** demonstrate an appreciation that humans have been created in the image of a loving God. (CCC 299, 325-327; CCCC 59; GDC 116-117, 123; GS 12)

**A2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans are both unique and share a common human nature with each other. (CCC 299, 1699-1715; CCCC 358; FC 11)

**A3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the unique and shared aspects of human nature in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 229, 337-349, 353-354; CCCC 43, 63, 66-67; GS 4)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 5, students will:

#### A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**A1.1** recognize and appreciate that God loves each one of us forever

**A1.2** recognize and appreciate the uniqueness of each person in the class

**A1.3** recognize and appreciate the gift of each human life

**A1.4** recognize and appreciate the importance of support and prayer at the time of a death

#### A2. Exploring Human Nature

**A2.1** respond to a story about a boy who has done something wrong

**A2.2** recognize that we need to ask forgiveness from people we have harmed, and from God, who is always ready to listen and forgive

**A2.3** respond to a story about Mr. Talbot and his classroom rules

**A2.4** respond to a story about the death of an elderly man

**A2.5** recognize and appreciate that people, both living and dead, can have a lasting positive influence on others

#### A3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**A3.1** create a short written description of their thoughts and feelings as they begin Grade 5

**A3.2** identify and describe some features of the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions of human development

**A3.3** identify special people who have made a positive difference in the lives of their family members and in their own lives

## **B. LIVING IN RELATIONSHIP**

### **OVERALL EXPECTATIONS**

By the end of Grade 5, students will:

**B1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by living in relationship with others. (CCC 2258-2265, 2318-2320; CCCC 466-467; GS 47-52; FC 11)

**B2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which the bonds of family and friendship are central to human life and shape human identity and development. (CCC 1897-1917; CCCC 405-410; GS 53-56; FC 12)

**B3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the role of relationships in shaping human identity and development in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1877-1880, 1890-1896; CCCC 401-404; GS 57-62; FC 14, 15)

### **SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS**

By the end of Grade 5, students will:

#### **B1. Appreciating God’s Goodness**

**B1.1** recognize and appreciate the value of family love

**B1.2** recognize and appreciate family rules as a sign of family love

**B1.3** recognize and appreciate that friendship is a gift that is freely given

#### **B2. Exploring Human Nature**

**B2.1** describe the purpose of rules and laws

**B2.2** recognize and appreciate the need for support and co-operation within the family when changes occur

**B2.3** recognize that some friendship difficulties are a normal part of growing up

**B2.4** recognize the responsibility to support peers who are being mistreated

#### **B3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing**

**B3.1** identify and describe some unique and shared characteristics of families

**B3.2** identify some of the feelings that occur in response to family changes

**B3.3** identify and describe some of the qualities that are valued in friendships

**B3.4** describe the consequences of different solutions to common friendship difficulties

**B3.5** respond to a story about an incident of bullying

## C. CREATED SEXUAL: MALE AND FEMALE

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 5, students will:

**C1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by creating, protecting, and sustaining life. (CCC 1601-1605; CCCC 337; GS 12-22; FC 42-43)

**C2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which human sexuality is a gift from God, a fundamental dimension of human identity, and intended for life and love. (CCC 2331-2336; CCCC 487-492; GS 47-52; FC 28-29)

**C3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of human sexuality as it is related to identity in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1652-1653; CCCC 487-492; GS 23-32; FC 32)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 5, students will:

#### C1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**C1.1** recognize and appreciate that God created human beings as body/spirit persons

**C1.2** recognize and appreciate the power of human fertility and the responsibility to use in according to God’s plan

#### C2. Exploring Human Nature

**C2.1** identify the major body systems, and the unique characteristics of the reproductive system

**C2.2** identify the major parts of the female and male reproductive systems

**C2.3** identify the main features of female and male fertility

**C2.4** recognize that there is a wide range of ages at which the physical changes of puberty occur

**C2.5** recognize that growing up is a process that takes time and patience

#### C3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**C3.1** recognize and appreciate the need for respect when speaking about the gift of being able to create new human life

**C3.2** identify the physical changes of puberty for girls and boys

**C3.3** identify some of the social and emotional changes related to puberty

## D. GROWING IN COMMITMENT

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 5, students will:

**D1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by committing to faithful relationships. (CCC 1716, 1776-1780, 1795-1797; CCCC 359; DV 4)

**D2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans grow in their ability to develop committed and trustworthy relationships. (CCC 1790-1794, 1801-1802; CCCC 376; DV 4)

**D3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the role of commitment in human relationships in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1789; CCCC 375; DV 4)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 5, students will:

#### D1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**D1.1** recognize and appreciate that our commitment to ourselves is a commitment to the people God created us to be

#### D2. Exploring Human Nature

**D2.1** recognize and appreciate that actions have consequences for ourselves and others

**D2.2** recognize and appreciate that learning to keep commitments involves difficulties and satisfaction

#### D3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**D3.1** identify some reasons why we avoid accepting responsibility for our actions

**D3.2** respond to a story about living up to one’s beliefs

**D3.3** identify commitments in their lives

## E. LIVING IN THE WORLD

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 5, students will:

**E1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by caring for all of God’s gifts of creation. (CCC 1881-1885, 1892-1894; CCCC 402, 403; GS 33-39)

**E2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans participate in society and fulfill the responsibility to care for and build God’s world. (CCC 1897-1909, 1910-1917, 1926-1927; CCCC 405-410; GS 40-45)

**E3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the global dimension of human nature in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 268-278, 290-292, 295-301, 316-320, 337-344; CCCC 50, 52, 54, 62; C in V Ch 4; GS 77-92)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 5, students will:

#### E1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**E1.1** recognize and appreciate the importance of using their gifts to make the world a better place for everyone

#### E2. Exploring Human Nature

**E2.1** describe a community as a group of people who have special interests in common

**E2.2** explain four important signs of a good community

**E2.3** recognize and appreciate that creating a good community requires the participation of all members

#### E3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**E3.1** identify the small communities that make up their world

**E3.2** respond to and analyze a description of a parish community

**E3.3** identify some of the attitudes and activities of the members of a good community

**E3.4** identify some of the common needs of all people in the world

# GRADE 6

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Unless otherwise noted, the following abbreviations are used in the **Overall Expectations**:

**CCC** *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

**CCCC** *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*

**C in V** *Caritas in Veritate* (Love in Truth), 2009

**DV** *Donum vitae* (Instruction on Respect for Human Life in its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation), 1987

**FC** *Familiaris consortio* (On the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World)

**GDC** *General Directory for Catechesis*

**GS** *Gaudium et spes* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)

## A. CREATED AND LOVED BY GOD

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 6, students will:

**A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** demonstrate an appreciation that humans have been created in the image of a loving God. (CCC 299, 325-327; CCCC 59; GDC 116-117, 123; GS 12)

**A2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans are both unique and share a common human nature with each other. (CCC 299, 1699-1715; CCCC 358; FC 11)

**A3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the unique and shared aspects of human nature in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 229, 337-349, 353-354; CCCC 43, 63, 66-67; GS 4)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 6, students will:

#### A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**A1.1** recognize and appreciate that each person is created in God’s image to be a person of love

**A1.2** appreciate the complexity and mystery of each person created by God

**A1.3** recognize and appreciate the presence of life-giving people in their lives

**A1.4** appreciate the power of life-giving love in action

#### A2. Exploring Human Nature

**A2.1** respond to a story about the impact of life-giving love

**A2.2** respond to a story about an incident of bullying

**A2.3** recognize the harm caused by bullying and the need to seek adult help for serious problems

#### A3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**A3.1** create a jigsaw puzzle that reflects aspects of their unique lives

**A3.2** identify some of the ways in which human development is supported and nurtured by other people

**A3.3** identify and describe some of the ways that people can make a difference in the lives of others

## **B. LIVING IN RELATIONSHIP**

### **OVERALL EXPECTATIONS**

By the end of Grade 6, students will:

**B1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by living in relationship with others. (CCC 2258-2265, 2318-2320; CCCC 466-467; GS 47-52; FC 11)

**B2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which the bonds of family and friendship are central to human life and shape human identity and development. (CCC 1897-1917; CCCC 405-410; GS 53-56; FC 12)

**B3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the role of relationships in shaping human identity and development in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1877-1880, 1890-1896; CCCC 401-404; GS 57-62; FC 14, 15)

### **SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS**

By the end of Grade 6, students will:

#### **B1. Appreciating God’s Goodness**

- B1.1** recognize and appreciate the value of their relationships with family members and friends
- B1.2** respect and appreciate the experiences of their families, past and present
- B1.3** recognize and appreciate the value of true friendship

#### **B2. Exploring Human Nature**

- B2.1** explain the importance of relationships in the lives of each person
- B2.2** recognize and appreciate the value of honest communication with family members and friends
- B2.3** recognize that some stress in friendship is unavoidable

#### **B3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing**

- B3.1** gather information about their family histories
- B3.2** identify some day-to-day stresses and tensions that all families experience
- B3.3** describe some strategies for managing day-to-day family stress
- B3.4** identify and describe common communication problems
- B3.5** identify changes in friendship as people develop
- B3.6** identify and analyze stressful friendship situations

## C. CREATED SEXUAL: MALE AND FEMALE

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 6, students will:

**C1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by creating, protecting, and sustaining life. (CCC 1601-1605; CCCC 337; GS 12-22; FC 42-43)

**C2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which human sexuality is a gift from God, a fundamental dimension of human identity, and intended for life and love. (CCC 2331-2336; CCCC 487-492; GS 47-52; FC 28-29)

**C3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of human sexuality as it is related to identity in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1652-1653; CCCC 487-492; GS 23-32; FC 32)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 6, students will:

#### C1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**C1.1** recognize and appreciate the gift of sexuality

**C1.2** recognize and appreciate the life-giving and loving nature of human sexuality

**C1.3** appreciate the amazing design of God’s plan for the creation of new human life

**C1.4** express through prayer their appreciation for the gift of life

#### C2. Exploring Human Nature

**C2.1** describe the main features of adult female and male fertility

**C2.2** provide a basic explanation of how a new human life receives genetic information from both the mother and father

**C2.3** describe some of the main features of fetal development during each trimester

**C2.4** recognize that the maturation of the reproductive system has an impact on all aspects of their development as persons

#### C3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**C3.1** identify some of the ways in which they have learned about sexuality

**C3.2** describe some of the physical, emotional, and social changes related to puberty

**C3.3** identify some of the ways in which heredity and environment influence identity and development

**C3.4** describe some of the choices they can make as they continue to develop

## D. GROWING IN COMMITMENT

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 6, students will:

**D1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by committing to faithful relationships. (CCC 1716, 1776-1780, 1795-1797; CCCC 359; DV 4)

**D2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans grow in their ability to develop committed and trustworthy relationships. (CCC 1790-1794, 1801-1802; CCCC 376; DV 4)

**D3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the role of commitment in human relationships in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1789; CCCC 375; DV 4)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 6, students will:

#### D1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**D1.1** recognize and appreciate that becoming a committed person involves both difficulties and rewards

#### D2. Exploring Human Nature

**D2.1** explain the meaning of commitment

**D2.2** describe the qualities and accomplishments of a person who is a model of commitment

#### D3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**D3.1** describe some of the ways in which they learn about being a committed person

**D3.2** analyze aspects of the lives of both famous and unrecognized people who are models of commitment

**D3.3** describe some of the commitments in their lives

## E. LIVING IN THE WORLD

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 6, students will:

**E1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by caring for all of God’s gifts of creation. (CCC 1881-1885, 1892-1894; CCCC 402, 403; GS 33-39)

**E2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans participate in society and fulfill the responsibility to care for and build God’s world. (CCC 1897-1909, 1910-1917, 1926-1927; CCCC 405-410; GS 40-45)

**E3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the global dimension of human nature in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 268-278, 290-292, 295-301, 316-320, 337-344; CCCC 50, 52, 54, 62; C in V Ch 4; GS 77-92)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 6, students will:

#### E1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**E1.1** appreciate the need to be aware of influences on themselves and of their capacity to influence others

#### E2. Exploring Human Nature

**E2.1** explain the meaning of values and virtues

**E2.2** recognize that they are part of the world and have a responsibility to be a positive influence on the natural environment

#### E3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**E3.1** analyze the human capacity to influence and be influenced

**E3.2** describe some of the ways television, advertising, and stereotypes influence values

**E3.3** describe some ways in which they can be good stewards of the natural environment

**E3.4** describe some ways in which they can protect the social environment

# OVERVIEW OF GRADES 7 AND 8

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No longer children but not yet adults, adolescents are beginning to face life decisions that may have major consequences for them as well as others. Their lives are changing rapidly, and they need more advanced knowledge and skills to understand and cope with the changes they are experiencing and to make responsible decisions grounded in an understanding of what it means to be fully human.

## STUDENT DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRAM IMPLICATIONS

Program design and delivery must take into account the physical, cognitive, and emotional development of students. The following descriptions of the developmental characteristics of students in the intermediate grades are general in nature, and individual student characteristics will vary depending on the child's age, sex, body size, experience, and background. Because the developmental characteristics and needs of students in these grades cover such a wide range, awareness of individual needs is critically important at this level.

### Physical Domain

Students in the intermediate grades may still be going through a growth spurt. For females, the growth spurt tends to occur between the ages of 9 and 13 years, and for males, between 11 and 15 years. Thus, students may vary considerably in their physical development, and growth differences may still account for differences in physical abilities and skills.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 165)*

### Cognitive Domain

Students in the intermediate grades are becoming capable of handling more complex thought processes. They are generally able to process and understand more complex instructions and strategies, although cognitive abilities will vary, and they generally have well-developed attention spans. Accompanying these expanding intellectual capacities is a greater understanding of their individual learning preferences. Some students may know that they learn best when given the opportunity to explore and discover on their own. Others may know that they learn best by collaborating with others or that they benefit from more direct guidance and supervision. Programs for students in these grades should offer instructional activities that are personally relevant and meaningful. Students need to see themselves reflected in the curriculum. This underlies the importance of recognizing and including all students of all backgrounds.

Programs should also offer students opportunities to make their own creative adaptations to activities in order to stimulate their thinking and create an optimal level of challenge, one that is neither too hard nor too easy and that is interesting for all participants.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 166)*

## **Affective Domain**

Students in the intermediate grades are in the process of forming their adult identities and consolidating their moral beliefs and values. They are very much influenced by the world around them, and especially by their peers, who are a major source of motivation. They are continuing to develop their interpersonal skills and generally enjoy participating in activities with their peers. Their responses to winning and losing vary individually but can be very emotional.

Programs for these students should provide opportunities for students to interact positively with their peers, to continue developing and improving their interpersonal skills, and to learn and apply concepts of equity, fair play, and social justice... Adolescence is a key time for using the opportunities provided within *family life education* to reach and connect with youth and provide them with positive social, emotional, and physical experiences.

*(The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised), p. 166)*

## **FOCUS OF LEARNING IN FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION FOR THE INTERMEDIATE DIVISION**

### **Strand A – Created and Loved by God<sup>14</sup>**

As the dignity and worth of each person is explored in this first strand, the students are encouraged to deepen their sense of how valuable they are and to recognize and offer to others their many gifts. A Christian view of self-worth acknowledges the struggle that goes on in each person between genuine self-love and pride. This conflict is part of the human condition, and one that each person must face with hope and with faith.

The foundation of genuine self-love, which expresses itself in self-confidence and in empathy and generosity toward others, is built at home. When children have been well loved, the confidence born of this love appears effortless. They accept themselves and reach out to others because they have been accepted. They acknowledge and struggle with their faults and failings without being overwhelmed by them. They forgive themselves and others because they have received forgiveness. They know in their hearts that their value does not lie in their achievements, appearance, or talents, but in something much deeper.

But for children who have been less fortunate, the role of the Catholic school in conveying the priceless value of each person becomes more vital. The family life education curriculum cannot build self-esteem, but individuals and caring communities can. Catholic educators in Ontario have the extraordinary opportunity to communicate God's love for each child. The role and influence of the Catholic educator at this stage of their lives are second only to that of the family. The Catholic educator's sensitivity to the unique nature of each student, and their support for each student's growth as persons can make an enormous difference, particularly for those living

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<sup>14</sup> The strand descriptors in the overview of grades 7 and 8 find their source in the Grade 7 and 8 *Fully Alive – Renewal Edition*, Pearson Canada Inc.

in difficult circumstances. Long after leaving school, many adults can point to a teacher who made them feel valued and capable – an example of God’s love in action.

In Grade 7, students continue to explore what it means to be a person who is made in God’s image. They examine self-concept, personality traits, and human emotions and learn more about the influence of heredity and environment on individuals. Students explore some of the strengths and limitations that are part of each person and discuss the importance of self-honesty and self-discipline.

In Grade 8, students consider the human person as the wonder of creation, made in the image of God and given the powers of human intelligence and free will. They examine the human abilities to learn, to remember, to reason, to create, to feel, and to act freely. Students explore the concept of character (i.e., the moral self) and discuss the importance of the four cardinal virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance) for moral growth.

### **Strand B – Living in Relationship**

The message of this strand is intended to be both hopeful and challenging: hopeful, because learning to love is a life-long process and there is always the opportunity for a new beginning; challenging because the students are urged to recognize the importance of their contribution to the quality of their family life and friendships.

We all experience difficulties and failures in living out our vocation of love within our families, yet we all long for enduring and strong family love. At times, the gap between longing and reality can seem vast. Poverty, divorce, unstable living situations, absent parents, over-burdened single parents, the stress of modern life on all families – all these circumstances are a reality within the Catholic community, and are reflected in Ontario Catholic school classrooms.

The approach of the family life education curriculum is one that centres on the student, and the student’s need for secure attachment. Ontario Catholic schools welcome each student and in doing so, also welcome each student’s family. It is unacceptable that any child should feel less worthy or valued because of family circumstances. The Catholic school also recognizes that most families do the very best they can, whatever their circumstances.

There is always a great concern on the part of Catholic educators for those students who are experiencing major family problems with no apparent resolution. This concern is well founded, since these students are vulnerable to feelings of worthlessness and anger, which in turn impairs their ability to form loving and trusting relationships. They deserve attention and compassion, but they too need a message that is hopeful and challenging. The future is not predetermined for them. They do not have to repeat unhealthy patterns of relating learned in the family.

Learning to love begins in the family, but it does not end there. God’s grace is mediated through many people who touch our lives: teachers who believe in us even when we do not believe in ourselves, friends who listen and understand, a neighborhood family that offers its help during times of difficulties, and even strangers who surprise us with their generosity. The evidence of God’s life-giving love is always there when we look for it.

In Grade 7, students explore three aspects of relationships: intimacy, choice, and quality. They discuss the importance of communication in their relationships with family members and friends. Students examine the experience of living in a family from the perspective of family structure, the birth order of children, and challenges that are part of being a family. They explore the relationship of friendship, including what they learn from it, the qualities of healthy relationships, and the challenges that are part of all relationships.

In Grade 8, students consider the significance of human relationships and the unique contribution they make in each person's life. They examine the importance of families and their contribution to providing children with secure roots for their lives. Students explore some of the challenges of adolescence for both parents and young people and the need to resolve conflicts in a respectful way. They discuss the qualities of true friendship and consider some attitudes and behaviours that cause friendship difficulties. Finally, students reflect on the virtue of mercy, which is essential for living in relationship with others.

### **Strand C – Created Sexual: Male and Female**

As late childhood gives way to early adolescence, one of the important goals of this strand is to prepare students for a new time of discovery and questioning. It is also a time of reflection, and the issue of identity, which includes sexuality, assumes increasing importance, especially in later adolescence.

At the beginning of puberty, as the secondary sexual characteristics develop and the first signs of fertility are experienced, there is a natural focus on the body. This focus is recognized in the Created Sexual: Male and Female strand with topics that address the concerns that students have about the timetable of puberty and their place in that timetable. In the intermediate grades, issues such as changing relationships with the opposite sex and the new experience of sexual feelings and attraction are also part of this strand.

As in the earlier grades, the view of sexuality that is developed in this strand is one that integrates the relational and procreational dimensions of sexuality. Sexual attraction is not only the attraction of bodies, but of persons. Human fertility is a gift to be cherished and protected, an integral part of our identity as male and female persons. We are embodied spirits, created to be life-giving and loving, called to live in harmony with our physical/spiritual nature, and challenged to understand and follow God's plan for sexuality. The sense of appreciation for the wonder of human life and love, and the sensitivity to the students that educators in Ontario Catholic schools exhibit, are the most important ingredients that can be brought to family life education.

In Grade 7, students examine some aspects of sexuality, including sexual characteristics, sexual identity and sexual roles. They review the changes of puberty and the development of male and female fertility. Students explore the responsibility of caring for their health, including sexual health, and of developing a realistic body image during adolescence. They discuss the experience of sexual attraction and feelings, and examine the need for self-discipline and patience to reach the goal of becoming fully mature males and females. In this context, students learn about the virtue of chastity and the attitudes and behaviours that reflect this virtue and show respect for the gift of sexuality.

In Grade 8, students reflect on the gift of sexuality and God's plan for them to be loving and life-giving persons. They explore the role of sexuality within marriage and for those who are single and reflect on the virtue of chastity, which helps them to honour the gift of sexuality and live according to God's plan. Students once again review some aspects of adolescence, including changing appearance, moods, stress, and sexual attraction. They examine some of the pressures on young people to become involved in exclusive male-female relationships at an early age and discuss some serious abuses of sexuality. Students review basic information on sexually transmitted infections and their potential impact on fertility and introduce the topic of family planning from the perspective of living in harmony with the gift of fertility. Finally, students complete this strand with a reflection on the meaning of true love as it is expressed in the enduring commitment of marriage.

### **Strand D – Growing in Commitment**

The essential message of this strand is that commitment is a personal decision. This decision is made not once but many times throughout the course of each day – the decision to spend time with a friend, to complete a homework assignment, to help in the preparation of a family meal, to participate actively in a classroom discussion or a basketball game, or to avoid an unnecessary argument with a sibling. Commitment is really the free gift of ourselves to being the best person we can be at each stage in our lives. It involves personal effort and determination and is nurtured in young people by families and teachers who recognize and honour their own commitment to be patient, to encourage, to inspire, and to build confidence.

Together with parents, Ontario Catholic schools share the vital task of helping students learn to be dependable, to keep their word, and to make wise choices. The Catholic educator's role is particularly significant for children living in difficult circumstances. The Catholic educator's commitment to each student is an important model for their future growth. It is also from parents and teachers that students learn to depend on God, who is the supreme model of commitment and will never fail them.

In Grade 7, students discuss some of the feelings they have about growing up and examine the relationship between freedom and responsibility. They analyze and practise the process of making decisions. Students explore the connection between commitments and responsibilities and reflect on what it means to be authentic people and to create balance in their lives.

In Grade 8, students examine the meaning of commitment as a choice to be involved, to give themselves to other people and to their activities. They explore their commitments to others, especially family members and friends. Students consider the meaning of a commitment to the future, the challenges of meeting their commitments, and the significance of moral development as they grow up.

### **Strand E – Living in the World**

One of the many gifts children bring to adults is their enthusiasm and idealism. They see the possibilities, and although they lack the experience that leads to patience, they also lack the cynicism that blurs the vision of so many adults. When Ontario Catholic schools nourish this idealism in students, the gifts that have been given are returned. When Catholic educators communicate a sense of optimism and a belief that people can make a difference, they are

helping to prepare students to participate whole-heartedly in the human society to which they belong. Hope is the necessary foundation for a personal commitment to build God's world.

In Grade 7, students examine the social nature of persons, which motivates people to join together in groups, both small and large. They explore four significant reasons for gathering with others: to celebrate; to support each other in times of difficulty; to create needed changes in their society; and to work together cooperatively to accomplish goals. Students learn about their responsibilities as members of groups, including the creation of a sense of community that respects and appreciates the uniqueness of each person.

In Grade 8, students discuss a common project, shared by all people, to build a society that reflects human dignity and value. They examine the characteristics of just behaviour, the meaning of social justice, and the necessary qualities and skills to do the work of social justice. Students reflect on the virtue of solidarity, which is commitment to the common good of all people, and analyze two issues related to social justice: poverty and respect for life.

# GRADE 7

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Unless otherwise noted, the following abbreviations are used in the **Overall Expectations**:

**CCC** *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

**CCCC** *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*

**C in V** *Caritas in Veritate* (Love in Truth), 2009

**DV** *Donum vitae* (Instruction on Respect for Human Life in its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation), 1987

**FC** *Familiaris consortio* (On the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World)

**GDC** *General Directory for Catechesis*

**GS** *Gaudium et spes* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)

## A. CREATED AND LOVED BY GOD

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 7, students will:

**A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** demonstrate an appreciation that humans have been created in the image of a loving God. (CCC 299, 325-327; CCCC 59; GDC 116-117, 123; GS 12)

**A2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans are both unique and share a common human nature with each other. (CCC 299, 1699-1715; CCCC 358; FC 11)

**A3 Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the unique and shared aspects of human nature in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 229, 337-349, 353-354; CCCC 43, 63, 66-67; GS 4)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 7, students will:

#### A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**A1.1** recognize and appreciate the need to express emotions in a way that reflects respect for oneself and for others

**A1.2** recognize and appreciate the dignity and responsibility of being persons created in the image of God

#### A2. Exploring Human Nature

**A2.1** explain the difference between self-concept and self-esteem

**A2.2** describe some dimensions of personality

**A2.3** explain the meaning of emotions and describe some common effects of adolescence on a person’s emotional life

**A2.4** describe some inherited and environmental influences on people

**A2.5** describe some of the strengths and limitations of persons

#### A3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**A3.1** create a short written description of who they are at this point in their lives

**A3.2** recognize and appreciate that their personalities are still developing

**A3.3** identify and describe an example of a positive and a negative feature of media influence on the social environment

## **B. LIVING IN RELATIONSHIP**

### **OVERALL EXPECTATIONS**

By the end of Grade 7, students will:

**B1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by living in relationship with others. (CCC 2258-2265, 2318-2320; CCCC 466-467; GS 47-52; FC 11)

**B2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which the bonds of family and friendship are central to human life and shape human identity and development. (CCC 1897-1917; CCCC 405-410; GS 53-56; FC 12)

**B3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the role of relationships in shaping human identity and development in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1877-1880, 1890-1896; CCCC 401-404; GS 57-62; FC 14, 15)

### **SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS**

By the end of Grade 7, students will:

#### **B1. Appreciating God’s Goodness**

**B1.1** recognize and appreciate the role that human relationships play in each person’s life

**B1.2** recognize and appreciate the contribution of friendship to their growth as persons

#### **B2. Exploring Human Nature**

**B2.1** describe three significant aspects of relationships: intimacy, choice, and quality

**B2.2** recognize and appreciate that each person’s experience as a family member is unique

**B2.3** recognize and appreciate the importance of working together as a family to meet the challenges in their lives

**B2.4** recognize and appreciate the need to understand the challenges of friendship and learn from them

#### **B3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing**

**B3.1** analyze some guidelines for open and respectful communication with family members and friends

**B3.2** create examples of scenes involving family members or friends that follow the guidelines for open and respectful communication

**B3.3** analyze families from the perspective of structure of characteristics associated with birth order

**B3.4** examine some everyday challenges and some significant challenges that families face

**B3.5** analyze friendship from the perspective of the lessons it provides and of the qualities of healthy relationships

**B3.6** analyze some early adolescent friendship challenges

## C. CREATED SEXUAL: MALE AND FEMALE

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 7, students will:

**C1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by creating, protecting, and sustaining life. (CCC 1601-1605; CCCC 337; GS 12-22; FC 42-43)

**C2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which human sexuality is a gift from God, a fundamental dimension of human identity, and intended for life and love. (CCC 2331-2336; CCCC 487-492; GS 47-52; FC 28-29)

**C3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of human sexuality as it is related to identity in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1652-1653; CCCC 487-492; GS 23-32; FC 32)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 7, students will:

#### C1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**C1.1** recognize and appreciate that males and females are unique persons with a wide range of interests, talents, and personalities

**C1.2** recognize and appreciate the challenge of being good stewards of their lives as body/spirit persons

#### C2. Exploring Human Nature

**C2.1** review the development of primary and secondary sexual characteristics during puberty

**C2.2** recognize and appreciate that concerns about their developing bodies are a normal response to a significant change

**C2.3** recognize and appreciate the need for self-discipline and patience to reach the goal of becoming fully mature males and females

**C2.4** recognize and appreciate that intimate sexual activity exposes young people to serious moral, emotional, and physical harm

#### C3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**C3.1** analyze aspects of sexuality, including sex, sexual characteristics (primary, secondary), sexual identity, sexual roles, masculinity, and femininity

**C3.2** explain the value of good nutrition, exercise, adequate sleep, protection of sexual health, and a realistic view of body image during adolescence

**C3.3** identify and describe the experience of sexual attraction and feelings as aspects of the gift of sexuality

**C3.4** describe attitudes and behaviours that show respect for the gift of sexuality

## D. GROWING IN COMMITMENT

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 7, students will:

**D1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by committing to faithful relationships. (CCC 1716, 1776-1780, 1795-1797; CCCC 359; DV 4)

**D2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans grow in their ability to develop committed and trustworthy relationships. (CCC 1790-1794, 1801-1802; CCCC 376; DV 4)

**D3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the role of commitment in human relationships in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1789; CCCC 375; DV 4)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 7, students will:

#### D1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**D1.1** recognize and appreciate the value of being authentic and well-balanced people who are growing in the commitment to be the people God created them to be

#### D2. Exploring Human Nature

**D2.1** explain the relationship between freedom and responsibility and how it changes as people mature

**D2.2** recognize and appreciate that some limitations on their freedom are necessary during adolescence

**D2.3** recognize and appreciate that asking for help with a difficult personal issue is a sign of maturity

#### D3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**D3.1** analyze and practise a process for decision making

**D3.2** identify some of their commitments and responsibilities

## E. LIVING IN THE WORLD

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 7, students will:

**E1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by caring for all of God’s gifts of creation. (CCC 1881-1885, 1892-1894; CCCC 402, 403; GS 33-39)

**E2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans participate in society and fulfill the responsibility to care for and build God’s world. (CCC 1897-1909, 1910-1917, 1926-1927; CCCC 405-410; GS 40-45)

**E3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the global dimension of human nature in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 268-278, 290-292, 295-301, 316-320, 337-344; CCCC 50, 52, 54, 62; C in V Ch 4; GS 77-92)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 7, students will:

#### E1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**E1.1** recognize and appreciate that each person has a role to play in building a world that reflects God’s plan for creation

#### E2. Exploring Human Nature

**E2.1** explain the importance of gathering with others for celebration and for support

**E2.2** recognize and appreciate the human need to join with others for a variety of purposes

**E2.3** explain the importance of gathering with others to create change and to work together

**E2.4** recognize and appreciate the need to create groups that respect the uniqueness of persons and are open and welcoming

#### E3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**E3.1** describe essential responsibilities of membership in groups

# GRADE 8

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Unless otherwise noted, the following abbreviations are used in the **Overall Expectations**:

**CCC** *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

**CCCC** *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*

**C in V** *Caritas in Veritate* (Love in Truth), 2009

**DV** *Donum vitae* (Instruction on Respect for Human Life in its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation), 1987

**FC** *Familiaris consortio* (On the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World)

**GDC** *General Directory for Catechesis*

**GS** *Gaudium et spes* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)

## A. CREATED AND LOVED BY GOD

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 8, students will:

**A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** demonstrate an appreciation that humans have been created in the image of a loving God. (CCC 299, 325-327; CCCC 59; GDC 116-117, 123; GS 12)

**A2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans are both unique and share a common human nature with each other. (CCC 299, 1699-1715; CCCC 358; FC 11)

**A3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the unique and shared aspects of human nature in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 229, 337-349, 353-354; CCCC 43, 63, 66-67; GS 4)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 8, students will:

#### A1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**A1.1** recognize and appreciate the unique gifts of the human person

#### A2. Exploring Human Nature

**A2.1** explain why human beings are the wonder of creation

**A2.2** describe a wonder of the world that reflects the intelligence and creativity of humans

**A2.3** explain the meaning of character

#### A3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**A3.1** analyze aspects of the human ability to learn, remember, and reason

**A3.2** analyze aspects of the human ability to create and feel

**A3.3** analyze aspects of the human ability to act freely

**A3.4** analyze scenarios related to the four cardinal virtues

## **B. LIVING IN RELATIONSHIP**

### **OVERALL EXPECTATIONS**

By the end of Grade 8, students will:

**B1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by living in relationship with others. (CCC 2258-2265, 2318-2320; CCCC 466-467; GS 47-52; FC 11)

**B2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which the bonds of family and friendship are central to human life and shape human identity and development. (CCC 1897-1917; CCCC 405-410; GS 53-56; FC 12)

**B3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the role of relationships in shaping human identity and development in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1877-1880, 1890-1896; CCCC 401-404; GS 57-62; FC 14, 15)

### **SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS**

By the end of Grade 8, students will:

#### **B1. Appreciating God’s Goodness**

**B1.1** recognize and appreciate the value of relationships in their lives

**B1.2** recognize and appreciate the value of the relationship of friendship

#### **B2. Exploring Human Nature**

**B2.1** explain the meaning of relationship and its importance in human lives

**B2.2** describe the essential role of families in the lives of their children

**B2.3** recognize that all families have challenges in their lives

**B2.4** recognize that some stressful situations in friendship can be avoided

#### **B3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing**

**B3.1** describe the concerns of parents and young people during early adolescence

**B3.2** practise strategies for managing disagreements between parents and young

**B3.3** describe the abilities that true friends demonstrate in their friendships

**B3.4** identify and examine behaviours and attitudes that cause stress in friendship

## C. CREATED SEXUAL: MALE AND FEMALE

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 8, students will:

**C1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by creating, protecting, and sustaining life. (CCC 1601-1605; CCCC 337; GS 12-22; FC 42-43)

**C2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which human sexuality is a gift from God, a fundamental dimension of human identity, and intended for life and love. (CCC 2331-2336; CCCC 487-492; GS 47-52; FC 28-29)

**C3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of human sexuality as it is related to identity in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1652-1653; CCCC 487-492; GS 23-32; FC 32)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 8, students will:

#### C1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**C1.1** recognize and appreciate the true meaning of sexuality and the challenge of accepting responsibility for this gift

**C1.2** recognize and appreciate that sexual intimacy is intended for marriage

**C1.3** recognize and appreciate the role of family, friends, and God in their lives as they mature

**C1.4** recognize and appreciate the value of enduring commitment of marriage

#### C2. Exploring Human Nature

**C2.1** describe the meaning of intimacy, marriage, sexual intimacy, the single state, and celibacy

**C2.2** recognize and appreciate the need to develop all aspects of their lives, including friendships with people of the opposite sex

**C2.3** examine the meaning of true love between a man and a woman

#### C3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**C3.1** examine their present understanding of sexuality

**C3.2** analyze aspects of the life stage of adolescence: appearance, moods and stress, and sexual activity

**C3.3** analyze external and internal pressures on young adolescents to become involved at an early age in exclusive male-female relationships

**C3.4** identify major sexually transmitted infections and some of their consequences

**C3.5** examine methods of family planning in the light of Catholic teaching

## D. GROWING IN COMMITMENT

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 8, students will:

**D1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by committing to faithful relationships. (CCC 1716, 1776-1780, 1795-1797; CCCC 359; DV 4)

**D2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans grow in their ability to develop committed and trustworthy relationships. (CCC 1790-1794, 1801-1802; CCCC 376; DV 4)

**D3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the role of commitment in human relationships in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 1789; CCCC 375; DV 4)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 8, students will:

#### D1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**D1.1** recognize and appreciate the responsibility to be committed family members, friends, and brothers and sisters in Christ

**D1.2** recognize and appreciate that their commitment to the future is to prepare to become mature adults

#### D2. Exploring Human Nature

**D2.1** explain the meaning of commitment

**D2.2** recognize and appreciate the challenge of meeting their commitment to themselves now and in the future

#### D3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**D3.1** respond to a story about the death of a family member

**D3.2** examine the meaning of making a moral choice and the role of conscience

## E. LIVING IN THE WORLD

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 8, students will:

**E1. Appreciating God’s Goodness:** appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by caring for all of God’s gifts of creation. (CCC 1881-1885, 1892-1894; CCCC 402, 403; GS 33-39)

**E2. Exploring Human Nature:** demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans participate in society and fulfill the responsibility to care for and build God’s world. (CCC 1897-1909, 1910-1917, 1926-1927; CCCC 405-410; GS 40-45)

**E3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing:** apply an understanding of the global dimension of human nature in personally relevant contexts. (CCC 268-278, 290-292, 295-301, 316-320, 337-344; CCCC 50, 52, 54, 62; C in V Ch 4; GS 77-92)

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

By the end of Grade 8, students will:

#### E1. Appreciating God’s Goodness

**E1.1** recognize and appreciate the social dimension of their faith

**E1.2** recognize and appreciate the responsibility to participate in the work of creating a more just society

#### E2. Exploring Human Nature

**E2.1** describe the requirements of individual and social justice

**E2.2** recognize and appreciate that justice is the virtue that helps us respond to the rights and dignity of each person

**E2.3** recognize and appreciate the shared responsibility to participate in efforts to protect human rights

#### E3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

**E3.1** examine the responsibility to participate in building a just society

**E3.2** analyze two issues related to social justice: poverty and respect for life

**E3.3** describe the personal qualities and skills that are essential to contribute to the efforts to create a more just society

# APPENDIX A: LEARNING SUMMARIES BY STRAND

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The charts on the following pages provide a summary of the key concepts and/or the skills covered by the expectations in each strand of the family life education curriculum from Grade 1 to Grade 8. The wording of the expectations in these charts is that of the Key Expectations by strand from Appendix A: Assessment and Evaluation of the Teacher's Guide of the revised *Fully Alive* program (Pearson Education Canada). These charts are intended to give teachers a quick overview of the strand across all grades in order to develop a sense of the way in which the key concepts of each strand follow a developmental progression.

In a number of cases, it will be noted that key expectations have not been provided. This should not be taken to imply that a particular concept is absent. The key concepts learned in earlier grades provide the foundational knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary for ongoing learning in family life education. While the chart captures *new* learning along the continuum of understanding, the students will continue to deepen their understanding of core concepts already presented at each grade for each strand.

**STRAND A – CREATED AND LOVED BY GOD LEARNING SUMMARY\***

	<b>GRADE 1</b>	<b>GRADE 2</b>	<b>GRADE 3</b>	<b>GRADE 4</b>
<b>CREATED AND LOVED BY GOD</b>	Recognize and appreciate the gift of human life and of all God’s creation	Recognize and appreciate the ways in which each of them is a unique person whom God creates and loves	Recognize and appreciate that God knows them and loves them	Recognize and appreciate that human life is a gift of love from God
<b>HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT</b>	Recognize and appreciate that feelings, growth, and development are part of human life	Identify aspects of their past development and look ahead to future growth and development	Identify personal characteristics of themselves and their classmates	Identify characteristics of two stages of human development: infancy and childhood
<b>HUMAN FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS</b>	Recognize and appreciate that feelings, growth, and development are part of human life	Recognize the importance of feelings, their expression, and the choices they have in the way feelings are expressed	Describe some differences in the way people express feelings and explain why it is important to be in charge of our feelings	
<b>HUMAN UNIQUENESS</b>	Recognize and appreciate the uniqueness of each person, including appearance, and likes and dislikes	Identify and appreciate their personal qualities and gifts, and those of others	Identify talents and gifts and recognize that they are meant to be shared with others	Identify some similarities and differences among their classmates
<b>HUMAN INFLUENCE</b>				Identify some of the people who help them grow and develop  Analyze situations in which people can affect others by what they do and say

\*See page 121 for important information about the content, purpose, and design of this chart.

GRADE 5	GRADE 6	GRADE 7	GRADE 8	
Recognize and appreciate that God loves each one of us forever and is always ready to forgive us when we fail	Recognize the power of life-giving love and appreciate that each person is created in God's image to be a person of love	Describe some of the strengths and weaknesses of persons, and appreciate the responsibility of being a person created in the image of God	Explain why human beings are the wonder of creation, and describe a wonder of the world that reflects the intelligence and creativity of humans	<b>CREATED AND LOVED BY GOD</b>
Identify some features of the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions of human development	Identify some of the ways in which human development is supported and nurtured by other people	Describe some inherited and environmental influences on people	Analyze aspects of the human ability to learn, remember, and reason, and recognize and appreciate the unique gifts of the human person	<b>HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT</b>
		Explain the instinctive nature of emotions, and the need for control in expression of emotions	Analyze aspects of the human ability to create and feel, and recognize and appreciate the unique gifts of the human person	<b>HUMAN FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS</b>
Examine the concept of respect and recognize the uniqueness of each person in the class	Recognize and appreciate the mystery of each person	Explain the difference between self-concept and self-esteem, and the importance of knowing oneself  Describe some dimensions of personality	Explain the meaning of character, and analyze situations related to the four cardinal virtues	<b>HUMAN UNIQUENESS</b>
Recognize and appreciate the importance of support and prayer at the time of a death  Recognize and appreciate that people, both living and dead, can have a lasting positive influence on others	Recognize the harm caused by bullying and the need to seek adult help for serious problems  Identify some ways people can make a difference in the lives of others, and appreciate the power of life-giving love in action		Analyze aspects of the human ability to act freely, and recognize and appreciate the unique gifts of the human person	<b>HUMAN INFLUENCE</b>

**STRAND B – LIVING IN RELATIONSHIP\***

	<b>GRADE 1</b>	<b>GRADE 2</b>	<b>GRADE 3</b>	<b>GRADE 4</b>
<b>FAMILY LOVE</b>	Recognize and celebrate the family as a place of love	Identify and describe signs of love in the family		Recognize and appreciate the signs of love in their families
<b>FAMILY CHANGES</b>	Describe a change in the family (new baby), the feelings associated with the change, and the endurance of family love	Describe a change in the family (moving), the feelings associated with change, and the endurance of family love	Identify feelings in response to a death in a family and recognize the need for family members to help each other in times of change and sadness	Identify some of the feelings that children experience as a result of separation and divorce
<b>FAMILY STRUCTURE AND DYNAMICS</b>	Recognize and appreciate that brothers and sisters are special people	Recognize the uniqueness of each person’s family  Recognize the need for forgiveness in relationships with brothers and sisters	Identify unique characteristics of their families (family name, customs) and recognize and appreciate special occasions when families share their love with others  Identify the advantages and disadvantages of birth order in the family and recognize the value of friendship among brothers and sisters	Recognize the importance of spending time together as a family on both regular and special occasions  Recognize that family members share responsibilities and each member of the family has a contribution to make
<b>THE VALUE OF FRIENDSHIPS</b>	Describe and celebrate the experience of friendship	Identify and describe expressions of friendship and the value of co-operation in relationships with others	Identify some qualities of friendship and explain the importance of learning to compromise and of being friendly and open to others	Identify and distinguish between effective and ineffective strategies for making friends
<b>UNDERSTANDING RELATIONSHIPS</b>				

\*See page 121 for important information about the content, purpose, and design of this chart.

GRADE 5	GRADE 6	GRADE 7	GRADE 8	
Recognize and appreciate family rules as a sign of family love				<b>FAMILY LOVE</b>
Recognize some of the feelings that occur as a result of changes in the family and the need for support and co-operation with the family	Identify common sources of family stress and strategies for managing this stress	Examine some everyday and significant challenges for families	Describe the concerns of parents and young people during early adolescence, and practise strategies for managing disagreements between them	<b>FAMILY CHANGES</b>
Identify some unique and shared characteristics of families	Gather information about their family histories, and recognize the significance of family histories	Analyze aspects of families: structure and birth order	Describe the essential role of families in the lives of their children, and recognize that all families have challenges in their lives	<b>FAMILY STRUCTURE AND DYNAMICS</b>
Identify and describe some of the qualities that are valued in friendships  Describe the consequences of possible solutions to common friendship difficulties  Recognize the responsibility to support peers who are being mistreated	Identify changes in friendship as people develop  Identify and analyze stressful friendship situations	Analyze some of the lessons friendship provides, and some qualities of healthy friendships  Analyze some friendship challenges of early adolescence	Describe the abilities that true friends demonstrate in their friendships  Identify and examine behaviours and attitudes that cause stress in friendship, and recognize that some stressful friendship situations can be avoided	<b>THE VALUE OF FRIENDSHIPS</b>
	Explain the importance of relationships in the lives of each person  Identify and describe common communication problems	Analyze significant aspects of relationships: intimacy, choice, and quality  Analyze guidelines for open and respectful communication, and create examples of good communication	Explain the meaning of relationships and their importance in human lives	<b>UNDERSTANDING RELATIONSHIPS</b>

**STRAND C – CREATED SEXUAL: MALE AND FEMALE\***

	<b>GRADE 1</b>	<b>GRADE 2</b>	<b>GRADE 3</b>	<b>GRADE 4</b>
<b>HUMAN LOVE AND MARRIAGE</b>	Recognize that in marriage a man and woman share their love for each other and build a new life together	Recognize that husbands and wives share their lives with each other and with their children	Recognize that marriage and the birth of children are special events in the lives of families	Recognize that children are a special sign of the love between a husband and wife  Recognize and appreciate the value of loving relationships within families
<b>HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT</b>	Describe and explain some basic information about prenatal life, birth, and essential needs of babies	Describe and explain some basic information about prenatal life and birth	Describe and explain some basic information about the beginning of new life, prenatal life, birth, and the needs of new babies  Describe some basic features of growth and development in the early years of life	Describe and explain some basic information about prenatal life, identical and fraternal twins, birth, and the needs of new babies  Identify characteristics of two stages of human development: adolescence and adulthood
<b>HUMAN SEXUALITY</b>	Recognize that God made boys and girls physically different	Identify basic physical differences between girls and boys, and describe some ways in which the children can show respect and care for the body		

\*See page 121 for important information about the content, purpose, and design of this chart.

GRADE 5	GRADE 6	GRADE 7	GRADE 8	
			Examine the meaning of true love between a man and a woman that leads to the commitment of marriage	HUMAN LOVE AND MARRIAGE
Identify the physical changes of puberty for girls and boys, and recognize the wide range of ages for these physical changes	Describe some of the main features of fetal development by trimester  Describe some of the physical, emotional, and social changes of puberty	Explain the value of nutrition, exercise, sleep, protection of sexual health, and a realistic body image	Analyze aspects of the stage of adolescence: appearance, moods and stress, and the issue of sexual activity, and recognize and appreciate the role of family, friends, and God in their lives as they mature	HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
Identify some of the social and emotional changes related to puberty	Identify some of the ways in which they have learned about sexuality	Analyze aspects of sexuality: sex, sexual characteristics, sexual identity and roles, masculinity and femininity  Identify and describe the experience of sexual attraction and feelings  Describe attitudes and behaviours that show respect for the gift of sexuality	Analyze external and internal pressures on young adolescents to become involved at an early age in exclusive male-female relationships  Recognize and appreciate the true meaning of sexuality and the challenge of accepting responsibility for this gift  Describe the meaning of intimacy, marriage, sexual intimacy, the single state, and celibacy, and recognize and appreciate that sexual intimacy is intended for marriage	HUMAN SEXUALITY

**STRAND C – CREATED SEXUAL: MALE AND FEMALE (continued)\***

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4
HUMAN FERTILITY AND REPRODUCTION				Identify some of the gifts they received at the moment of conception and recognize the importance of the love and care they continue to receive from their families

\*See page 121 for important information about the content, purpose, and design of this chart.

GRADE 5	GRADE 6	GRADE 7	GRADE 8	HUMAN FERTILITY AND REPRODUCTION
<p>Identify the major body systems, the unique characteristics of the reproductive system, and the major parts of the male and female reproductive systems</p> <p>Identify the main features of male and female fertility, and recognize the power and responsibility of human fertility</p>	<p>Describe the main features of adult male and female fertility, and recognize the life-giving and loving nature of human sexuality</p> <p>Provide a basic explanation of how a new human life receives genetic information from both parents</p> <p>Identify some of the influences of heredity and environment on identity and development</p>	<p>Review the development of primary and secondary sexual characteristics during puberty</p>	<p>Identify major STIs and some of their consequences, and examine family planning in the light of Catholic teaching</p>	

## STRAND D – GROWING IN COMMITMENT\*

	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4
HUMAN INFLUENCE	Recognize the value of dependability in the family	Recognize the value of dependability on people in their community	Analyze a situation involving a decision and recognize that other people can be helpful when trying to make a decision	
UNDERSTANDING COMMITMENT	Explain the meaning of the word <i>promise</i> and of the need for careful thought before making a promise	Recognize the importance of keeping their word	Identify some family commitments and explain the meaning of commitment	Explain the meaning of commitment and identify some of their commitments  Examine the process of making a commitment and recognize the need for careful reflection
HUMAN FREEDOM	Recognize that preference choices have consequences	Analyze situations involving decisions	Recognize the need for careful thought when making decisions	
COMMITMENT CHALLENGES				Identify some of the pleasures and difficulties of keeping commitments and recognize the value of keeping commitments

\*See page 121 for important information about the content, purpose, and design of this chart.

GRADE 5	GRADE 6	GRADE 7	GRADE 8	
	Analyze aspects of the lives of people who are models of commitment		Recognize and appreciate the responsibility to be committed family members, friends, and brothers and sisters in Christ	HUMAN INFLUENCE
Recognize the importance of living up to our commitment to ourselves to be the people God created us to be	Explain the meaning of commitment, and describe ways of learning about commitment	Identify some of their commitments and responsibilities		UNDERSTANDING COMMITMENT
Recognize that actions have consequences for ourselves and others		Analyze and practise a process for decision making  Explain the relationship between freedom and responsibility, and the relevance of this relationship during adolescence	Examine the meaning of making a moral choice and the role of conscience, and recognize and appreciate that their commitment to the future is to prepare to become mature adults	HUMAN FREEDOM
Identify commitments in their lives and recognize that learning to keep commitments involves difficulties and satisfaction	Describe some commitments in their lives and both the price and reward of keeping those commitments		Explain the meaning of commitment, and appreciate the challenge of meeting their commitment to themselves, now and in the future	COMMITMENT CHALLENGES

**STRAND E – LIVING IN THE WORLD\***

	<b>GRADE 1</b>	<b>GRADE 2</b>	<b>GRADE 3</b>	<b>GRADE 4</b>
<b>CARING FOR GOD'S CREATION</b>	<p>Identify some amazing aspects of the world and some of the ways they learn about the world</p> <p>Identify and appreciate some of the ways in which people care for the Earth</p>	<p>Identify some aspects of the world that make it a good place for them</p> <p>Identify and recognize the value of the many natural resources of the Earth</p>		<p>Describe some of the ways in which the world is their home</p> <p>Identify some of the ways people can care for the physical environment and recognize the importance of being good caretakers</p>
<b>THE DIGNITY OF HUMAN WORK</b>	<p>Identify and appreciate the contributions of adult work in the world</p>	<p>Identify some of the people who work to transform God's gifts for others</p>	<p>Identify and recognize the contributions of human work to the world</p> <p>Identify some of the demands of work and recognize the value of care and effort</p>	<p>Examine the contributions of people to building the world through work and appreciate the value of human work</p>
<b>INTERDEPENDENCE OF ALL PEOPLE</b>			<p>Describe some of the differences and similarities of people from all over the world</p>	

\*See page 121 for important information about the content, purpose, and design of this chart.

GRADE 5	GRADE 6	GRADE 7	GRADE 8	
	Describe some of the ways they can be good stewards of the natural environment			CARING FOR GOD'S CREATION
Recognize the common needs of all people and the importance of using their gifts to make the world a better place	Describe some of the ways they can protect the social environment	Explain the importance of gathering with others to create change and to work	Describe the personal qualities and skills that are essential to the efforts to create a more just society, and recognize and appreciate the responsibility to participate in the work of creating a more just society  Analyze two issues related to social justice: poverty and respect for life, and recognize and appreciate the shared responsibility to participate in efforts to protect human rights	THE DIGNITY OF HUMAN WORK
Identify the meaning of community and the communities that make up their world  Identify attitudes and activities of members of a good community  Describe and examine four signs of a good community	Analyze the human capacity to influence and be influenced  Explain the meaning of values and virtues, and describe some of the ways television, advertising, and stereotype influence their values	Explain the importance of gathering with others for celebration and support  Describe essential responsibilities of membership in groups	Examine the responsibility to participate in building a just society, and recognize and appreciate the social dimension of their faith  Describe the requirements of individual and social justice, and recognize and appreciate that justice is the virtue that helps us respond to the rights and dignity of each person	INTERDEPENDENCE OF ALL PEOPLE

# APPENDIX B: CATHOLIC CHURCH TEACHINGS ON FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

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## Second Vatican Council Documents

- *Apostolicam Actuositatem (Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity)*, 1965
- *Gaudium et spes (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)* 1965

## Papal Documents

- *Pope Benedict XVI on Marriage: A Compendium*, 2008
- *Deus caritas est (God is Love)*, 2005, Pope Benedict XVI
- *Evangelium vitae (The Gospel of Life)*, 1995, Pope John Paul II
- *"Theology of the Body"*, 1979-1984, Pope John Paul II
- *Familiaris consortio (The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World)*, 1980, Pope John Paul II
- *Humanae vitae (Of Human Life)*, 1968, Pope Paul VI
- *Caritas in Veritate (Love in Truth)*, 2009, Pope Benedict XVI
- *Charter of Rights of the Family*, John Paul II, see *Origins* 13 (Dec. 15, 1983), pp.461-464.

## Documents of the Holy See

- *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1997
- *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2005
- *Declaration On Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics*, 1975, Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
- *Donum vitae (Instruction on Respect for Human Life)*, 1987, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
- *Educational Guidance in Human Love*, 1983
- *General Directory for Catechesis*, 1997
- Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons – *Homosexualitatis problema*, 1986, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
- Instruction *Dignitas Personae* On Certain Bioethical Questions, 2008, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
- *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, 1995, Guidelines for Education Within the Family
- *Vademecum for Confessors Concerning Some Aspects of the Morality of Conjugal Life*, 1997, Pontifical Council for the Family

### **Documents by Canadian Catholic Bishops**

- *Chastity*, 2011
- *Pastoral Care of Homosexuals*, 1986
- *Pastoral Message of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops on the Occasion of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Encyclical “Humanae Vitae”*, 2008
- *Pastoral Ministry to Young People with Same-Sex Attraction*, 2011
- *Pastoral Letter to Young People on Chastity*, 2011

### **Documents by the Ontario Catholic Bishops**

- *Family Life Education for Secondary Students: A Message to the Catholic Education Community*, 1996, Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops (now ACBO)
- *Intimacy and Sexuality*, 1994, OCCB
- *Pastoral Guidelines to Assist Students of Same-Sex Attraction*, 2004

### **Documents by Ontario Catholic School Trustees’ Association**

- *Respecting Difference*, 2012

### **Documents by the Institute for Catholic Education**

- *Curriculum Links Between The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, Interim Edition, 2010 (revised) and the Fully Alive Program and Other Catholic Education Resources*, 2010

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