

Grade Eight: Healthy Relationships & Sexual Health Parent Info and OPT-OUT

Dear Parent or Guardian of Parkway 8th Grade Student,

This letter is provided to assist parents in identifying the lesson content and timeline for the implementation of the K-12 Healthy Relationships & Sexual Health (HRSH) Curriculum, as well as communicate your right to withdraw your child from any of these lessons upon written request, using a passive consent or “opt-out” process, as identified in the Parkway Healthy Relationships and Sexual Health Policy (IHAMB.G). You should be receiving this letter three weeks prior to the beginning of the 8th grade HRSH Unit.

The attached form is specifically for the Healthy Relationships and Sexual Health Unit which is incorporated within the Eighth Grade Health and Physical Education Course. It includes the overview and objectives for each lesson. All lessons are designed for a co-ed setting (mixed group of boys and girls). More lesson details and any video/media resources can also be previewed on the Parkway Online Curriculum Guide and/or at the annual Parkway HRSH Curriculum Nights which are held every September and January. More information about the HRSH Curriculum can be found on the Parkway HRSH Parent Information webpage <https://www.parkwayschools.net/Page/3329>).

Parkway is committed to providing its students with a well-rounded health education experience, which includes learning about the physical, mental-emotional, social, and intellectual impacts of various health behaviors, including an individual’s sexual health. We respect your involvement in your child’s development and their learning experiences regarding their growth and development. Therefore, we have designed some Home-Family Connection Activities for you to voluntarily participate in with your child to open up these conversations and allow you to share your family values and beliefs regarding these topics (See more information on next page).

We understand that due to personal preferences you may not wish for your child to participate in the HRSH unit/lessons. **If you should wish to opt your child out of any or all of the grade 8 Healthy Relationships and Sexual Health Unit, please complete the attached form and return it to your child’s Health and Physical Education Teacher at least one week prior to the first lesson (see dates on following pages).** There is no need to return any paperwork for your child’s participation in the Healthy Relationships and Sexual Health Unit.

Parkway is making every effort to assure that your child has a positive learning experience regarding meaningful health-related issues that may impact their lives. Your feedback about your child’s experience will be invited through an end-of-unit questionnaire.

Home-Family Connections Activities

An important part of the Parkway Healthy Relationships and Sexual Health (HRSH) Curriculum is the open conversations between a family member or trusted adult and the student. Parkway would like to encourage these conversations by offering Home-Family Connection activities that the student and an adult family member can complete together. The following paragraphs explain the purpose of the Home-Family Connections Activities and what you can expect.

One of the goals of the HRSH unit is to increase communication about important topics and health issues between children and the adults in their lives who care for them. Even though children don't always show it, surveys show that they would like to talk more about these issues with a parent or other trusted adult, and research shows that these conversations play a very important role in helping teens avoid risky behaviors and health threats, as well as the health that are possible as the result of these behaviors and threats. The Parkway HRSH Curriculum includes Home-Family Connections activities to make these discussions easier and more frequent.

Young people are surrounded by messages in the media which influence their behaviors and attitudes. Many times these messages are inaccurate and don't reflect the norms of our society. Although the power of the media is huge, we know that family communication is also very powerful. Home-Family Connection activities are intended to help adults talk clearly and directly with the young people in their life about their beliefs and hopes for them.

The activities in the Home-Family Connections ask parents to share their thoughts and beliefs on topics related to the classroom lesson. You don't need to have any information about these topics to do the activities, but we do encourage you to learn more about these topics on your own.

Home-Family Connection activities are not required. There is no penalty to the student for not participating, but we do encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to talk and have dialogue with your child about important health topics and issues that may impact their social, physical, and emotional health.

There is no need to return any paperwork for your child's participation in the Healthy Relationships and Sexual Health Unit. If you wish your child to opt out of any part or the entire HRSH unit please complete, sign and return the attached form indicating the lessons for which your child to be excused. If you have any questions please contact your school's health education teacher (See teacher name and contact information.)

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Healthy Relationships & Sexual Health Unit Opt Out Form (8)

I wish to opt my child _____ out of the following lesson(s).
(Please check the box of the lesson you DO NOT want your child to take part in, sign and return to your child’s health teacher)

Check Box	Lesson Overview	Lesson Objectives	Date of Lesson
Lesson 1 – Healthful Dating Relationships			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>This lesson will help students understand the importance of respecting their self and their partner in a romantic relationship. Class discussions and learning activities will address the types of touch and everyone’s right to refuse unwanted or uninvited touches. Students will be introduced to the concepts of love and affection and how to communicate feelings in a healthful, safe, and respectful way. Dating violence and ways to end a relationship will also be discussed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students will learn about characteristics of healthy relationships and unhealthy relationship warning signs. ● Students will learn the difference between romantic behaviors that might present more comfort (safe zone) versus those that might be too risky or uncomfortable (Danger zone). ● Students will learn the importance of setting limits, communicating boundaries, and displaying sexual integrity. ● Students will learn what it means to have self-worth and self-respect. 	2/24-3/13
Lesson 2 – Sexual Orientation & Relationships			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>This lesson will introduce students to various types of attractions and relationships, including LGBTQ relationships. Group discussions and learning activities will include medically-accurate information about the different types of relationships allow students to develop an understanding of the common characteristics of all relationships.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students will learn about various types of sexual feelings, attractions, and relationships. ● Students will learn how opinions, cultural and family values, religious views, comfort levels, and personalities affect feelings of attraction. ● Students will learn the harmful health effects of discriminating and biased behaviors and the importance of respecting all people. 	2/24-3/13
Lesson 3 – Resisting Sexual Pressures			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>This lesson will help students recognize dating/romantic relationships situation that are not safe and appropriate. Group discussions and learning activities will teach students steps to resist and communicate unwanted sexual pressures. Students will be introduced to the term “consent” in context of romantic and sexual relationships. Classroom discussions and learning activities will help develop the communication skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students will learn about the laws of sexual consent. ● Students will learn assertive communication skills that establish clear boundaries. ● Students will learn how to be respectful to boundaries and not to pressure their partner. 	2/24-3/13

	between two partners to establish boundaries and draw the line between invited and uninvited behaviors.		
Lesson 4 – Sexting and Online Safety			
<input type="checkbox"/>	This lesson will help students understand the dangers of inappropriate texting that includes sexual content. Students will develop a better understanding of the “dos” and “don’ts” of online communication and messaging.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will learn about online risks to their sexual health and how to protect yourself. • Students will learn about the laws regarding sexting and cyberbullying. • Students will learn about the harmful health effects of inappropriate online communication. 	2/24-3/13
Lesson 5 – Sex and the Media			
<input type="checkbox"/>	This lesson will introduce to students the sexual influences on youth by various media (i.e., television, the Internet, magazines, music). Students will explore how media message target their age group and ways that these messages impact the perceived norm of youth sexuality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will learn about various media influences that target youth sexuality. • Students will learn the importance of a healthy body image and how media images and perceived norms can impact one’s body image. • Students will learn the health effects of viewing sexual content on a person’s sexual health. 	2/24-3/13

For any of the “opt-out” lessons identified above, special arrangements will be made for your child. Please identify your preference for accommodations for your child when these lessons are presented. The Health and Physical Education staff will notify you of these accommodations. The Health and Physical Education staff will notify you of the accommodations that have been determined for your child.

- An alternative self-study learning activity about HRSH unit topics.
- An alternative self-study assignment on a health topic other than topics identified above.
- An alternative location for personal reading or homework time.

Student’s Name

Health Teacher’s Name

Parent/Guardian Name (Please print clearly)

Relationship to Student

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date of Request