Questions to Ask When Choosing A Health Education Curriculum

1. Does the curriculum focus on reducing the **risk behaviors** that are most critical to the health of young people?  
   - Nutrition………………………………………………………………..  
   - Physical activity…………………………………………………………..  
   - Alcohol and other drug use……………………………………………..  
   - Tobacco use………………………………………………………………  
   - Violence and accidental injury…………………………………………  
   - Sexual activity that leads to unintended pregnancy, HIV, STDs…………  
   - **YES**  
   - **NO**

2. Does it provide **basic, accurate information** about the possible short- and long-term consequences of risky behavior?  
   - **YES**  
   - **NO**

3. Does the curriculum focus on increasing young people’s personal **perception of risk** and harmfulness of engaging in specific health risk behaviors?  
   - **YES**  
   - **NO**

4. Does it address personal and group **values** and **norms** that help support healthy behaviors?  
   - **YES**  
   - **NO**

5. Does it address **personal** and **social pressures** to engage in risky behaviors (e.g., media influences, peer pressure, social barriers)?  
   - **YES**  
   - **NO**

6. Does the curriculum build essential **skills** (e.g., communication, decision-making, planning/goal-setting, stress management) through the following steps?  
   - Teacher and students discuss the importance of the skill, how it is relevant, and how it related to other learned skills……………………  
   - Teacher presents the steps for developing the skill……………………  
   - Teacher models the skill………………………………………………  
   - Students practice and rehearse the skill using real-life scenarios………  
   - Students receive feedback and reinforcement………………………..  
   - **YES**  
   - **NO**

7. Does it include a **variety of teaching methods** that are interactive and experiential, encourage higher-order thinking skills and link to the world outside the classroom?
8. Does it provide information, learning strategies, teaching methods, and instructional materials that are **appropriate** to the students’ needs, interests, concerns, maturity level, and current knowledge and skill levels? ............

9. Does the curriculum incorporate learning strategies, teaching methods, and materials that are **culturally inclusive** (gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, physical/mental ability, and appearance)? ...........................

10. Does it **last** long enough (a minimum of 50 hours per year) to give students multiple opportunities to practice critical health skills? ...........................

11. Will the teachers who will be using this curriculum receive curriculum-focused **professional development**?

   - Will they receive training in how to use this specific curriculum? ......
   - Can they access technical assistance during implementation? ...........
   - Is follow-up curriculum training available? ..............................

The state-developed *Michigan Model for Comprehensive School Health Education* is one curriculum that meets these criteria. To learn more about the *Michigan Model*, or for assistance in evaluating another curriculum, contact:


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1 These criteria are adapted from
- the *Health Education Curriculum Assessment Tool (draft)*, developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Adolescent and School Health; and