

## InnerVisions HealthCare - Relationships Program 8th Grade Scope and Sequence - Catholic Schools

### Day 1 - Learning about Yourself (YOU)

- Introduction
- Norms & Expectations
  - Objective: set the climate of the classroom by setting guidelines for behavior and expectations set guidelines for the experience.
    - Norms: be open minded/kind to one another, be respectful, agree to disagree, no verbal put-downs
    - Expectations: to have fun, learn more about myself, to gain new resources
- Personality Styles
  - Objective: To help students discover their personality style and appreciate the differences in others.
    - Students take a quiz to help them discover their personality style. Students learn about their own personality and their classmates. The goal of a well rounded person is to take on qualities of all four personality types, rather than demonstrating huge peaks and valleys.
  - Students are asked the following questions:
    - Who do you say that I am, Lord?
      - A child of God. I am His.
        - Through baptism we are His sons and daughters.
        - We are human beings not human doings. Our worth is measured intrinsically.
    - Why am I here?
      - God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself, in a plan of sheer goodness, freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life. (Prologue of the CCC, section 1)
        - God wanted to share everything He has with you (and me). He didn't share everything with us because we earned it. He did it because he loves us and wants to *freely* give us everything He has.
        - God created us to be happy. We are happiest when we live our purpose which is to know, love, and serve God in this life so we can be with him in the next life (heaven).
    - If God made us in His image and likeness (Gen. 1:26-27), why are we all so different?
      - Let students answer freely then read: 1 Corinthians 12:4-12
      - **God allows and gives us different gifts to do different roles in life to ultimately know and glorify Him.**
      - **The better we understand ourselves, the better we can use our unique gifts to bring glory to God!**

## Day 2 - Learning about Yourself + Others (**YOU+YOUR RELATIONSHIPS**)

- Review norms/expectations & last week's material
- Whole Person Health
  - Objective: To teach students the 6 categories of good health: physical, emotional, intellectual, social, spiritual, and financial.
    - Students are given a worksheet and as a class work together to define each aspect of health and provide examples.
- Essentials of a Friendship
  - Objective: To teach students the 10 essentials of friendship so they can determine if their friendships are healthy, or unhealthy.
    - The 10 essentials include: meaningful/fun conversation, quality time together, trust, reliability, positive shared experiences, shared values/boundaries, emotional safety/respect, support, high mutual expectations, & shared responsibilities in the relationship.
  - John 15:15
    - [Jesus said] I no longer speak of you as slaves, for a slave does not know his master is about. Instead, I call you friends, since I have made known to you all that I heard from my father.
    - True friendship is not using another person as a master and slave. Rather it's doing the good for another. (Like how God wanted to share all the Earth's goodness with us – remember the first day CCC prologue).
    - Another question you could ask about your friendships: “Is this friendship helping me grow in virtue? Or helping me grow closer to God?”

### Day 3 - Healthy Relationships/Communication (**YOUR RELATIONSHIPS**)

- Words Have Power
  - Objective: To help students learn that words have power and can affect how they feel.
    - Discussion on if words *actually* have power or if the old rhyme “sticks and stones may break my bones but words may never hurt me” is true.
      - Discuss: words that make us feel appreciated vs words that make us feel hurt.
      - A large cardboard heart is on display – students use thumbtacks to tack into the heart with words/phrases that make them feel badly.
        - Other people's words can hurt us and our own words can hurt others.
        - Even if someone apologizes, a wound is still there (evidenced by the hole left by the thumb tack after the tack is removed)
      - \*\*\*But, if reconciliation occurs, healing can happen! How do we do that?
        - If we have hurt others, we go to be reconciled to God in the sacrament of reconciliation.
        - If others have hurt us, one way we can be healed is by the Eucharist - physically or adoration.
        - This is shown by using tape to “heal” the holes caused by the tacks – the heart is stronger after the tape has been applied because healing has occurred.
- Boundaries Are Your Friend
  - Objective: To foster positive feelings about setting boundaries among students
    - An elementary school did not have a fence around its playground. When the children were outside, they congregated closely toward the center of the yard and did not utilize much of the playground. After several months of observation, school officials built a fence around the playground. Soon children were playing all the way to the very end of the playground. The fence made all the difference. It was a clear boundary that gave the children freedom.
    - Activity is completed demonstrating this.
  - **Does God give us boundaries? If so, why would He do that?**
    - Yes, Think of the commandments - here's a few to name:
      - You shall have no other Gods
      - You shall not kill
      - You shall not steal
    - Does He give us these boundaries to keep us from having fun?

- No! Because He knows us (remember 2 weeks ago we talked about how God created us like Himself), He knows that we would be hurt if we did these things. He also knows of the beauty of our own hearts - because our hearts were created to match His.
  - Hang with me here: Father James Downey gave a homily about how Jesus came and gave his disciples and followers some really hard teachings like divorce. He didn't do this to condemn anyone (make them feel bad), he did this to show them the beauty of God's *true* plan for each and everyone of us. It's like a really pretty picture. Normally there's a picture frame around it. Why would some put a picture frame around the already good enough picture? The frame draws your attention to what's within the frame - the true beauty. That's exactly what God's boundaries are doing with our own desires and hearts.
    - Matthew 5:31-37
      - Even Though we're given these boundaries, we are not bound to them. God allows us to *choose* if we stay within the boundaries He knows is best for our hearts.
    - Catechism's Moral Treatise: Part Three, Section One, Chapter One, Articles 1-4

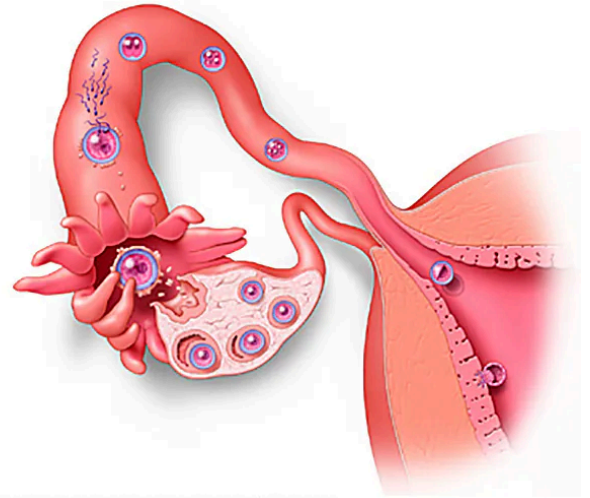
"ABOVE ALL ELSE, GUARD YOUR HEART, FOR  
EVERYTHING YOU DO FLOWS FROM IT."  
Proverbs 4:23



#### Day 4 - Health Science (**YOUR BODY**)

- Made in God's Image
  - We, both male and female, are made in the image of God. We are created to mirror the love of the trinity within our families! We most fully live up to living in the image and likeness of God when we get married and have children! This is the highest form of active participation in the creation of life and co-create with God! It's a beautiful calling!
  - In the eyes of the church, what makes you a girl is not your hair, make up, your body type, playing with barbies or babies, being into cars, strength, etc. What makes you a girl or boy is God. He "formed you in your mothers womb." (jer 1:5) and made you a girl or boy on purpose.
  - We discussed how both of us are called to be in relationship with one another and not just marriage. All good and respectful relationships mirror the trinity. The closest image is marriage but that doesn't mean our friendships don't mirror God.
  - So you know how in the Trinity, God the Father is a different person than God the Son? Like, they are both God but they express that in different ways? God created humanity in his image, but males and females express God's image in different ways. Later in Genesis, God sees Adam is lonely and says in Gen 2: 18 "It is not good for man to be alone." So God brought Adam all different animals to be suitable partners, knowing Adam would not want any of them. God created Adam very good and yet Adam knew he wasn't complete. He needed others to more perfectly imitate God's image, to be in relationship.
  - Using the biology of our bodies to point to deeper truths about how we are made (or theology of the body) we understand males and females are different. Boys have testicles and penises, girls have vaginas and breasts, etc. And the difference is good because it takes a male and female to create life.
    - Segue to Reproduction/pregnancy.
- Reproduction/Pregnancy
  - 40 weeks of a pregnancy
    - Weeks 1 & 2
      - Female body is not pregnant. The female body is preparing for ovulation or egg maturation.
    - Weeks 3 & 4
      - Egg is released from the ovary (ovulation)
      - Conception occurs when male sperm fertilize the egg.
      - Pregnancy begins when the sperm fertilizes the egg in the fallopian tube.
      - It is its own entity called a Zygote. It has its own DNA.
      - A healthy pregnancy will implant in the uterine wall.

- \*If there is no pregnancy, then menstruation occurs at the end of week 4.
  - See image below
- Week 5-8
  - At 6 weeks, the heart begins to beat, eyes develop, and brain and spinal cord begin development.
  - The term embryo is used through 7 weeks. Becomes a “fetus” at 8 weeks. Fetus is Latin for living one.
- Weeks 9-12
  - At 9 weeks eyelids begin to form as well as fingers and toes.
    - The fetus is roughly  $\frac{3}{4}$ ”
    - Teddy Graham sized (Teddy Grahams are handed out to students)
  - By 12 weeks, the webbing is gone from the fingers and toes. Each body system is at its early stages: stomach, kidneys, and eyes - fetus is now  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ”.
- Weeks 13-16
  - At 13 weeks, the fetus’ kidneys are at work and is able to urinate. Bones begin to ossify (hardened).
  - By 16 weeks, the fetal limb movements are coordinated and can be seen on ultrasounds and is roughly the size of an avocado.
- Months 4-9
  - Continuation of fetal development
- As we can see, **This process of reproduction reveals the love-giving and life-giving nature of God.**
  - If someone we know has strayed from God’s natural boundaries around sex and has accidentally created life, we must always choose life. We learn to make good choices and encourage others to make good choices, even in the face of a pregnancy related decision.
- References
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- Talking about Sex

- Part one: We are created Good, we are set apart from the animals. Although animals have sex, when humans have sex, sex is elevated and given a totally new meaning to the reality of the unique goodness of our human bodies.
  - Something we need to keep in mind is our human dignity. Because humans are created in God's image, we are not like the rest of the animals. Remember in Genesis, God creates animals with a poof! But when he creates man, he does what... he breathes his life into Adam. God shares his spirit with us, and not the animals. God gives us authority and dominion over animals.
  - Animals use instinct. They have an urge, then take care of that urge. They are hungry, they eat. They have to pee, they pee right then and there. They get the urge to mate, they mate. But we humans are not like the animals. When God breathed his life into Adam, he also breathed our intellect. We can reason, unlike the animals. Just because we have an urge, doesn't mean we HAVE to take care of it. In fact, there are several urges we must temper.
  - Love vs Lust: Anyone know what lust is? Lust is basically an animal approach to sexuality. Lust is the base desire for sex without regarding the other person's dignity. It's taking the person out of sex. Lust is all about satisfying the urge or desire.
  - Love is different. Love can still be sexual (within marriage), but love is motivated by the good of the other. Love is defined pretty well in 1 John 3:16 - The way we came to know love was that he laid down his life for us; so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. Point to crucifix.
  - True Love demands sacrifice. Infatuation feelings do not.
    - "When we see God's plan for love, lust looks boring. When we see the truth about our bodies and sex, we change our lives but not out



of guilt, or fear of pregnancy or disease. We change our lives because God's view of love is everything the human heart longs for. But it is not enough that we long to receive this kind of love, we must learn how to give it.” Jason Evert

○ Part Two: Sex: Use as Directed

- Many Christians believe sex is bad and that everyone needs to avoid it or else terrible things will happen! And the same people say SEX IS BAD unless you're married, then all of the sudden it's good! Well that can be super confusing for people.
- In our Catholic faith we teach that sex is good and sacred. It's a gift from God and any good and sacred thing needs protection and boundaries. In order to preserve the goodness of sex, we must only use this gift when it's appropriate and when it is ordered rightly.
- You see, like any gift, if it is unwrapped too early, it can spoil the occasion. Likewise, if we participate in sex before it's intended, many negative and hurtful things can happen.
  - Before we talk about the affect sex has on relationships, I need to ask you to answer this question. What is sex? Well for this presentation, we will discuss sex as anything where the genitals are involved. So basically if it involves a penis or vagina, it's considered some form of sex.
- Have you ever tried to use something that was against how it should have been used? For example, let's say you get a brand new iphone! Yay! The user manual tells you: This is an electronic device used for texting, calling, internet use, etc. DO NOT USE UNDER WATER. Now, this device was not created to be used underwater, so what would happen if you took your brand new iphone and used it underwater? It would stop working well, right?

Well whether we know it or not, we were created with sort of a user manual. God created us good, our bodies good, and created us to be fruitful and multiply within the context of marriage. If we have any form of sex outside of marriage, parts of us stop working well. Parts of us become hurt and broken.

- Here's another example... What words would you use to describe the feelings you experience when coming home to a wood burning fire?
  - (Answer may include cozy, warm, comfortable, safe, relaxed).
- Now, shift gears for a minute, and imagine arriving home to this fire on your couch in





your living room...

- What would you feel in this circumstance?
  - (Answer may include panicked, fearful, chaotic, burned, hurt).

The main difference between a fireplace and a house fire is one is as it should be, within safe boundaries. A fireplace was made to have a fire in it. Your couch was not.

**When we reserve sex for marriage, it's like lighting that fire in the fireplace. When we engage in any sexual activity outside of marriage, it can be as devastating as a house fire.**



- **Part three: Speaking with our bodies**

- Sign Language. Who here knows sign language? (probably no one). Well all of us know some things... like what am I saying when I do this (Wave). What about when I cross my arms like this. (that you're upset). We are made with an intellect/soul and body. We are our most happy and free when those things align. We should never lie with our bodies. If you are upset, you can let your body reflect that. If you are happy, then smile!
- In healthy relationships, our bodies should tell the truth. In Marriage, you say your vows on your wedding day that go something like, "I, \_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_, for my lawful wife/husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part. I will love and honor you all the days of my life." You say with your voice that you will love this person with all of your heart, soul, body, everything for the rest of your life.
- You say these exact same things with your body on your wedding night. Sex is designed to be a truthful statement of love, made with your whole person, body and soul.
- Anytime sex is outside of marriage, you are lying to this person with your body. Lies are not a sign of a healthy relationship. Lies are hurtful.

## Day 5 Cultural Influences

- Paper Bag Hot Potato
  - Objective: To help students understand the decision making process and become more aware of how they make decisions.
    - 4 different food items are placed in 4 brown bags; participating students stand in a circle and pass the bags left to right while music plays. When the music stops, the student must decide if to eat the food item to remain in the game or pass and be eliminated.
    - After the game ends, a discussion of the decision making process occurs.
    - Draw students back to Only YOU (student) can make the decisions in your life
      - In this life, we have free will to choose. Every choice that we make can either lead you closer to God or further away. (Recall Day 3 Words Have Power Lesson). Now we make choices with our actions.
      - We get to make choices when it comes to how we use our bodies. We can live in a way that is made in the image of God and love our spouse. What does this look like? Waiting for marriage to give my body and soul to another person.
        - Vows of marriage = soul
          - The unbreakable bond to use this life to help your spouse get to heaven.
        - The marital act or sex = body
          - The physical act in which our bodies speak as a renewal of the vows said at the altar.
- STIs PPT
  - Prior to the powerpoint, we point out that every person has free will. Each individual can make the choice to go outside of God's plan for our bodies and his plan for sex. Because of this, there are natural consequences that can occur such as STIs.
    - Just in the same way when we are around someone with a cold or any type of sickness, when we make contact with them, the germs spread and hence cause us to get sick.
  - Key to STIs - you can't tell if someone has a curable or incurable STI by looking at them. (Good for the students to know about these on the PPT but we do not need to go into detail)
  - Bacterial STIs
    - Chlamydia and Gonorrhea are highest in Polk County = 3000+ Chlamydia cases & 1000+ Gonorrhea cases reported just in Polk County in 2023.
    - \*I discuss the Tuskegee Syphilis "Study" - pointing out why we know the

stages of Syphilis and the importance of abstaining, testing, and the dignity of human life regardless of race.

- [https://www.cdc.gov/tuskegee/about/timeline.html?CDC\\_AAref\\_Val=http://www.cdc.gov/tuskegee/timeline.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tuskegee/about/timeline.html?CDC_AAref_Val=http://www.cdc.gov/tuskegee/timeline.htm)
- Prevention:
  - Ask the students: Through social media, movies and tv shows, how do we see relationships being shown?
    - Think first about a Disney Movie.. Then a Hallmark Show/Movie
      - Is that realistic though?
    - Think back to Day 2 when we talked about friendship essentials.. Our relationships need boundaries
    - We need boundaries with ourselves, our surroundings, our friends, etc.
      - 1 Corinthians 3:16 tells us, “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?”
      - 1 John 4 tells us, “If any one says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him, that he who loves God should love his brother also.”
        - These scripture verses are reflective of what God desires for us and our relationships
        - Love- to will the good of the other
          - Not give into the passions/desires of the flesh
      - To honor and withhold the dignity of ourselves and one another is to recognize the gift of the body and not cross the boundaries of touching each others swimsuit areas which is also how we can prevent the prevalence and or spreading of STD/Is
    - The marital act is to be saved for the bride and groom where they are asked if they are entering into marriage freely and wholeheartedly AND with full understanding that the Catholic Church teaches that the martial embrace of sex must be both open to life and unitive.
      - *The Church, nevertheless, in urging men to the observance of the precepts of the natural law, which it interprets by its constant doctrine, teaches that each and every marital act must of necessity retain its intrinsic relationship to the procreation of human life (Humanae Vitae II; emphasis added).*

- “[E]very action which, whether in anticipation of the conjugal act, or in its accomplishment, or in the development of its natural consequences, proposes, whether as an end or as a means, to render procreation impossible is intrinsically evil” (CCC 2370). “Legitimate intentions on the part of the spouses do not justify recourse to morally unacceptable means . . . for example, direct sterilization or contraception” (CCC 2399).
  - God sees you as his son or daughter made in his image who is so incredibly valuable. Your worth is not determined by what you do for another person rather just who you are.
    - You are a gift to your future spouse. By saying no to sex now, is saying yes to a greater yes for God’s plan for your future.
- The Contagion (Activity)
  - Objective: to help students discover the ways HIV/AIDS and other STDs are passed from one person to another. To showcase the randomness of contracting STD/STI.
  - Students choose if they want to participate.
    - Participating students grab a cup of water (2 of the 20 cups have a couple of drops of ammonia in the water representing STIs).
    - Students then pour a little bit of their water into another cup with 3 different people in the class. After this, cups are put back on the front table. One drop of phenolphthalein is placed in each cup. Any cup with traces of Ammonia will then turn pink.
    - Students learn that only 2 of the cups that began would have been pink prior to the swapping but that number increases exponentially after swapping.
    - Each time, you give your body to another person (ie. sex), you do more than just increase your risk for STDs. You set yourself up for emotional hurt. Your body is a gift. A gift that should be given to the person that will help you get to heaven and vice versa.

## Day 6 Cultural influences/Future

- Love vs Infatuation
  - To help students understand the definition of love and differentiate its mean from infatuation
    - Love is defined as: selfless desire for the other’s good
    - Infatuation is defined as: feeling of obsessively strong love for or interest in someone/something; strong and unreasoning attachment.
  - Are given cards and will work together to categorize them as love or infatuation.
  - The bible defines love
    - 1 John 3:16
      - The way we came to know love was that he laid down his life for us; so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.
- A Distorted View
  - Objective: To inform and warn students about the harmful effects and danger of pornography.
    - A volunteer (teacher or student) will show how pornography distorts reality.
    - This comical illustration demonstrates the analogy of reality becoming distorted. This powerful analogy allows for a transition to begin a discussion about pornography and how it distorts our views on sex which can have lasting effects on current and future relationships.
    - Students will be given the site: [fightthenewdrug.org](http://fightthenewdrug.org) in case they have ever struggled with pornography.
    - Again, the Church teaches against pornography because of the way it objectifies people and distorts and demeans the beautiful and life-giving reality of what sex is meant to be.
- Evaluations (mini-eval + instructor eval)
- Free time/follow-up questions



Questions may be directed to [education@innervisionshealthcare.org](mailto:education@innervisionshealthcare.org)