

Minnesota Sexuality Education Resource Review Panel

Summary of Panel Review
Review Date: January 2005

Love U2: Becoming Sex Smart (2004)

Format: Curriculum
Target Audience: Grades 8-12
Cost: \$265.00

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The Minnesota Sexuality Education Resource Review Panel **Recommends** the use of this curriculum for the following reasons and with the following reservations:

Review Summary:

Love U2: Becoming Sex Smart is an eleven-lesson curriculum that focuses on building healthy relationships and making healthy decisions regarding sexuality. The strength of this curriculum lies in its clear focus on relationships – the knowledge and skills one needs to develop an “emotionally healthy, mutually respectful and ethically sound relationship”. It delivers a straightforward and consistent message about the value of abstinence and delaying sex. It’s limitations lie in the amount and complexity of the information shared, the focus on marriage, and the amount of preparation time required to deliver the lessons effectively.

The panel commended the curriculum for presenting a broad perspective of the physical, mental, emotional and social needs of young people, however, expressed concern that some of the language and activities reinforce gender stereotypes regarding these issues. The curriculum includes information on sexual intimacy not found in most curricula on relationships and sexuality. It conveys a positive message about sex, particularly within the context of a mature, loving relationship. It offers many good activities, role-plays and opportunities to practice developing healthy relationships, responding to social pressures and identifying good alternatives to sex. Many panel members were concerned about the emphasis on marriage. They liked the focus on committed relationships, but felt the focus on marriage would not be inclusive of all participants, particularly GLBT youth.

The panel found that in some places, facts were intermingled with opinion in a way that makes it difficult to distinguish between the two. In addition, there was concern about the accuracy of some of the facts on STDs. The panel recommends that the group leader substitute local facts and statistics for the ones contained in the curriculum.

Though the curriculum includes a lot of good information and directions, the panel found it dense and difficult to follow. They felt the instructions need to be streamlined and offer clear time frames for each lesson. The panel was concerned that the amount of information and the way it is organized would overwhelm some teachers or group leaders. For some, the cost may be prohibitive, particularly given that the curriculum relies on videos not included in the package.

Overall, the panel **recommends** the use of *Love U2: Becoming Sex Smart* to explore healthy relationships – what they are and the skills needed to develop them. MSERRP recommends that the curriculum be led by an experienced, non-judgmental facilitator who has strong content knowledge and group leading skills.

LoveU2: Becoming Sex Smart (2004)

Assessment Criteria	Mean Score	Comments
Accuracy of Information - Provides basic, accurate information about teen sexual health, e.g., risks of teen sexual activity, ways to avoid intercourse or use methods of protection against pregnancy and STDs, human growth and development, relationships, etc.	2.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Facts with clear citations are mixed in with opinions stated as facts. ▪ Some assertions and generalizations are presented as facts, e.g., gender differences ▪ Some of the STD facts are inaccurate; teacher/leader should get local data. ▪ The effectiveness of condoms is minimized.
Focus - Focuses on ways to promote sexual health e.g., reducing one or more sexual behaviors that lead to unintended pregnancy or HIV/STD infection; understanding healthy physical/emotional development; developing healthy relationships, etc.	3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear, straightforward focus on abstinence, delaying sex, and marriage. ▪ Strong focus on developing healthy relationships. ▪ Many positive messages about sexuality; contains good information on intimacy.
Messages - Delivers and consistently reinforces a clear message, e.g., states message multiple times in multiple ways.	3.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consistent message about the value of abstinence and delaying sex. Reinforces message that sex is more rewarding in a mature, loving relationship; offers good alternatives to sex. ▪ Messages are sometimes conveyed with strong negative language and over-emphasis on dangers and risks.
Addresses Social Pressures - Includes activities that address social pressures that influence sexual behavior.	3.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contains many activities, role-plays and opportunities to practice dealing with social pressures, however, some of them perpetuate stereotypical gender roles and bias.
Communication Skills - Provides examples of and practice with being assertive, using negotiation and refusal skills, making decisions, etc.	3.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lots of role play/group work; some good activities on communication refusal skills and negation. ▪ Many activities on how to develop strong, healthy relationships.
Teaching Methods - Employs a variety of teaching methods designed to involve participants and have them personalize the information.	3.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Offers many options - interactive activities, lecture, multi-media and take-home activities. ▪ Mixed quality of activities – some are very strong, some feel contrived, and some may be hard to implement.
Appropriateness for Audience - Incorporates behavioral goals, teaching methods, and materials that are appropriate to the age, sexual experience, and culture of the students (as stated by publisher.)	3.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Covers a wide range of material; may be used with different age groups. Some activities too complex for 8th-10th and others too simple for 11th-12th. Must choose based on group. ▪ May work best in a non-school setting (congregations, community group, etc.)
Multicultural Perspective – This resource is most appropriate for the following audiences.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reinforces some gender stereotypes. ▪ Acknowledges GLBT youth; is not GLBT inclusive, but is not GLBT hostile. Marriage language excludes gay youth. ▪ There is a focus on urban African American youth, however, it is not well integrated into the curriculum.
Teacher-Friendly - Is well organized with clear, thorough instructions or discussion guide. Minimal assembly or preparation time required.	1.74	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Includes a lot of information and directions but is not well organized or easy-to-read. May be overwhelming for a teacher or group leader. Does not give clear time frames for lessons. ▪ Cost may be prohibitive for some settings.
Facilitation Skills Required - How knowledgeable and skilled must the facilitator be to use this resource effectively?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Requires strong content knowledge and group leading skills. ▪ Complex, hard to navigate; needs to be able to link areas together and make flow smoothly.
Presentation Quality – How appealing is the product (e.g. visual quality, sound quality, graphics, etc.)?	2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Text is very dense. Few visual breaks or graphics.
Overall Recommendation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recommend Highly - 0 ▪ Recommend - 15 ▪ Reject - 4