

PARENT INFORMATION LETTER REGARDING SEXUAL HEALTH LESSONS AT SCHOOL



Sexual Health Lessons at School

Sexual health lessons at school are a part of the "Health and sex education, and family skills" programme. All Danish schools have to provide their pupils, i.e. all age-groups/class levels, with lessons on both health and sex related topics and in family skills.

Sexual health education is an important factor in relation to your child's health and well-being and in relation to his or her academic and personal development. Following on from this, sexual health education usually takes place as part of the schools' overall endeavours to strengthen the learning, health and well-being of their pupils.

The aim of the sex education programme is:

- To support children and youngsters in registering their own boundaries and respecting those of others.
- To develop children's, and youngsters' knowledge of topics such as gender, the body, emotions, rights, well-being, sexuality and sexual health.
- To develop the ability of children and youngsters to make good decisions that strengthen their own health and well-being and that of others.
- To equip children and youngsters so that they can play an active role within the communities and society of which they are a member.
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Subject matter covered by the sex education programme

The subject matter covered by the sex education programme is adjusted according to the age group involved. This means that there is a huge difference between the compulsory subject matter covered by the youngest and the oldest classes.

- From kindergarten class to 3rd class, for example, children are taught about topics such as rights, the body, boundaries, emotions, family life and reproduction.
- From 4th to 6th class, for example, children are provided with lessons on topics such as puberty, rights, boundaries, friendships and norms regarding the body, gender and sexuality.
- From 7th to 9th class, for example, youngsters are provided with lessons on topics such as personal boundaries, relationships, rights, norms regarding gender, the body and sexuality along with specific sexual health issues.

While sex education can be scheduled as separate teaching modules, it can also consist of cross-curricular modules that deal with the topics to be covered under the sex education programme, for example in Danish, History, Biology and Art classes. The school nurse will collaborate with your child's class teachers in providing this instruction. The school can also make use of guest teachers with a specialised knowledge of the area in question.

The role of parents

It is important that you, as a parent, support the sex education programme provided by your child's school. It is also important that you show an interest in what your child is being taught in these classes. You can contact your child's teachers for more information on the sexual health lessons in your child's particular class.

As a parent, you also have an important role to play in teaching your child about the topics covered by the sexual health programme at school. Children and youngsters often think a lot about gender, the body, boundaries, emotions and sexuality and they need to be able to talk to their parents and other adults about the thoughts and considerations they are having.

Sexual health lessons at school are part of the national "Health and sex education, and family skills" programme. As the topic has not been allocated a specific number of hours, it has to be integrated within the subjects that have been scheduled throughout the year. A set of compulsory targets has been drawn up for the programme and is to be followed by all schools in Denmark.