Building Blocks of the HECAT: The Characteristics of Effective Curricula

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Module 2 in the HECAT Series

The HECAT building blocks

Characteristics of effective curricula

National Health Education Standards

Goals and Outcomes

Clear goals?

Instruction connected to outcomes?

Outcomes connected to goals?
Characteristics of Effective Curricula

Driven by theory?
Research and theory
Based on research?

Values, Attitudes, Beliefs
Positive perceptions of healthy behavior
Examine connection to behavior
Consider new perspectives
Negative perceptions of unhealthy behavior

Characteristics of Effective Curricula

EXAMPLES

Values, Attitudes, Beliefs

Create a top 10 list of reasons to avoid pregnancy
List personal goals and describe how abstinence will help reach goals
Brainstorm how life would be different as a teen parent
Characteristics of Effective Curricula

- **Norms**
  - Power to shape norms
  - Accuracy of perceptions about peer behavior
- **Perceptions**
  - Personal risk
  - Consequences of risk and harm
  - Risky situations

**EXAMPLES**

- **Norms**
  - Examine data on the % of students who are not sexually active
  - Develop public service announcement about the benefits of abstinence

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Perceptions of risk and harm

Discuss consequences of Sexually Transmitted Infections

Brainstorm situations that increase risk of engaging in unhealthy behavior

Characteristics of Effective Curricula

Social pressures and influences

Media influence

Peer pressure

Social barriers

Characteristics of Effective Curricula

Opportunities for positive connections

Engages peers

Engages positive adult role models

Engages parents
Characteristics of Effective Curricula

**Opportunities for positive connections**
- Interview parents or guardians about family rules
- Identify three adults or peers they could talk to

**BUILDING SKILLS**
- Discusses importance of skill
- Shows steps for developing skill
- Enables skill practice
- Provides feedback and reinforcement
- Models the skill

**EXAMPLES**
- Seeking help for a friend
- Role plays about partner communication
- Opportunities for positive connections
Characteristics of Effective Curricula

- REINFORCES SKILLS
  - Skill booster sessions
  - Reinforcement across grade levels

Characteristics of Effective Curricula

- Integrates with other subjects

Characteristics of Effective Curricula

- Needed for behavior change

Characteristics of Effective Curricula

- Functional health knowledge
  - Basic
  - Accurate

Examples

- Functional health knowledge
  - Signs and symptoms of sexually transmitted infections (STI)
  - Effects of untreated STI
Characteristics of Effective Curricula

- Personalize information and engage
- Experiential
- Interactive
- Student-centered

EXAMPLES

- Peer-led role plays: Group discussion about how HIV would affect life goals
- Written assignment about how to be assertive

Characteristics of Effective Curricula

- Age-appropriate
- Relevant to daily life
- Logical

Reading levels tested
Characteristics of Effective Curricula

- Culturally inclusive
  - Acknowledge diversity
  - Build on cultural resources

- Adequate time
  - Adequate hours of instruction
  - Multiple grade levels

- Teacher guidance
  - Ongoing professional development
  - Training
Acknowledgement

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