

Characteristics Summary Table*

Name of Curriculum: **GET REAL: COMPREHENSIVE SEX EDUCATION THAT WORKS**

For more detailed information about this program, visit the [Get Real](#) page at ETR's [Program Success Center](#) website.

Category 1	
Characteristic	Get Real
1. Involved multiple people with different backgrounds in theory, research and sex and STD/HIV education to develop the curriculum.	Developed by the team of health care and health education experts at Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts, the largest freestanding reproductive health care and education provider in Massachusetts, which provides trustworthy, medically accurate, age-appropriate education to young people, parents and professionals.
2. Assessed relevant needs and assets of target group.	<i>Get Real</i> emphasizes social and emotional skills as a key component of healthy relationships and responsible decision making. It promotes abstinence from sex as the healthiest choice for adolescents; provides a comprehensive understanding of sexual health, sexuality and protection methods; and supports parents as the primary sexuality educators of their children through family activities that encourage dialogue between students and the caring adults in their lives.
3. Used a logic model approach to develop the curriculum that specified the health goals, the behaviors affecting those health goals, the risk and protective factors affecting those behaviors, and the activities addressing those risk and protective factors.	See the program Logic Model .
4. Designed activities consistent with community values and available resources (e.g., staff time, staff skills, facility space and supplies).	<i>Get Real</i> consists of 27 sequential lessons taught across the middle school years—9 lessons each in Grades 6, 7 and 8. Each lesson is designed to be taught in 45 minutes. If classes are taught during longer blocks, the lessons can be expanded through prolonged discussion, use of additional activities and process questions, or review of anonymous questions. If necessary, two lessons may be taught in a 90-minute block.
5. Pilot-tested the program.	<i>Get Real</i> was piloted in five Massachusetts schools over a 3-year period. Experiences and observations gathered while teaching the pilot curriculum contributed greatly to curriculum revisions. The final year of pilot testing culminated in a formative evaluation conducted by Wellesley Centers for Women.

* Kirby, D., Rolleri, L. & Wilson, M. M. (2007). *Tool to Assess the Characteristics of Effective Sex and STD/HIV Education Programs*. ETR and Healthy Teen Network.

Characteristics Summary Table

Category 2	
Characteristic	Get Real
6. Focused on clear health goals — the prevention of STD/HIV and/or pregnancy.	<p>The health goal of the curriculum is to promote positive sexual health behaviors and beliefs among students, resulting in a delay of sexual initiation, a reduction of unintended pregnancies, and higher use of protection methods.</p> <p>See the program Logic Model.</p>
7. Focused narrowly on specific behaviors leading to these health goals (e.g., abstaining from sex or using condoms or other contraceptives), gave clear messages about these behaviors, and addressed situations that might lead to them and how to avoid them.	<p>The behaviors targeted are delaying initiation of sex and increasing correct and consistent use of condoms and/or other protection methods.</p> <p>See the program Logic Model.</p>
8. Addressed multiple sexual psychosocial risk and protective factors affecting sexual behaviors (e.g., knowledge, perceived risks, values, attitudes, perceived norms and self- efficacy).	<p><i>Get Real</i> is framed with the concept of social and emotional learning, or SEL. According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL): “SEL is a process for helping children and even adults develop the fundamental skills for life effectiveness. SEL teaches the skills we all need to handle ourselves, our relationships, and our work effectively and ethically. These skills include recognizing and managing our emotions, developing caring and concern for others, establishing positive relationships, making responsible decisions, and handling challenging situations constructively and ethically.”</p> <p><i>Get Real</i> incorporates five SEL skills of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making as key elements in learning how to negotiate relationships. If young people can negotiate relationships, they can better negotiate sexual relationships. These skills are integrated into the content of the lessons through activities and process questions.</p> <p>Further, each behavioral target (delaying sexual initiation and correct and consistent condom use) has corresponding risk and protective factors. Lessons in <i>Get Real</i> are mapped to these determinants, which are listed on the first page of each lesson.</p> <p>See the program Logic Model for more detail.</p>

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9. Created a safe social environment for youth to participate.	The first lesson at each grade level is devoted to Creating the Classroom Climate. Activities include developing a list of Group Rights and Responsibilities that help ensure all students feel safe and respected and agree to respect others during the lessons. Optional Icebreaker games also help set a welcoming and united tone for the class sessions.
10. Included multiple activities to change each of the targeted risk and protective factors.	<i>Get Real</i> incorporates the five SEL skills of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and decision making as key elements in learning how to negotiate relationships. These skills are integrated into the content of the lesson through fun and interactive activities and process questions. The program Logic Model shows how the various activities relate to the targeted risk and protective factors.
11. Employed instructionally sound teaching methods that actively involved the participants, that helped participants personalize the information, and that were designed to change each group of risk and protective factors.	The lesson activities make use of brainstorming, large- and small-group discussion, roleplays, activity sheets and scenarios. A key component of the curriculum includes the take-home family activities found in every lesson that encourage dialogue between students and caring adults in their lives about sexual health topics.
12. Employed activities, instructional methods and behavioral messages that were appropriate to the youths' culture, developmental age and sexual experience.	The curriculum promotes abstinence from sex as the healthiest choice for adolescents, while also providing a comprehensive understanding of sexual health, sexuality and protection methods. Lesson activities are framed with the concept of social and emotional learning and teach key skills of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and decision making. Family activities encourage dialogue between students and the caring adults in their lives about sexual health topics.
13. Covered topics in a logical sequence.	See the program Logic Model .

Characteristics Summary Table

Category 3	
Characteristic	Get Real
14. Secured at least minimal support from appropriate authorities such as ministries of health, school districts or community organizations.	<p>This characteristic would be addressed during program implementation by the project team.</p> <p>ETR's Program Success Center website offers a framework for successful implementation of our programs, including free tools that can help with for assessing, selecting, developing, implementing and sustaining programs.</p>
15. Selected educators with desired characteristics (whenever possible), trained them and provided monitoring, supervision and support.	<p>This characteristic would be addressed during program implementation by the project team.</p> <p><i>Get Real</i> developers believe in the importance of preparing and fully training educators who teach <i>Get Real</i> to youth, thereby increasing the efficacy of the program to impact youth behavior. Educators planning to implement <i>Get Real</i> are highly encouraged to attend training through the <i>Get Real</i> Training of the Educator (TOE) process. Upon completion, participants will have the advanced skills needed to successfully teach <i>Get Real</i> with a high degree of comfort and fidelity.</p> <p>For more information, visit the Get Real Teacher Training pages.</p>
16. If needed, implemented activities to recruit and retain youth and overcome barriers to their involvement (e.g., publicized the program, offered food or obtained consent).	<p>This characteristic would be addressed during program implementation by the project team.</p> <p>ETR's Program Success Center website offers a framework for successful implementation of our programs, including free tools that can help with for assessing, selecting, developing, implementing and sustaining programs.</p>
17. Implemented virtually all activities with reasonable fidelity.	<p>ETR offers Fidelity Logs for our programs, see the Adaptation Guidelines and Tools tab on the Get Real page</p>