

Health Instruction

# RESPONSIBILITIES & COMPETENCIES

For Elementary (K-6) Classroom Teachers



The Board of Directors of the American Association for Health Education (AAHE) supports the development of education standards for preparation of elementary teachers in the field of Health Education. Lack of teacher training had been identified through national surveys as one of the most significant barriers to the effective implementation of school health education, especially for elementary teachers.

## Responsibilities & Competencies

**Responsibility I:** Communicating the concepts and purposes of health education.

*Competency A:* Describe the discipline of health education within the school setting.

*Sub-Competencies:*

- (1) Describe the interdependence of health education and the other components of a comprehensive school health program.
- (2) Describe comprehensive school health instruction, including the most common content areas.

*Competency B:* Provide a rationale for K-12 health education.

*Competency C:* Explain the role of knowledge, skills, and attitudes in shaping patterns of health behavior.

*Competency D:* Define the role of the elementary teacher within a comprehensive school health education program.

*Sub-Competencies:*

- (1) Describe the importance of health education for elementary teachers.
- (2) Summarize the kinds of support needed by the K-6 teacher from administrators and others to implement an elementary school health education program.
- (3) Identify available quality continuing education programs in health education for elementary teachers.
- (4) Describe the importance of modeling positive health behaviors.

**Responsibility II:** Assessing needs to determine priorities for school health education.

*Competency A:* Utilize information about health needs and interests.

*Competency B:* List behaviors and how they promote or compromise health.

**Responsibility III:** Planning effective comprehensive school health education curricula and programs.

*Competency A:* Select realistic program goals and objectives.

*Competency B:* Identify a scope and sequence plan for elementary school health instruction.

*Competency C:* Plan elementary school health education lessons based upon the National Health Education Standards.

*Competency D:* Plan elementary school health education lessons which reflect the abilities, needs, interests, development levels, and cultural backgrounds of students.

*Competency E:* Describe effective ways to promote cooperation with and feedback from administrators, parents, and other interested community members.

*Competency F:* Determine procedures which are compatible with school policy for

implementing curricula containing sensitive health topics.

**Responsibility IV:** Implementing elementary school health instruction.

*Competency A:* Employ a variety of strategies to facilitate implementation of an elementary school health education curriculum.

*Sub-Competencies:*

- (1) Provide an effective health education curriculum.
- (2) Integrate health education and other content areas.
- (3) Incorporate topics introduced by students into the health education curriculum, as appropriate.
- (4) Utilize effective skill building techniques to help students apply health knowledge in their daily lives.
- (5) Involve parents in the teaching/learning process.

*Competency B:* Incorporate appropriate resources and materials.

*Sub-Competencies:*

- (1) Select valid and reliable sources of information about health appropriate for grades K-6.
- (2) Utilize school and community resources within a comprehensive program.
- (3) Refer students to valid sources of health information and services.

*Competency C:* Employ appropriate strategies for dealing with sensitive health issues.

*Competency D:* Adapt existing health education curricular models to community and student needs and interests.

**Responsibility V:** Assessing student learning.

*Competence A:* Utilize appropriate criteria and valid and reliable assessments, both formative and summative, to determine student achievement in health education.

*Competency B:* Interpret and apply student assessment results to improve health instruction.

## Glossary

**Competency-** A broadly defined skill or ability, adequate performance of which is expected of the health educator. Mastery of a competency is dependent upon achievement of clusters of simpler but essential related skills or abilities. (A Competency Based Framework for Health Educators, 2006)

**Health Education-** Any combination of planned learning experiences based on sound theories that provide individuals, groups, and communities the opportunity to acquire information and the skills needed to make quality health decisions. (Joint Committee on Health Education and Promotion Terminology, 2000)

**Coordinated School Health Program-** An organized set of policies, procedures, and activities designed to protect, promote, and improve the health and well-being of students and staff, thus improving a student's ability to learn. It includes, but is not limited to comprehensive school health education; school health services; a healthy school environment; school counseling; psychological and social services; physical education; school nutrition; services; family and community involvement in school health; and school-site health promotion for staff. (Joint Committee on Health Education and Promotion Terminology, 2000)

**Comprehensive School Health Education-** The part of the coordinated school health program that includes the development, delivery, and evaluation of planned, sequential, and developmentally appropriate instruction, learning experiences, and other activities designed to protect, promote, and enhance the health literacy, attitudes, skills, and well-being of students, pre-kindergarten through grade 12. The content is derived from the National Health Education Standards, and guidelines that are available in some states. (Joint Committee on Health Education and Promotion Terminology, 2000)

## References

Joint Committee of Health Education Terminology, (2001). Report of the 2000 Joint Committee on Health Education and Promotion Terminology. *American Journal of Health Education* , 32(2).

National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, Inc. Society for Public Health Education, American Association for Health Education, (2006). *A Competency-Based Framework for Health Educators-2006*. Whitehall, PA: The National Commissions for Health Education Credentialing.

*Note: This document was adapted from a 1990 collaboration between the American Association for Health Education and the American School Health Association.*

