

The mission of the Family Life Education Department is to provide a medically accurate and age appropriate human development and sexuality education that encourages parent/child communication, promotes abstinence and enables students to make responsible decisions regarding their health and sexuality.

All New Hanover County middle school students are offered the choice of ONE Family Life Education course: *My Life: Choices Today for a Healthy Tomorrow* (abstinence-only) or *Stepping Stones to Better Living: Responsible Decisions* (abstinence-based). These courses are taught during the students' regularly scheduled PE/Health course. **Parental consent is required for either course.** The Family Life Education courses are:

### **My Life: Choices Today for a Healthy Tomorrow – Grade 8** (9-day course)

*My Life* is an abstinence-until-marriage, reproductive health and safety education course that promotes optimal health outcomes for teens. *My Life* reviews and builds on information learned in the lower grades and guides students in realizing the long-term health benefits of a sexually abstinent lifestyle until they are in a mutually faithful monogamous adult relationship or marriage.

The following information is covered: (co-ed)

- Advantages of abstinence and consequences of teen sex (social, emotional, financial and physical)
- Analyze and discuss current local, state, national and global trends in teen risk-taking behaviors
- Review conception and fertilization (male/female reproductive systems' purpose and function)
- Sexual risk reduction vs. sexual risk elimination (analyze difference)
- Sexual decision making & choosing abstinence in a sexually permissive society (pop culture influence)
- Recognize and report sexual abuse and rape
- Awareness and prevention of sex trafficking
- HIV/AIDS & other sexually transmitted (STDs): project based learning
- Practice effective communication and refusal skills
- Empower students to advocate for health benefits of abstinence

### **Stepping Stones to Better Living: Responsible Decisions – Grade 8** (14-day course)

In *Stepping Stones* abstinence is stressed as the only 100% effective way of preventing teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

The following information is covered:

- Recognizing and building healthy relationships among family, friends and romantic interests
  - Gender inclusivity and sexual orientation - basic terminology and definitions
  - Understanding mutual consent
  - How to set and communicate personal boundaries and values
  - Developing and practicing assertive communication skills to refuse pressure
  - Awareness and prevention of sexual harassment, sexual assault and sex trafficking
  - Risky behaviors for contracting HIV and STDs
  - Challenges of teen pregnancy
  - Methods of contraception (birth control) to prevent pregnancy and infection
  - Qualities of a responsible parent – egg baby project
  - Review of male and female reproductive systems \*\*
  - Prevention and detection of breast cancer\*\* • Prevention and detection of testicular cancer\*\*
- \*\*Boys and girls are separated for these topics.**

**Contact information for the teachers can be found at [www.nhcs.net/familylife/](http://www.nhcs.net/familylife/)  
Parents may also review the curricula in the office of their child's middle school.**