

Western Options High School

Our Sex Ed is offered through the Jackson County Health Department (JCHD). Two days a week we have a Health Educator come to WOHS and facilitate the Teen Outreach Program (TOP) which is a curriculum developed by the Wyman Corporation. TOP is a national program that helps prevent adolescent problem behaviors through improving positive self image, effective life management skills, and achievable goals. The program is directed toward reducing rates of teenage pregnancy, school failure, and school suspension. This program consists of supervised community service, classroom based discussion, and activities related to key social developmental tasks of adolescence. There are several lessons that focus on STIs and HIV as well as contraception, defining sexuality, dating violence and many more lessons. Each student has to fill out a parent or guardian permission form to participate in the class. For more information on the national TOP program, visit: http://wymancenter.org/?page_id=36

Component 1: Classroom Activities and Community Service Learning - Classes meet at least once a week throughout the school year to discuss topics from the “Changing Scenes” curriculum, such as communication skills, dealing with family stress, and understanding self and values. The curriculum uses a variety of experimental methods to engage youth, including small-group discussions and role-playing. A community service-learning guide aids discussions about volunteer experiences to tie together the classroom and volunteer service aspects of the program, allowing youth, to process and reflect on their service activities. Although pregnancy prevention is a main focus of the program, less than 10 percent of the curriculum would be considered sex education.

Component 2: Community Service - Participants engage in a minimum of 20 hours of supervised volunteer work per academic year. Community service coordinators (experienced staff) help youth design effective community service projects that meet the needs of the students and the community.

Teens that complete TOP experience:

- **52% lower risk of school suspension**
- **60% lower risk of course failure**
- **53% lower risk of pregnancy**
- **60% lower risk of school drop out**

This program is funded by the Michigan Department of Community Health Taking Pride in Prevention Program.