PURPOSE

Human Sexuality: A Catholic Perspective for Education and Lifelong Learning, 1991, pages 74-75, states "In a Catholic context, the purpose of ... education in human sexuality, whether formal or informal, is threefold:

"To give each learner an understanding of the nature and importance of sexuality as a divine gift, a fundamental component of personality, and an enrichment of the whole person--body, emotions, soul--whose deepest meaning is to lead the person to the gift of self in love (cf. Educational Guidance in Human Love, nos. 4, 16; Familiaris Consortio, nos. 37, 11, 32).

"To give each learner an appreciation of chastity as a virtue that develops a person's authentic maturity and makes him or her capable of guiding the sexual instinct in the service of love and integrating it into his or her psychological and spiritual development (cf. Education Guidance, nos. 4,18, 34; Familiaris Consortio, no. 37).

"To give each learner an appreciation of the human and Christian values that sexuality is intended to express and to lead each learner to a knowledge of, respect for, and sincere personal adherence to the moral norms regarding sexuality that are taught by the Church (cf. Educational Guidance, nos. 19, 40; Familiaris Consortia, nos. 33, 37)."

PRINCIPLES

The following principles are set forth in The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality, 1995, #65-75.

"Each child is a unique and unrepeateable person and must receive individualized formation...

"The moral dimension must always be a part of their explanations...

"Formation in chastity and timely information regarding sexuality must be provided in the broadest context of education for love..."
"Parent should provide this information with great delicacy, but clearly and at the appropriate time..."

Therefore:

Parents are recognized as the primary educators of their children. Church educators will work collaboratively with parents to help them carry out this responsibility.

Human sexuality programs for children and youth will be rooted in the teachings of the Church.

Human sexuality information will be presented in a manner sensitive to the children's development, to cultural issues, and to pastoral concerns.

It is the right of children to be adequately informed about their sexuality in an appropriate setting.

POLICIES

A curriculum of Family Life Education shall be taught in all parochial schools, beginning in Kindergarten and continuing through grade 8 (Administrative Handbook #6134). The content of the curriculum and the delivery of instruction will be consistent with the teaching and the documents of the Church.

The content of the Family Life curriculum will include education for “safe environment” (Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, Article 12), safe touch, chastity, non-violent conflict resolution, anger management, personal hygiene, refusal skills, substance abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS.

The content of the Family Life curriculum can and should be integrated into the study of other subjects when the subject matter lends itself to free discussion of family relationships and family development in its religious, social, cultural, and economic aspects.

The administration at each school site should establish a consultative group of educators and parent.

The successful implementation of such a curriculum requires a corresponding program of parent education on Family Life (Administrative Handbook
In-service teacher formation is also essential to the successful implementation of the recommended curriculum.

Parents have legitimate authority to ensure the right of children to withdraw from any form of sexual instruction imparted outside the home. At the same time, parents are called to remember that the family is not the only or exclusive formative community. In our faith tradition, the parish is the basic structure within which most Catholics express and experience faith and catechesis. In the area of human sexuality formation the parish will be a strong partner with the home.

PROCEDURES

All programs shall include assistance to parents so that they can fulfill their role as the primary educators of their children.

All programs shall include assistance to educators so that they can fulfill their role in helping parents and children know and live authentic Catholic doctrine and morals.

All family programs and resources must meet the following standards:
- Programs must reflect authentic and comprehensive Church catechesis.
- Programs must be pastorally sensitive to local cultural issues.
- Programs must be family-centered.
- Programs must be developmentally sensitive and appropriate.

The following textbook series are approved for Family Life Education in the Diocese of San Jose:

The principal is responsible for convening a consultative group consisting of administration, faculty, and parents to recommend:
- the appropriateness of grade level material;
- how the sexually sensitive material at grades 5 and 6 will be delivered;
- a program of parent education and information.

By November of the 2003/2004 school year, each principal will inform the Department of Education of the process used, the textbook series
selected, and the implementation plan including the parent education component. This information will be input into a Zoomerang survey.

Any Family Life textbook series with a copyright date earlier than 2001 will no long be approved for use in the Diocese of San Jose after 2003.

CONCLUSION
Young people have a right to know the Church’s teaching on sexuality and safe environment. Providing catechesis for parents and educators is critical so that this teaching will be comprehensive and authentic. The Church, parents, and educators must work together to help young people understand and live out Church teaching.