

**279.50 Human growth and development instruction — early intervention programs.**

1. Subject to [section 279.80](#), each school board shall provide instruction in kindergarten which gives attention to experiences relating to life skills and human growth and development as required in [section 256.11](#). School districts shall use research provided in [section 256.9, subsection 46](#), paragraph “b”, to evaluate and upgrade their instructional materials and teaching strategies for human growth and development.

2. Subject to [section 279.80](#), each school board shall provide age-appropriate and research-based instruction in human growth and development including instruction regarding self-esteem, stress management, interpersonal relationships, and domestic abuse in grades one through six.

3. Each school board shall provide age-appropriate and research-based instruction in human growth and development including instruction regarding human sexuality, self-esteem, stress management, interpersonal relationships, domestic abuse, and the prevention and control of disease, including sexually transmitted diseases as required in [section 256.11](#), in grades seven through twelve.

4. Each school board shall annually provide to a parent or guardian of any pupil enrolled in the school district, information about the human growth and development curriculum used in the pupil’s grade level and the procedure for inspecting the instructional materials prior to their use in the classroom.

5. Each school district shall, upon request by any agency or organization, provide information about the human growth and development curriculum used in each grade level and the procedure for inspecting and updating the instructional materials.

6. A pupil shall not be required to take instruction in human growth and development if the pupil’s parent or guardian files with the appropriate principal a written request that the pupil be excused from the instruction. Notification that the written request may be made shall be included in the information provided by the school district.

7. Each school board or community college which offers general adult education classes or courses shall periodically offer an instructional program in parenting skills and in human growth and development for parents, guardians, prospective biological and adoptive parents, and foster parents.

8. Each area education agency shall periodically offer a staff development program for teachers who provide instruction in human growth and development.

9. The department of education shall identify and disseminate information about early intervention programs for students who are at the greatest risk of suffering from the problem of dropping out of school, substance use disorder, adolescent pregnancy, or suicide.

10. For purposes of [this section](#) and [sections 256.9](#) and [256.11](#), unless the context otherwise requires:

a. “*Age-appropriate*” means topics, messages, and teaching methods suitable to particular ages or age groups of children and adolescents, based on developing cognitive, emotional, and behavioral capacity typical for the age or age group.

b. “*Research-based*” means all of the following:

(1) Complete information that is verified or supported by the weight of research conducted in compliance with accepted scientific methods; recognized as medically accurate and objective by leading professional organizations and agencies with relevant expertise in the field, such as the American college of obstetricians and gynecologists, the American public health association, the American academy of pediatrics, and the national association of school nurses; and published in peer-reviewed journals where appropriate.

(2) Information that is free of racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, and gender biases.

11. To the extent not inconsistent with [this section](#) and [section 256.11](#), an accredited nonpublic school may also choose curriculum in accordance with doctrinal teachings for the human sexuality component of the human growth and development requirements of [this section](#) and [section 256.11](#).

12. Nothing in [this section](#) or [section 256.11](#) shall be construed to prohibit a school or school district from developing and making available abstinence-based or abstinence-only materials pursuant to the requirements of [section 256.9, subsection 46](#), and from offering an

abstinence-based or abstinence-only curriculum in meeting the human sexuality component of the human growth and development requirements of [this section](#) and [section 256.11](#).

[88 Acts, ch 1018, §3, 5, 6](#); [90 Acts, ch 1253, §121](#); [91 Acts, ch 218, §19](#); [2007 Acts, ch 98, §4](#); [2023 Acts, ch 19, §1032](#); [2023 Acts, ch 90, §21, 22](#); [2023 Acts, ch 91, §9 – 11](#)

Referred to in [§256.11](#)

See Code editor's note on simple harmonization at the beginning of this Code volume

Subsection 1 amended

NEW subsection 2 and former subsections 2 - 7 renumbered as 3 - 8

Former subsections 8 and 9 amended and renumbered as 9 and 10

Former subsections 10 and 11 renumbered as 11 and 12