

TO: Parents of Grade Five Students –Elementary

FROM: Eric Michael, Supervisor of Health and Physical Education and Athletics

SUBJECT: Family Life Instruction

As part of the instructional health program, starting in grade 5 all Washington County Public School students are provided the opportunity to participate in lessons relating to family life and human development. The approved Health Education curriculum is based on the national and state health education standards and in accordance with Maryland Regulations (COMAR 13A.04.18). Specific outcomes and activities are designed to be developmentally appropriate for students at each grade level.

In grade 5, there are two lessons presented separately to boys and girls by a male-female teaching team. The first lesson deals with self-esteem and the second lesson deals with maturation/puberty. Each lesson will include the following:

**Self Esteem**

- Positive self-concept is crucial to coping with changes during puberty and future success.
- Recognizing the importance of high self-esteem is essential given the changes that occur during puberty and the challenges, fears, and confusion of adolescence.
- Understanding ways to improve self-esteem is essential to achieving or maintaining a positive self-esteem.

**The puberty/maturation lesson contains the following ideas and information**

- Knowledge of the changes of puberty and the reproductive system are important as boys and girls are on the threshold of puberty.

***Materials distributed during the lesson contain information relating to both male and female maturation/puberty and male and female reproductive systems. However, the focus of the lesson is on the respective reproductive system and changes of puberty for the boys and girls.***

Information on the program can be accessed at the WCPS website, [www.wcps.k12.md.us](http://www.wcps.k12.md.us). Click on “Departments,” scroll down to “Health Education,” and click on the “curriculum” on the left side of the page. Then on the right side of the page click on “family life 5<sup>th</sup> grade presentation. Your child’s elementary school has the Family Life materials available for preview at his/her school. If you desire additional information about the program; you may contact the Family Life Resource Teachers, Dennis Talbert (for boys) or Jen Wood (for girls). Please e-mail them at [TalbeDen@wcps.k12.md.us](mailto:TalbeDen@wcps.k12.md.us) (males) or [woodjenn@wcps.k12.md.us](mailto:woodjenn@wcps.k12.md.us) (females). Staff encourages you to preview Family Life materials in advance of your child’s participation in these lessons.

According to State of Maryland regulations, students may be excused from this program upon written request from their parent/guardian. If you choose for your child to opt out of the Family Life curriculum please check below.

\_\_\_\_\_ I choose for my child to opt out.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

If you need further information, please call Eric Michael at (301) 766-2929.