

TO: Parents of Grade Five Students –Elementary

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

SUBJECT: Family Life Instruction Dates:

The Washington County Public School System makes available lessons relating to family life and human development as part of its regular instructional program. 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. The Washington County Public Schools Family Life and Human Development Advisory Committee believe the information presented is useful and necessary for children to have a better understanding of the physical changes they are experiencing. They also believe these lessons encourage increased child-parent communication. We ask you to examine the pamphlets and other materials given to your child, discuss them with your child, and keep them as a reference for later use.

The self-esteem lesson contains the following ideas and information:

- A 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. Please note the following:

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.

Child and parent responses to these lessons are very positive and nearly all children in the school system participate in Family Life instruction. However, if you prefer that your child not participate, please send a written notice to the school requesting that your child be excused from Family Life instruction.

Information on the program can be accessed at the WCPS website, 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 5th 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 (males) or woodjenn@wcps.k12.md.us (females). Staff encourages you to preview Family Life materials in advance of your child’s participation in these lessons.