



*The glory of God is a human being fully alive;
and to be alive consists in beholding God. - Irenaeus of Lyons*

February 22, 2021

Dear Families of Grade One Students,

I would like to introduce our Health and Wellness resource, called *Fully Alive*. This resource, currently planned to roll out for use in Grades 1–8 and will deal with Family Life learning outcomes, is the result of many years of discussion, consultation, and work by bishops, Catholic educators, Catholic school trustees, and parents. It has been approved by the Catholic Bishops of Alberta as consistent with Catholic teachings and has been endorsed for use in Catholic classrooms by the Alberta Catholic School Trustees Association (ACSTA) and the Council of Catholic School Superintendents of Alberta (CCSSA). It is intended to complement the efforts of parents or guardians as primary educators to teach their children at home.

In Catholic schools, Family Life Education has been an integral part of the Religious Education program for many years. Family Life Education incorporates content about all aspects of human development, including sexual health. *Fully Alive's* approach to health, relationships, and sexuality is guided by our Catholic faith and by the wisdom accumulated through many years of Christian human experience.

Fully Alive is organized into five themes:

- **Theme One — Created and Loved by God:** The first theme provides the foundation of the program. We are created in the image of God, and God loves and sustains each one of us. This theme explores some of the ways in which each person is unique and irreplaceable, yet shares a common human nature with all others.
- **Theme Two — Living in Relationship:** Human beings are created to live in relationship with others. The bonds of family and friendship, which are explored in this theme, are central to our lives, and shape our identity and our development.
- **Theme Three — Created Sexual: Male and Female:** Sexuality is a fundamental dimension of our identity as children of God. In this theme, sexuality is presented as a gift from God that is intended for life and love.
- **Theme Four — Growing in Commitment:** God's call to faithfulness is explored in this theme. Learning to be committed and trustworthy is a lifelong challenge that begins in childhood.
- **Theme Five — Living in the World:** Our relationships with others go beyond the circle of family and friends. In Theme Five, we examine what it means to participate in society, and to fulfill our responsibilities to care for and build God's world.

Since parents or guardians are the primary educators of their children in the area of sexuality, below are details about the content in this year's program that relate to human sexuality.

*Holy Spirit Catholic Schools...
Christ-centered learning
communities where students are cherished and achieve their potential.*

St. Basil Education Centre

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*All
AG od's
Children*

*Excellence
in
Learning*

Sacramentality

*Our
Collaborative
Community*

Ministry

Stewardship



Grade 1 Outcomes (found in *Theme 3: Created Sexual: Male and Female*)

In Theme Three we will:

- meet Dominic and Sara, who fall in love and decide to marry.
- discover that husbands and wives share their love by becoming parents.
- learn about the development of babies before birth and about the care and love they need after they are born.
- learn that God made boys and girls physically different.

Looking Ahead

In Grade 1 the amount of information given to children is quite limited: the development of the baby in the mother's *uterus*; the introduction of the terms *penis* and *vagina* for the physical differences between boys and girls; and a brief explanation of *breastfeeding*. In Grades 2 and 3, additional information about prenatal life is included. A very simple explanation of sexual intercourse is given in Grade 4 by the teacher, but is not included in the student book until Grade 5.

More detailed information about *Fully Alive* is available on the Student-Home Portal for *Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ* (Pearson Education Canada), using your same username and password:

<http://www.pearsoncanada.ca/school/growinginfaith/student-home/>

The username is **holyspirit99** and the password is **Student99**

Section 58.1(2) of the *Education Act* requires us to allow a student's parent or legal guardian to request to exclude the student, without academic penalty, from the parts of *Fully Alive* that deal primarily and explicitly with human sexuality. Two exclusion options exist:

- (A) the student may **leave the classroom** when the teacher is instructing about the parts of *Fully Alive* that deal primarily and explicitly with human sexuality; or
- (B) the student may **remain in the classroom but not take part** when the teacher is instructing about the parts of *Fully Alive* that deal primarily and explicitly with human sexuality.

If you wish to request either of the exclusion options described above, for Theme Three only, then you must do all the following **each school year**:

- (1) Write a letter addressed to your child's principal.
- (2) Specify your request in the letter as exclusion option A or B.
- (3) Sign and date the letter.
- (4) Deliver the signed and dated letter to your child's school by hand or regular mail or send an electronic image of the signed and dated letter to your child's school by email.

If you wish your child to remain in the classroom and take part in **all** of *Fully Alive*, then **no further action is required**.

I am very much looking forward to the growth and development of all our students. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher should you have any specific questions about the *Fully Alive* program. I hope you will enjoy participating in *Fully Alive*.

Sincerely,



Ken Sampson,
Superintendent of School