

FAMILY LIFE NEWS

We are excited to offer ***Draw the Line, Respect the Line*** as a supplement to our middle school family life education. This 3-year, evidence-based program aligns with the Virginia Standards of Learning and is currently used in multiple school divisions across the state.

What's the program like?

The program, consisting of 5 lessons in 6th grade and 7 lessons in 7th and 8th grades, emphasizes the importance of boundaries and consent, respectful relationships, and healthy choices. Students in 6th grade learn about peer pressure and practice ways to handle non-sexual pressure situations. Students in 7th and 8th grade continue to practice "drawing the line" and also learn how to prevent STIs and unplanned pregnancy. The program uses a medical approach to sexual health, helping students to see that, like other body systems, the reproductive system can become diseased, and that's why it's important to learn about risky behaviors and how to reduce risk. *Draw the Line* begins with a pre-test to determine students' knowledge level and ends with a post-test to measure student knowledge gain. These tests are anonymous and not graded. You can view the materials at any time in your school's office.

The overarching message of the program, repeated throughout the lessons, is that choosing not to have sex is the best way to prevent STIs and unplanned pregnancy and is the safest choice for middle school students. Because everyone deserves to understand how to protect their bodies from STIs and unplanned pregnancy, our *Draw the Line* teachers are trained to be compassionate and inclusive toward all youth and affirming of all identities.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Will my child be in the same room with boys/girls?

Each school decides the best way to schedule students so that all students have an opportunity to participate in *Draw the Line*. Either way, the curriculum is the same no matter how students are grouped.

What are the pre and post tests like?

The pre-test consists of questions that gauge student knowledge about the lessons they'll encounter during the program. The post-test asks the same questions so that teachers can see how much students learned. The post-test also gives students an opportunity to share what they liked and did not like about the program. The tests are anonymous and voluntary, and the results are confidential. Copies of the pre and post tests are located in each school's office.

What are the benefits of sex education?

There are many! Students who participate in sex education programs like *Draw the Line*, *Respect the Line* are less likely to experience domestic violence and sexual abuse, and they are more likely to develop healthy relationships and increase their social emotional intelligence. Additionally, research shows that the more teens know about the risks associated with sexual activity, the more likely they are to wait longer to become sexually active. During a 12-year period of *Draw the Line* implementation, Rockingham County, Page County, and Harrisonburg, Virginia saw significant decreases in teen pregnancy and teen STIs.

Does my student have to take *Draw the Line*?

No. At this time, parents are able to opt their student out of the program, the pre and post test, or both. Each school will contact parents/caregivers for permission prior to the first day of *Draw the Line*. Students who do not participate in the program will complete different health lessons in an alternate location.

I have more questions. Who do I contact?

For more information, please reach out to one of the administrators here at school. We look forward to talking to you!