

Choosing the Best Diversity/Inclusion Statement

Choosing the Best contains universally applicable principles* and is designed to be inclusive to all teens, regardless of racial and ethnic origin, sexual orientation or gender identity, disability, socioeconomic status, or religious beliefs. All teens are at significant risk of contracting STDs through casual sexual activity, and all teens benefit from the core message that sexual delay is a protective factor for their health and future. The mission of *Choosing the Best* curricula is to educate all teens on the benefits of delayed sexual activity, and to empower all teens to make the healthiest choices.

How *Choosing the Best* Accomplishes Diversity and Inclusivity

1. Diverse/Inclusive photos, imagery, and videos.

Every program includes numerous positive racially diverse images and representations of teens of various backgrounds and orientations throughout the books and videos. Nearly all teen photos depict diverse individuals or groups (vs. opposite sex couples). Gender-neutral imagery is utilized for core concepts. (e.g., Gender-neutral stick figures in lessons discussing “crush vs. infatuation vs. love/marriage”) Positive visuals of disabled teens are presented. (Eg. Teen boy in wheelchair at school, laughing with friends)

2. Diverse/Inclusive language, text, and teacher instruction.

Curricula provides positive stories and examples involving people of various backgrounds, abilities, ethnicities, and orientations, known nationally and globally (e.g.: Story about Erik Weihenmeyer, who was blind, accomplishing climbing a mountain; along with another story featuring Oprah Winfrey in a section discussing “goals;” story about Frida Kahlo (an international figure, Hispanic, disabled, and bisexual) in a section about “Determination.”

When discussing relationships, curricula text refers to “*someone you’re dating*” or “*romantic partner*” (vs. opposite sex reference)

Every program includes multiple statements acknowledging differences in sexual orientation and gender identity. Statement: “*These principals apply to all students, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.*” is provided multiple times, in nearly every lesson, throughout every *Choosing the Best* curriculum.

In every program, teachers are instructed to follow the program as outlined, and to “*refrain from discussing religion or politics in any context...or to express value judgements...*” (p. 3) also to “*please be sensitive to the possibility that some of your students may have already had sex. The goal and tone of this program is to provide these students with positive, encouraging messages about the benefits of making healthier choices going forward (not to create guilt or shame about past choices).*” (p.4)

3. Strong emphasis on treating all others with dignity and respect, which is the basis for diversity and inclusivity, as well as anti-bullying.

For specific examples regarding how *Choosing the Best* accomplishes diversity and inclusivity for each curriculum, please see the Diversity/Inclusion Charts below for CTB WAY, PATH, LIFE, and JOURNEY which provide examples and page numbers.

*These **universal principles**, which apply to **all** students, regardless of racial and ethnic origin, sexual orientation or gender identity, disability, social economic status, or religious beliefs include:

- Sexual delay is a protective factor for sexual health.
- The greater number of lifetime sexual partners a person has, the greater the risk of negative health consequences, some of which can be significant and long-term.
- Healthy relationships may have a greater opportunity to develop when they are not complicated by sexual activity.
- Setting boundaries, learning refusal skills, and sexual violence prevention strategies help to prevent victimization.
- Contraception can reduce but does not eliminate risk. All sexually active teens are at risk for STDs, even if condoms are used, to varying degrees, because condoms are more/less effective against some STDs than others. (For more information about how contraception is covered, go to:
<http://www.choosingthebest.com/faq#questionA3>)
- Reserving sex for a long-term, sexually faithful, monogamous relationship with an uninfected partner is the **best** protection against contracting STDs or sexually transmitted HIV.

DIVERSITY/INCLUSION Element	<i>Choosing the Best WAY—Some Examples</i> (6th grade)
Diverse/Inclusive photos/images/videos	<p>Student Manual/Leader Guide cover photo features teens of 4 different races: Caucasian, African American, Asian, and Hispanic</p> <p>Photos in Student Manual are highly diverse, prominently featuring 23 Caucasian, 18 African American, 3 Hispanic, and 4 Asian teens.</p> <p>Nearly all photos (24 out of 25) are of teen groups or individuals (versus opposite sex couples) which represent a variety of ethnicities, genders, orientations, and backgrounds. Cover photo of <i>Choosing the Best</i> 6th grade Reproductive and Sexual Health program (companion for WAY) and photo on page 25 in WAY feature diverse teens of various ethnicities, orientations, and backgrounds.</p> <p>Videos feature teens representing high level of racial diversity throughout.</p> <p>Gender-neutral stick figures used during discussion of “Are Relationships Crushes, Infatuation, or Love?” (p. 14-15)</p>
Positive language/text acknowledging differences in sexual orientation or gender identity	<p>Statement: <i>“These principals apply to all students, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.”</i> provided 7 times throughout curriculum (pgs. 11, 14, 17, 20, 25, 33, and 39)</p> <p>Reference that <i>“Anyone can be a victim of sexual violence, regardless of age, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation”</i> (p. 22)</p> <p>When discussing relationships, curricula text uses gender neutral language such as <i>“someone you’re dating”</i> or <i>“romantic partner”</i> (vs. “opposite sex” references), including when discussing marriage, ...<i>“Sometimes two adults who are in love decide to get married...”</i> (p15)</p>
Teacher Instruction references to prevent bias	<p>Teachers are instructed: <i>Choosing the Best</i> programs contain <i>universally applicable principles that are designed to help ALL students avoid sexual risk, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Like heterosexual teens, LGBTQ teens are at significant risk of contracting STDs through casual sex, and benefit from the core message that sexual delay is a protective factor to one’s health and future.</i> (p.3)</p> <p>Teachers are instructed to follow the program as outlined, and to <i>“refrain from discussing religion or politics in any context...or to express value judgements...”</i> (p. 3) also to <i>“please be sensitive to the possibility that some of your students may have</i></p>

DIVERSITY/INCLUSION Element	<i>Choosing the Best WAY—Some Examples (6th grade)</i>
	<i>already had sex. The goal and tone of this program is to provide these students with positive, encouraging messages about the benefits of making healthier choices going forward (not to create guilt or shame about past choices). (p.4)</i>
Strong emphasis on treating all others with dignity and respect	<i>“Respect: Accepts others as valuable and important...Treats each person with dignity, regardless of how similar or different they are from ourselves...Is both a way of thinking and a way of acting...(p. 16) In any relationship, it’s important to treat each other with dignity and respect, even if the relationship ends. (p. 18)</i>

DIVERSITY/INCLUSION Element	<i>Choosing the Best PATH—Some Examples</i> (7th grade)
Diverse/Inclusive photos/images/videos	<p>Student Manual/Leader Guide cover photo features teens of 4 different races: Caucasian, African American, Asian, and Hispanic</p> <p>Photos utilized in Student Manual are highly diverse, prominently featuring 18 Caucasian, 8 African American, 6 Hispanic, and 6 Asian teens.</p> <p>All 24 photos in Student Manual are of teen groups or individuals (versus opposite sex couples) which represent a variety of ethnicities, genders, orientations, and backgrounds.</p> <p>Cover photo of <i>Choosing the Best</i> 7th/8th grade Reproductive and Sexual Health program (companion for PATH) and photo on page 23 and 29 in PATH feature diverse teens of various ethnicities, orientations, and backgrounds.</p> <p>Videos feature teens representing high level of racial diversity throughout.</p> <p>Gender-neutral images of teens are used on pages 6-7 “Qualities of a Healthy Relationship” discussion, on page 15 “How STDs are Spread,” on page 34 “Boundaries,” and on page 49 “What Does it Mean to Be Assertive?”</p>
Positive language/text acknowledging differences in sexual orientation or gender identity	<p>Statement: <i>“These principals apply to all students, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.”</i> provided 9 times throughout curriculum (pgs. 5, 11, 17, 23, 29, 31,33, 39, and 45)</p> <p>Reference that <i>“Anyone can be a victim of sexual violence, regardless of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or age”</i> (p. 37)</p> <p>When discussing relationships, curricula text uses gender neutral language such as <i>“someone you’re dating,” “romantic partner” etc.</i> (p 15) (vs “opposite sex” references), including when discussing marriage, <i>...“Sometimes two adults who are in love decide to get married...”</i> (p 8)</p> <p>Gender neutral names for dating couple featured in story within discussion of “Boundaries” (p.35)</p>
Teacher Instruction references to prevent bias	<p>Teachers are instructed: <i>Choosing the Best</i> programs contain universally applicable principles that are designed to help ALL students avoid sexual risk, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Like heterosexual teens, LGBTQ teens are at significant risk of contracting STDs through casual sex, and benefit from the core message that sexual delay is a protective factor to one’s health and future. (p.3)</p>

DIVERSITY/INCLUSION Element	<i>Choosing the Best PATH—Some Examples (7th grade)</i>
	<p>Teachers are instructed to follow the program as outlined, and to “<i>refrain from discussing religion or politics in any context...or to express value judgements...</i>” (p. 3) also to “<i>please be sensitive to the possibility that some of your students may have already had sex. The goal and tone of this program is to provide these students with positive, encouraging messages about the benefits of making healthier choices going forward (not to create guilt or shame about past choices).</i>” (p.4)</p>
Strong emphasis on treating all others with dignity and respect	<p>“<i>Respect: Respect for others requires us to treat all human beings, regardless of how much they are similar or different from ourselves, as having dignity and rights equal to our own.</i>” (p.38)</p> <p><i>Treating others with respect and dignity is critical in all interactions with others and is foundational to all healthy friendships and relationships.....Remember, it’s always important to treat others with respect and dignity, even if the relationship ends.</i> (p. 9)</p>

DIVERSITY/INCLUSION Element	<i>Choosing the Best LIFE—Some Examples (8th grade)</i>
Diverse/Inclusive photos/images/videos	<p>Student Manual/Leader Guide cover photo features teens of 4 different races: Caucasian, African American, Asian, and Hispanic</p> <p>Photos utilized in Student Manual are highly diverse, prominently featuring 23 Caucasian, 11 African American, 9 Hispanic, and 7 Asian teens.</p> <p>Of the 33 photos in Student Manual, 30 are of teen groups or individuals (versus opposite sex couples) which represent a variety of ethnicities, genders, orientations, and backgrounds. The remaining 3 are couples where you cannot tell the gender of the second person.</p> <p>Cover photo of <i>Choosing the Best</i> 7th /8th grade Reproductive and Sexual Health program (companion for LIFE) and photo on page 5 and 23 in LIFE feature diverse teens of various ethnicities, orientations, and backgrounds.</p> <p>Videos feature teens representing high level of racial diversity throughout.</p> <p>Gender-neutral images of teens are used on pages 24 “How STDs are Spread” and on page 53, “Becoming Pressure Proof”</p>
Positive language/text acknowledging differences in sexual orientation or gender identity	<p>Statement: <i>“These principals apply to all students, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.”</i> provided 11 times throughout curriculum (pgs. 5, 11, 17, 33, 39, 45, 51, 54-57)</p> <p>Reference that <i>“Anyone can be a victim of sexual violence, regardless of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or age”</i> (p. 15)</p> <p>When discussing relationships, curricula text uses gender neutral language such as <i>“someone you’re dating,” “romantic partner”</i> etc. (p.7, 24) (vs “opposite sex” references), including when discussing marriage, ...<i>“Sometimes two adults who are in love decide to get married...”</i> (p 43)</p>
Teacher Instruction references to prevent bias	<p>Teachers are instructed: <i>Choosing the Best</i> programs contain universally applicable principles that are designed to help ALL students avoid sexual risk, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Like heterosexual teens, LGBTQ teens are at significant risk of contracting STDs through casual sex, and benefit from the core message that sexual delay is a protective factor to one’s health and future. (p.3)</p> <p>Teachers are instructed to follow the program as outlined, and to <i>“refrain from discussing religion or politics in any context...or to express value judgements...”</i> (p. 3) also to <i>“please be sensitive to the possibility that some of your students may have</i></p>

DIVERSITY/INCLUSION Element	<i>Choosing the Best LIFE—Some Examples (8th grade)</i>
	<i>already had sex. The goal and tone of this program is to provide these students with positive, encouraging messages about the benefits of making healthier choices going forward (not to create guilt or shame about past choices). (p.4)</i>
Strong emphasis on treating all others with dignity and respect	<i>“Respect: Respect for others requires us to treat all human beings, regardless of how much they are similar or different from ourselves, as having dignity and rights equal to our own. (p.16) Treating others with respect and dignity is critical in all interactions with others and is foundational to all healthy friendships and relationships.....What are examples of respectful behaviors? (p. 8)</i>

DIVERSITY/INCLUSION Element	<i>Choosing the Best JOURNEY—Some Examples (High School)</i>
Diverse/Inclusive photos/images/videos	<p>Student Manual/Leader Guide cover photo features teens of 4 different races: Caucasian, African American, Asian, and Hispanic</p> <p>Photos utilized in Student Manual are highly diverse, prominently featuring 29 Caucasian or mixed, 18 African American, 6 Hispanic, and 10 Asian teens.</p> <p>Of the 39 teen photos in Student Manual, 38 are of teen groups or individuals (versus opposite sex couples) which represent a variety of ethnicities, genders, orientations, and backgrounds. The remaining photo is a couple where you cannot determine the gender or gender identity of those in the photo. (p.64)</p> <p>Cover photo of <i>Choosing the Best</i> High School Reproductive and Sexual Health program (companion for JOURNEY) and photos on page 12, 33, 34, 41 in JOURNEY feature diverse teens of various ethnicities, orientations, abilities, and backgrounds.</p> <p>Positive representation of disabled teen on page 12.</p> <p>Gender neutral imagery “How STDs are Spread” p. 27</p> <p>Videos feature teens representing high level of racial diversity throughout.</p>
Positive Diverse/Inclusive Stories	<p>Positive story about Erik Weißenmeyer, who was blind, accomplishing climbing a mountain, p.7 in “What is a Goal?” Lesson</p> <p>Positive story featuring Oprah Winfrey accomplishments in “Goals” lesson (p.7)</p> <p>Positive story about Frida Kahlo (an international figure, Hispanic, disabled, and bisexual) in a lesson about “Determination.”</p>
Positive language/text acknowledging differences in sexual orientation or gender identity	<p>Statement: <i>“These principals apply to all students, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.”</i> provided 9 times throughout curriculum (pgs. 5, 11, 25, 33, 41, 49, 59, and 64-65)</p> <p>Reference that <i>“Anyone can be a victim of sexual violence, regardless of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or age”</i> (p. 56)</p> <p>Reference that <i>“There can be significant emotional, social, and even legal consequences from sexting. This is the case regardless of gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation.”</i> (p. 52)</p>

	<p>Reference that <i>“anyone can become addicted to porn, regardless of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or age.”</i> (p. 53)</p> <p>When discussing relationships, curricula text uses gender neutral language such as <i>“someone you’re dating,” “romantic partner”</i> etc. (p.46) (vs “opposite sex” references), including when discussing marriage, ...<i>“Sometimes two adults who are in love decide to get married...”</i> (p 44)</p>
Teacher Instruction references to prevent bias	<p>Teachers are instructed: <i>Choosing the Best programs contain universally applicable principles that are designed to help ALL students avoid sexual risk, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Like heterosexual teens, LGBTQ teens are at significant risk of contracting STDs through casual sex, and benefit from the core message that sexual delay is a protective factor to one’s health and future.</i> (p.3)</p> <p>Teachers are instructed to follow the program as outlined, and to <i>“refrain from discussing religion or politics in any context...or to express value judgements...”</i> (p. 3) also to <i>“please be sensitive to the possibility that some of your students may have already had sex. The goal and tone of this program is to provide these students with positive, encouraging messages about the benefits of making healthier choices going forward (not to create guilt or shame about past choices).</i> (p.4)</p>
Strong emphasis on treating all others with dignity and respect	<p><i>“Respect: Respect for others requires us to treat all human beings, regardless of how much they are similar or different from ourselves, as having dignity and rights equal to our own.</i> (p.58)</p> <p><i>Treating others with respect and dignity is critical in all interactions with others and is foundational to all healthy friendships and relationships.....What are examples of respectful behaviors?</i> (p. 34)</p>