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# SCHOOL POLICY ACTION TOOLKIT

PREPARED BY

*Pure***FREEDOM**   
PROGRAM

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# ABOUT US



*Pure Freedom* is a sexual risk avoidance & relationship education program based on the community saturation model. The key component of this program is a three-day workshop offered to 6th, 7th, 8th, and high school audiences. The Sexual Risk Avoidance (SRA) educational model is a national movement to encourage teens to avoid risk. It's based on the fact that delaying sex until marriage provides men and women with the greatest chance at optimal physical health, successful relationships, and socioeconomic stability.

## ***OUR VISION***

UTILIZING A COMMUNITY SATURATION APPROACH WORKING WITH SCHOOLS, STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND COMMUNITY PROFESSIONALS, PURE FREEDOM WILL EMPOWER YOUTH IN NORTHEAST MISSOURI TO AVOID SEXUAL RISK.

*Pure Freedom* utilizes this model to help students understand what real love is, how to create boundaries that protect them and their peers, how to identify abuse, how the human body works, how STIs spread, and ultimately, how infinitely valuable they are.



## HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

Each section contains 3 components: the need statement, the policy goal, and the policy and strategy actions. Our hope is that you can see these policy guidelines as best practices and develop a realistic plan to implement them in your school. Effective policies do not live on paper, but in the hearts and minds of all involved.



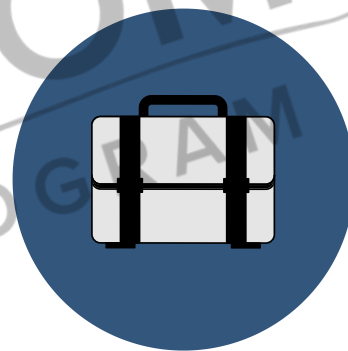
### POLICY NEED

The purpose of the need statement is to present the topic and reasons why it should be addressed in school policy. This can be found in the blue boxes on the lefthand column.



### POLICY GOAL

The purpose of the policy success statement is to showcase the goal of the specific policy. You can find this under the title for each topic and highlighted in the yellow boxes.



### POLICY ACTIONS

The purpose of these policies is to be implemented in the form of clear actions. The goal is to foster a positive school culture for students to avoid risk. These actions can be found in the bullet pointed list.



Policy actions marked with this symbol are covered through hosting the *Pure Freedom* program in the school

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# ***Reproductive Health***

Puberty	10
Hygiene	12
Menstruation	14
Pregnancy	16
STIs	18

## ***Key Stakeholders***

- Nurse
- Support Staff
- Counselor
- Teachers

## ***Reproductive Health***

Being a teenager can be confusing and hard.

During their adolescent years, teenagers are experiencing many physical, mental, emotional, and social changes. Students need reassuring guidance to navigate all of these changes.

Reproductive health education will lay a foundation for basic skills needed throughout life. We must equip and empower our youth to make healthy decisions now, so those skills can be carried with them in the future.

# PUBERTY

## Policy Goal

The goal is to enable a healthy transition through adolescence and into adulthood. It is a holistic approach to the topic of puberty that includes all of the changes that someone would undergo: physical, mental, emotional, and social. The objective is that students would avoid entering puberty unprepared. Students should understand body changes, basic reproductive anatomy, the biology of conception, menstruation, proper hygiene practices, how to build healthy friendships, and how to set boundaries.<sup>82</sup>

## NEED STATEMENT

Schools can contribute to the healthy development of children by teaching them the skills to identify and manage challenges in life. One of the most trying times for teens is puberty. Puberty may come with many negative perceptions, which makes the topic of puberty necessary to be addressed properly in schools. Teaching puberty in schools helps students better understand themselves and deal with the changes they are experiencing. Youth should leave puberty education with raised self-esteem and confidence to navigate all changes.<sup>82</sup>

“

**AVOID STUDENTS  
ENTERING  
PUBERTY  
UNPREPARED.**

”



## PUBERTY

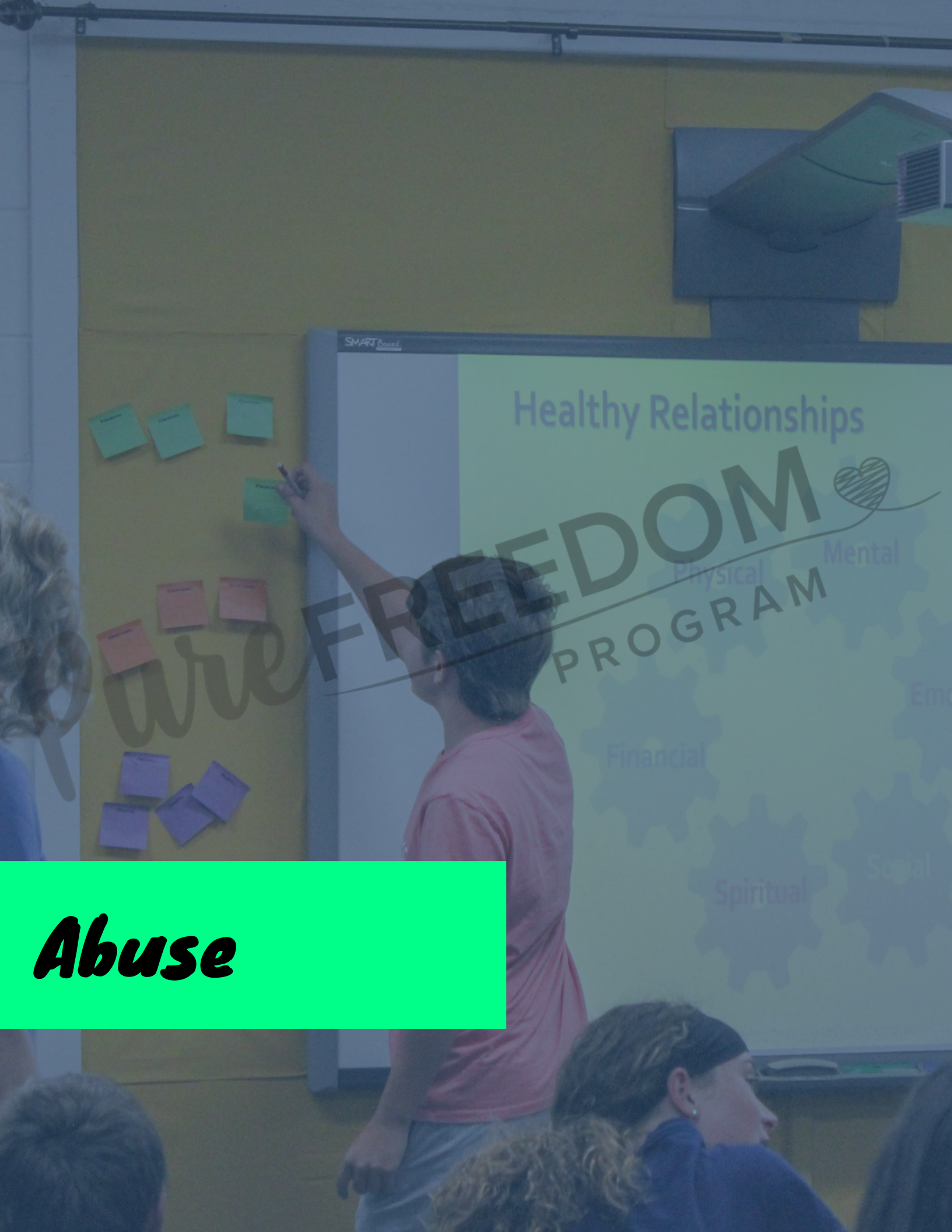
# POLICY & STRATEGY ACTIONS

- Provide age-appropriate, accurate, and timely knowledge about puberty from informed and caring professionals, such as the *Pure Freedom* program educators.<sup>82</sup> **PF**
- Equip teachers through training with the knowledge on how to create positive social norms around puberty changes.\*<sup>82</sup>
- Have a puberty education program that addresses both boys and girls. Addressing one without the other will reduce the effectiveness of the program. For instance, teaching boys about the reproductive system and menstruation may help destigmatize this natural process and prevent misunderstanding.<sup>82</sup> **PF**
- Address the physical, but also the psychological and cognitive changes in puberty.<sup>82</sup> **PF**
- Encourage students to talk about puberty with their parents and vice versa. For instance, you may involve parents through an assignment or exercise where the students interview their parents about puberty.<sup>82</sup> **PF**



\* In addition to teaching about puberty in class, *Pure Freedom* also hosts monthly webinars addressed to parents and professionals working with youth. You can join our email list by contacting us at [purefreedom@lifelinepregnancyhelp.org](mailto:purefreedom@lifelinepregnancyhelp.org).





**Abuse**

Trauma Informed	22
Reporting	24
Dating Violence	26
Sexual Assault &	28
Harassment	
Bullying	30
Substance Use	32

## ***Key Stakeholders***

- Administration
- Support Staff
- Counselor
- Teachers

## ***Abuse***

Schools can play a key part in the prevention and intervention of students who might find themselves in an abusive situation. This is important for schools because one-half of students who experience harm, such as dating violence say some of the abuse took place on school grounds.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, schools have a unique position in the fight against abuse. Policies that effectively address abuse would include using a trauma-informed approach and reporting system that enables staff, students, and parents to be aware of concerns and secure a safer learning environment.



# TRAUMA INFORMED

## Policy Goal

The goal includes a trauma-informed approach that promotes physical, social, and emotional safety for students and provides a “*shared understanding among staff about the impact of trauma and adversity in students*”.<sup>57</sup> Therefore, the students and the staff will be able to engage in meaningful relationships, positively influencing their personal well-being. The result is a school environment that enables students, both those who have experienced trauma and those who have not, to thrive in the school and community setting.

## NEED STATEMENT

Two-thirds of children in the U.S. experience a traumatic event by the age of 16. Schools are well-positioned to intervene.<sup>60</sup> The majority of students in the school system will experience trauma either firsthand or witness it. Even if the trauma did not occur in the school environment, there are significant negative effects for the school. Students with trauma often have a variety of negative experiences including difficulties with attention, academic problems, anxiety, depression, lower classroom engagement, and even unfavorable impact on peers.<sup>60</sup> Trauma also affects the staff, continuing a degeneration of health in the school learning environment. Schools have a unique opportunity to play a role in minimizing the adverse effects of trauma on their students by creating a trauma-informed atmosphere.

“

**A SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT  
THAT ENABLES  
STUDENTS, BOTH THOSE  
WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED  
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COMMUNITY SETTING.**

”



## TRAUMA-INFORMED

# POLICY & STRATEGY ACTIONS

- Evaluate the level of commitment from the school and its staff. As stated by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), *"trauma-informed should not feel like another program to implement, but rather a fundamental shift in HOW programs are implemented"*.
- Provide ongoing training and education for staff that brings awareness to different forms of trauma and the effects of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).
- Incorporate social-emotional learning practices into the classroom and/or curricula. This learning style will promote the student's emotional self-regulation.
- Adopt a trauma-informed approach to discipline policies. A *"trauma-informed approach to behavior shifts from the mindset of rewards and punishment towards a model of accountability"*. (DESE) This approach will guide students into self-regulating and achieving their goals.
- Develop a procedure for staff to identify students who are potentially or who have previously experienced trauma. Staff members should actively attempt to engage parents to promote positive collaboration.
- Develop connections with additional resources. For instance, schools can develop partnerships with state and community-based agencies that facilitate additional access if necessary.
- Hire a social worker, counselor, and/or a behavior specialist if funding allows. Hiring staff in these areas can relieve stress from teachers who do not feel equipped to handle a student's behavior. Additionally, trained specialists can aid the child in developing better personal health and self-regulation.





# ***Real Love Respects***



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