

Course  
**Health and Sexuality**  
**PRS-2102-1**  
Secondary Cycle One





“To not speak about sexuality is to not speak about oneself.”

Michel Conte, *Nu... comme dans nuage*

## Presentation of the Course *Health and Sexuality*

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The course *Health and Sexuality* is designed to help adult learners deal competently with real-life situations in which they maintain sexual health by adopting an autonomous, responsible approach to their health.

The course prepares adults to make informed, responsible choices with respect to their sexual health.

At the end of the course, adult learners will be able to choose methods of family planning and prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV/AIDS. They will also be able to use specific information, help and support resources in order to maintain their sexual health.

## Dealing With the Real-Life Situations

Dealing effectively with real-life situations is based on actions. These actions are grouped into categories and make use of a set of resources that include operational competencies and essential knowledge. During the learning process, adults are expected to construct knowledge related to these resources in order to be able to deal appropriately with their real-life situations.

The class of situations, categories of actions, operational competencies and essential knowledge constitute the compulsory elements of the course. These elements are explained in detail under their respective headings.



## Class of Situations Addressed by the Course

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This course addresses a single class of situations: *Maintaining sexual health*.

Sexual health affects a large number of life situations. Sexually active adults need to be able to find relevant answers to their questions in order to better understand their physical and psychological needs.

Acquiring a new sexual partner, maintaining a stable intimate relationship, planning to have a child or even facing an unintended

pregnancy are all situations in which adults must reassess their priorities in order to lead a satisfying, harmonious and safe sex life. The ability to prevent sexual health problems and make informed choices about family planning is based on accurate, relevant information that is adapted to the questions an individual may have.

Class of Situations	Examples of Real-Life Situations
Maintaining sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Acquiring a new sexual partner</li><li>▪ Stable intimate relationships</li><li>▪ Planning to have a child</li><li>▪ Terminating a pregnancy</li><li>▪ Unintended pregnancy</li><li>▪ Symptoms associated with a sexually transmitted infection</li></ul>

## Categories of Actions

The *categories of actions* are groups of actions that are appropriate for dealing with the real-life situations addressed in the course. *Examples of actions* are provided to illustrate the scope of the category in a variety of contexts.

Categories of Actions	Examples of Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Choosing planning and prevention methods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Detects a health problem</li> <li>▪ Identifies risky behaviours</li> <li>▪ Chooses methods of protection against HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections</li> <li>▪ Determines fertility periods</li> <li>▪ Selects suitable contraceptive methods for specific situations</li> <li>▪ Recognizes the consequences of terminating a pregnancy</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Expressing personal choices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Makes decisions, individually and as a couple</li> <li>▪ Discusses personal choices</li> <li>▪ Explains a problem</li> <li>▪ Raises questions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Using specific information, help and support resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Looks for contact information of relevant resources in his or her environment</li> <li>▪ Reads documentation</li> <li>▪ Contacts an organization</li> <li>▪ Attends a lecture</li> <li>▪ Describes his or her needs and concerns</li> </ul>

## Compulsory Elements and End-of-Course Outcomes

The compulsory elements are those that the teacher must absolutely take into account when designing learning situations.

### Class of Situations

Maintaining sexual health

### Categories of Actions

- Choosing planning and prevention methods
- Expressing personal choices
- Using specific information, help and support resources

### Operational Competencies

Exercises critical and ethical judgment

- Adequately assesses the importance or nature of his or her concerns or problems
- Questions the soundness and coherence of the values underlying habits and choices
- Analyzes information from a variety of recognized sources
- Determines accurate criteria for making choices
- Justifies his or her choices

Communicates

- Takes into account the person he or she is speaking with, recognized codes and the communication context
- Uses accurate terminology
- Adapts verbal and nonverbal language to the person he or she is speaking with
- Decodes verbal and nonverbal communications received
- Verifies whether the communications sent and received were understood
- Identifies explicit information and the meaning of written and oral communications

### Essential Knowledge

- Reproductive systems
- Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV/AIDS
- Methods of contraception
- Decision making
- Information, help and support resources

The end-of-course outcomes describe how adults make use of the compulsory elements to deal with the real-life situations addressed in the course.

### End-of-Course Outcomes

In order to deal with the class of situations *Maintaining sexual health*, adults select appropriate methods of family planning and of preventing STIs and HIV/AIDS. They express personal choices in relation to their needs and particular situation, and use specific information, help and support resources appropriately.

When adults choose planning or prevention methods, they must accurately assess the importance or nature of the concerns or problems associated with their particular situation. They question the soundness and coherence of the values underlying common sexual health habits or choices. They analyze information about planning and prevention methods obtained from a variety of recognized sources. They determine criteria for making appropriate choices, using what they know about decision making. They are able to justify their choices based on their knowledge of contraceptive methods, reproductive systems, STIs and HIV/AIDS.

When expressing personal choices about planning or prevention methods, adults must take into account the person they are speaking with, the communication context and recognized formal and informal codes. They are respectful of and open to the point of view of others. They adapt their verbal and nonverbal language to the person they are speaking with and carefully decode the communications they receive. During exchanges, they use accurate terminology based on their knowledge of contraceptive methods, reproductive systems, STIs and HIV/AIDS. They verify whether the communications they send and receive are correctly understood.

When choosing specific information, help and support, adults explore and select those resources that are appropriate to their situation and accessible in the community. They find useful contact and referral information, understand the purpose of these resources and identify the information and services offered. They identify explicit information elements and interpret the meaning of oral and written communications that may be useful in dealing with a specific problem. They verify the credibility of the sources consulted.



## Evaluation Criteria

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- Chooses appropriate planning and prevention methods
- Expresses personal choices adequately
- Uses specific information, help and support resources appropriately

## Operational Competencies

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The contribution of each operational competency is described in terms of the actions that are appropriate for dealing with the real-life situations in this course. These operational competencies are addressed in other courses and therefore all of the courses taken together contribute to their development.

In this course, only the following operational competencies are addressed: *Exercises critical and ethical judgment* and *Communicates*.

### Contribution of the Operational Competency *Exercises critical and ethical judgment*

The operational competency *Exercises critical and ethical judgment* enables adults to make informed sexual health choices. They use this competency when choosing methods of family planning and of preventing STIs and HIV/AIDS, and when using specific information, help and support resources.

When adults want to make informed sexual health decisions, they must adequately assess the importance or nature of their concerns or problems. They question the soundness and coherence of the values underlying their sexual health habits and choices. They become aware of the factors that influence them. They discover the importance of putting aside prejudices and preconceived ideas. They analyze information obtained from a variety of credible sources. They determine the criteria that will enable them to analyze different options. They arrive at a choice that they can justify with nuance, open-mindedness and respect.

### Contribution of the Operational Competency *Communicates*

The operational competency *Communicates* is at the centre of all real-life situations in which adults discuss sexual health with a partner or peers, and use information, help or support resources. It allows adults to understand others and to make themselves understood.

Adults who express personal choices must take into account the person they are speaking with, the requirements of the context and recognized formal and informal codes. When they speak out, they share a personal problem or concern, discuss possible choices, and formulate and justify a point of view. Discussions about sexuality can make certain adults feel embarrassed or uncomfortable. Adults must therefore adapt their verbal and nonverbal language and decode the language of others, while ensuring they use accurate terminology. During these exchanges, adults must make sure they have been understood and that they understand what others are saying, by asking questions and rephrasing communications, if necessary.

To find information, help or support, adults must identify resources in their environment and consult available documentation. They identify explicit information elements and interpret the meaning of oral and written communications in order to select the resources that seem relevant. For example, they read, attend a lecture or discuss ideas with resource persons around them.

## Essential Knowledge

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### Reproductive systems

- Elements and functions of the male and female human reproductive systems
- Menstrual cycle
- Fertility and sterilization
- Gynecological and urogenital examinations

### Sexually transmitted infections (STIs and HIV/AIDS)

- Myths and misconceptions
- Types of infections
- Mode of transmission
- Symptoms
- Detection
- Preventive measures

### Contraceptive methods

- Myths and misconceptions
- Male and female contraception
- Mode of action
- Advantages and disadvantages

### Decision making

- Decision-making process
- Responsibilities of partners
- Protection of personal information

### Information, help and support resources

- Contact and referral information
- Special mission or goal
- Information and services offered

## Attitudes

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The following attitudes are provided as suggestions only. The development of these attitudes can help adults become more competent in dealing with the real-life situations in this course.

<b>Sense of Responsibility</b>	<b>Respect</b>
Adults who are responsible consider adopting preventive, safe measures to protect their health and that of others.	Adults who are respectful make choices that take into account their reality and that of others.

## Complementary Resources

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The following resources are provided as suggestions only and consist of references that may be consulted in learning situations.

Social Resources	Material Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Health and social services employees and professionals (e.g. CLSCs, hospitals)</li><li>▪ Information and referral helplines</li><li>▪ Recognized support groups and organizations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Government publications and documentation from recognized organizations (e.g. brochures, pamphlets)</li><li>▪ Material illustrating family planning or protection methods</li><li>▪ Recognized Web sites<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Health Canada</li><li>- Public Health Agency of Canada</li><li>- Institut national de santé publique du Québec</li></ul></li></ul>

## Contribution of the Subject Areas

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The contribution of other subject areas, in particular knowledge related to Languages and to Mathematics, Science and Technology, is also useful for dealing with the real-life situations in this course. The elements identified for each subject area are not compulsory and do not constitute prerequisites.

### Subject Area: Languages

#### Program of Study: *English, Language of Instruction*

Course (Presecondary): *Lifestyle Options*

- Categories of actions related to health and sexuality in the class of situations *Using language for a healthy lifestyle*

### Subject Area: Mathematics, Science and Technology

#### Program of Study: *Computer Science*

- Searching for information on the Internet (e.g. searching for documentation, public, parapublic or community organizations)
- Formatting various documents supporting the adult's reflective process
- Creation of promotional materials to raise awareness among peers about preventive measures (e.g. posters, pamphlets)

## Andragogical Context

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The *Health* program enables adult learners to lay the foundation for a responsible and preventive approach to health. It emphasizes the importance of healthy lifestyle habits, of achieving better balance in life to preserve psychological health, and of adopting safe, responsible sexual behaviours. For this reason, the learning situations presented focus on awareness, analysis, observation and reflection.

In all cases, the learning situations must be meaningful to adults and resemble the situations they encounter in their daily lives. Many different learning activities can therefore be organized: meetings with resource persons (e.g. nutritionists, athletes, psychologists), presentations of testimonials, documentary screenings, preparing questionnaires for a survey, etc.

The real-life situations addressed by the program refer to personal experiences and to perceptions of what is beneficial or harmful to one's health. It goes without saying that these perceptions are rooted in the experience of individuals. As a result, the teacher should be careful to choose situations that do not intrude on the private life of adults, as some adults may be directly affected by the situations presented. The teacher must also take into account the interests that adults may have for specific health problems, while introducing concepts and developing the operational competencies that will allow adults to question some of their perceptions.



## Learning Situation

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The learning situation that follows is provided as an example to show teachers how the principles of the education reform can be applied in the classroom.

It is authentic in the sense that it addresses a real-life situation (taken from the class of situations in the course) that adults may find themselves in. It is sufficiently open and comprehensive to allow adult learners to explore several important aspects related to dealing with this real-life situation.

The examples of actions presented in the course help the teacher to identify those actions that an adult would take to deal with the real-life situation. The teacher can then refer to these examples in order to develop pertinent learning activities.

The learning situation is organized in terms of the three steps of the teaching-learning process, which are as follows:

- planning learning
- actual learning
- integrating and reinvesting learning

These steps highlight the principles of the education reform insofar as they encourage adults to be active, to reflect on their learning and to interact with their peers when the learning context is suitable. They include learning activities and may also include evaluation activities intended to support adults in the learning process.

These activities help learners to construct knowledge related to the compulsory elements of the course that are targeted by the learning situation concerned: one or more categories of actions, essential knowledge and the actions of the operational competencies associated with the categories of actions.

The example provided also refers to certain teaching strategies—pedagogical methods and techniques—that can be selected according to the learners, the context and the learning environment. Certain learning strategies may also be suggested, as well as a variety of material and social resources.

## Example of a Learning Situation

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### Difficult Choices

Informed sexual health choices are based on accurate, credible information. This information needs to be analyzed and discussed between partners in a relationship, and among peers in the classroom. The class of situations *Maintaining sexual health* deals with the type of discussions involved in choosing an appropriate contraceptive method. The learning situation presented here provides a context in which adults can discuss their points of view on how to arrive at such a choice while respecting the needs of a partner, and calls into play the operational competencies *Exercises critical and ethical judgment* and *Communicates*.

The teacher begins the first activity by presenting a story about two young lovers who cannot agree on the type of contraceptive method to use. To contribute to the story, the participants are asked to answer a series of true-or-false questions to assess their level of knowledge on the topic and select a method of contraception that they think would be appropriate to the case presented. The adults then discuss the topic with the rest of the class and put aside their questionnaire until the end of the activity. The teacher underlines the importance of participating actively in the discussions, of paying attention to the points of view expressed and, above all, of respecting those who agree to express their opinions.

In the second activity, the teacher verifies what the adults know about the male and female reproductive systems and contraceptive methods, completing or correcting the information shared and explaining the concept of fertilization. He or she then distributes a table listing the contraceptive methods that will be

analyzed, along with their modes of action, advantages, disadvantages and levels of effectiveness. Based on the discussions and the table, the teacher helps the adults determine the criteria to use when selecting a method of contraception. These criteria are then entered on an analytical checklist. The participants then discuss which method seems most interesting. The teacher leads the discussion, ensuring that the participants justify their opinions.

The third activity takes place in teams. To encourage adults to reflect on the use of a contraceptive method, the teacher asks each team to select a method. Using an analytical checklist, adults identify arguments for or against the method, ease of use and ways of integrating the chosen method into a couple's sexual life. Any unanswered questions are also recorded on the checklist. All participants receive a copy of the checklist presented by each team during a group discussion. The results are discussed and clarifications are provided, if necessary.

During the fourth learning activity, working in teams, adults make up a hypothetical situation in which a couple must choose an appropriate method of contraception. The teams are then paired up so that they can present and discuss their cases and give appropriate advice. After each team has presented its case, a plenary discussion follows. The teams then provide a summary of their exchanges and systematically list the suggestions made. The ideas suggested are then discussed by the entire class. The teacher clarifies or corrects any misconceptions, using the table of contraceptive methods.

To conclude the activity, the teacher distributes another questionnaire and asks the participants to compare their answers to the answers they gave at the beginning of the learning situation. This comparison will help the participants recognize how much they have learned and discover how much they already knew and were able to confirm. Adults also evaluate their level of satisfaction with the discussions: they identify an element they agreed with and one they disagreed with. On a sheet of paper, they write down, anonymously, a question or comment that the teacher can use to guide the next learning activity.

## Elements of the Course Addressed by the Learning Situation

Class of Situations	
Maintaining sexual health	
Learning Situation	
Difficult Choices	
Categories of Actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Selecting planning and prevention measures</li> <li>▪ Expressing personal choices</li> </ul>	
Operational Competencies	Essential Knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exercises critical and ethical judgment</li> <li>▪ Communicates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reproductive systems</li> <li>▪ Contraceptive methods</li> </ul>
Complementary Resources	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recognized Web sites</li> <li>▪ Government publications or documentation from recognized organizations (e.g. brochures, pamphlets)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Material illustrating family planning or health prevention methods</li> </ul>

