



Health Promotion South Africa Trust
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Basic Health Education Curriculum Overview

*Currently being updated by Elaine Harcombe, M.Ed. (Ed Psych) and Dr Annemiek Dekker, M. A. **

The HPSA **Basic Health Education** (BHE) curriculum consists of **12 compulsory** workshops and **10 optional** workshops. The compulsory workshops educate people in all the essentials of good health principles and healthy lifestyle practices, as well as teaching how to prevent and manage the major infectious and non-communicable diseases. The optional workshops address health education issues that apply to particular sectors of the population (gender, adolescents, parents, elders etc.).

We teach, on a simple level, the various systems and organs of the body and how to keep them healthy in each topic. So each workshop introduces the relevant system/organ, how to keep it/them healthy, followed by an explanation of the most common illnesses relating to the system, and medical / healthy ways of coping with such illnesses. Each workshop builds on knowledge learnt in the previous workshop, which facilitates more in-depth learning. So the compulsory topics are taught in sequence (see below), but the optional topics can be taught in any order, once the compulsory workshops are completed.

Attendees are awarded Certificates of Attendance only when they have attended all 12 compulsory workshops, or they can complete some of the optional workshops before they get their certificates. In this way we make sure that each 'graduate' of the BHE course is educated in the essentials of basic health principles and practices.

We call our health educators **Senior Health Promoters**, and they live in the communities they serve. Each Senior Health Promoter is well trained and their work is supported and supervised by educational and medical professionals. We use up-to-date and culturally appropriate Power Point presentations and hand-outs as well as innovative teaching and learning techniques, including practical demonstrations, role plays, discussions, games etc. This interactive, participatory teaching and learning style is proven by considerable research to improve knowledge acquisition as well as enhance motivation to change unhealthy practices. All the material and activities are adapted, as far as possible, to suit the culture and ages of participants. We find our attendees learn and participate well and enjoy their learning and many seem highly motivated to adopt healthful practices.

A brief overview of the content of the BHE topics follows:

HEALTH EDUCATION IS **ALSO** A HUMAN RIGHT!

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12 BASIC HEALTH EDUCATION COMPULSORY TOPICS (Participants must do ALL these workshops)

<p>1 HYGIENE AND HEALTH</p> <p>This workshop covers the prevention of infectious diseases by teaching sound hygiene practices. Prevention and management of diarrhea and dehydration is also covered.</p>
<p>2 SAFETY AND FIRST AID</p> <p>This workshop looks at basic first aid techniques, as well giving an overview of safety practices that can prevent injury and death.</p>
<p>3 HEALTHY EATING</p> <p>In this workshop the digestive system is introduced along with healthful nutrition. Gastritis and malnutrition are also discussed. Thrifty ways of planning healthy food is presented.</p>
<p>4 HEALTHY HEARTS</p> <p>This topic teaches about the heart and the circulatory system, and how to keep this system healthy and avoid disease. The various heart / blood vessel diseases and their management are discussed.</p>
<p>5 HEALTHY LUNGS</p> <p>Here participants learn about the respiratory system and how to keep lungs healthy, including how to prevent contracting TB, and how to manage TB well when contracted. Smoking and its effect on lungs is also included in this topic.</p>
<p>6 HEALTHY EXERCISE</p> <p>In this workshop the musculoskeletal system is introduced, along with the peripheral nervous system and how exercise keeps all these and other systems healthy. Various illnesses relating to these systems and exercise are also discussed.</p>
<p>7 DIABETES PREVENTION</p> <p>This topic deals with the metabolic system, including the pancreas and liver, and how unhealthy lifestyles can cause diabetes. Healthy ways of preventing the development of Diabetes 2 as well as ways of managing diabetes once contracted are discussed.</p>
<p>8 HEALTHY SEX: REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM</p> <p>This workshop discusses the reproductive system, puberty, and briefly, pregnancy.</p>
<p>9 HEALTHY SEX: BIRTH CONTROL, PREVENTING STIs</p> <p>Here ways of keeping healthy sexually are discussed, including sexual hygiene and birth control. The various sexually transmitted infections, symptoms and prevention are also taught.</p>
<p>10 HEALTHY IMMUNE SYSTEM : PREVENTING HIV / AIDS</p> <p>The immune system is taught and HIV / AIDS discussed in this topic. We teach about the disease itself, its prevention and treatment, and ways of keeping healthy when infected.</p>
<p>11 PREVENTING CANCER WITH A FOCUS ON CERVICAL AND BREAST CANCER</p> <p>First cancer in general is discussed, followed by a brief review of how to prevent various cancers, including a detailed section on cervical and breast cancer. Cancer management is also included.</p>
<p>12 HEALTHY LIVER AND BRAIN AND THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL AND DRUGS ON HEALTH</p> <p>In this workshop the liver and brain are taught, followed by the effects of alcohol and drugs on general health and society. Related diseases are also discussed. We also teach healthy, non-substance ways of dealing with stress with the hope that such strategies can help prevent abuse.</p>



10 BHE OPTIONAL WORKSHOPS (Participants can choose to do some of these workshops)

13 HEALTHY PREGANCY

Here a more in depth understanding of healthy pregnancy is taught than in Topic 8 above, including how to keep mother and fetus/baby healthy (including childbirth, breast feeding, miscarriages)

14 HEALTHY SEX : AVOIDING SEXUAL ABUSE

This workshop aims at helping women (mostly) to prevent/report/anticipate/guard against/ recover from sexual abuse.

15 HEALTHY SEX FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

This is a specially designed workshop for little ones on the reproductive system including preventing sexual abuse, etc.

16 ORAL HEALTH

This is a very practical and comprehensive look at how to prevent dental health issues, as well as when/where to go for help with fixing dental problems.

17 HEALTHY TEEN YEARS

This workshop looks at adolescent strengths, peer pressure, the pain and joy of being a teenager. Emotional growth and adverse emotional health issues are explored, along with ways of recognizing depression and suicidal ideation.

18 MEN'S HEALTH: AGES OF MAN:

This Department of Health flip chart examines the different ages of boys and men in terms of health and general living.

19 HEALTHY RECREATION, EMOTIONS AND STRESS (mental health)

This workshop examines adult emotions, healthy recreation, healthy ways of dealing with stress as well as ways of identifying and coping with psychological problems.

20 HEALTHY PARENTING, PREADOLESCENTS

This workshop looks at child development (ways of helping children develop well physically, socially, emotionally) as well as practical parenting skills.

21 HEALTHY PARENTING, ADOLESCENTS

This workshop looks at adolescent development (ways of helping adolescents develop well physically, socially, emotionally) as well as practical parenting skills.

22 HEALTHY ELDERS

Finally, this workshop examines growing old healthfully, physically, emotionally and cognitively. Age-related illnesses and their prevention and management are also examined, as well as self-protection methods like restraining orders.

**The focus and content of the curriculum was decided on by the founders at the inception of HPSA. Currently the Basic Health Education curriculum is in the process of being updated based on collaboration between Elaine Harcombe, HPSA's Programme Development Director, and Dr Annemiek Dekker, HPSA's Medical Advisor. Updated versions are sent to relevant members of HPSA's Professional Panel for review. The process will be completed by the end of 2018.*