

## **Introduction to the Fully Alive Program**

- A Family Life Education program sponsored by the Roman Catholic Bishops of Ontario and developed by them in collaboration with Ontario's Catholic educators

## First Edition of Fully Alive

- Result of many years of thought, discussion, consultation and work by bishops, Catholic school board personnel, trustees, parents, and members of the wider Catholic community.
- The goal was to develop a program that would support and strengthen the family, which “has received from God its mission to be the first vital cell of society.” (Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People, 11)

## Second edition of Fully Alive

- Shares the same goal and continues to reflect the insights of the province-wide collaboration and consultation that shaped the first one
- The new edition also reflects the changing nature of our society, with its challenges in the areas of family, marriage and sexuality.

## Some Background to Fully Alive

- Late 60's and 70's, Family Life Education became part of the curriculum of many Ontario Roman Catholic school boards
- Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops issued Guidelines for Family Life Education in 1978
- This document addressed the Church's teaching on issues related to human sexuality and highlighted the roles of the home, school, and parish in Family Life Education
- Two revisions followed in 1983 and 1987

## The Approach of Fully Alive

- Fully Alive was created to help Catholic parents teach their children to become fully human.
- Its focus is on the ordinary experiences of daily life – family relationships, friendships, marriage, birth, death, joys and disappointments.

## The Approach of Fully Alive (continued)

- Human experience indicates that children who are well-loved, who have developed trust in others, and who can communicate personal thoughts and feelings will be more receptive to God's will.
- Fully Alive encourages children to reflect on the fact that they are loved, to open themselves to others, and to value their lives as unique manifestations of the Creator's love.

## The Participants in Fully Alive

- Fully Alive has been written for three important groups of people:
  - \* parents
  - \* teachers
  - \* children
- Activities that involve the participation of the home are a regular feature of the program. These are intended to support and enhance communication within the family.

## Materials

- Fully Alive provides materials for teachers, families, and students
- For Families:
  - \* family letters are included in teacher edition as well as on the OCCB website ([www.occb.on.ca](http://www.occb.on.ca))
  - \* also available are descriptions of topics, key concepts in the topics, and suggestions for enriching the topics at home
  - \* full text of stories also available

## Theme One – Created and Loved by God

- Focuses on the human person, created out of love in the image and likeness of God and is destined for eternal life
- Uniqueness, dignity and the meaning of each human life

## Theme Two – Living in Relationship

- Relational nature of the human person
- It is within the family that each person learns the first lessons about love, generosity, trust, commitment, and loyalty.
- Lessons are fundamental for future relationships and a sense of personal identity and self-worth
- The meaning, importance, and joys of friendship

## Theme Three – Created Sexual: Male and Female

- Rooted in the conviction stated in “Educational Guidance in Human Love: Sexuality is a fundamental component of personality.” (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1983, # 4)
- Sexuality is part of our whole identity as children of God.
- The goodness of our sexuality is presented in its procreative and relational dimensions

## Theme Four – Growing in Commitment

- Explores God's call to faithfulness
- To be human is to act freely – to make decisions, choices, and promises
- The most significant human actions are those that involve relationships with others and God.
- Learning to be faithful, trustworthy, dependable, and committed is a life-long challenge that begins in childhood

## Theme Five – Living in the World

- The human society in which each person is born, lives, and works
- Through living in the world, we realize the intentions of our Creator
- The goodness of creation
- Examines the significance of human activity and its consequences for both the earth and human society
- Many influences of human society on the individual

# Topics

- These five themes provide the organizing structure for individual topics
- Topics are sequential within each grade and between the grades
- *The recommended approach, therefore, is to present the topics in the order in which they appear.* (share best practices for split grades)

# Topic Development

The development of each topic is consistent throughout the program as is the basic three-part structure of the core lessons.

- Quotation
- Learning expectations
- Note to the teacher
- Caution
- Important words
- Materials / preparation
- Program resources
- Assessment
- Curriculum connections
- Introducing the Themes
- We Experience
- We Discover
- We Respond
- Reflecting on the Themes
- We Explore (related activities)
- Family Connections

# Teaching Strategies for Fully Alive

## *1. Personal Participation:*

For example, teachers could mention their family members during a discussion of family, or share the feelings they experienced when they were growing up or when they came to teach at a new school...

- Needs to be appropriate for the classroom setting
- Needs to respect the boundaries of the teacher's privacy
- Participation by other school staff and by parents from the school community enhances learning experience

# Teaching Strategies for Fully Alive (continued)

## 2. *Stories*

- A frequent feature in Fully Alive
- create a shared experience that students can examine and reflect on
- the questions in the Teacher's Edition that follow each story indicate important details that should be highlighted

# Teaching Strategies for Fully Alive (continued)

## 3. *Discussion Strategies*

- an essential element of Fully Alive (particularly in the We Discover phase of the topics)
- Suggested questions which guide the discussion are included for each topic
- Use shared classroom events to illustrate important points (ie. anger or frustration)

# Teaching Strategies for Fully Alive (continued)

## 4. *Key Concepts*

Suggested that key concepts, which are highlighted for the teacher, are recorded on a chart in the classroom

- Also recorded in Family Life notebooks

# Teaching Strategies for Fully Alive (continued)

## 5. *Working Together*

- A number of activities suggest working together with a partner or small group
- Teacher is encouraged to use a variety of selection techniques for grouping

# Teaching Strategies for Fully Alive (continued)

## 6. *Working With Families*

Important for teachers to be sensitive to the special rights and responsibilities of families in Family Life Education.

# Students with Special Education Needs

- Most can participate in Fully Alive with only minor modifications
- The following may be helpful:
  - \* regularly include related activities that concentrate on the student's strength
  - \* for partner tasks, pair the student with a competent partner who is sensitive to needs
  - \* keep in close communication with the family. Find out about his/her special interests
  - \* encourage student to contribute in group activities
  - \* create a classroom discussion atmosphere that is relaxed and sensitive to needs of others

## Additional Resources

- Program was deliberately designed to be a complete Family Life Education program that does not require additional materials
- However, many books, television programs, websites, CDs and DVDs lend themselves
- Some topics touch on sensitive issues: it is important that any additional resources for these topics be carefully screened and have school board approval