



Our Whole Lives
Comprehensive Sexuality Education
Amarillo Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Information for Parents and Guardians

Our Whole Lives (OWL) values

- Self-Worth
- Sexual Health
- Responsibility
- Justice and Inclusivity

As parents, you are the primary sexuality educators of your children. The OWL curricula can help you educate your children about bodies, babies, birth, and families. You will be actively involved in this nationally-acclaimed, age-appropriate program as your child learns through songs, stories, activities and at-home projects that promote family dialogue.

Our Whole Lives helps parents fulfill their role as the primary educators of their children on issues of sexuality and helps create a partnership between the family and the Fellowship through parent orientation and parent education programs. Children and youth who participate in the program will know that the Fellowship cares about sexuality as a part of life to be treated with respect and openness. In the program, children and youth will build relationships with adults who not only care about sexuality education and sexual development, but have been trained as facilitators of comprehensive sexuality for particular age groups. Comprehensive sexuality education is about much more than just anatomy and health. It is about values, respect, emotions and justice.

We live in a culture that is deeply conflicted about sexuality. *Our Whole Lives* is an antidote to a culture that is saturated with mixed messages and misinformation about sexuality. It provides an opportunity to step back, reflect on, and evaluate these messages, so that participants can more effectively act on and communicate their religious and sexual values. The program helps children, youth, and adults develop and articulate their religious and sexual values and to make responsible, healthy decisions based on those values. The program teaches that we are responsible to and accountable to others and to ourselves.

Two members of the Amarillo Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Jeff Davis and Martha Baird, have been trained as facilitators for children in grades K-1 and those in grades 4-6. Jeff's background is as an elementary school teacher; Martha is a retired Certified Nurse Midwife,

During the spring of 2014, the curriculum will be offered to one of these age groups. Interested parents and the facilitators will collaborate (at the Parent's Meeting on March 23) to decide which age group will be offered the curriculum at this time.

*If you are considering enrolling your child/children in this program, please **add your name** to the interest sheet in the Children's Religious Education (CRE) classroom.*



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Parent rights

- Parents have the right to decide whether or not their children will participate.
- Parents have the right to see all materials their children will see. This is done in the context of parent orientation session(s) where an open, trusting atmosphere is created; all sincere questions are addressed; there is an open, trusting relationship established; questions and concerns are welcomed and addressed; and no information is withheld.
- Parents are welcome to attend any or all of the workshops with their children.

Parent responsibilities

- Participate in the Parent Orientation session(s).
- Sign a permission form to enroll their children.
- Make a commitment to regular attendance by their children.
- Help out as needed (providing snacks, transportation, chaperoning, etc.).
- Speak with the facilitators, the minister, or the Children's Religious Educator about concerns or questions at any time during the program.
- Order the *Parent Guide to Our Whole Lives* by March 1 from the UUA Bookstore (online) – or decide to order it as a group and obtain discount. (\$15 if single copy; 10% discount for 5-9 copies; 20% discount for 10 or more).
- Before the Parents Meeting on March 23, review the *Guide*. Note that this book covers both elementary age groups.

In eight workshops (which will be conducted in four Sunday afternoons), OWL models and teaches caring, compassion, respect, and justice. The components of the curriculum (age-appropriate curriculum, engaging approach, and *homelinks* for the parents and child to explore) work together to achieve these ends.

The **K-1** curriculum helps young children identify their attitudes, values, and feelings about themselves, their own and others' sexuality. Topics are: Our Wonderful Bodies, Healthy Bodies, Safe Bodies, Families, Families and Feelings, Babies and Families, Birth of a Baby, and Celebrations.

The **4th-5th-6th** grade curriculum helps children understand the physical and emotional changes of puberty. Participants explore values, communication and decision making, as well as physical health and development. Topics included are: Values and Sexuality, Family Relationships, Puberty: Physical and Emotional Changes, Lovemaking and Reproduction, Health and Safety, Communication, and Decision Making.

More information about *Our Whole Lives* is available from the UUA website,
<http://www.uua.org/re/owl/>



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Parents, save these dates!

Parent(s) must attend both the Parents Meeting and the Parent/Child Orientation sessions for a child to participate.

Parents meeting*: Sunday, March 23 from 12:30 PM - 2:00 PM (light lunch will be provided)

For: All parents considering enrolling children in the OWL program.

Purpose: To provide an overview of comprehensive sexuality education and the OWL curriculum so that parents can make informed decisions for how best to educate their children about sexuality. Options include:

1. Enroll their children in a structured 8-session OWL program
2 sessions will be offered every other week for 4 meetings
2. Participate in parent group using OWL materials as resource
3. Educate children at home using OWL materials

Parent/child orientation*: Sunday, March 30 from 12:30 PM – 3:00 PM
(light lunch will be provided)

Includes separate meetings, one for parents and one for children, followed by a joint gathering.

For: Parents who will enroll their children **AND** all children who will participate in OWL.

Purposes: To establish a partnership between parents and facilitators; to become familiar with the curriculum for the age group selected in the Parents Meeting; to develop ground rules for participation; to develop comfort in using sexual terminology; and to strengthen family commitment to sexuality education.

OWL workshops (light lunch will be provided for each meeting)

- **Sunday, April 13, 2014 (afternoon)**
- **Sunday, April 27, 2014 (afternoon)**
- **Sunday, May 11, 2014 (afternoon)**
- **Sunday, May 25, 2014 (afternoon)**

***Childcare** will be provided for these sessions

Questions? Contact Martha Baird at:

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