

APPENDIX 3

Using the HECAT for the Review of Health Education Resource Materials

It is not unusual for health education curriculum resource materials, such as health textbooks, student workbooks, videos, or a collection of disconnected lessons to be labeled and marketed as health education curricula. However, such resources alone rarely include all the information, learning experiences, and instructional strategies expected in a complete and high quality health education curriculum. Ideally, resource materials should be analyzed as part of the curriculum in which they will be used. If resource materials, such as a textbook or a set of lessons, are being selected to replace existing resources or to augment an existing curriculum, then the HECAT can provide useful guidance for analyzing these materials.

- 1) Any curriculum resource material, such as a textbook, should be accurate, acceptable, feasible, and affordable. Chapter 4 of the HECAT provides a list of questions and an analysis process (including analysis charts) that are useful to ask about any resource that may be added to an existing curriculum.
- 2) Any curriculum resource material, such as a textbook, should reflect characteristics that are fundamental to any high quality health education curriculum. The analysis items in Chapter 5 can be used to evaluate a resource independent from a curriculum to assure the resource reflects appropriate fundamental characteristics.
- 3) Any curriculum resource material, such as a textbook, must provide functional information that students can use to make health-enhancing decisions. The resource should be consistent with local standards, complement a health education curriculum framework and course of study, and support the outcomes expected from the curriculum. A resource should also emphasize concepts that are relevant to these outcomes. The health topic modules in Chapter 6 provide lists of essential concepts that relate to typical topics in a health curriculum. Any resource that is being considered for addition to an existing curriculum should reinforce these concepts.
- 4) Any curriculum resource material, such as a textbook, should help students learn and apply skills that contribute to achieving healthy behaviors. The health topic modules in Chapter 6 emphasize these skills and provide sub-skills and skill examples to illustrate how they might be articulated within an existing curriculum. Any resource that is being considered for addition to an existing curriculum should reinforce these skills, sub-skills, and skill examples.