

Appendix 2: 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 assembled, labeled and marketed as health education curricula. However, such resources alone rarely include all the information, and instructional activities and assessment strategies expected in a complete and quality health education curriculum. Ideally, resource materials, such as a textbook or a set of lessons plans, should be considered as part of the curriculum in which they will be used and included as part of an initial overall curriculum analysis.

A health education curriculum should include:

1. A set of intended learning outcomes or objectives that directly relate to students' acquisition of health-related knowledge, attitudes, and skills.
2. A planned progression of developmentally appropriate lessons or learning experiences that lead to achieving health objectives.
3. Continuity between lessons or learning experiences that clearly reinforce the adoption and maintenance of specific health-enhancing behaviors.
4. Content or materials that correspond with the sequence of learning events and help teachers and students meet the learning objectives.
5. Assessment strategies to determine if students have achieved the desired learning.

It is not necessary to complete a formal, systematic HECAT analysis of each resource material or those being considered as supplements to an existing curriculum. But the HECAT does provide priorities for determining their selection.

- 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 replace materials currently in use or added to an existing curriculum.
- Any curriculum resource material, such as a textbook, should reflect characteristics that are fundamental to any 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 and inclusive fundamental characteristics.

- 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 knowledge expectations that are relevant to these outcomes. The health topic modules in Chapter 6 provide lists of knowledge expectations that relate to topics in a health curriculum. Any resource that may replace materials currently in use or added to an existing curriculum should reinforce these expectations.
- Any curriculum resource material, such as a textbook, should help students learn and apply skills that contribute to achieving healthy practices and behaviors. The health topic modules in Chapter 6 emphasize the skill standards and skill expectations to be addressed in an existing curriculum. Any resource that may replace materials currently in use or added to an existing curriculum should reinforce these standards and skill expectations.