

April 4, 2002

To: Chairs and Directors of English Catholic School Boards  
English Catholic Educational Associations and AFOCSC  
Members of CRECO and OCFLN

Dear Colleagues:

Re: Resource Document on Health and Physical Education by OPHEA

In the year 2000-01, the Ontario Physical and Health Education Association produced a resource document to accompany the Ministry of Education Curriculum document, *Healthy Living*. OPHEA included some Catholic teachers in its writing teams and sought permission to reference the Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations. In their document, they also referenced the *Fully Alive* program.

When OPHEA document was released, some Ontario Catholic boards expressed reservations about some of the content. ICE undertook to scrutinize the document and the report resulting from that scrutiny is attached.

The following points give a reasonable summary of the findings:

- OPHEA is to be commended for producing material which will for the most part be very helpful for teachers in our schools in meeting many of the expectations of the Ministry of Education curriculum documents: *Health and Physical Education* (Grades 1-8) and (Grades 9-10).
- Three of the components in the OPHEA material: *Healthy Living*; *Personal Safety and Injury Prevention*; and *Substance Use and Abuse*, have great merit and only minor adjustments could be suggested for use in Catholic schools.
- There are, however, several aspects of the *Growth and Development* component which are unsuitable for use in Catholic schools.

The reasons for this assessment are laid out in the enclosed report. The most important is that this very sensitive area is totally separated from the Religious education program and from the Christian philosophical foundations and moral stand with regard to the human person that it is incumbent upon us to teach our students. There are also issues of overly explicit material, resource inappropriateness and language usage.

Please remember when vetting these and other materials in the area of Family Life Education that the program for Religious Education and Family Life must be approved by the diocesan bishop before being used in Catholic schools.

I hope this report will be of use to you. Please call if you need further information.

Yours sincerely,

Sr. Joan Cronin, g.s.i.c.  
Executive Director

Encl.

Copy: All Ontario Bishops  
Diocesan Offices of Catholic Education