

*The future of humanity passes by way of the family.* **Pope John Paul II**

**Some information for families  
About**

***Fully Alive***

A Family Life Education program

Sponsored and developed by

The Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops

In collaboration with

The Catholic community in Ontario

## Outline of the Program

Family Life Education is intended to supplement the Religion Program and accounts for about one-fifth of the time set aside for Religious Education at all grade levels in Catholic schools.

*Fully Alive* is organized into five major themes:

### Created and Loved by God

We are created in the image of God and loved as a special creation.

### Living in Relationship

The bonds of family and friendship are central to our identity and development.

### Created Sexual: Male and Female

The gift of sexuality, which is intended for love and life, is an integral part of our identity and development.

### Growing in Commitment

We are called to be faithful and fully human in our promises, choices and decisions.

### Living in the World

We are members of human society and have a responsibility to care for and build God's world.

**These five themes are developed at each grade level through a series of topics. An overview of the topics is included later in this material.**

### About the *Fully Alive* Materials

In the *Fully Alive* program, books are provided for teachers, families and students. These materials are carefully integrated to reflect the special nature of Family Life Education as a shared program between home and school.

### About the *Fully Alive* Family Books

Parents have always sought advice from others as they raise their children. Relatives and neighbours can be wonderful sources of information and guidance. There are also many helpful books on parenting. The family books for *Fully Alive*, available through your school, are another resource for you. As you would with any source of advice, you will want to adapt the ideas and suggestions you find in these books and use them in your own way.

#### **The family books include:**

- A summary of the main ideas the students are learning, and, grade 7 and 8, excerpts from the student book;
- Copies of the stories the teacher reads to the students in Grades 1-3;
- Information and suggestions for parents related to the topics in the program;
- Information about what will be taught in school in the theme on sexuality well before it is presented, as well as some suggestions on how to talk to children about life before birth;
- Special sections in Grades 5-8 with additional information about puberty and some answers to the questions girls and boys often have.

About the Topics in *Fully Alive*

**Grades 1 – 3**

Theme 1

God's gift of creation and people – God knows me – being me – my likes and dislikes – growing up – my feelings – other people's feelings – our gifts – sharing gifts with others.

Theme 2

My family – family love – family changes (a new baby, moving, a grandparent's death) – brothers and sisters – learning to be friends – cooperation – friendliness.

Theme 3

Love and marriage – becoming parents – life before birth – how life begins – caring for new babies – the gift of bodies – being girls and boys.

Theme 4

Caring in the family – caring adults – family commitment – promises – choices and decisions.

Theme 5

An exciting world – God's good world – many people in the world – caring for the world – the value of work – learning to work.

About the Topics in *Fully Alive*

**Grades 4 – 6**

Theme 1

My life is a gift – God’s love for us – we are alike and different – we are mysterious – growing up – human development – death – we need each other – we affect each other – we are life-givers.

Theme 2

Our families – family time together – family love – family rules – family history – family changes (divorce, a new job, unemployment) – communication – sharing chores – making friends – friendship growth and stress.

Theme 3

Marriage and family love – the gift of sexuality – how life begins – heredity and environment – fetal development – birth – reproductive system – human fertility – puberty.

Theme 4

Commitments and responsibilities – models of commitment – learning to make and keep commitments.

Theme 5

The world as a home – caring for and building the world – communities – we are members of society – values and media – influencing society.

About the Topics in *Fully Alive*

**Grades 7 – 8**

Theme 1

God's gift of human nature – personality – the human mind – genes and environment – being fully human.

Theme 2

Relating to others – family (structure, birth order, rules, communication, changes, conflict resolution, abuse) – friendship (qualities, changes, loyalty, peer pressure, moods, cliques).

Theme 3

Sexuality (Christian vision, sexual identity and roles, fertility, puberty, sexual attraction and chastity, sexually transmitted diseases and family planning).

Theme 4

Growing up – making decisions – responsibilities – commitment as a gift of self – understanding and managing stress.

Theme 5

Participating in groups (purpose, responsibilities, discrimination) – social justice (poverty, the environment, abortion) – growing toward social justice.

About your role, as a parent, in *Fully Alive*

It is often said that parents are the first and most important teachers of their children. No where is this more true than in the areas that are explored in *Fully Alive* – what it means to be a person, to live in a family, to have friends, to grow up as a boy or a girl.

The small groups of Catholic parents that helped to develop the family books were very conscious of the special role of parents in Family Life Education. Some of their thoughts about this role are:

- *Fully Alive* creates special opportunities for you to talk to your child about things that matter.
- Intimate talks create an atmosphere of trust, which is especially important as children grow older.
- Pick the right time for special talks – when the occasion comes up naturally, and when you and your child are relaxed and not distracted.
- Have faith in yourself. You are better able than anyone else to talk to your child about many of the topics in *Fully Alive*. When it comes to Family Life Education, you are the true expert.

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