

Our Whole Lives (OWL)

Comprehensive Sexuality Education

For 7th & 8th Graders

Offered at:
Winchester Unitarian Society
478 Main Street, Winchester, MA
www.winchesteruu.org



WHAT IS OWL?

Our Whole Lives, also known as “OWL,” is **comprehensive sexuality education** that helps participants make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior. It equips participants with accurate information in six subject areas: human development, relationships, personal skills, sexual behavior, sexual health, society and culture.

The program assumes that parents are the primary sexuality educators for their children, but what is society otherwise teaching our children about sexuality? Our Whole Lives is an antidote to sexualized media messages, peer pressure, misinformation and prejudice. It provides accurate, age-appropriate information, puts sexuality in the context of values and personal responsibility, supports healthy decision making, and strengthens social skills. These skills and values help prepare youth to make healthy choices for life.

Our Whole Lives (OWL) values: • Self Worth • Sexual Health • Responsibility • Justice and Inclusivity

OWL models and teaches caring, compassion, respect, and justice. It helps adolescents address their attitudes, values, and feelings about themselves, their sexuality, and others’ sexuality. Participants are guided by trained facilitators through an engaging curriculum that addresses topics that are most important to young adolescents, including those typically excluded from sexuality education and health classes.

WHO IS OWL FOR?

The course is offered to **7th and 8th graders**. The curriculum was designed for 7th-9th graders and depending on each child’s needs, age of enrollment can vary. This program is open to members and friends of the Winchester Unitarian Society first, and then members of the greater community.

WHEN IS OWL OFFERED?

We offer the program **during the school year**. The group usually begins meeting in late September or early October and concludes in mid- to late April. The group does not meet during the first Sunday of Winchester public school vacation weeks, nor on most holiday weekends. Classes are **on Sundays from 5-6:30 pm** in the OWL Room on the 3rd floor of WUS. All OWL participants can also stick around afterwards for fun and games (and social action/ service projects) with JUSYG, the Junior Youth Group (for 7th and 8th graders) that meets from 6:30-8 pm, starting with dinner.

WHY DO WE OFFER OWL AT WUS?

The curriculum was developed jointly by the Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ. As a part of our liberal faith traditions, we encourage facts, self knowledge and candid communication between young people regarding choices and consent around sexual and social matters. However, this class is secular, and designed for youth from any or no faith background. We do not encourage participants to join the congregation or otherwise proselytize toward kids or parents about our faith. All are welcome (and of course if you do share our values, you might also be interested in checking out our other offerings and worship services etc. too. You may be pleasantly surprised by what a pluralistic and progressive faith community looks like!)! In offering this course, we affirm the Unitarian Universalist Association's invitation to "commit ourselves to justice, equity, and compassion for all, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Our belief in the inherent worth and dignity of every person requires us to act on our values."

WHO ARE THE TEACHERS?

Our program facilitators are members/friends of Winchester Unitarian Society who have been approved by our staff and have successfully completed an extensive training by the Unitarian Universalist Association. Each year, 4+ leaders bring a variety of life experiences as parents, mentors, health professionals, and educators. The members of our teaching team offer their time and skills as sexuality educators. They volunteer throughout the program year to serve in this important ministry to young people.

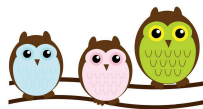
HOW DO I LEARN MORE?

Go to UUA.org/RE/OWL or go to our website WinchesterUU.org and then click on the Learning tab (for more info about OWL as well as our other programs for children and youth).

HOW DO I SIGN MY CHILD UP AND HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Registration begins in mid-May for the following Fall. To enroll your child, please **send an email to owl@winchesteruu.org with your child's name and grade**. We accept students who are members of the Winchester Unitarian Society first, and then we accept others on a first-come-first-serve basis until our limit is reached, or up until the Parent's Orientation before the 1st week of class. After reaching out to us, we will send you a link to register, or put you on a wait list if the class is full. Please do not share this link with others. Please note that the Parent Orientation is mandatory. Attending does not commit you to the program. The orientation offers an opportunity to review program materials and meet members of the teaching team.

This program is offered for **\$200**: \$50 non-refundable fee to hold your spot and then \$150 is due after the Parent Orientation. However, no one is turned away and we have scholarship funds available if this cost is prohibitive. Your generosity allows us to continue offering special speakers, teacher training, curriculum, supplies and other resources that are needed for this program.



If you have any questions, or would like to enroll your child for our next OWL classes starting in the Fall, please contact our OWL team via OWL@winchesteruu.org or Sam Wilson, our Director of Youth and Children's Ministries, Sam.Wilson@winchesteruu.org