


Bioethics Week in the Classroom!




Resources for Alberta Teachers
From Kindergarten to Grade 12

Bioethics Week
March 5-11, 2007
www.phen.ab.ca/bioethicsweek





This resource has been developed to help teachers at all grade levels incorporate health ethics into existing Alberta Learning curricula and plan Bioethics Week activities within their classes. PHEN's website has further resources to help with your Bioethics Week planning.



Visit www.phen.ab.ca/bioethicsweek for:

- A wide variety of health ethics activities and discussion questions developed for students from Kindergarten to Grade 12
- Areas of Alberta Learning curricula where health ethics can be easily incorporated, including:
 - Elementary-** Health & Life Skills, Science, Social Studies
 - Junior High-** Health & Life Skills, Science, Social Studies
 - High School-** Career and Life Management, Science, Social Studies, Religious Ethics

How can my class participate?

Your involvement in Bioethics Week is encouraged at a level that is comfortable for you and relevant to the age, abilities, and curriculum of your class. It may take the form of a creative writing topic or art project incorporated into your planned lessons. It could be a prepared class debate or facilitated discussion on one or more bioethics topics, or your class may develop a theatrical performance to share with other students. Organizing a Bioethics Week activity can be fun – and is limited only by your imagination!



What is Bioethics Week? It is an annual event that provides an opportunity to discuss ethical issues that affect the health and well-being of Albertans.

Bioethics Week: March 5-11, 2007



What is Bioethics? An ethical issue arises in any situation in which one must make a decision that will have an impact on others. It involves reflecting on individual and societal values, how these values influence our decisions, and how our decisions affect our lives and those around us.



Who can participate in Bioethics Week? All organizations, schools, groups and individuals in Alberta who are affected by or interested in ethical issues that arise in topics of health and health care are invited to participate in Bioethics Week. Some of these groups include, schools and classes of all ages, community organizations, mental health agencies, members of the public, health care institutions and ethics committees.





Character Development

While we cannot rely on static, pre-determined rules for making ethical decisions, promoting, teaching, and discussing values such as Alberta Learning's values of respect, integrity, trust, openness, and caring will help students to reflect on their own values, and be more prepared to act ethically when faced with difficult decisions.

By participating in Bioethics Week you will be creating an awareness of a range of ethical issues and how they relate to your students' health and well-being, while fostering critical thinking and ethical decision-making skills. Doing so will result in a community of students who are more conscious of their values, increasingly aware of the ethical issues that exist in their lives and in the community around them, and significantly more likely to engage in ethical behaviour.

Why should my class or school participate? Because we face moral decisions everyday, ethical education is of utmost importance in the character development of our students.



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Sample Activity Topics

- How do our everyday decisions affect the health of all Albertans?
- Should scientists be concerned about the moral implications of their research?
- What makes an ethical community?
- Should children have the right to make their own health care decisions?
- If you could afford to clone your beloved pet, should you be allowed to?
- Should we allow genetically modified foods?
- And many more!

Science can only ascertain what is, not what should be, and outside of its domain, value judgements of all kinds remain necessary.

Albert Einstein



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How do I get started?

Visit www.phen.ab.ca/bioethicsweek

On the website mentioned above, the section **Resources for Teachers** provides a detailed outline of areas of the Alberta Learning curricula where ethics and bioethics topics are relevant and can be easily incorporated. Reviewing this section will give you ideas as to where and how to incorporate Bioethics Week into your goals and plans for your students' learning. You can then look through the list of suggested bioethics topics, discussion questions

and activities, and choose ones that are age-appropriate and relevant for your class.

If you prefer to receive hard copies of these resources, please contact PHEN and we will be happy to mail them to you.





The Provincial Health Ethics Network (PHEN) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization which provides resources to Albertans to support thoughtful analysis of ethical issues in the health system. All Albertans are encouraged to access the services of the Network and to become members.



For more information about PHEN, please visit our website at www.phen.ab.ca or contact a PHEN office:



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**Provincial
Health Ethics
Network**



Bioethics Week is coordinated by the Provincial Health Ethics Network with support from:

- Office of Medical Bioethics, University of Calgary
- John Dossetor Health Ethics Centre, University of Alberta
- Alberta Catholic Health Corporation's Ethics Service
- Alberta Social and Health Equities Network



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