The Health Education/Promotion profession is dedicated to excellence in the practice of promoting individual, family, group, organizational, school, and community health. Guided by common goals to improve the human condition, Health Education Specialists are responsible for upholding the integrity and ethics of the profession as they perform their work and face the daily challenges of making ethical decisions. Health Education Specialists value diversity in society and embrace a multiplicity of approaches in their work to support the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of all people.

The Code of Ethics provides a framework of shared values within the professions in which Health Education/Promotion is practiced. The Code of Ethics is grounded in fundamental ethical principles including promoting justice, doing good, and avoiding harm. The responsibility of each health education specialist is to aspire to the highest possible standards of conduct and to encourage the ethical behavior of all those with whom they work.

Regardless of job title, professional affiliation, work setting, or population served, Health Education Specialists should promote and abide by these guidelines when making professional decisions.

**Article I: Core Ethical Expectations**

1. Health Education Specialists respect and support the right of individuals to make informed decisions regarding their health, as long as such decisions pose no risk to the health of others.

2. Health Education Specialists are truthful about their qualifications and the qualifications of others whom they recommend as well as the limitations of their education, expertise, and experience in providing services consistent with their respective levels of professional competence including certifications and licensures.

3. Health Education Specialists are ethically bound to respect the privacy, confidentiality, and dignity of individuals, and respect the rights of others to hold diverse values, attitudes, and opinions. Health Education Specialists have a responsibility to engage in supportive relationships, free of exploitation, over whom they have supervisory, evaluative, or other authority to include clients, patients, community members, students, supervisees, employees and research participants as examples.

4. Health Education Specialists openly communicate to colleagues, employers, and professional organizations when they suspect unethical practice that violates the profession's Code of Ethics.

5. Health Education Specialists are conscious and responsive to social, racial and cultural diversity when assessing needs and assets, planning and implementing programs, conducting an evaluation, and engaging in research to protect individuals, groups, society, and the environment from harm.
6. Health Education Specialists should disclose conflicts of interest in professional practice as well as research, evaluation, and the dissemination process.

7. Health Education Specialists display personal behaviors that represent the moral conduct principles of honesty, autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, respect, and justice. The Health Education Specialist should under no circumstances engage in derogatory language, violence, bigotry, racism, sexual activities, or inappropriate sexual communications in person or through the use of technology.

Article II: Ethical Practice Expectations

Section 1: Responsibility to the Public
Health Education Specialists are responsible to educate, promote, maintain, and improve the health of individuals, families, groups, and communities. When a “conflict of issues” arises among individuals, groups, organizations, agencies, or institutions, Health Education Specialists must consider all issues and give priority to those that promote the health and well-being of individuals and the public while respecting both the principles of individual autonomy, human rights, and equity.

A: Health Education Specialists advocate and encourage actions and social policies that promote maximizing health benefits and eliminating or minimizing preventable risks and health inequalities for all affected parties.

B: Health Education Specialists contribute to the profession by redefining existing – and developing new – practices, and by sharing the outcome of their work.

C: Health Education Specialists actively involve individuals, groups, and communities in the entire educational process to maximize the understanding and personal responsibilities of those who may be affected.

Section 2: Responsibility to the Profession
Health Education Specialists are responsible for their professional behavior, for the reputation of their profession, and for promoting ethical conduct among their colleagues.

A: Health Education Specialists recognize the boundaries of their professional competence and are accountable for their professional activities and actions.

B: Health Education Specialists maintain, improve, and expand their professional competence through continued study and education, research, scholarship, membership, participation, leadership in professional organizations, and involvement in issues related to the health of the public.

C: Health Education Specialists contribute to the profession by refining existing and developing new practices, and by sharing the outcomes of their work.
D: Health Education Specialists give appropriate recognition to others for their professional contributions and achievements.

Section 3: Responsibility to Employers
Health Education Specialists are responsible for their professional behavior in the workplace and for promoting ethical conduct among their colleagues and employers.

A: Health Education Specialists apply current evidence-based standards and theories when carrying out their professional responsibilities.

B: Health Education Specialists accurately represent potential and actual service and program outcomes to employers.

C: Health Education Specialists maintain competence in their areas of professional practice.

Section 4: Responsibility in the Delivery of Health Education/Promotion
Health Education Specialists deliver health education/promotion with integrity. They respect the rights, dignity, confidentiality, inclusivity, and worth of all people by adapting strategies and methods to the needs of diverse populations and communities.

A: Health Education Specialists remain informed of the latest scientific information and advances in health education theory, research, and practice.

B: Health Education Specialists support the development of professional standards that are grounded in theory, best-practice guidelines, and data.

C: Health Education Specialists adhere to a rigorous and ethical evaluation of health education/promotion initiatives.

D: Health Education Specialists promote healthy behaviors through informed choice rather than by coercion, intimidation, or political influence.

E: Health Education Specialists disclose potential outcomes of proposed services, strategies, and actions that affect individuals.

F: Health Education Specialists actively collaborate with a variety of individuals and organizations, and demonstrate respect for the unique contributions provided by others to avoid plagiarism.

Section 5: Responsibility in Research and Evaluation
Through research and evaluation activities, Health Education Specialists contribute to the health of populations and the profession. When planning and conducting research or evaluation, Health Education Specialists do so by federal and state laws and regulations, organizational and institutional policies, and professional standards and ethics.
A: Health Education Specialists ensure that participation in research is voluntary and is based upon the informed consent of participants and the relevant research protocol to include following the approved research design by appropriate institutional review committees and/or boards.

B: Health Education Specialists respect and protect the privacy, rights, and dignity of research participants and honor commitments made to those participants.

C: Health Education Specialists treat all information obtained from participants as confidential unless otherwise required by law. Participants are fully informed of the disclosure requirements and procedures.

D: Health Education Specialists take credit, including authorship, only for work they have performed and give appropriate co-authorship, credit, or acknowledgment to the contributions of others.

E: Health Education Specialists report and disseminate the results of their research and evaluation objectively, accurately, and in a timely fashion and promoted to appropriate formats effectively while fostering the translation of research into practice.

Section 6: Responsibility in Professional Preparation and Continuing Education

Those involved in the professional preparation and training of Health Education students and continuing education for Health Education Specialists are obligated to provide a quality education that meets professional standards and benefits the individual, the profession, and the public.

A: Health Education Specialists foster an inclusive educational environment free from all forms of discrimination, coercion, and harassment.

B: Health Education Specialists involved in professional preparation and continuing education engage in careful planning; state clear and realistic expectations; present material that is scientifically accurate, developmentally appropriate and inclusive, conduct fair assessments and provide reasonable and prompt feedback to learners.

C: Health Education Specialists provide learners with objective and comprehensive guidance about career opportunities, development, and advancement.

D: Health Education Specialists facilitate meaningful opportunities for the professional development and advancement of learners.

Taskforce Members:
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