

Snapshot Review: Sexuality and Relationships Education and Capacity Building Strategies in Victorian School and Community settings

Prepared for the WHAV S&RH Working Group February 11, 2015

Current Sexuality and Relationships Education Programs in Victorian schools

Background

Many current sexuality education programs were developed by the Victorian *Department of Education and Training* DET (formerly DEECD) in collaborative partnerships with other State government departments and in more recent times, the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University (2011) and Deakin University (2014).

Consideration of key concepts such as gender, power and violence within DET's current and updated *Catching On* sexuality education (2013) follows DEECD commissioned research and reviews undertaken by VicHealth (2009). These holistic approaches to sexuality education reflect "the health promoting school approach" (Deakin University 2012, p.15), where evidence based teaching and learning activities are ideally embedded across the curriculum from Prep to Year10 with links to formal assessment and reporting aligned with State and/or National standards and supported by a range of resources and tools.

The DEECD Vic Health report (2009) also informed the development of "good practice criteria" (p.5) required to achieve violence prevention and respectful relationships education in schools and provided the basis for future policy and program development exemplified in *Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out Against Gender-Based Violence* (DEECD 2014).

Other Victorian stakeholders working in health and community sectors supported research and the development of sexuality and relationships education focused on the social determinants of health, in particular prevention of violence against women and children. This body of work led to a proliferation of respectful relationships programs targeting young people in school and community settings (SAPPS 2004, WHGNE 2007, WHW 2006, 2012).

Capacity building strategies in school settings have been informed by collaborative research and initiatives undertaken by Victorian universities, the Department of Education and Training (formerly DEECD) and key stakeholders involved in sexual and reproductive health advocacy, workforce knowledge development, health care and service provision.

This review includes:

- Key Victorian sexuality and relationships education programs and supporting resources available on line and developed for delivery by professionals working with children and adolescents in school settings from 2004- 2014
- Examples of Victorian sexuality and relationships education available to support professionals working with young people in school and community settings
- Examples of Victorian capacity building strategies to support sexuality education in school and community settings

Catching On sexuality education training and curriculum materials have been provided to Victorian schools since 2004 through a partnership between the Department of Education and Training and Departments of Human Services and Health. Since this time, *Catching On* has become the phrase used to identify the Department's sexuality education resources which are designed to be embedded within whole school teaching and learning approaches. In Victoria, it's compulsory for government schools to provide sexuality education within the Health and Physical Education domain, including assessment and reporting against the Victorian Essential Learning Standards now aligned with AusVELS.

Catching On sexuality education education resources and other evidence based supporting materials can be found at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/social/physed/Pages/resources.aspx>

1. **Catching On Teaching and Learning Activities for Years 9 & 10 2004**

This resource with support materials was developed as part of the Department's STI/AIDS Prevention Education Strategy (2005) to support classes exploring issues of love and relationships, risk behaviours, gender and power, and sexual identity. The resource and its supporting material is meant to be used with other material to assist teachers in planning a comprehensive sexuality education program appropriate for the specific student population of any school. It's designed for use at AusVELS Level 6 but includes activities that can be adapted by experienced teachers to meet some requirements in Level 4 or 5.

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/teachingresources/social/physed/catchingonteach.pdf>

2. **Catching on Early - Teaching and Learning Activities for Primary Schools 2011**

Comprehensive evidence based sexuality education program for students from prep through to year 6. Developed with the collaborative support of the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University and based on current research into sexuality education and child sexual development. It was recently updated in 2013 to reflect the AusVELS curriculum. Its development-based program is designed to help schools teach the sexuality education components in the Health and Physical Education and Interpersonal Development domains.

<https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/content/ee5cfd49-48e7-4698-a06d-37e2e21cbbd9/catching%20on%20early%202013.pdf>

3. **Catching On Later - Teaching and Learning Activities for Secondary Schools 2013**

New classroom resource released in 2013 including a set of sequential learning activities for students in Years 7-10. An addition to *Catching on Early* for primary school students and the 2004 *Catching on For Years 9 and 10*, this resource includes a set of evidence-based learning activities around key topics for adolescents such as body image, sexual health and relationships. Aligned to AusVELS, the introduction of *Catching On Later* in conjunction with *Catching on Early*, ensures that every compulsory year-level is supported by comprehensive sexuality education resources

<https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/content/407ed837-2c8b-4842-9a22-fe7f8bb07b99/catchingonlater.pdf>

Violence Prevention / Respectful Relationships Education

Schools and Community Settings

1. Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping Out Against Gender-Based violence 2014

Building Respectful Relationships – Stepping Out Against Gender-Based Violence, is the new DET teaching resource for Victorian secondary students to learn about respectful relationships and preventing gender-based violence. It includes a set of sequential teaching activities specifically targeted to Years 8 and 9 students. The resource is designed to provide curriculum advice as part of a whole-school approach to the prevention of gender based violence and building of respectful relationships. The resource was developed in partnership with CASA House and Deakin University.

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/Pages/respectrel.aspx>

<https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/pages/View.aspx?pin=HTWGQ7>

2. You, Me and Us Project 2012

The [You, Me and Us project](http://www.whwest.org.au/resource/you-me-and-us-training-manual/) used a peer education model developed by Women's Health West to implement respectful relationship education sessions as a strategy to prevent violence against women. The manual outlines the project approach, provides implementation tools and resources and an evaluation summary. The manual has been designed for women's, community health and youth services whose work is underpinned by a gender equity approach and who are committed to implementing a peer education respectful relationships project to help prevent violence against women. The manual can also be used by professionals working with young people in primary schools, universities, TAFEs, youth organisations and sports clubs.

<http://whwest.org.au/resource/you-me-and-us-training-manual/>

3. REAL Life: Relationship Education and Awareness for Life 2003 Reprinted 2007

Program developed by WHGNE for students in years 7-10 or young people out of school in community settings. The downloadable manual and recently updated activities provide interactive teaching and learning to:

- Establish a safe, inclusive environment for teaching and learning
- Explore beliefs, values and attitudes about relationships
- Increase knowledge and skills to develop healthy relationships
- Develop understandings about the role of gender and power in relationships
- Help link young people with local services and support

http://www.whealth.com.au/work_respectful_relationships.html

4. Sexual Assault Prevention Program for Secondary Schools (SAPPSS) 2004

SAPPSS is a whole-of-school model to prevent sexual assault in **secondary schools**. The model was developed by CASA House, a department of the The Royal Women's Hospital and includes staff professional development, respectful relationships curriculum for junior and middle school, Train the Trainer, Peer Educator Programs and ongoing evaluation. SAPPSS enables CASAs to work in long-term partnership with schools to integrate respectful relationships education into everyday school life.

The SAPPSS Report (2008) provides a summary and guide for organisations wishing to initiate, develop, monitor and evaluate school-based violence prevention programs and other initiatives focused on young people and their communities. The Report includes good practice guidelines for school-based violence prevention.

http://www.casahouse.com.au/index.php?page_id=172

Capacity Building Strategies for school and community settings

1. Sexuality Education Matters Resource 2013

Designed to support pre-service teacher education programs to prepare students to teach sexuality education in primary and secondary schools. It builds on the research and teaching experience of Debbie Ollis and Lyn Harrison at Deakin University. It assumes that sexuality education in Australian schools is part of a comprehensive health and physical education curriculum. Many of the activities, suggested readings and teaching and learning experiences could be adapted or used in other contexts that focus on school-based sexuality education.

http://www.deakin.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/252661/sexuality-education-matters-april-2013-online.pdf

Voices of Sexuality Education 2012

Developed as a partnership resource to prepare pre-service teachers to teach sexuality education and support existing teachers and health workers. The resource consists of a series of short video clips portraying the sexuality education experiences of young people and their parents/carers from a range of cultural backgrounds, belief systems, abilities/disabilities, from rural locations, and including those who are same sex attracted or sex and gender diverse. It also features sexuality education professionals who share their knowledge and is designed to align with sexuality education resources, particularly *Sexuality Education Matters: Preparing pre-service teachers to teach sexuality education*, Deakin University. Prompt questions and resources are provided for each section.

Partners include: Deakin University School of Education; Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO); Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. (VAECI); Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society (ARCSHS); La Trobe University; Multicultural Health Support Services (MHSS); UnitingCare Cutting Edge (UCCE); Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service (AWAHS); Monash University; Brophy Family and Youth Services; Golden City Support Services

<http://www.cersh.com.au/voices/>

2. Building Capacity in Sexuality Education: The Northern Bay College Experience 2012

This Deakin University report details the first phase of the Sexuality Education and Community Support (SECS) project. Funded by the DEECD, the SECS project aims to introduce a P-12 approach to sexuality education at Northern Bay P-12 College through a collaborative partnership process between schools within the College and local, regional, and state health and education agencies. The report provides comprehensive information including a literature review, best practice strategies, data and tools to support the planning and implementation of a whole school approach to sexuality education.

http://www.deakin.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/252660/building-capacity-in-sexuality-education-nbc-report.pdf

3. Girls Talk – Guys Talk 2006

Developed by Women's Health West, *Girls Talk – Guys Talk* is a 14-month program that extends the World Health Organisation whole of school approach by combining it with a year nine sexuality education program, the VicHealth participation for health framework for action and a feminist approach. Since starting the program in 2006, WHW has found that it fosters a sustainable school environment in which young people gain the knowledge, skills and resources they need for healthy relationships and sexual choices. Limited distribution to those who have completed training in the delivery of Girls Talk – Guys Talk Program.

<http://whwest.org.au/resource/girls-talk-guys-talk/>

4. SAPPSS Report 2008

Describes the development and evaluation of the CASA House Sexual Assault Prevention Program for Secondary Schools (SAPPSS) and intended to be used as a summary and guide for organisations wishing to initiate, develop, monitor and evaluate school based violence prevention programs and other initiatives focused on young people and their communities. The report provides good practice guidelines for school based violence prevention. http://www.casahouse.com.au/index.php?page_id=172#report

5. Safe Landing 2013

SafeLanding is an evidence based model developed by Family Planning Victoria that addresses the barriers that schools face in delivering sexuality education. The *SafeLanding Model* provides a practical framework for schools to deliver a whole-school learning approach to sexuality education, utilising community partnerships and a health promotion framework. The *SafeLanding Model* is supported by the *SafeLanding Toolkit*, which includes information and resources to implement the model in a school or cluster of schools and to deliver sexuality education that meets curriculum standards for AusVELS Levels 3-10.

<http://www.fpv.org.au/safelanding>

http://www.fpv.org.au/assets/SLlaunchbrochurewebAugust2013_2.pdf

For comprehensive reviews of Australian and International approaches to sexuality education

Building Capacity in Sexuality Education: The Northern Bay College Experience 2012, Ollis D, Harrison L & Richardson A, Deakin University, Geelong, pp. 14-24

http://www.deakin.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/252660/building-capacity-in-sexuality-education-nbc-report.pdf

USA Sexuality Education Policy and Guidelines

Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States [SIECUS](#)

Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States is the not for profit organisation founded in 1964 to provide education and information about sexuality and sexual and reproductive health.

[Guidelines for Comprehensive Sexuality Education, Kindergarten through 12 Grade](#) Third Edition

[Community Action Kit:](#)

And a wee reminder that SOME things have changed....

This is an actual extract from a sex education school textbook for girls, printed in the early 60's in the UK and explains why the world was much happier and peaceful then...!

"When retiring to the bedroom, prepare yourself for bed as promptly as possible. Whilst feminine hygiene is of the utmost importance, your tired husband does not want to queue for the bathroom, as he would have to do for his train. But remember to look your best when going to bed. Try to achieve a look that is welcoming without being obvious. If you need to apply face-cream or hair-rollers wait until he is asleep as this can be shocking to a man last thing at night. When it comes to the possibility of intimate relations with your husband it

is important to remember your marriage vows and in particular your commitment to obey him.

If he feels that he needs to sleep immediately then so be it. In all things be led by your husband's wishes; do not pressure him in any way to stimulate intimacy. Should your husband suggest congress then agree humbly all the while being mindful that a man's satisfaction is more important than a woman's. When he reaches his moment of fulfilment a small moan from yourself is encouraging to him and quite sufficient to indicate any enjoyment that you may have had.

Should your husband suggest any of the more unusual practices be obedient and uncomplaining but register any reluctance by remaining silent. It is likely that your husband will then fall promptly asleep so adjust your clothing, freshen up and apply your night-time face and hair care products.

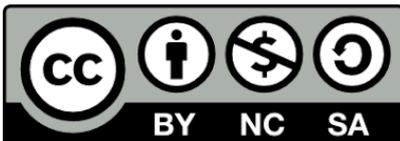


You may then set the alarm so that you can arise shortly before him in the morning. This will enable you to have his morning cup of tea ready when he awakes."

Source unknown...copy provided by a good humoured community health nurse working in regional Victoria.

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11. Ollis, D, Harrison, L & Maharaj (2013) *Sexuality Education Matters: Preparing pre-service teachers to teach sexuality education*, Deakin University, Burwood, Vic.
12. Deakin University (2013), *Voices of Sexuality Education*, Burwood, Vic.
<http://www.deakin.edu.au/arts-ed/education/teach-research/health-pe/projects.php>
<http://www.cersh.com.au/voices/>
13. Family Planning Victoria (2013), *Safe Landing Addressing Barriers to teaching sexuality education in schools*, Melbourne.



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