

COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION (CSE) TOOLKIT

CONTENT MATRIX



NORWEGIAN CHURCH AID
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A COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION TOOLKIT (CSE)

Content Matrix

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INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Sexuality Education Toolkit Content Matrix purpose is to provide resources that could enrich discussions on content in the facilitators'/ trainers' manual. It is a "quick reference" for age appropriate concepts and selected resources to guide trainers towards relevant literature and trigger more research into suggested content.

RELATIONSHIPS




FAMILIES

9-12
years

Key Learning Idea	Content
No matter what family type you identify with, each one has its strengths and weaknesses or pros and cons	<p>There are different types of families¹ and each has its own strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>Types of families</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Nuclear family2 Single parent family3 Extended family4 Childless family5 Step family6 Grandparent family7 Same sex family
The primary function of the family is to ensure the continuation of society	<p>A family's function² to ensure continuity can be achieved through the following.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Procreation which is a biological process2 Socialization that is dependent of socially created networks/relationships. <p>Given these functions, the nature of one's role in the family changes over time.</p>
Performing the roles expected of each member can lead to family harmony and happiness	<p>Responsibilities and Roles³</p> <p>Family members must perform their expected roles in order to live together in peace and harmony. To achieve this, each member of the family must be aware of the duties and responsibilities, which could be captured in a schedule. For example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The mother is perceived to be the manager and treasurer of the family.• The girls are perceived to help the mother in doing the household chores.• The boys are usually assigned the heavy working the house.
Gender influences roles within a family	<p>Nowadays, father and mother, as well as girls and boys in the family, still do not share in almost all the house works. The home activities of one family may differ from those of other families.</p>
Parents/ Adults must strive to portray positive values	<p>How do children learn from family members?⁴</p> <p>Family members play a critical role in a child's learning and socialization. This is because the family is the child's primary social group. Our family values are a reflection of who we are and how parents guide their children.</p>
By choosing their children's activities, parents are directly influencing their gender role views and preferences onto their children and shaping expectations	<p>Child development happens physically, emotionally, socially, and intellectually during this time. When parents/ older family members voice and live those values, our children learn life lessons. They learn to express themselves, solve problems, grow from mistakes, and develop other skills and abilities that lead to fulfilling lives.</p> <p>How do families influence gender in/equality?⁵</p> <p>Both fathers and mothers can encourage traditional gender roles in their children. In addition, female adults such as mothers and grandmothers have been shown to encourage harmful practices like female genital mutilation (FGM)⁶.</p>

9-12 years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Roles and responsibilities change</p> <p>The demands of caregiving must be negotiated</p> <p>Family members' emotions may fluctuate and change over time</p> <p>Chronic illness is a family experience, one that is shared by all</p> <p>There is always help</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Effect of illness on family structure, capacity and responsibility⁷</p> <p>Chronic illness may cause certain changes on family structure, capacity and responsibilities as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and responsibilities change to fill in the gap left by the ill family member • One member's chronic illness influences the lives of everyone in the family as they empathize with the ill members situation. • The constant engagement of medical care may introduce a feeling that seem as if the medical professionals that care for the ill family member become part of the family. • There is always help to deal with situations of chronic illnesses within a family and its effects on family members
12-15 years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Stay calm to stay productive. Don't point fingers (literally or figuratively), and don't try to make a decision while you're still mad</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Managing Conflict and Misunderstanding in Young People⁸</p> <p>There is a rise in conflict and misunderstanding, as children grow older and particularly during adolescents. This is due to several reasons as adolescents seek independence and parental influence clash. Teens are able to think on their own but still live with parents who have rules and expectations for them. Teenagers don't necessarily hold the same beliefs and values as their parents, and their goal to have stretch the limits/ boundaries of experimentation of life and newly found independence, which ultimately lead to conflicts with their parents' goal to keep them safe⁹.</p> <p>There also exist different ways of dealing with such situations for both adolescents and their parents/ guardians/ adults¹⁰.</p>
15-18+ years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>There are support systems that young people and family members can turn to when faced with challenges related to sharing or disclosure of information related to sexual relationships and health issues</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Support systems for disclosure of sexual relationships and health issues</p> <p>One of the most accessible ways of adolescents and young people disclosing sexual relationships and health issues is to a trusted adult. They should identify and approach an adult they feel would keep their information confidential as well as provide advice on ways to tackle the foreseen problem.</p> <p>Another support system for disclosure of sexual relationships and health issues is at a youth –friendly health service provision centre.</p>

FRIENDSHIP, LOVE AND ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

<p>9-12 years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>In order to experience friendship, you need to have true friends</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>FRIENDSHIP:</p> <p>Definition</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 long-term connection with someone. 2 special relationship between people who enjoy being together. 3 special relationship between people who are the same age <p>Characteristics of friendship</p> <p>Friendship is a combination of affection, loyalty, love, respect, and trust. Traits of a friendship include similar interests, mutual respect and an attachment to each other,</p>
	<p>You know you have their approval and love, but your self-esteem doesn't depend on them</p>	<p>Healthy relationships¹¹</p> <p> CHARACTERISTICS OF A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are interdependent i.e. Interdependence means you rely on each other for mutual support but still maintain your identity as a unique individual. • It involves the expressions of friendship and love • Good friends can be like a personal support group that brings many benefits. • Benefits of friendship and love • Provide emotional security that teenagers need to grow. • Allow teens to do new things within social groups, outside of their family. • Provide a sense of belonging and value, and help build trust • Offer a way of experiencing different values, roles, ideas and identities. • Bring comfort to see that others are going through similar things. • A source of recognition that helps build self-esteem.
	<p>Friendship and love can be expressed differently as one matures and inequalities negatively affect relationships</p>	
<p>12-15 years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Romantic relationships can be strongly affected by inequality and differences in power (e.g. due to gender, age, economic, social or health status)</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Inequalities in Romantic Relationships¹²</p> <p>There may exist inequality in romantic relationships. Inequality in a relationship refers to an imbalance of power between partners. In an unhealthy relationship one partner "maintains power and control over the other." If your partner's needs dominate the relationship without much consideration for your own needs, then the relationship is unequal.</p> <p>Healthy Sexual Relationships¹³</p> <p> CHARACTERISTICS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Healthy sexuality includes the capacity to promote and preserve significant interpersonal relationships; • Value one's body and personal health; • Interact with [others] in respectful and appropriate ways; • Express affection, love, and intimacy in ways consistent with one's own values, sexual preferences, and abilities" <p>Unhealthy Relationships¹⁴</p> <p> CHARACTERISTICS INCLUDE BUT NOT LIMITED TO:</p> <p>Physical violence between dating partners (intimate partner violence) Sexual dating violence (sexual assault and reproductive and sexual coercion sexual coercion)</p>
<p>15-18+ years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Love and affection are displayed differently as one matures and could be within healthy or unhealthy relationships</p>	

15-18+ years	<p>Key learning Idea</p> <p>Love and affection are displayed differently as one matures and could be within healthy or unhealthy relationships</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Reproductive coercion and abuse¹⁵ (RCA) or simply “reproductive coercion” – This is any intentional attempt to influence or control a person’s reproductive choices or interfere with their reproductive autonomy. It is typically carried out by a male intimate partner and could be propagated as well by other family members. It can manifest in 3 forms mainly (i) Pregnancy coercion – where a woman is forced to become pregnant against her will. (ii) Contraceptive sabotage – deliberately damaging, hiding, or otherwise interfering with birth control and (iii) Controlling the outcome of a pregnancy – forcing a woman to terminate or continue with pregnancy against her will.¹⁶</p> <p>Sexual coercion¹⁷ – any sexual activity that is unwanted and happens to a woman due to pressure, tricks, threats or force in a non-physical way. For example it is sex that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being worn down by someone who repeatedly asks you for sex • Being lied to or promised things that weren’t true to trick you into having sex
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TOLERANCE, INCLUSION AND RESPECT

9-12 years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Every human is unique, can contribute to society and has a right to be respected</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Every human is important and has a right to be respected¹⁸. Learning to be tolerant and respectful of others is key to being successful in life. The world is composed of people from different backgrounds who speak various languages, and follow diverse customs and religions</p> <p>Children will become more mature, and in the future they will have an economic advantage when they respect others from around the world.</p> <p>Tolerance can be easily taught to a child from an extremely early age.</p>
	<p>It is disrespectful and hurtful to harass or bully anyone on the basis of their social, economic or health status, ethnicity, origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or other differences</p>	<p>Stigma and Discrimination¹⁹</p> <p>🔗 WHAT IS STIGMA? <i>“Stigma is a powerful social process of devaluing people or groups based on a real or perceived difference—such as gender, age, sexual orientation, behaviour, or ethnicity.”</i> In relation to health, it refers to the negative association between a person or group of people who share certain characteristics and a specific disease. This may cause people who suffer from this disease be labelled, discriminated against, treated separately, stereotyped and/or experience loss of status because of having a certain disease.</p> <p>🔗 WHAT IS DISCRIMINATION?²⁰ Discrimination follows stigma and is the unfair and unjust treatment of an individual based on that socially identified status.</p>
	<p>It is disrespectful and hurtful to harass or bully anyone on the basis of their social, economic or health status, ethnicity, origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or other differences</p>	<p>Harassment and Bullying²¹</p> <p>🔗 WHAT IS HARASSMENT? It refers to illegal behaviour towards a person that causes mental or emotional suffering, which includes repeated unwanted contacts without a reasonable purpose, insults, threats, touching, or offensive language.</p>

9-12
years

Key Learning Idea

It is disrespectful and hurtful to harass or bully anyone on the basis of their social, economic or health status, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other differences

Content

TYPES OF HARASSMENT

There are different types of harassment based on several aspects such as:

Ethnicity	Gender
Religion	Disability
Sexual orientation	Age
Sexual ²²	Quid pro quo sexual

WHAT IS BULLYING? ²³

Bullying refers to:

- Aggressive behaviour that is intended to show power and control over another person.
- Through physical, verbal and non-verbal abusive behaviour, a bully violates the space of the other person.
- They may also harass others using technology such as mobile text messages, blogs and social media.

Some factors that could lead to a child becoming a bully include:

- Exposure to violence through media - TV, video games
- Abuse, neglect and lack of love and security at home
- Peer rejection and failure at school
- Having been the victim of bully, displacement of anger, rejection and frustration by bullying someone else
- Low self-esteem
- Being with peer groups or having parents who display bullying behaviour
- Imitating parents' bully behaviour

12-15
years


Key Learning Idea

Stigma and discrimination on the grounds of differences (e.g. Covid 19, HIV, pregnancy or health status, economic status, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other differences) are disrespectful, harmful to well-being, and a violation of human rights

Content

Examples of stigma related to HIV

There are several contexts of stigma related to HIV and AIDS. Here are a few examples highlighted in the website below by Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation

 <https://www.pedaids.org/2018/02/28/six-stories-stigma-surrounding-hiv-aids/>

WHAT IS THE IMPACT?



The impact of stigma irrespective of circumstances usually has similar outcomes. Stigma can undermine togetherness and prompt possible isolation of individuals/groups, which might contribute to further spread/ transmission in case of diseases such as HIV. This can result in more severe health problems and difficulties controlling a disease outbreak. Stigma can:

- Drive people to hide the illness to avoid discrimination
- Prevent people from seeking health care immediately
- Discourage them from adopting healthy behaviours

15-18+ years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	<p>Challenging stigma and discrimination to promote inclusion, non discrimination and diversity</p> <p>Adopting a human rights approach is in the best interests of public health and is key to eradicating stigma and discrimination</p>	<p>Dealing with stigma (Example)</p> <p>INDIVIDUAL/PERSON LIVING WITH HIV Do any of these sounds familiar to you?²⁴</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“I don’t tell people I have HIV because I don’t want them to judge me.”</i> • <i>“I was told that people living with HIV should not have children. Because I have HIV, I was sterilized.”</i> • <i>“They kept me out of the kitchen and stopped talking to me because I have HIV.”</i> • <i>“I know I got this through sex. I feel really ashamed having a sexual disease and am no longer interested in having sex.”</i> • <i>“No one could really want to be with someone who has HIV.”</i> <p>These are examples of stigma and discrimination that are experienced with many women living with HIV.</p> <p>DEALING WITH HIV STIGMA There are two main ways of dealing with HIV stigma ²⁵.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking about HIV to normalize the subject • Taking action to lead with supporting behaviour in everyday life.

LONG-TERM COMMITMENTS AND PARENTING

9-12 years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	<p>There are different family structures and concepts of marriage</p>	<p>What is a family?²⁶</p> <p>A group of people who share a legal bond or a blood bond is a family.</p> <p>Legal Bonds: Families are legally bound through marriages, adoptions, and guardianships, including the rights, duties, and obligations of those legal contracts. Legal bonds can be changed, expanded, or dissolved to change the composition of a family.</p> <p>Blood Bonds: Individuals who are directly related through a common ancestor are part of a family. This includes both close and distant relatives such as siblings, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins. Researching a family tree or genealogical records can reveal familial blood bonds.</p>
	<p>Child, early and forced marriages (CEFM) are harmful and illegal in the majority of countries</p> <p>Long-term commitments, marriage and parenting vary and are shaped by society, religion, culture and laws</p> <p>Culture and gender roles impact parenting</p>	<p>Child, early and forced marriages and unions (CEFMU)</p> <p>DEFINITION²⁷: A child marriage is a marriage where at least one of the parties is under 18 years of age.</p> <p>Forced marriages are marriages in which one and/or both parties have not personally expressed their full and free consent and willingness to the union.</p> <p>A child marriage is considered to be a form of forced marriage, given that one and/or both parties have not expressed full, free and informed consent. It is thus a human rights violation that robs a girl /boy of their childhood and education and limits their possibilities for growth and stability.</p>

<p>9-12 years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Child, early and forced marriages (CEFM) are harmful and illegal in the majority of countries</p> <p>Long-term commitments, marriage and parenting vary and are shaped by society, religion, culture and laws</p> <p>Culture and gender roles impact parenting</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Child marriages also comes with a huge number of health risks, including increased risk of violence, abuse, rape, and sexual assault, early pregnancy, and a high risk of maternal mortality and morbidity</p> <p>To protect our young girls and boys from child marriages, there is need for a concerted effort from the household, family and society at large to speak out against such actions.</p> <p> See the link below for detailed explanations. https://www.unfpa.org/child-marriage-frequently-asked-questions</p>
<p>12-15 years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>There are many responsibilities that come with marriage and long-term commitments</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Responsibility of long – term relationships</p> <p>PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY ²⁸</p> <p>All mothers and fathers have legal rights and responsibilities as a parent - known as 'parental responsibility'. These responsibilities include to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a home for the child • Protect and maintain the child • Choosing and providing for the child's education, medical treatment and ensure financial support • Naming the child and agreeing to any change of name • Looking after the child's property
<p>15-18+ years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>It is the right of children to have their needs fulfilled by parents/ guardians</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>The Convention on the Rights of the Child²⁹ protects every child. There are many factors that influence if, why, and when people decide to have children. However each child has a right to having the following needs fulfilled.</p> <p>Key needs of a child</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Security 2 Stability 3 Consistency 4 Emotional support 5 Love 6 Education 7 Positive role models 8 Structure. <p> For detailed explanations see the link below https://www.childrenscolorado.org/conditions-and-advice/parenting/parenting-articles/what-children-need/</p>

VALUES, RIGHTS, CULTURE AND SEXUALITY

VALUES AND SEXUALITY

9-12
years

Key Learning Idea

Values are strong beliefs held by individuals, families and communities about important issues

Content

What is a value?³⁰

Values are basic and fundamental beliefs that guide or motivate attitudes or actions. They help us to determine what is important to us, describe the personal qualities we choose to embody to guide our actions individually as well as the manner in which we treat others and ourselves.

What one person values may not be what another person values even in the same situation.

Examples of values: Honesty, kindness, compassion, respect, and personal responsibility.

IN RELATION TO SEXUAL HEALTH, WE HAVE RIGHTS³¹ THAT INCLUDE:

- ✔ *The right to equality and non-discrimination*
- ✔ *The right to life, liberty and security of the person*
- ✔ *The right to autonomy and bodily integrity*
- ✔ *The right to be free from torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment*
- ✔ *The right to be free from all forms of violence and coercion*
- ✔ *The right to privacy*
- ✔ *The right to the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual health; with the possibility of pleasurable, satisfying, and safe sexual experiences*
- ✔ *The right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its application*
- ✔ *The right to information*
- ✔ *The right to education and the right to comprehensive sexuality education*
- ✔ *The right to enter, form, and dissolve marriage and similar types of relationships based on equality and full and free consent*
- ✔ *The right to decide whether to have children, the number and spacing of children, and to have the information and the means to do so*
- ✔ *The right to the freedom of thought, opinion, and expression*
- ✔ *The right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly*
- ✔ *The right to access to justice, remedies, and redress*

9-12 years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Values and attitudes imparted to us by families and communities are sources of what we learn about sex and sexuality, and influence our personal behaviour and decision-making</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>One's sexuality is a natural drive attained from birth. However your family, your culture, your religious background, the media, and your peers could shape your attitudes towards sex. As you become an adult, your own experiences further influence your sexuality³².</p> <p>Our attitudes develop over time and not only reflect where we have come from i.e. the influence family, friends and experiences have had on our attitudes, but also how we will proceed with our life in the future. Attitudes are therefore a powerful element in our life, are long enduring and hard to change—BUT NOT IMPOSSIBLE!</p>
12-15 years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>It is important to know one's own values, beliefs and attitudes, how they impact on the rights of others and how to stand up for them</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Values, beliefs and attitudes are important for oneself and others. Thus...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to accept and respect that other people may well have different attitudes, values and beliefs than you. • We do not have the right to expect that others change their values, attitudes and beliefs just because they are different to ours. • It is important that you develop an awareness of what you value, as these values will be important in informing your relationships with • Everyone is entitled to his or her own values, attitudes and beliefs.
15-18+ years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>It is important to know one's own values, beliefs and attitudes, in order to adopt sexual behaviours that are consistent with them</p> <p>As children grow up, they develop their own values which may differ from their parents/ guardians</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>In everyday life values drive our actions and they motivate our goals. Our goals help us establish our priorities in life, guide our decision-making, and affect our evaluation/ assessments of our success and happiness in sexual life.</p> <p>Society/cultures vary in regard to norms on how they understand and perceive sexuality, how they understand the relationship between gender and sexuality, and how they interpret and/or perceive particular sexual behaviours (such as masturbation, premarital sex, homosexuality, the age of sexual consent, etc.). For example societies that value monogamy are likely to oppose extramarital sex³³.</p> <p>Society's views on sexuality are continuously evolving. Historically, religion has been the greatest influence on sexual behaviour; however, in more recent years, peers and the media are two of the strongest influences, particularly among adolescents and young people.</p>

HUMAN RIGHTS AND SEXUALITY

**9-12
years**

Key Learning Idea

Everyone has human rights

Content

Human rights³⁴ are rights we have simply because we exist as human beings - they are not granted by any state. They are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world, from birth until death regardless of where you are from, what you believe or how you choose to live your life.

These basic rights are based on shared values like dignity, fairness, equality, respect and independence.

Some examples of human rights include:

- ✓ *The right to life*
- ✓ *The right to liberty and freedom*
- ✓ *The right to the pursuit of happiness*
- ✓ *The right to live your life free of discrimination*
- ✓ *The right to control what happens to your own body and to make medical decisions for yourself*
- ✓ *The right to freely exercise your religion and practice your religious beliefs without fear of being prosecuted for your beliefs*
- ✓ *The right to be free from prejudice on the basis of ethnicity, gender, national origin, colour, age or sex*
- ✓ *The right to grow old*
- ✓ *The right to a fair trial and due process of the law*
- ✓ *The right to be free from cruel and unusual punishment*
- ✓ *The right to be free from torture*
- ✓ *The right to be free from slavery*
- ✓ *The right to freedom of speech*
- ✓ *The right to freely associate with whomever you like and to join groups of which you'd like to be a part.*
- ✓ *The right to freedom of thought*
- ✓ *The right not to be prosecuted from your thoughts*

<p>9-12 years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>It's important to know your rights and that human rights are outlined in national laws and international agreements</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>The Universal Declaration of Human Rights</p> <p>The atrocities of the Second World War made the protection of human rights an international priority. The United Nations was founded in 1945. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948.</p> <p>The European Convention on Human Rights</p> <p>The Universal Declaration of Human Rights formed the basis for the European Convention on Human Rights, adopted in 1950. It protects the human rights of people in countries that belong to the Council of Europe.</p> <p>Protocol to The African Charter On Human and Peoples' Rights on The Rights of Women in Africa³⁵</p> <p>"This is an international human rights instrument established by the African Union that went into effect in 2005. It guarantees comprehensive rights to women including the right to take part in the political process, to social and political equality with men, improved autonomy in their reproductive health decisions, and an end to female genital mutilation. It was adopted by the African Union in Maputo, Mozambique in 2003 in the form of a protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (adopted in 1981, enacted in 1986)"³⁶.</p>						
<p>12-15 years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Everyone's human rights include rights that impact their sexual and reproductive health</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Good sexual and reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being in all matters relating to the reproductive system. It implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life, the capability to reproduce, and the freedom to decide if, when, and how often to do so³⁷.</p> <p>To maintain one's sexual and reproductive health, adolescents have a right to access accurate information. They also have a right to a safe, effective, affordable and acceptable contraception method of their choice. They must be informed and empowered to protect themselves from sexually transmitted infections.</p> <p>Every adolescent has the right to make their own choices about their sexual and reproductive health.</p>						
<p>15-18+ years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>There are local and/or national laws and international agreements that address human rights that impact sexual and reproductive health</p> <p>It's important to know and promote human rights that impact sexual and reproductive health</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Women sexual and reproductive health is related to multiple human rights that include:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="496 1630 1441 1753"> <tbody> <tr> <td>The right to life</td> <td>The right to privacy</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The right to be free from torture</td> <td>The right to education and</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The right to health</td> <td>The prohibition of discrimination³⁸ .</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>According to the United Nations (UN) Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), it is clearly indicated that women's right to health includes their sexual and reproductive health³⁹. Therefore each state has an obligation to protect and fulfil rights related to women's sexual and reproductive health.</p>	The right to life	The right to privacy	The right to be free from torture	The right to education and	The right to health	The prohibition of discrimination ³⁸ .
The right to life	The right to privacy							
The right to be free from torture	The right to education and							
The right to health	The prohibition of discrimination ³⁸ .							

15-18+
years

Key Learning Idea

There are local and/or national laws and international agreements that address human rights that impact sexual and reproductive health

It's important to know and promote human rights that impact sexual and reproductive health

Content

The right to health⁴⁰ maintains that women are entitled to reproductive health care services, and goods and facilities that are⁴¹ :

- Available in adequate numbers;
- Accessible physically and economically;
- Accessible without discrimination; and
- of good quality (see report A/61/338).

Even though the right to health is an obligation, there exists violations of women's sexual and reproductive health that include⁴² :

- denial of access to services that only women require;
- poor quality services;
- subjecting women's access to services to third party authorization;
- forced sterilization, forced virginity examinations, and forced abortion, without women's prior consent;
- female genital mutilation (FGM); and
- early marriage.

The United Nations through several committees outline different standards of human rights that are related to women. These include:

"CEDAW (article 16) guarantees women equal rights in deciding "freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights."

CEDAW (article 10) also specifies that women's right to education includes "access to specific educational information to help to ensure the health and well-being of families, including information and advice on family planning."

The Beijing Platform for Action states that "the human rights of women include their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence."

The CEDAW Committee's General Recommendation 24 recommends that States prioritise the "prevention of unwanted pregnancy through family planning and sex education."

The CESCR General Comment 14 has explained that the provision of maternal health services is comparable to a core obligation which cannot be derogated from under any circumstances, and the States have to the immediate obligation to take deliberate, concrete, and targeted steps towards fulfilling the right to health in the context of pregnancy and childbirth.

The CESCR General Comment 22 recommends States "to repeal or eliminate laws, policies and practices that criminalize, obstruct or undermine access by individuals or a particular group to sexual and reproductive health facilities, services, goods and information."

Human rights standards in this area are summarized in the OHCHR information series on sexual and reproductive health and rights.⁴³

15-18+ years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	<p>There are local and/or national laws and international agreements that address human rights that impact sexual and reproductive health</p> <p>It's important to know and promote human rights that impact sexual and reproductive health</p>	<p>Controversial Human Rights⁴⁴</p> <p>There are some human rights that are contested and seen from some groups of people to be very controversial. Some of these controversial rights are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right to reproductive freedom including the right to choose abortion⁴⁵ • The right to be free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation⁴⁶, including the right to marry a person of the same sex <p>Different societies have different ideas on what fundamental human rights are and the government protections extended to protect basic human rights are a reflection of the widespread cultures and ideals of the society as a whole.</p>

CULTURE, SOCIETY AND SEXUALITY

9-12 years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	<p>There are many sources of information that help us learn about ourselves, our feelings and our bodies</p>	<p>One of the earliest sources of information that help adolescents and young people learn about their body and feelings is the family, household and society norms that they grow up with.</p>
	<p>Culture, religion and society influence our understanding of sexuality</p>	<p>If you were raised in a place where most people, for religious or cultural reasons, feel that sex is bad or to be feared, this may lead an adolescent to suppress their own sexual exploration. This is also applicable in cultures or family that have strict definitions of how a woman/female should express her sexuality⁴⁷.</p>
12-15 years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	<p>Social, cultural and religious factors influence what is considered acceptable and unacceptable sexual behaviour in society, and these factors evolve over time</p>	<p>Your sexuality is a natural drive that's with you from birth, but your family, your culture, your religious background, the media, and your peers shape your attitudes toward sex. As you become an adult, your own experiences further influence your sexuality. The result for many is a healthy enjoyment of sex, but others may have more mixed feelings⁴⁸.</p>
15-18+ years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	<p>It is important to be aware of how social and cultural norms impact sexual behaviour while developing one's own point of view</p>	<p>Social and cultural norms that adolescents and young people are exposed to during childhood could make discussions around sexual matters embarrassing. As such expressions of sexuality by adolescents and young persons could be limited. For example, there is uneasiness about discussing ways to maximize sexual pleasure and this could prevent some young boys and girls from developing techniques that could offer greater pleasure. Others may even avoid such discussion in totality.</p>

UNDERSTANDING GENDER

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER AND GENDER NORMS

9-12 years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	<p>It is important to understand the difference between biological sex and gender</p> <p>Families, individuals, peers and communities are sources of information about sex and gender</p>	<p>Sex⁴⁹ refers to a set of biological attributes in humans and animals. It is primarily associated with physical and physiological features including chromosomes, gene expression, hormone levels and function, and reproductive/sexual anatomy. Sex is usually categorized as female or male but there is variation in the biological attributes that comprise sex and how those attributes are expressed.</p> <p>Gender⁵⁰ refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, expressions and identities of girls, women, boys, men, and gender diverse people. It influences how people perceive themselves and each other, how they act and interact, and the distribution of power and resources in society. Gender identity is not confined to a binary (girl/woman, boy/man) nor is it static; it exists along a continuum and can change over time. There is considerable diversity in how individuals and groups understand, experience and express gender through the roles they take on, the expectations placed on them, relations with others and the complex ways that gender is institutionalized in society.</p> <p>Although parents and friends are identified as the most common sources of sexual information, the mass media is also recognized as an important contributor to sexual knowledge. Some sources may be more influential than others and may emphasize different aspects of sexuality.</p>
12-15 years	<p>Social and cultural norms and religious beliefs are some of the factors which influence gender roles</p> <p>The way that individuals think of themselves, or describe themselves to others in terms of their gender, is unique to them and should be respected</p>	<p>Gender roles in society means how we're expected to act, speak, dress, groom, and conduct ourselves based upon our assigned sex. For example, girls and women are generally expected to dress in typically feminine ways and be polite, accommodating, and nurturing.</p> <p>Every society, ethnic group, and culture has gender role expectations, but they can be very different from group to group. They can also change in the same society over time.</p>
	<p>Gender roles and gender norms influence people's lives</p>	<p>Learning plays a role in this process of shaping gender roles⁵¹. These gender schemas are deeply embedded cognitive frameworks regarding what defines masculine and feminine. In other words, learning gender roles always occurs within a social context, the values of the parents and society being passed along to the children of successive generations.</p> <p>Gender roles adopted during childhood normally continue into adulthood. At home, people have certain presumptions about decision-making, child-rearing practices, financial responsibilities, and so forth. At work, people also have presumptions about power, the division of labour, and organizational structures. None of this is meant to imply that gender roles, in and of themselves, are good or bad; they merely exist. Gender roles are realities in almost everyone's life.</p>

12-15 years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Romantic relationships can be negatively affected by gender roles and gender stereotypes</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Gender stereotypes are simplistic generalizations about the gender attributes, differences, and roles of individuals and/or groups. Stereotypes can be positive or negative, but they rarely communicate accurate information about others. When people automatically apply gender assumptions to others regardless of evidence to the contrary, they are perpetuating gender stereotyping. Many people recognize the dangers of gender stereotyping; yet continue to make these types of generalizations.</p> <p>The female stereotypic role is to marry and have children. She is also to put her family's welfare before her own; be loving, compassionate, caring, nurturing, and sympathetic; and find time to be sexy and feel beautiful. This would bring conflict if a women wishes not to marry or have children</p> <p>The male stereotypic role is to be the financial provider. He is also to be assertive, competitive, independent, courageous, and career-focused; hold his emotions in check; and always initiate sex. If the contrary happens, let us say a man is financially incapable of providing for his family, then he may feel unworthy.</p>
15-18+ years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>It is important to challenge one's own and others' gender biases</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Gender stereotypes⁵² can prove harmful; they can stifle individual expression and creativity, as well as hinder personal and professional growth.</p> <p>The weight of scientific evidence demonstrates that children learn gender stereotypes from adults. As with gender roles, socializing agents—parents, teachers, peers, religious leaders, and the media—pass along gender stereotypes from one generation to the next.</p> <p>One approach to re-examining conventional gender roles and stereotypes is androgyny, which is the blending of feminine and masculine attributes in the same individual. The androgyny, or androgynous person, does not neatly fit into a female or male gender role; she or he can comfortably express the qualities of both genders. Parents and other socializing agents can teach their children to be androgynous, just as they can teach them to be gender-biased.</p>
	<p>Homophobia and trans phobia are harmful to people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity</p>	<p>Violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation⁵³ is one of the ways in which sexual stigma is expressed.</p> <p>Sexual stigma based on perceived sexual orientation emerges from a society's shared belief system in which homosexuality is denigrated and discredited as invalid relative to heterosexuality.</p> <p>Stigma based on gender identity works along the same lines of a gendered society in which only two gender possibilities, masculine or feminine, are perceived as valid.</p> <p>This stigma is incorporated by a society and enacted by its institutions. In many countries, for example, laws criminalize sexual and gender minorities directly or indirectly on the grounds of morality or promotion of non-traditional values. This can result in physical punishment, death penalty, arbitrary arrest and torture, ill treatment in health facilities and forced sterilization.</p> <p>Discriminatory health policies have also resulted in unnecessary gender-conformation operations in intersex babies. Individuals identified as sexual and gender minorities and may internalize the negative attitudes and values of society. This internalized homophobia or trans phobia has detrimental effects on their mental health and might result in self-harm or violence among individuals.</p>

GENDER EQUALITY, STEREOTYPES AND BIAS

9-12 years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Gender inequalities and differences in power exist in families, friendships, relationships, communities and society</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Gender inequality refers to unequal treatment or perceptions of individuals based on their gender. It arises from differences in socially constructed gender roles.</p>
12-15 years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Gender stereotypes and bias impact how men, women, and people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity are treated and the choices they can make</p> <p>Stereotypes about gender can lead to bias and inequality</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Gender relations are power relations⁵⁴. Many usually perceive that to be a 'woman' is to be powerless (quiet, obedient, accommodating). A 'real man', by contrast, is powerful (outspoken, in control, able to impose his will), particularly in relation to women. These are basically stereotypes against young boys and girls that limit their exploration of possible human opportunities.</p> <p>Example of wrongful gender stereotyping are the failure to criminalize marital rape based on societal perception of women as the sexual property of men, and the failure to effectively investigate, prosecute and sentence sexual violence against women based on, e.g., the stereotype that women should protect themselves from sexual violence by dressing and behaving modestly.</p>
15-18+ years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Gender inequality, social norms and power differences influence sexual behaviour and may increase the risk of sexual coercion, abuse and GBV</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Gender stereotypes⁵⁵ compounded and intersecting with other stereotypes have a disproportionate negative impact on certain groups of women, such as women from minority or Indigenous groups, women with disabilities, women from lower caste groups or with lower economic status, and migrant women. Wrongful gender stereotyping is a discrimination towards young girls and women and a contributing factor in violations of a vast array of rights such as the right to health, adequate standard of living, education, marriage and family relations, work, freedom of expression, freedom of movement, political participation and representation, effective remedy, and freedom from gender-based violence.</p> <p>NORMS SUPPORTING HARMFUL PRACTICES⁵⁶</p> <p>Female genital mutilation (FGM), sex selection, child marriage, honour killings and widowhood rituals are harmful cultural practices supported by various social norms and beliefs. According to the world health organization, FGM is a traditional harmful practice that involves the partial or total removal of external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs for non-medical reasons⁵⁷. Female genital mutilation can lead to immediate health risks as well as long term complications to women's physical, mental and sexual health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Immediate complications include: - severe pain, excessive bleeding (haemorrhage), genital tissue swelling, fever, infections e.g., tetanus, urinary problems, wound healing problems, injury to surrounding genital tissue, shock and even death.</p> <p>Long term complications include: - urinary problems (painful urination, urinary tract infections); vaginal problems (discharge, itching, bacterial vaginosis and other infections); menstrual problems (painful menstruations, difficulty in passing menstrual blood, etc.); scar tissue and keloid; sexual problems (pain during intercourse, decreased satisfaction, etc.); increased risk of childbirth complications (difficult delivery, excessive bleeding, caesarean section, need to resuscitate the</p>

15-18+
years

Key Learning Idea

Gender inequality, social norms and power differences influence sexual behaviour and may increase the risk of sexual coercion, abuse and GBV

Content

baby, etc.) and newborn deaths; need for later surgeries: for example, the sealing or narrowing of the vaginal opening (Type 3) may lead to the practice of cutting open the sealed vagina later to allow for sexual intercourse and childbirth (deinfibulation). Sometimes genital tissue is stitched again several times, including after childbirth, hence the woman goes through repeated opening and closing procedures, further increasing both immediate and long-term risks; psychological problems (depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, low self-esteem, etc.);

Communities that continue to practice FGM do so because of social and cultural reasons⁵⁸, psychosexual reasons, hygiene and aesthetics reasons, religious reasons and socio-economic reasons⁵⁹. However, many countries now recognize FGM as a violation of human, child and health rights.

Types of FGM

According to WHO there are 4 classifications of FGM⁶⁰.

Type 1: this is the partial or total removal of the clitoral glans (the external and visible part of the clitoris, which is a sensitive part of the female genitals), and/or the prepuce/ clitoral hood (the fold of skin surrounding the clitoral glans).

Type 2: this is the partial or total removal of the clitoral glans and the labia minora (the inner folds of the vulva), with or without removal of the labia majora (the outer folds of skin of the vulva).

Type 3: Also known as infibulation, this is the narrowing of the vaginal opening through the creation of a covering seal. The seal is formed by cutting and repositioning the labia minora, or labia majora, sometimes through stitching, with or without removal of the clitoral prepuce/clitoral hood and glans (Type I FGM).

Type 4: This includes all other harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes, e.g. pricking, piercing, incising, scraping and cauterizing the genital area.

Deinfibulation refers to the practice of cutting open the sealed vaginal opening of a woman who has been infibulated, which is often necessary for improving health and well being as well as to allow intercourse or to facilitate childbirth."

Note: For pictorial illustration of FGM visit <http://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk/fgm/>

Sex selective abortions, infanticide and neglect of female children are manifestations of son preference typically grounded in rigid patriarchal family systems.

Honour killings involve murders, often committed by close relatives in the name of "family honour", to sanction the refusal to enter an arranged marriage, an attempt to marry outside their own social group, or having been the victim of rape.

Widows are sometimes victims of violence from in-laws and humiliating rites and isolation as part of the mourning process to demonstrate grief and innocence for their husband's death.


GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

<p>9-12 years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p>	<p>Content</p>
<p>12-15 years</p>	<p>All forms of GBV are wrong and a violation of human rights</p>	<p>Gender-Based violence⁶¹ refers to harmful acts directed at an individual based on their gender. It is rooted in gender inequality, the abuse of power and harmful norms. It is preventable and a serious violation of human rights and a life-threatening health and protection issue.</p> <p>Gender-based violence can include sexual, physical, mental and economic harm inflicted in public or in private. It also includes threats of violence, coercion and manipulation. This can take many forms such as intimate partner violence, sexual violence, child marriage, female genital mutilation and so-called 'honour crimes'⁶².</p> <p>The consequences of gender-based violence are devastating and can have life-long repercussions for survivors. It can even lead to death.</p>
<p>15-18+ years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Intimate partner violence is harmful, and support exists for those who experience it</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Domestic violence is sometimes called intimate partner violence⁶³. It includes physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, as well as sexual coercion and stalking by a current or former intimate partner. An intimate partner is a person with whom you have or had a close personal or sexual relationship.</p> <p>Rape and sexual assault</p> <p>All rape and sexual assault are serious offences and a deprivation of human rights to either a boy or girl and young man or woman. The terms rape and sexual assault are used simply to show the variation between two types of offence.</p> <p>"Rape, defined as non-consensual penetration – even if slight – of the vulva, mouth or anus, using a penis, other body part or an object."⁶⁴</p> <p>Sexual or indecent assault refers to a sexual act that causes physical, psychological and emotional that is inflicted on someone without obtaining consent from them. It can also involve forcing or manipulating someone to witness or participate in any sexual acts⁶⁵.</p> <p>It is important to note that not all cases of sexual assault involve violence, cause physical injury or leave visible marks. A sexual assault can cause severe distress, emotional harm and injuries that can't be seen with a naked eye but does take a long time to recover from.</p>

VIOLENCE AND STAYING SAFE

VIOLENCE (PLEASE REFER TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ABOVE)

CONSENT, PRIVACY AND BODILY INTEGRITY

9-12 years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>It is important to understand what unwanted sexual attention is and the need for privacy when growing up</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Unwanted sexual attention includes a wide range of behaviours from being touched without permission, causing fear, alarm or distress, sexual name-calling or harassment to rape and sexual assault. Unwanted sexual attention can happen to both girls/women and boys/men and happen between people of the same and opposite sex⁶⁶.</p>
12-15 years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Everyone has the right to privacy and bodily integrity</p> <p>Everyone has the right to be in control of what they will and will not do sexually, and should actively communicate and recognize consent from their partners</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Body autonomy is the right for a person to govern what happens to their body without external influence or coercion. A young boy or girl who knows that they are in control of their body is less likely to fall victim to sexual abuse, sexual assault and later intimate partner violence. This is because they are likely to disclose any abusive events that should happen to them (and must be referred to relevant authorities for support).</p> <p>Consent is an agreement between participants to engage in an activity, for example having sex. Consent should be clearly and freely communicated. A verbal and affirmative expression of consent can help both you and your partner to understand and respect each other's boundaries.</p>
15-18+ years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Consent is critical for healthy, pleasurable and consensual sexual behaviour with a partner</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Consent is dynamic and young boys and girls can change their mind at any time. This is achieved by clearly communicate to your partner that you are no longer comfortable with this activity and wish to stop. When it is challenging to give verbal consent, young boys and girls could use non-verbal cues to convey this. The best way to ensure that all parties are comfortable with any sexual activity is to talk about it, check in periodically, and make sure everyone involved consents before escalating or changing activities.</p> <p> Consent does NOT look like this⁶⁷:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ Refusing to acknowledge "no" ⊗ A partner who is disengaged, nonresponsive, or visibly upset ⊗ Assuming that wearing certain clothes, flirting, or kissing is an invitation for anything more ⊗ Someone being under the legal age of consent, as defined by the state ⊗ Someone being incapacitated because of drugs or alcohol ⊗ Pressuring someone into sexual activity by using fear or intimidation ⊗ Assuming you have permission to engage in a sexual act because you've done it in the past

SAFE USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICTS)

9-12 years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	Sexually explicit images and media are easily accessible through social media and can promote harmful gender stereotypes.	<p>The internet has enabled the empowerment of women and girls (and men and boys) through social media and information websites hence improving equitable access to information and knowledge and providing the skills needed to navigate and engage with the content being disseminated through various channels (print, audio, video, digital, etc.). These include health information sites (WHO, UN, UNAIDS etc), support/help line information as well as educative materials available from reputable organizations. However there also exists explicitly harmful content (e.g. pornography, misogynistic, degrading and violent material) that is easily accessible through the internet and on mobile devices, which promote gender stereotyping⁶⁸.</p>
12-15 years	The Internet, cell phones and social media can be sources of unwanted sexual attention	Unwanted Sexual Attention on the Internet, Cell Phones and Social Media⁶⁹ <p>The internet plays an essential role in the life of young peoples. It is a medium friendship and relationships are built and thrive, provide positive opportunities for communication, connection and self-expression. However, for many young people, online sexual harassment is embedded in their digital lives and to some extent normalised and expected</p>
12-15 years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	Sexually explicit media and images can be sexually arousing and potentially harmful	Example Study from South Africa⁷⁰ <p><i>“REDUCING BARRIERS TO THE SHARING OF PORNOGRAPHY:</i></p> <p><i>It is a matter of public record that in South Africa, school authorities and security agencies have had to deal with complex cases of young people recording sexual activity - consensual or abusive - and sharing these on social media platforms.</i></p> <p><i>This is partly because pornography is normalized by its availability through social networks. Although one cannot give an accurate scientific number (I was unable to collate all the entries), in the half a dozen social media groups I actively used for the experiment, one in four posts were “porn-related or suggestive of explicit unprotected sex. Sharing nudes increases the vulnerability of abuse” by older and richer men as well as syndicates.</i></p> <p><i>Social media facilitates inter-generational mating: Young girls are lured into sexual relationships by older men (and paedophiles) using social media. The phenomenon of sugar daddies is well known in South Africa and “its contribution” to the Aids epidemic cannot be underestimated since most adolescent girls and older men infect young women. The popular meeting point for these relationships is now social media.</i></p> <p><i>Another extreme of this phenomenon is the emergence of mavuso stokvels (casual sex parties where strangers have casual sex in exchange for money) and blessers (casual sexual relationships with rich men in exchange of money, expensive gifts and holidays).”</i></p>

SKILLS FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

NORMS AND PEER INFLUENCE ON SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

9-12
years

Key Learning Idea	Content
Peer influence can exist in different ways and be good or bad	<p>Peers are people who are part of the same social group i.e. friends, so the term “peer pressure” means the influence that peers can have on each other. It implies that the process influences people to do things that may be resistant to, or might not otherwise choose to do.</p> <p>Peer pressure and influence can be positive. For example, an adolescent can be influenced to become more assertive, try new activities/sports, or to get more involved with school.</p> <p>But it can be negative in that some young people and adolescents might choose to try things they normally wouldn't be interested in, like having sex, drinking alcohol, smoking or behaving in antisocial ways.</p>
Peers can influence decisions and behaviours related to adolescence and sexuality	<p>Peer pressure can have both positive and negative outcomes. For example positive peer pressure could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Friends telling you to study harder so they can get better grades. They decide it's cool to get a good grade on a test.• A group of friends all going to play a sport in order to sharpen their sporting skills instead of being idle. <p>Here is an example of negative peer pressure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have sex even though he/she doesn't want to because their partner convinces them that it is what all couples their age do.
There are ways to challenge negative peer pressure and accept and promote positive peer influences related to adolescence and sexuality	Pressure Pointers <p>Many young people have peer pressure situation at some point in their lives. It may be something as simple as resisting the pressure to insist on being bought a dress that “everybody” has. It may also mean not “being part of” your group of friends. These examples are some situations that can be opportunities to figure out what is right for you.</p> <p>Below are some tips that can help you navigate negative peer pressure and promote positive peer influence⁷¹.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen to your gut/ inner voice. If you feel uncomfortable, even if your friends seem to be accepting what's going on, it means that something about the situation is wrong for you.• Plan and mimic ahead of time possible pressure situations. Learn a few tricks.• Learn to feel comfortable saying “no.”• Hang with people who feel the same way you do.• If a situation seems dangerous, don't hesitate to get an adult's help.

9-12 years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	There are ways to challenge negative peer pressure and accept and promote positive peer influences related to adolescence and sexuality	<i>“It’s not always easy to resist negative peer pressure, but when you do, it is easy to feel good about it afterward. And you may even be a positive influence on your peers who feel the same way — often it just takes one person to speak out or take a different action to change a situation. Your friends may follow if you have the courage to do something different or refuse to go along with the group. Consider yourself a leader, and know that you have the potential to make a difference.”⁷²</i>
12-15 years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	Social and gender norms and peer influence can affect sexual decision-making and behaviour	Gender norms and values affect the lives of everyone in a society. They determine what is perceived or expected of a man and a woman as well as shape their responsibilities and behaviour in all aspects of their living. Gender norms and values vary from society to society. It is also important to note that the roles and responsibilities for men and women are not the same; they are unequal. Women are allowed to execute different types of jobs than men, they behave differently in public, have different roles in their family. In the same way, gender norms also shape our reproductive and sexual knowledge, behaviour and life. They decide whether in a society it is accepted for a girl to say ‘no’/ or reject to a man’s a sexual advance. They decide whether it is acceptable for a boy to have more than one sexual partner at the same time. Mitigating risks in sexual decision-making or behaviour is determined by your ability as a young person to have the control over your own sexual life. Whether you have control over your own sexual life, or whether someone else decides for you, can make a huge difference to your risk in getting infected with HIV or involuntarily pregnant. Gender thus has a big influence on our sexual health.
	There are strategies for challenging negative peer influences on sexual decisions and behaviour	Adolescents and young people can challenge negative peer influence (otherwise known as peer pressure) on sexual decisions and behaviour. Peer pressure resistance ⁷³ is the ability to consciously resist the desire “to go along with the crowd”. It means not taking part in undesirable/unsafe activities without feeling obliged to make explanations to peers who may have conflicting ideas and threaten you with exclusion from the group for not participating. If the group is engaging in negative influences and habits, peer pressure resistance is a very important skill for adolescents and young people. It makes a person stand up for his/her values and beliefs in the face of conflicting ideas or practices from peers. Examples of abilities in resisting peer pressure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain your own beliefs about when to become sexually active. • Refuse alcohol or drugs, even if others do not. • Decide to remain faithful to one partner, no matter what others say.

DECISION MAKING

9-12
years

Key Learning Idea

Decision-making is a skill that can be learned and practised

Content

The decision-making process⁷⁴ involves the following steps:

- 1 Define the problem.
- 2 List possible options
- 3 Analyse the alternatives
- 4 Select the best alternative
- 5 Implement the decision/ make a plan to do it
- 6 Establish a control and evaluation system

There are multiple influences on decisions, including friends, culture, gender-role stereotypes, peers and the media

Cultural norms and values, media, peer pressure, sexual orientation, and social controls such as age-of-consent laws can influence decisions about sex.

12-15
years

Key Learning Idea

The process of making decisions about sexual behaviour includes consideration of all positive and negative potential consequences

Content

Decision Making⁷⁵

It is a right of every adolescent to make the decision to engage in sexual activity with others. It is usually influenced by many social factors such as personal values, cultural beliefs, and self-esteem. Adolescents may want to have sex out of choice or it can happen in the moment. However, there are certain things one needs to consider as elaborated below.

- ② **What are my reasons for wanting to explore sexual activity?**
 - Am I okay with these reasons? There are no right or wrong reasons. It is about your own personal values, beliefs, and comfort level.
- ② **Do I feel safe with this person/people to explore sexual activity?**
- ② **Is there anything I need to know before engaging in sexual activity with others?**
 - Are there specific questions I have or information I need?
 - Am I trying to prevent pregnancy? If so, what information might I need to help me do this?
 - Do I need access to birth control options?
 - Will my sexual partner/partners respect my need to prevent pregnancy?
 - Or maybe I am not sure if the sexual activity I want to engage in will create a chance of pregnancy?
- ② **Am I trying to prevent sexually transmitted infections (STIs)?**
 - If so, what information do I need to play safe and where can I get the safer sex supplies I might need?
 - How can I communicate my desire to have safe sex?
- ② **Can I talk to my partner about the decision to be sexual?**
 - Are there specific things I want to talk to this person/people about such as what our expectations might be, what sexual activities we want to explore, our sexual histories, safe words, how to gather consent, etc.
- ② **Is the sexual activity legal in terms of age of consent? What can I do to ensure that sexual exploration is consensual?**

12-15 years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	<p>Sexual decision-making can result in possible legal consequences</p>	<p>What do I need to know about consent to sexual activity?⁷⁶</p> <p>Sexual activity includes kissing, sexual touching, and sexual intercourse (e.g., oral, anal, vaginal).</p> <p>The choice to have sex, or not, is very personal. However, many countries have laws restricting sex to above 16 years of age, as is the case in Norway and above 18 years of age as is the case in Kenya. Therefore anyone having sex with a partners aged below the mentioned ages in the respective countries has committed a crime.</p> <p>It is also important to note that adolescents of the same or similar ages (both below the legal age of consent) do often engage in sex.</p> <p>Consent means partners agree to the sexual activity and everyone understands what they're agreeing to. Partners must give and get consent every time they have sex. Therefore consent is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needed for every sexual activity • Understanding what you're saying yes to • Asking your partner if they understand what they're saying yes to • Checking in with your partner and accepting that either of you can change your mind at any time <p>People cannot give consent if they're:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High or drunk • Forced, threatened, bribed, intimidated, or offered rewards to do something sexual

COMMUNICATION, REFUSAL AND NEGOTIATION SKILLS

9-12 years	Key Learning Idea	Content				
	<p>Communication is important in all relationships including between parents/guardians or trusted adults and children, and between friends and others</p>	<p>Types of communication</p> <p>There are two main types of communication.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="496 1420 1444 1599"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="496 1420 970 1462">Verbal Communication,</th> <th data-bbox="970 1420 1444 1462">Non-Verbal Communication</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="496 1462 970 1599">Spoken or Verbal Communication, which includes face-to-face, telephone, radio or television and other media.</td> <td data-bbox="970 1462 1444 1599">Non-Verbal Communication, covering body language, gestures, how we dress or act, where we stand, and even our scent.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Verbal Communication,	Non-Verbal Communication	Spoken or Verbal Communication , which includes face-to-face, telephone, radio or television and other media.	Non-Verbal Communication , covering body language, gestures, how we dress or act, where we stand, and even our scent.
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	<p>Effective communication uses different modes and styles, and is important to expressing and understanding wishes, needs and personal boundaries</p>	<p>"Effective communication using verbal or nonverbal communication forms the essence of human relationships. It is one of the most important life skills. Simply exchanging words or ideas does not ensure good communication. Effective communication is a skill that can be learned and developed through constant practice. It involves, among others; active listening, effective use of verbal and body language, observation, and respect for others' feelings. Although good communication does not guarantee an end to problems, it can go a long way in improving relationships and minimising possibilities of conflict"⁷⁷.</p>				

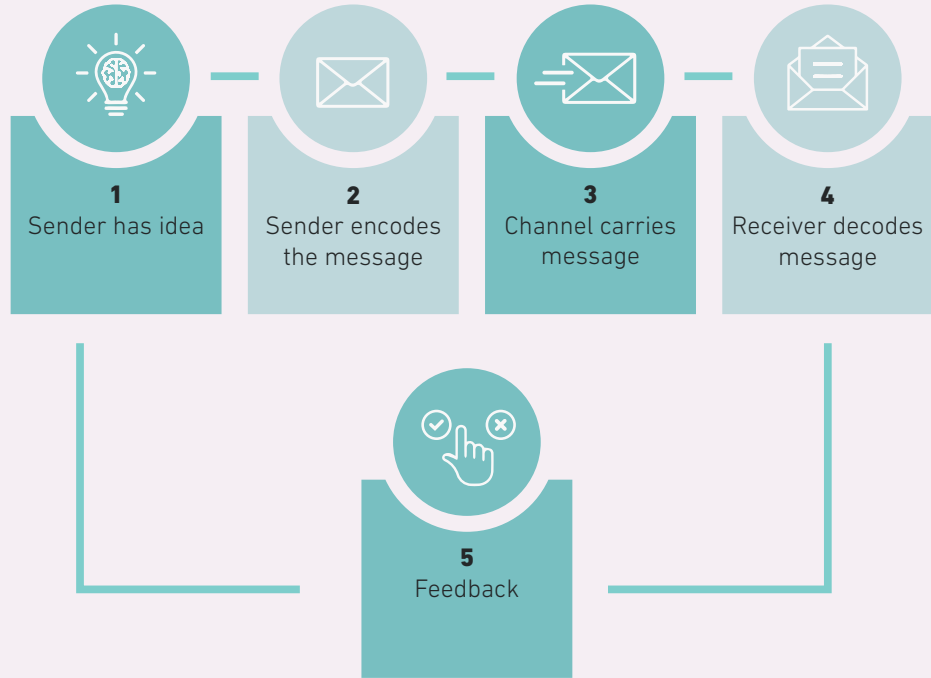
12-15
years

Key Learning Idea

Good communication is essential to personal, family, school, work and romantic relationships

Content

Good communication⁷⁸ means that what is said is relayed effectively (information, feelings and emotions) and the recipient clearly receive and understand what is relayed. It means a good communicator (effective communicator) is one able to listen to others, as well as successfully relay their own ideas and opinions. See the figure on basic communication model below



Effective communication helps us among others:

- 1 Build trust
- 2 Provide clarity
- 3 Preventing and resolving problems
- 4 Improves relationships

15-18+
years

Key Learning Idea

Effective communication is key to expressing personal needs and sexual limits

Content

Sexuality in adolescents can be a fun and fulfilling part of life⁷⁹. It is his/her right of choice whether or not you are sexually active, what kind of sexual activities you partake in, when, and with whom. In order to have fulfilling sexual experiences, it is important to effectively communicate these wants and needs and also take into account the wants and needs of others.

The following are examples of abilities in effective communication⁸⁰:

- The ability to communicate ideas skilfully and be able to persuade but not bully a partner.
- The ability to use the appropriate tone of voice in expressing anger, sadness, happiness, nervousness, respect, shame and understanding.
- The ability to use the appropriate verbal and non-verbal language in asking for and presenting information, influencing and persuading.

15-18+ years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	<p>Effective communication is key to expressing personal needs and sexual limits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to use non-verbal methods during negotiations by sustaining eye contact and using appropriate facial expressions. • The ability to use verbal hints to communicate i.e. "Yes", "I see" etc. • The ability to demonstrate active listening and to communicate empathy, understanding and interest. <p>In order to effectively communicate is usually accompanied by other life skills as follows.</p> <p>Decision-making⁸¹</p> <p>Decision-making is the ability to utilise all available information to assess a situation, analyse the advantages and disadvantages, and make an informed and personal choice. As a person grows up he/she is frequently confronted with serious choices that require his/her attention. These situations may present conflicting demands that cannot possibly be met at that same time. ("I want to have sex but I am afraid of STIs and I don't know my partner's status"). One must prioritise and make choices, but at the same time be fully aware of the possible consequences of those choices. One must learn to understand the consequences before making a decision. Examples of abilities in decision-making:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "No, I don't want to have sex" or "Yes, I do want to have sex", and understand the consequences of both decisions. • To decide on the appropriate contraceptive (condom, the pill) to use if you do have sex. • To decide to remain faithful to one partner. • To decide to avoid high-risk activities, such as drug and alcohol use. • To decide to visit a health clinic to be tested for STIs and HIV. <p>Problem solving⁸²</p> <p>Problem solving is the ability to identify, cope with and find solutions to difficult or challenging situations. Problem solving is related to decision-making and the two may often overlap. It is only through practice in making decisions and solving problems that young people can develop the skills necessary to make healthy choices for themselves</p>

THE HUMAN BODY AND DEVELOPMENT

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY

9-12 years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Women’s bodies can release eggs during the menstrual cycle, and men’s bodies may make and ejaculate sperm, both of which are needed for reproduction</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Body changes and the development of the reproductive organs</p> <p>Puberty is initiated by hormonal signals from the brain to the gonads: the ovaries in a girl, the testes in a boy. In response to these signals, the gonads produce hormones that stimulate libido and the growth, function, and transformation in his/her body including sexual organs. The major landmark of puberty for males is the first ejaculation, which occurs about age 13. For females, it is the onset of menstruation, which occurs on average between ages 12 and 13.</p>
12-15 years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>During puberty and pregnancy, hormones impact many processes involved with maturation and reproduction</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Hormones⁸³ are responsible for human reproduction, sexual development and controlling the menstruation cycle. Some key hormones in the human body include:</p> <p>Sex hormones are responsible for driving sexual development (puberty). The reproductive hormones are oestrogen and testosterone. Oestrogen causes eggs to mature in ovaries once a girl hits puberty. These are then released at regular intervals during the menstrual cycle. Testosterone stimulates sperm production in males.</p> <p>Other hormones involved in the menstrual cycle include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follicle stimulating hormone (FSH), causing maturation of an egg in the ovary. • Luteinising hormone (LH) stimulating the release of the egg. • Oestrogen and progesterone are involved in maintaining the uterus lining.
12-15 years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>All cultures have different ways of understanding sex, gender and reproduction, and when it is appropriate to become sexually active</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>All cultures have different ways of understanding sex, gender and reproduction, and when it is appropriate to become sexually active. These definitions are dependent on how societies understand the concepts of sex, gender and sexuality, and reproduction.</p> <p>Defining Sex, Gender, and Sexuality⁸⁴</p> <p>Sex refers to biological characteristics, while gender is socially determined based on those characteristics.</p> <p>Points to remember</p> <p>A person’s sex, as determined by their biology, does not always correspond with their gender. Therefore, the terms “sex” and “gender” are not interchangeable.</p> <p>“Sex” refers to physical or physiological differences between male, female, and intersex bodies, including both primary sex characteristics (the reproductive system) and secondary sex characteristics (such as breasts and facial hair).</p>

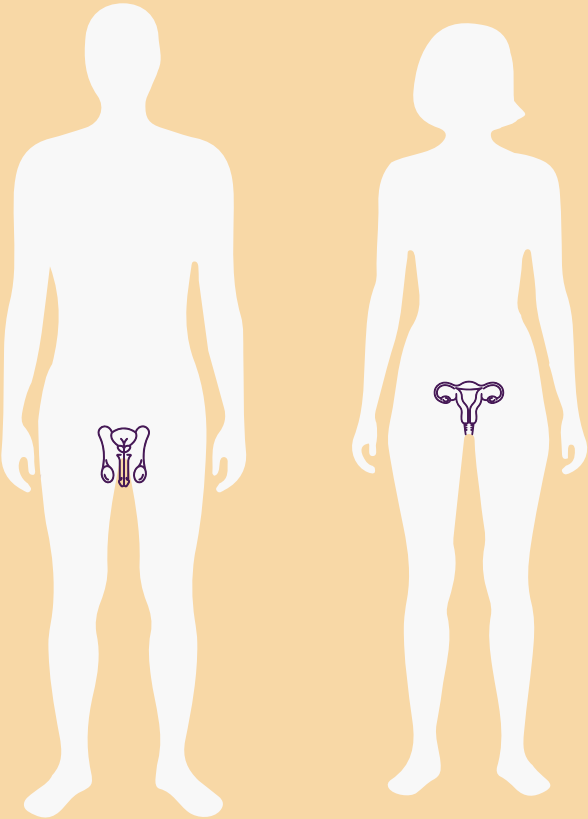
<p>12-15 years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>All cultures have different ways of understanding sex, gender and reproduction, and when it is appropriate to become sexually active</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>“Gender” is a term that refers to social or cultural distinctions associated with a given sex; it is generally considered to be a socially constructed concept. “ Gender identity” is the extent to which one identifies with their sex assigned at birth. In many Western cultures, individuals who identify with a role that is different from their biological sex are called transgender.</p> <p>“Human sexuality” refers to people’s sexual interest in and attraction to others, as well as their capacity to have erotic experiences and responses.</p>
<p>15-18+ years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Men’s and women’s bodies change over time, including their reproductive and sexual capacities and functions</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Female body changes during puberty</p> <p>During puberty, the following changes occur in females’ bodies and reproductive organs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hips widen up in a circular shape • Increase in height and weight gain • Breasts start growing • The labia thicken, the clitoris starts to grow and reaches its final size around the age of 18 • Hair starts to grow around reproductive organs and in the armpits • The uterus increases in size • Voice starts to change • Ovaries grow and start producing ovum • The wall of the uterus becomes ready to host the foetus • Face may develop pimples • Monthly menstrual flow begins (Note: If a girl has unprotected sex at the young adolescents’ stage, she might become pregnant. Girls may become pregnant before they even begin to see their first menstruation.) • Sexual feelings – excitement when touching our private parts <p>Male body changes during puberty</p> <p>During the young adolescence stage, the following changes occur in males’ bodies and reproductive organs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice starts to change • Face develops pimples • Increase in height and weight gain

15-18+ years	Key Learning Idea
	Men's and women's bodies change over time, including their reproductive and sexual capacities and functions

Content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoulders and chest widen up • Hair starts to grow around reproductive organs and in the armpits, beard starts to grow • Penis and testicles start to grow • Sperm starts being produced • Sexual arousal/feelings – excitement when touching our private parts • Wet dreams can occur

REPRODUCTION

9-12 years	Key Learning Idea
	A pregnancy begins when an egg and sperm unite and implant in the uterus

Content
<p>Human Reproduction</p> <p>Pregnancy is when an egg cell from a woman and a sperm cell from a man unite and develop to form a baby. Ovulation is when a woman's ovary releases an egg cell. A fertilized egg is implanted in the uterus and grows into the unborn baby. A number of organs and structures in both the woman and the man are needed in order for this process to occur. These are called the reproductive organs and genitals.</p>


Key Learning Idea	Content
<p>Pregnancy generally lasts for 40 weeks and a woman's body undergoes many changes during the span of a pregnancy</p>	<p>Pregnancy⁸⁵ lasts about 40 weeks, counting from the first day of your last normal period. The woman's body undergoes many changes that may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extreme tiredness • Tender, swollen breasts. Your nipples might also stick out. • Upset stomach with or without throwing up (morning sickness) • Cravings or distaste for certain foods • Mood swings • Constipation (trouble having bowel movements) • Need to pass urine more often • Headache • Heartburn • Weight gain or loss • Body aches, such as back, abdomen, groin, or thigh pain • Stretch marks on your abdomen, breasts, thighs, or buttocks • Darkening of the skin around your nipples • A line on the skin running from belly button to pubic hairline • Patches of darker skin, usually over the cheeks, forehead, nose, or upper lip. Patches often match on both sides of the face. This is sometimes called the mask of pregnancy. • Numb or tingling hands, called carpal tunnel syndrome <p>Health threatening signs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Itching on the abdomen, palms, and soles of the feet. (See a doctor if you have nausea, loss of appetite, vomiting, jaundice or fatigue combined with itching. These can be signs of a serious liver problem.) <p>Swelling of the ankles, fingers, and face. (If you notice any sudden or extreme swelling or if you gain a lot of weight really quickly, see a doctor right away. This could be a sign of preeclampsia.)</p>
<p>In order for a pregnancy to begin, criteria must be just right for sperm to join with an egg and implant in the uterus</p>	<p>Conception occurs when a sperm cell from a fertile man swims up through the vagina and into the uterus of a woman and joins with the woman's egg cell as it travels down one of the fallopian tubes from the ovary to the uterus.</p>

Key Learning Idea

The menstrual cycle has different stages, including the time around ovulation in which, if sperm are present, pregnancy is most able to occur

Content

Menstruation and Pregnancy: Menstruation is a normal, healthy part of a woman's life. When it happens, it means that a girl is biologically able to get pregnant. It does not mean that she is automatically mature enough to have sexual intercourse or to become a mother.

The menstruation cycle⁸⁶**Days 1-5:**

Menstruation (period): The lining of the womb together with an unfertilized egg leave the body in form of blood fluids and tissue lining through the vagina. The bleeding can last from 2-8 days, on average 4-6 days. The length of each period, as well as the amount of bleeding, varies from woman to woman.

Days 5-7:

Every month, one egg grows and matures in the ovary.

Days 7-11:

The lining of the womb starts to build up and makes its inside wall thick like a nest and ready to house a baby. (The lining continues to thicken until about day 21)

Days 11-14:

When the egg is ready, it leaves the ovary. This moment is called ovulation.

Days 14-21:

The egg moves through the fallopian tube into the womb.

Days 21-28:

The egg can only survive for about 24 hours in the fallopian tube after the ovulation. Menstruation occurs when a sperm following sexual intercourse does not fertilize the egg. If the egg reaches the womb and is not fertilized, the lining of the womb begins to dissolve.

And then it starts all over again. The length of one menstrual cycle is the interval from the beginning of one monthly menstruation to the beginning of the next one. It is usually 28 days long, but it can vary between 21 and 35 days.

There are common signs of pregnancy, which should be confirmed through a pregnancy test that can be taken as soon as the menstrual period is missed or late

Common Signs of Pregnancy

- 1 A missed period
- 2 Frequent urination
- 3 Swollen or tender breasts
- 4 Fatigue
- 5 Nausea, with or without vomiting
- 6 Light spotting and cramping
- 7 Bloating
- 8 Mood swings
- 9 Constipation
- 10 Food aversions and sensitivity to smell

<p>12-15 years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>There are differences between reproductive functions and sexual feelings and these can change over time</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>The female reproductive system is designed to carry out several functions. It produces the female egg cells necessary for reproduction, called the ova or oocytes. The system is designed to transport the ova to the site of fertilization. Conception, the fertilization of an egg by a sperm, normally occurs in the fallopian tubes. The next step for the fertilized egg is to implant into the walls of the uterus, beginning the initial stages of pregnancy. If fertilization and/or implantation does not take place, the system is designed to menstruate (the monthly shedding of the uterine lining). In addition, the female reproductive system produces female sex hormones that maintain the reproductive cycle</p>
<p>15-18+ years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Not everyone is fertile and there are ways of trying to address infertility for those who would like to conceive</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Infertility⁸⁷ is defined as not being able to get pregnant despite having frequent, unprotected sex for at least a year for most couples. Infertility may result from an issue with either you or your partner, or a combination of factors that prevent pregnancy. Infertility occurs within many men and women. At times the cause is not known. In women however, the most frequent reasons are the blockage of the uterus, disruption of the ovulation, or a problem at the uterus entry. For the man, the reason for sterility could be the inability to produce enough sperm count. Because infertility can also be caused by STIs, it is important to prevent infections also with view to reproduction.</p> <p>Treatment</p> <p>Infertility treatment depends on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's causing the infertility • How long you've been infertile • Your age and your partner's age • Personal preferences <p>Some causes of infertility can't be corrected.</p> <p>In cases where spontaneous pregnancy doesn't happen, couples can often still achieve a pregnancy through use of assisted reproductive technology. Infertility treatment may involve significant financial, physical, psychological and time commitments.</p> <p><i>Sexual and reproductive rights⁸⁸ are human rights that are recognised in existing international and regional human rights documents – for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right to equality and non-discrimination; • The right to be free from torture or cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment; • The right to privacy; • The right to the highest attainable standard of health • The right to marry and to found a family and enter into marriage with free and full consent of the intending spouses, and to equality in and at the dissolution of marriage

15-18+ years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	Not everyone is fertile and there are ways of trying to address infertility for those who would like to conceive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right to decide the number and spacing of one's children; • The right to information and education; • The right to freedom of opinion and expression; and • The right to an effective remedy for violations of fundamental rights.

PUBERTY

9-12 years	Key Learning Idea	Content														
	Puberty is a time of physical and emotional change that happens as children grow and mature	<p>Puberty, in human physiology, the stage or period of life when a child transforms into an adult normally capable of procreation.</p> <p>All body changes vary from person to person either in early or late puberty</p>														
	Puberty signals changes in a person's reproductive capability	<p>In puberty⁸⁹ both girls and boys experience a swift increase in body size, a change in shape and composition of the body, and a rapid development of the reproductive organs and other characteristics marking sexual maturity.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>In a girl</th> <th>In boys</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>The nipples start to enlarge, and a few months later the breast tissue begins to grow.</td> <td>Accelerated growth of the testes and scrotum, and penile growth.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A few pubic hairs develop, and she enters into a period of relatively rapid growth.</td> <td>The first pubic hair may appear.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The ovaries begin producing oestrogen, causing fat deposits to develop on the hips and thighs, and the slim, angular girl moves steadily toward a more rounded female contour.</td> <td>The voice changes in pitch because of the enlargement of the larynx and lengthening of the vocal cords, initiated by action of the male hormone testosterone.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The first menstrual period usually occurring about two or more years after the entire puberty process is under way.</td> <td>Hair begins to appear on the armpits and face, and there may soon appear hair on the chest and other parts of the body</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Boy's height increases rapidly</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Ejaculation of seminal fluid</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Numerous factors may retard maturation or prevent normal growth, including hormonal disorders, metabolic defects, hereditary conditions, and inadequate nutrition.</p>	In a girl	In boys	The nipples start to enlarge, and a few months later the breast tissue begins to grow.	Accelerated growth of the testes and scrotum, and penile growth.	A few pubic hairs develop, and she enters into a period of relatively rapid growth.	The first pubic hair may appear.	The ovaries begin producing oestrogen, causing fat deposits to develop on the hips and thighs, and the slim, angular girl moves steadily toward a more rounded female contour.	The voice changes in pitch because of the enlargement of the larynx and lengthening of the vocal cords, initiated by action of the male hormone testosterone.	The first menstrual period usually occurring about two or more years after the entire puberty process is under way.	Hair begins to appear on the armpits and face, and there may soon appear hair on the chest and other parts of the body		Boy's height increases rapidly		Ejaculation of seminal fluid
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	During puberty, hygiene is important to keep one's sexual and reproductive anatomy clean and healthy	<p>Adolescence is a stage where growth happens very fast. With this time, especially with the start of puberty the body is very active, involving hormones and glands that produce sweat and other body fluids that can emit smell. To have a different smell than before due to hormonal change is not unnatural, it just requires us to clean ourselves regularly. Personal hygiene and cleanliness of clothes and environment is also important to keep off diseases and infections, which are dangerous for our health.</p>														

Key Learning Idea

Menstruation is a normal and natural part of a girls' physical development and should not be treated with secrecy or stigma

Content

Menstruation is a normal, healthy part of a woman's life. It is not an illness, dirty or shameful. All young females and women have monthly bleedings. When it happens, it means that a girl is biologically able to get pregnant. It does not mean that she is automatically mature enough to have sexual intercourse or to become a mother. Periods are a natural, healthy part of a girl's life. They shouldn't get in the way of exercising, having fun, and enjoying life⁹⁰.

Hygiene during menstruation⁹¹

In order to catch the blood from the vagina, there are different ways to do that:

Sanitary pads/towels: they are especially made for the menstruating days of women and made out of cotton wool. They are put into the under wear and catch the blood. There are two types of them, disposable ones, that have to be thrown away after one use, or re-usable ones that can be washed and used several times. Girls may also use cotton wool wrapped in thin cloth. Used sanitary pads should be disposed of in the pit latrines.

Tampon: these are tubes of cotton wool that can be inserted into the vagina to catch the blood. They can be used only one time and need to be changed regularly (latest after 8 hours, if not soaked with blood before) to avoid infections. At the end of the period, girls need to ensure that the last tampon has been removed.

Some girls stay away from school while menstruating if they do not have access to any sanitary towel or other hygiene products.

However there are certain myths in relation to menstruation that need to be discussed. For example:

Using tampons as a virgin will break the hymen and take a woman's virginity.

This is an incredibly damaging myth that still abounds in many places in the world. Contrary to popular belief, the hymen is not a flat piece of tissue that completely covers the vaginal opening. In most cases, the hymen is a fringe piece of tissue that is around the vaginal opening. Some women are born without a hymen, while others only have a small hymen.

It's true that hymens can be torn during intercourse, physical activity, or when a tampon is inserted. But the hymen does not "break," and virginity is an emotional concept, not just the disruption of a piece of tissue that a woman may or may not have been born with.

VIRGINITY⁹²

Are you a virgin? Virginity is often perceived as a 'yes' or 'No' answer. However, this is untrue because virginity isn't a medical concept but its meaning and understanding stem from cultural values and religious underpinnings that a girl/ boy is brought up in. Therefore there is no one definition of virginity and what exists about who is and who is not a virgin is misinformation that is reinforced by a lack of comprehensive sexuality education. The common myths about virginity and their accompanying facts are explained below.

Key Learning Idea

Menstruation is a normal and natural part of a girls' physical development and should not be treated with secrecy or stigma

Content

1 **Virginity is either/or.** ✘ FALSE

Virginity is an understanding that has varied meanings among people. For example, some people associate with being a virgin because they have neither engaged in penis in vagina (PIV) sex nor oral sex (going down on, eating out, blow job), manual sex (fingering, hand job), or anal sex. Others think that having an orgasm means that you are no longer a virgin. Thus virginity is a fluid concept that has different content-specific applications.

It is important to note that medical providers consider all of these sex acts to be the real deal and a girl or boy could attract a sexually transmitted infection (STI) from it. Therefore a girl or boy is said to be sexually active once he or she is engaging in the above-mentioned types of sex. So when your doctor asks you if you're sexually active, make sure you say "yes" if you're having any kind of sex. Your provider doesn't care about the vague idea of virginity—they care about your health and empowering you to take care of yourself.

2 **Any kind of penetration (including a tampon) counts.** ✘ FALSE

It is not true that inserting a tampon is having sex and a girl cannot lose her virginity by using a tampon.

3 **Medical Doctors can tell if you're a virgin.** ✘ FALSE

This is also not true. Medical doctors cannot tell whether someone with a vagina has had sex by looking at their hymen, and seeing if it's been torn. The hymen is a thin bit of skin tissue that partially covers the vaginal opening, often (but not always) in a half-moon shape. During puberty, hymens become more elastic. It is possible for the hymens to tear from different activities such as doing the splits, inserting a tampon or, yes, having PIV sex. However, it is almost impossible to assess if a hymen has been torn in the past; more often than not the hymen stretches—kind of like an elastic hair band.

In rare occasions we can find that the hymen has covered the whole vaginal opening. This is called an imperforate hymen. However, it when it occurs it can be fixed with a minor surgery.

4 **Sexual partners can tell.** ✘ FALSE

This is also not true. A sexual partner cannot tell whether his or her partner has had sex before. This is because many people believe that the hymen is rigid and once broken/ torn it cannot be tightened. While it is true that some people with vaginas bleed during PIV sex, it is not obvious. This is a false idea construed that a vagina can "become loose" after the first PIV. The only way a partner can know is if you reveal to them about having sex before.

5 **After you've "lost" your virginity, sex is no big deal.** ✘ FALSE

In many culture's it is believed that virginity implies that after that first time, sex is no big deal. This is entirely false. Sex is a powerful tool and upholds it meaning every time a young man or woman engages in sex. It is also important that partners must communicate and consent is key before any sex encounter. This implies that a young man or woman should not assume that it is another's right to oblige to having sex after the first encounter with him or her or be easy to have sex with anyone else. Having sex is a personal choice and people choose to have sex for all sorts of reasons, and they choose to stop having sex for all sorts of reasons too.

<p>9-12 years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>During puberty, adolescents may experience a variety of physical responses (e.g. erections and wet dreams)</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>A wet dream⁹³ is when a guy ejaculates while he's sleeping. During ejaculation, semen (the fluid containing sperm) comes out of the penis and this is what you noticed on your underwear. Wet dreams usually happen during dreams that have sexual images. Sometimes guys wake up from a wet dream, but sometimes they sleep through it. Wet dreams can be embarrassing and confusing, but is completely normal.</p> <p>Adults and teen girls can have wet dreams, too. Although girls can't ejaculate, they can have an orgasm during a dream. Girls don't have such dreams as often as boys, though.</p>
<p>12-15 years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Puberty is a time of sexual maturation that leads to major physical, emotional, social and cognitive changes that can be exciting as well as stressful throughout adolescence</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Adolescence is a period of experiencing physical, intellectual and, social and emotional changes/ growth⁹⁴.</p> <p>Physical changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The growth spurt (an early sign of maturation); • Primary sex characteristics (changes in the organs directly related to reproduction); • Secondary sex characteristics (bodily signs of sexual maturity that do not directly involve reproductive organs) <p>Intellectual changes</p> <p>Adolescent thinking is on a higher level than that of children. Adolescents will think of what might be true, rather than just what they see is true.</p> <p>Social and emotional changes</p> <p>Adolescents search for identity and also struggle with space for independence.</p>
<p>15-18+ years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Hormones play a major role in a person's emotional and physical changes over their lifetime</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Hormones are the chemicals that cause the physical growth and sexual development that will carry you through your teens and into adulthood. As these substances take hold of your body, you'll notice that your emotions, moods and sexual feelings are much stronger. This may also make teens more of risk takers and engage in alcohol or drugs. These hormones have impact in their behaviour.</p> <p>Peer pressure, low self-esteem, and hormonal surges can lead teens to take chances and engage in risky behaviours that could have a negative effect on their future. As children enter their teenage years, it's important for them to have a support system they can rely on. Parents, siblings, counsellors, teachers, and good friends can provide strength and advice as teens navigate this challenging, exciting time in their lives⁹⁵.</p>

BODY IMAGE

9-12
years

Key Learning Idea

All bodies are special and unique and people should feel good about their bodies

Content

Body image refers to how an individual sees their own body and how attractive they feel themselves to be. Many people have concerns about their body image. These concerns often focus on weight, skin, hair, or the shape or size of a certain body part.

Throughout history, people have given importance to the beauty of the human body. Society, media, social media, and popular culture often shape these views, and this can affect how a person sees their own body.

However, popular standards are not always helpful.

A person's physical appearance does not determine their worth as a human being

Appearance and self-esteem

How we view ourselves, our value and worth as a whole, otherwise known as self-esteem. Several things can influence our 'self-esteem'. One is how you feel about your appearance (your body image). If you don't like something about your body or appearance, it is often difficult to feel good about other aspects of yourself.

People are not born with high or low self-esteem. Self-esteem develops over time and this can fluctuate. This is the same with body image, your perception of your own appearance may change over time, and along with how much emphasis you place on looks and appearance.

Social media is a high influencer of body image among adolescents.

There is wide variation in what people find attractive when it comes to a person's physical appearance

What one considers attractive usually vary from person to person. The most important aspect is to have an ability to appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of one's own character (**Self-awareness**). Realising this will enable adolescents to take actions, make choices and take decisions that are consistent with individualistic abilities.

Examples of self-awareness skills include the ability to:

- Recognise the weak and strong sides of one's own behaviour and abilities.
- Differentiate what one can do or cannot do by her/himself.
- Recognise things which cannot be changed, and accept them (example: height, size of breasts, etc.).
- Recognise one's own unique talents.

Self-esteem⁹⁶ is the way an individual feels about her/himself and believes others to feel. It has been described as the 'awareness of one's own value as a unique and special person endowed with various attributes and great potential'. A person's self-esteem can be damaged or enhanced through relationships with others. High self-esteem tends to encourage and reinforce healthy behaviour. Low self-esteem tends to encourage unhealthy behaviour. Examples of self-esteem include the ability to:

- Develop a positive self-image.
- Respect oneself and one's choices.
- Not be unnecessarily influenced by what others think.

12-15 years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>People’s feelings about their bodies can affect their health, self-image and behaviour</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Consequences of Poor Body Image</p> <p>The pressure to be thin can have serious consequences. Research has linked the exposure of images of underweight airbrushed female bodies to unhealthy eating habits and decreased self-esteem. Poor body image can lead to even more serious consequences. While some teens develop eating disorders, others experience depression. Both boys and girls can suffer Poor body image.</p> <p>Importance of a positive body image</p> <p>Positive body image occurs when a person is able to accept, appreciate and respect their body. A positive body image will improve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-esteem, which dictates how a person feels about himself or herself and can infiltrate every aspect of life, and contribute to happiness and wellbeing. • Self-acceptance, making a person more likely to feel comfortable and happy with the way they look and less likely to feel impacted by unrealistic images in the media and societal pressures to look a certain way. • Healthy outlook and behaviours, as it is easier to lead a balanced lifestyle with healthier attitudes and practices relating to food and exercise when you are in tune with, and respond to the needs of your body.
15-18+ years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Unrealistic standards about bodily appearance can be challenged</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Media’s Harmful Effects⁹⁷</p> <p>Many young people access possibly harmful content through the internet, cell phones, social media, radio or television. One area that is often targeted is the tampered idealization of the body image, which creates meaning to what is beautiful and not beautiful. Young people have a right to information on how to be media literate and challenge unrealistic body standards. Young men and women should therefore be helped (by adults) as they navigate puberty and adolescents that is usually accompanied by many body changes; while at the same time fitting in and looking the same as others becomes more important.</p> <p>Some steps that could be employed to assist adolescents and young people include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using real examples- Encourage watching TV and reading magazines together with adolescents and discuss the messages being sent as well as discussing unrealistic body images. • Talk about marketing efforts. Discuss the tactics advertisers use to sell products. Help your teen spot underlying messages about how a product will make her more attractive. • Hold conversations about unhealthy body images. Discuss the harsh realities that underweight models and overly muscular stars experience. Talk about the drastic and unhealthy measures many people take to obtain these body types, despite the toll it takes on their health.

SEXUALITY AND SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

SEX, SEXUALITY AND SEXUAL LIFE CYCLE

9-12 years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	It is natural for humans to enjoy their bodies and being close to others throughout their lives	<p>As humans, the relationships we form with other people are vital to our mental and emotional wellbeing, and really, our survival. A positive relationship can be shared between any two people who love, support, encourage and help each other practically as well as emotionally. People in healthy relationships tend to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to each other • Communicate openly and without judgment • Trust and respect each other • Consistently make time for each other • Remember details about each other's lives • Engage in healthy activities together
	Human beings are born with the capacity to enjoy their sexuality throughout their life	<p>Sexuality begins at birth and stops at death. However, it may change, as one grows older as it is interplay between body image, gender identity, gender role, sexual orientation, eroticism, genitals, intimacy, relationships, and love and affection. A person's sexuality includes his or her attitudes, values, knowledge and behaviours.</p> <p>Sexuality is not synonymous with sex; rather it is part of a person's entire life from birth to death. It does not only entail genital and reproductive processes but encompasses gender roles, social roles, self-esteem, feelings and relationships. Sexuality is how one feels about him/herself as being a male or female, how one consequently relates to members of the same and opposite sex, and how one feels about her/himself as a total person.</p>
It's natural to be curious about sexuality and important to ask a trusted adult questions	The messages that children are taught about sex play an important role in how they will grow into their sexual selves and express (or not express) their sexual motivations. It can feel a little awkward to talk about sex, especially if you're still adjusting to your sexuality. Talking to people you trust can be eye opening, though, as you might find they have similar feelings (and maybe worry about the same things).	
12-15 years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	Sexual feelings, fantasies and desires are natural and occur throughout life although people do not always choose to act on those feelings	Thinking about sex is also completely natural, normal and healthy, even if you seem to do it at odd times (when you're grocery shopping, for example). It can be useful; too, since it lets you know who you're attracted to and can help you decide when you want to have sex with someone. Sex is enjoyable when practiced by consenting adults. However, people do not always choose to act on these feelings
15-18+ years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	Sexuality is complex and includes biological, social, psychological, spiritual, ethical and cultural dimensions that evolve over the lifespan	<i>"Human sexuality" refers to people's sexual interest in and attraction to others; it is the capacity to have erotic or sexual feelings and experiences. Sexuality differs from biological sex, in that "sexuality" refers to the capacity for sexual feelings and attraction, while "biological sex" refers to how one's anatomy, physiology, hormones, and genetics are classified (typically as male, female, or intersex).</i>

15-18+ years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	Sexuality is complex and includes biological, social, psychological, spiritual, ethical and cultural dimensions that evolve over the lifespan	<p><i>Sexuality is also separate from gender identity, which is a person's sense of his or her own gender, or sociocultural classification (i.e., man, woman, or another gender) based on biological sex (i.e., male or female). It is also distinct from—although it shapes—sexual orientation, or one's emotional and sexual attraction to a particular sex or gender.</i></p> <p><i>Sexuality may be experienced and expressed in a variety of ways, including thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles, and relationships. These manifest themselves not only in biological, physical, and emotional ways, but also in sociocultural ways, which have to do with the effects of human society and culture on one's sexuality. Some researchers believe that sexual behaviour is determined by genetics; however, others assert that the environment largely moulds it. Human sexuality impacts, and is impacted by, cultural, political, legal, and philosophical aspects of life, and can interact with issues of morality, ethics, theology, spirituality, or religion⁹⁸.</i></p>

SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR AND SEXUAL RESPONSE

9-12 years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	People have a sexual response cycle, whereby sexual stimulation (physical or mental) can produce a physical response	The sexual response cycle ⁹⁹ refers to the sequence of physical and emotional changes that occur as a person becomes sexually aroused and participates in sexually stimulating activities, including intercourse and masturbation. Knowing how your body responds during each phase of the cycle can enhance your relationship and help you pinpoint the cause of any sexual problem. The sexual response cycle has four phases: excitement, plateau, orgasm, and resolution.
	It is important to be able to make informed decisions about sexual behaviour, including whether to delay sex or become sexually active	<p>Sexual responsibility means making informed decisions and safer sex choices (including abstinence). Being sexually responsible involves respecting your partner, having open communication about all forms of sexual activity, as well as taking precautions against sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV, and unplanned pregnancy.</p> <p>Remember, it's always your choice if you will or will not be sexually active. No one should ever force you or try to persuade you to engage in sexual activity against your will. However, it is best to have sex when your body is ready and that is usually not under 18 years of age.</p>

12-15 years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	The sexual response cycle is about how the body reacts physically to sexual stimulation	<p>Stages of sexual response cycle¹⁰⁰</p> <p>Excitement stage: the body readies for sexual activity by tensing muscles and increasing heart rate and blood pressure. In the male, blood flows into the penis, causing it to become erect; in the female, the vaginal walls become moist, the inner part of the vagina becomes wider, and the clitoris enlarges.</p> <p>Plateau stage: breathing becomes more rapid and the muscles continue to tense; the glans at the head of the penis swells and the testes enlarge in the male; in the female, the outer vagina contracts and the clitoris retracts.</p>

The sexual response cycle is about how the body reacts physically to sexual stimulation

Every society, culture and generation has its own myths about sexual behaviours and it's important to know the facts

At orgasm the neuromuscular tension built up in the preceding stages is released in a few seconds. In the woman, the vagina begins a series of regular contractions; in the man, the penis also contracts rhythmically to expel the sperm and semen (ejaculation). The succeeding resolution stage brings a gradual return to the resting state that may take several hours. In the male, the penis shrinks back to its normal size; in the female, the vagina and other genital structures also return to their pre-excitement condition. **The resolution stage** in men contains a refractory period of several minutes to a few hours, during which the man is incapable of further sexual arousal. Women have no such refractory period and can quickly become aroused again from any point in the resolution stage

SEXUALITY MYTHS AND FACTS^{101 102}

✘ **Myth: Size matters!**

✔ **Fact:** Penises and testicles come in a variety of sizes and shapes. When they're not erect, penises appear to be quite different in size, but when they're erect their sizes are much more similar. Since most men don't see each other's erect penises, they really have no way to realistically compare the size of their erect penis to that of other men. The myth, however, persists, and many men feel that they should be a certain size in order to "measure up." No wonder they may feel inadequate. The size of a man's penis has nothing to do with how much pleasure he feels, and it has little effect on the amount of pleasure for his partner as well.

✘ **Myth: Men are always ready and willing to have sex.**

✔ **Fact:** There are lots of times when both women and men don't feel like they want to have sex, and don't want to get "in the mood." Even though men may like sex, and even those men who like sex a lot, almost all of us, at one time or another, don't really feel like being sexually active. However this stereotype can operate to make men feel expected to perform even when they'd rather not, and put extra pressure on themselves in this way. They may feel like they can't say that they don't want to have sex. Men's aren't vehicles of sex and need to be okay in being willing to say no when they don't want to. By learning how to say no, the sexual activity they do participate in can be that much more enjoyable – for both men and their partners.

✘ **Myth: Very few men are virgins.**

✔ **Fact:** Sometimes guys will be less than truthful about how much sex they have had or have on a regular basis. While it is true that more than half of men have experienced sexual intercourse by the time they are 18, this number appears to be going down, and men are increasingly delaying sexual intercourse. In fact, as many as 1 in 4 men have not had sexual intercourse by the age of 19.

✘ **Myth: Sex is over when the man has an ejaculation.**

✔ **Fact:** This need not, and should not, be the case. Sexual activity involves two people and the sexual activity should continue until both partners are satisfied and ready to stop. Good sex involves on-going communication and connection between the partners to make sure that they are doing what is mutually comfortable, exciting and pleasurable. Furthermore, there's no reason why every sexual encounter has to include an orgasm or an ejaculation. Men may experience "blue balls" or "lover's nuts" if they experience an erection without ejaculation, these are not harmful conditions. Men will experience some discomfort, but the experience of building the relationship and being creative within the sexual activity can lead to a stronger relationship and better sex overall.

Every society, culture and generation has its own myths about sexual behaviours and it's important to know the facts

- ⊗ **Myth: Using alcohol or marijuana is a stimulant.**
- ✔ **FACT:** Alcohol and marijuana may increase desire and reduce inhibitions (make you feel more like doing things), but this makes you at risk for doing something that you're not comfortable with, or doing something to someone else that they aren't totally comfortable with. Furthermore, alcohol and marijuana reduce the blood flow to the genital area and can decrease your sexual performance by making it difficult for you to maintain an erection or experience an orgasm.

- ⊗ **Myth: Sex requires an erection.**
- ✔ **FACT:** This myth seems to have become even more widespread and believed more firmly since the introduction of Viagra and other impotence drugs. The fact is that sex involves a great deal of activities and most women and men report that the best sex involves creativity, fun, communication and partnership. Many men experience a lack of erection from time to time and this doesn't need to be a problem. In fact, being so goal-oriented about sex means that men can miss out on a lot of pleasure. There are many things you can do to satisfy a partner and experience sexual pleasure yourself. Putting pressure on yourself to get an erection only makes it less likely that you'll have one.

- ⊗ **Myth: All orgasms are "explosive, mind-blowing, and earth-shattering."**
- ✔ **FACT:** If you've been living in this culture with its movies and pulp fiction, you may have a very unrealistic idea of what an orgasm is all about. Orgasms vary in intensity and character. It's perfectly normal for them to feel different from one occasion to the next.

- ⊗ **Myth: Men in relationships don't masturbate.**
- ✔ **FACT:** Although men tend to masturbate less frequently when they are in on going relationships, many men and women masturbate when their partner isn't available or just for their own pleasure. Some couples find that masturbating together enhances their level of intimacy. It's a matter of personal preference.

- ⊗ **Myth: Girls can't get pregnant the first time they have sex.**
- ✔ **FACT:** Women can get pregnant every time they have unprotected sex with a man.

- ⊗ **Myth: A girl can't get pregnant if she is having sex during her period.**
- ✔ **FACT:** A woman can get pregnant at any time during her menstrual cycle.

- ⊗ **Myth: If a girl douches right after having sex, this will wash out all the sperm and she won't get pregnant.**
- ✔ **FACT:** Douching is one of the least effective methods of birth control. It does not get all of the sperm, and in fact, it may push sperm farther up in the reproductive tract.

- ⊗ **Myth: A girl knows when, during the month, she can't get pregnant.**
- ✔ **FACT:** Although women often learn a lot about themselves and the particulars of their own menstrual cycle, no woman can know her menstrual cycle this well. A woman is at risk for getting pregnant every time she has unprotected sex with a man.

- ⊗ **Myth: Once you've had gonorrhoea (any other bacterial infection for that matter) and have been cured, you can't get it again.**
- ✔ **FACT:** Someone can become re-infected every time they have unprotected sex with another person who is infected."

It is important to be able to make informed decisions about sexual behaviour

Decision Making¹⁰³

The informed decision to engage in sexual activity with others is very personal and is usually influenced by personal values, cultural beliefs, and self-esteem.

"These are some things you may want to consider as a young person if you are consciously thinking about having sex.

- ① *What are my reasons for wanting to explore sexual activity?*
- ① *Do I feel safe with this person/people to explore sexual activity?*
- ① *Is there anything I need to know before engaging in sexual activity with others?*
- ① *Am I trying to prevent pregnancy? (this question is inclusive of all people whose bodies can get pregnant. If so, what information might I need to help me do this?)*
- ① *Am I trying to prevent sexually transmitted infections (STIs)?*
- ① *Can I talk to this person/people about the decision to be sexual?*
- ① *Is the sexual activity legal in terms of age of consent (in most countries, the age of consent is 18, but there are additional details like the close in age exception, as well as sexual exploitation caveats to this that are important to understand)*
- ① *What can I do to ensure that sexual exploration is consensual? (What is consent?)*

Sometimes, adolescents go through these questions and realized they aren't ready. It's also really important to consider if you are the partner of someone who is not ready to have sex that it is okay for him or her to say no. Your role as a supportive partner is to accept that no, without shaming or making guilty your partner. It's just as important to learn how to take a no as it is to be the one saying no."



There are ways to avoid or minimize risk of sexual behaviours that can impact negatively on one's health and well-being



(See decision making above)

Transactional sexual activity, the exchange of money or goods for sexual favours, can pose risks to one's health and well-being

Transactional sex refers to non-marital, non-commercial sexual relationships motivated by an implicit assumption that sex will be exchanged for material support or other benefits¹⁰⁴.

15-18+ years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	<p>Engaging in sexual behaviours should feel pleasurable and comes with associated responsibilities for one's health and well-being</p>	<p> (Refer to "Sexual responsibility")</p>
	<p>Sexual decision-making requires prior consideration of risk-reduction strategies to prevent unintended pregnancy and STIs, including HIV</p>	<p> (Refer to "Sexual responsibility")</p>

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

PREGNANCY AND PREGNANCY PREVENTION

9-12
years

Key Learning Idea

Pregnancy is a natural biological process and can be planned

Content

Pregnancy is the process of conception and development of the foetus. Pregnancy begins when the male's sperm meets the female's egg.

This is a natural biological process that can be planned and suitable for adults >20 years.

It is important to understand the key features of pregnancy

Pregnancy signs¹⁰⁵

No monthly menstrual flow, Nausea and vomiting, Darkening of the dark areas surrounding the nipples, Feelings of fatigue and discomfort, Urinating frequently, Headache, Abdominal size increases, Swollen legs, Breast enlargement and sensitivity, Mood swings

Early/Teenage pregnancy: refers to pregnancy in a female under the age of 20 (when the pregnancy ends). A pregnancy can take place at any time before or after puberty, with menarche (first menstrual period) normally taking place around the ages 12 or 13, and being the stage at which a female becomes potentially fertile. Teenage pregnancy depends on a number of societal and personal factors. Teenage pregnancy rates vary between countries because of differences in levels of sexual activity, general sex education provided and access to affordable contraceptive options.

Early pregnancy poses a serious health risk to both mother and baby. However, there are also social, psychological and economic consequences of early pregnancy.

Unintended pregnancy

Unintended pregnancy is a pregnancy that occurs when it is not wanted, mostly by the girl/ woman or her partner or both. Several factors that determine whether one wants to have a child at a certain point. These include a) age of partners, b) influence of the family and the community, c) financial constraints and d) a person's plan for life. An unwanted pregnancy is different from an unintended pregnancy: pregnancy can be unplanned, or unexpected, and the woman and her partner are very happy about it. And of course a pregnancy can also be both unplanned/ unintended and unwanted.

Social problems associated with unintended pregnancy

Some social problems that come with unintended pregnancy for young girls include:

- 1 Her family may break with her and may not take care of her.
- 2 In some cases, the pregnant girl will be expelled from home or flee by herself feeling guilty.
- 3 Pregnant young girls dropout of school and are unlikely to continue their education later on.

Key Learning Idea

It is important to understand the key features of pregnancy

Content

As a result, their future life becomes problematic and their chance to get married and lead a decent life declines. This situation makes the young girl unstable and internally disturbed. To avoid social problems, the girl may consider an abortion. However, non-professionals using unsafe equipment, which may cause terrible injury or lead to the death of the girl, often conduct abortion secretly. Some even commit suicide.

Note: (Also read dangers of early marriages)

Modern contraception can help people prevent or plan pregnancy

There are different types of family planning methods and are grouped into two broad categories, namely, modern methods and traditional methods. Modern contraceptive methods are further categorized into three subgroups: short-term methods (condoms, the lactation amenorrhoea method (LAM), and contraceptive pills), long-term methods (injectable, implants and IUDs) and permanent methods (female and male sterilisation).

Traditional methods consist of periodic abstinence, withdrawal, and various folk methods.

The Right Way To Use A Male Condom¹⁰⁶

 **Condom Dos**

- **DO** use a condom every time you have sex.
- **DO** put on a condom before having sex.
- **DO** read the package and check the expiration date.
- **DO** make sure there are no tears or defects.
- **DO** store condoms in a cool, dry place.
- **DO** use latex or polyurethane condoms.
- **DO** use water-based or silicone-based lubricant to prevent breakage.

 **Condom Don'ts**

- **DON'T** store condoms in your wallet as heat and friction can damage them.
- **DON'T** use nonoxynol-9 (a spermicide), as this can cause irritation.
- **DON'T** use oil-based products like baby oil, lotion, petroleum jelly, or cooking oil because they will cause the condom to break.
- **DON'T** use more than one condom at a time.
- **DON'T** reuse a condom.

Gender roles and peer norms may influence decisions about contraceptive use

It is BOTH partners' responsibility to ensure that you have safer sex, and use contraception to prevent both unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). There is a perception that it is the girl's responsibility to think about contraception and safer sex.

Different forms of contraception have different effectiveness rates, efficacy, benefits and side effects

Contraceptives¹⁰⁷

BARRIER METHOD CONTRACEPTIVES

The Condom

The condom is the only form of contraception that protects against most STIs as well as preventing pregnancy. It is hormone free, can easily be carried with you and it comes in male and female varieties.

Male condoms are rolled onto an erect penis and act as a physical barrier, preventing sexual fluids from passing between people during sex.

The female condom is placed into the vagina right before sex.

Pros	Cons include
It's the best protection against STIs; hormone free.	It can tear or come off during sex if not used properly; some people are allergic to latex condoms and may lead to itching

HORMONAL CONTRACEPTIVES

The Oral Contraceptive Pill

It's the little tablet taken once a day. The combined pill contains oestrogen and progestin and mini pill contains only one hormone, a progestin. The pill must be taken on time.

Pros	Cons include
Highly effective when used correctly; permits sexual spontaneity and doesn't interrupt sex; some pills may even reduce heavy and painful periods and/or may have a positive effect on acne.	Forgetting to take your pill means it won't be as effective; it can only be used by women; is not suitable for women who can't take oestrogen-containing contraception; it does not protect against STIs.

The pill is only available by getting a prescription from a medical professional so visit your local doctor or sexual health clinic.

The Contraceptive Injection

The injection contains a synthetic version of the hormone progestogen. It is given into a woman's buttock or the upper arm, and over the next 12 weeks the hormone is slowly released into your bloodstream.

Pros	Cons include
The injection lasts for up to three months; is very effective; permits sexual spontaneity and doesn't interrupt sex.	The injection may cause disrupted periods or irregular bleeding; it requires keeping track of the number of months used; it does not protect against STIs.

Different forms of contraception have different effectiveness rates, efficacy, benefits and side effects

Birth control Patch

The contraceptive patch is a safe and convenient birth control method that works really well if you always use it correctly. You wear the patch on certain parts of your body, and it releases hormones through your skin that prevent pregnancy. The patch has lots of other health benefits, too.

LONG-TERM REVERSIBLE CONTRACEPTIVES

Intrauterine Device (IUD)

This small, T-shaped device is made from made of material containing progesterone hormone or plastic and copper and is fitted inside a woman's uterus by a trained healthcare provider. It's a long-acting and reversible method of contraception, which can stay in place for three to 10 years, depending on the type.

Some IUDs contain hormones that are gradually released to prevent pregnancy. The IUD can also be an effective emergency contraception if fitted by a healthcare professional within five days (120 hours) of having unprotected sex.

IUDs containing coppers are 99% effective and the ones containing hormones are 99.8% effective, so you're about as protected as you possibly can be by a contraceptive method.

Cons include

Irregular bleeding and spotting occurs in the first six months of use; requires a trained healthcare provider for insertion and removal; does not protect against STIs.

The Contraceptive Implant

In this method, a small, flexible rod is placed under the skin in a woman's upper arm, releasing the hormone progesterone. The hormone stops the ovary releasing the egg and thickens the cervical mucus making it difficult for sperm to enter the womb. The implant requires a small procedure using local anaesthetic to fit and remove the rod and needs to be replaced after three years.

Pros

Highly effective; doesn't interrupt sex; is a long-lasting, reversible contraceptive option.

Cons include

Requires a trained healthcare provider for insertion and removal; sometimes there can be irregular bleeding initially; does not protect against STIs.

Diaphragm

A diaphragm is a small, soft silicon dome is placed inside the vagina to stop sperm from entering the uterus. It forms a physical barrier between the man's sperm and the woman's egg, like a condom.

The diaphragm needs to stay in place for at least six hours after sex. After six - but no longer than 24 hours after sex - it needs to be taken out and cleaned.

Different forms of contraception have different effectiveness rates, efficacy, benefits and side effects

Pros include	Cons include
You can use the same diaphragm more than once, and it can last up to two years if you look after it.	Using a diaphragm can take practice and requires keeping track of the hours inserted. The diaphragm works fairly well if used correctly, but not as well as the pill, a contraceptive implant or an IUD.

Contraceptive Ring

This method consists of a flexible plastic ring constantly releasing hormones that is placed in the vagina by the woman. It stays in place for three weeks, and then you remove it, take a week off then pop another one in. The ring releases the hormones oestrogen and progestogen. These are the same hormones used in the combined oral contraceptive pill, but at a lower dose.

Pros include	Cons include
You can insert and remove a vaginal ring yourself; this contraceptive method has few side effects, allows control of your periods and allows your fertility to return quickly when the ring is removed.	It is not suitable for women who can't take oestrogen-containing contraception; you need to remember to replace it at the right time; does not protect against STIs.

Emergency Contraception Pill (The 'Morning After' Pill)

The Emergency Contraception Pill can be used to prevent pregnancy after sex if contraception wasn't used, a condom has broken during sex, or a woman has been sexually assaulted.


While it is sometimes called the 'Morning After' pill, it can actually be effective for up to five days after having unprotected sex. The sooner it is taken, the more effective it is; when taken in the first three days after sex, it prevents about 85% of expected pregnancies.

This pill contains special doses of female hormones. It can be bought over the counter at a pharmacy or chemist without a prescription.

The common side effects of the emergency contraceptive include nausea, vomiting and the next period may be early or delayed. Emergency contraception does not protect against STIs.

Sterilisation

Sterilisation is the process of completely taking away the body's ability to reproduce through open or minimal invasion surgery. It is a permanent method of contraception; suitable for people who are sure they never want children or do not want any more children. Sterilisation is available for both women and men and is performed in a hospital.

12-15 years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	<p>Young people who are sexually active and could benefit from contraception should be able to access it without significant barriers, regardless of ability, marital status, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation</p>	<p> (Recall sexual and reproductive rights)</p> <p>Sexual and reproductive rights mean you should be able to make your own decisions about your body and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • get accurate information about these issues • access sexual and reproductive health services including contraception • choose if, when and who to marry • decide if you want to have children and how many
	<p>There are health risks associated with too early child-bearing and closely spaced births</p>	<p> (Recall risks of early marriage)</p>
15-18+ years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	<p>Contraceptive use can help people who are sexually active to prevent pregnancy, or plan if and when to have children, with important related benefits for individuals and societies</p>	<p> (Recall types of contraceptives including pros and cons)</p>
	<p>Unintended pregnancies occur, and all young people should be able to access the services and protections necessary for their health and well-being</p>	<p>I am pregnant and don't want to be what can I do?¹⁰⁸</p> <p>If you find that you are pregnant but did not plan to be, consult a person you trust. At some point, however, you must decide whether to have the baby or not.</p> <p>Not to have the baby</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never attempt unsafe abortion by a layperson or even by yourself, since this can permanently damage your reproductive organs and even kill you. Furthermore, illegal abortion done by laypersons is a punishable offense under the laws of many countries. • Also where abortion is illegal according to applicable law, abortions should only be carried out by health professionals and not by laypersons. <p>To have the baby</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family planning service providers, counsellors and peer educators can help young people with a pregnancy to see that it is not the end of the world to have an unplanned child. • Parents or guardians should support the girl during and after pregnancy and encourage her to seek prenatal care regularly so that she can have a healthy baby. • When the pregnant girl is under 18 years old, the competent authorities dealing with women's and family matters should be informed for legal support

15-18+
years

Key Learning Idea

Unintended pregnancies occur, and all young people should be able to access the services and protections necessary for their health and well-being

Content

- The girl must be supported when the time of delivery has come. Wherever possible, Young girls should deliver in hospital under professional medical supervision and not at home wherever possible, as complications are more likely to occur than in older women.
- Girls should be encouraged to go back to school as soon as possible after delivery of the child.

ABORTION

“Abortion is the removal of pregnancy tissue, products of conception or the fetus and placenta (afterbirth) from the uterus. In general, the terms fetus and placenta are used after eight weeks of pregnancy. Pregnancy tissue and products of conception refer to tissue produced by the union of an egg and sperm before eight weeks.”¹⁰⁹

The World Health Organization, and the global community, have long agreed on the definition of unsafe abortion: a procedure for terminating unwanted pregnancy that is performed by someone lacking the necessary skills or in an environment lacking minimal medical standards or both.



Factors contributing to unsafe abortion

Both wanted and unwanted pregnancies may be terminated. For example, even when women want a child,

- the pregnancy may threaten her health or survival, and the foetus may have a severe abnormality.
- Foetus may have a severe birth defect

Adoption is an option when someone is not ready or able to become a parent

“Adoption is the social, emotional, and legal process in which children who will not be raised by their birth parents become full and permanent legal members of another family while maintaining genetic and psychological connections to their birth family. Adoption has many facets and touches people in different ways—depending on their role and perspective.”¹¹⁰

There are practices that can contribute to or threaten a healthy pregnancy

PRACTICES THAT COULD THREATEN A HEALTHY PREGNANCY¹¹¹

- 1** Alcohol use
- 2** Tobacco use
- 3** Drug use such as smoking marijuana

HIV AND AIDS STIGMA, TREATMENT, CARE AND SUPPORT

9-12
years

Key Learning Idea	Content
<p>People living with HIV have equal rights and live productive lives</p>	<p>A person living with HIV has equal rights just as a person not infected with HIV. The lack of human rights slows down response and support to HIV in the following ways¹¹².</p> <p>By not protecting their human rights creates vulnerability to HIV, particularly among marginalized and underserved groups such as women, children, and young persons; sex workers; people who use drugs; migrants; men who have sex with men (MSM); transgendered persons; and prisoners.</p> <p>By not protecting human rights of persons living with HIV fuels stigma, discrimination, and violence against persons living with and affected by HIV. These harmful attitudes and practices are rooted in a lack of understanding of HIV, misconceptions about how HIV is transmitted, and as well as the perception that HIV is related to 'deviant' or 'immoral' behaviours such as sex outside marriage, sex between men, and drug use.</p> <p>By the lack of human rights protection of persons living with HIV, national responses to HIV could be slowed down. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminalization of groups at higher risk of infection, such as men who have sex with men, persons who inject drugs, and sex workers; • HIV testing without informed consent; • HIV-related immigration restrictions on entry, stay, and residence <p>These measures deter people from coming forward for HIV services and inhibit the ability of organizations to reach vulnerable and at risk groups.</p>
<p>There are effective medical treatments that can help people living with HIV</p>	<p>HIV treatment involves taking medicines that slow the multiplication of the virus in your body. The combination of drugs used to treat it is called antiretroviral therapy (ART), which must be taken daily for all people living with HIV immediately at diagnosis.</p> <p>Importance of HIV Treatment¹¹³</p> <p>Getting and staying on HIV treatment is important because it reduces the amount of HIV in your blood (also called the viral load) to a very low level. This keeps you healthy and prevents opportunistic illness. HIV treatment is also used for prevention benefit. People living with HIV who take HIV medication daily as prescribed and get and keep an undetectable viral load have effectively no risk of sexually transmitting HIV to their HIV-negative partners or unborn and newly born babies in case of pregnant/ nursing women living with HIV.</p>

9-12
years

Key Learning Idea

It's important for people living with HIV to be able to talk about their HIV status in a safe and supportive environment

Content

How Can You Help Someone Who Has Been Newly Diagnosed with HIV ¹¹⁴?

It is important to support a friend or loved one who has been recently diagnosed with HIV by adopting the following:

TALK

Be available to have open, honest conversations about HIV. Follow the lead of the person who is diagnosed with HIV.

LISTEN

Being diagnosed with HIV is life-changing news. Listen to your loved one and offer your support. Reassure them that HIV is a manageable health condition. There are medicines that can treat HIV and help them stay healthy.

LEARN

Educate yourself about HIV: what it is, how it is transmitted, how it is treated, and how people can stay healthy while living with HIV. Having a solid understanding of HIV is a big step forward in supporting your loved one.

ENCOURAGE TREATMENT

Some people who are recently diagnosed may find it hard to take that first step to HIV treatment. Your support and assistance may be helpful to getting linked to early HIV medical care to start ART, adhering to medication, and staying in care.

SUPPORT MEDICATION ADHERENCE


It is important for people living with HIV to take their HIV medication every day, exactly as prescribed.

GET SUPPORT

Take care of yourself and get support if you need it. Turn to others for any questions, concerns, or anxieties you may have, so that the person who is diagnosed can focus on taking care of their own health.

What to do if a Friend Tells You That They Have HIV¹¹⁵

- **Acknowledge.** If someone has disclosed his or her HIV status to you, thank him or her for trusting you with his or her private health information.
- **Ask.** If appropriate, ask if there's anything that you can do to help them. One reason they may have chosen to disclose their status to you is that they need an ally or advocate, or they may need help with a particular issue or challenge. Some people are public with this information; other people keep it very private. Ask whether other people know this information, and how private they are about their HIV status.
- **Reassure.** Let the person know, through your words or actions, that their HIV status does not change your relationship and that you will keep this information private if they want you to.
- **Learn.** Educate yourself about HIV.

9-12 years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>A person living with HIV will have unique needs for care and treatment, some of which may come with possible side effects</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Taking care of yourself when living with HIV¹¹⁶</p> <p>Having HIV doesn't have to stop you living a healthy life in the way that you choose to do. With the right treatment and care, you can expect to live as long as someone who doesn't have HIV. This is how you can look after yourself and stay healthy.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Consistently taking antiretroviral treatment for HIV to suppress the virus and prevent transmission to others 2 Eating healthily 3 Exercising regularly 4 Avoid excessive alcohol or drug use 5 Consistently using a condom to prevent re-infection with other strains of HIV
	<p>HIV and AIDS can affect family structure, family roles and responsibilities</p>	<p>HIV and AIDS take a profound toll on families. When a family member becomes sick or dies, everyone in the family suffers. HIV/AIDS disrupts the family structure in an irreversible and devastating way given that older people and children, particularly females, are put in the position of caring for the sick, the dying and the children orphaned by HIV/AIDS. There are situations where young boys and girls are often forced to assume adult responsibilities well beyond their years, leaving them highly vulnerable to discrimination, child labour or other forms of exploitative behaviour and, in turn, to HIV infection.</p>
12-15 years	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>With the right care, respect and support, people living with HIV can lead fully productive lives free from discrimination</p>	<p>Content</p> <p> Refer to content of stigma and discrimination</p>
	<p>Everyone, including people living with HIV, have the equal right with all others to express sexual feelings and love for others, through marriage and long-term commitments – should they choose to do so</p>	<p>LOVE AND RELATIONSHIPS IN YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV¹¹⁷</p> <p>People living with HIV fall in love, have sex, have fulfilling relationships, marry, have children (without passing on HIV) - all the things that people who don't have HIV do. However, there is always worry about deciding how and when to tell a partner about an HIV infection. Remember that it's your choice how much to tell them and when. You may want to avoid having a conversation, but bear in mind that the longer you put it off, the more upset they may be that you didn't tell them sooner¹¹⁸.</p>


12-15 years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	Support groups and programs run by and with people living with HIV can be helpful	<p>Support Groups for people living with HIV</p> <p>Support groups can be set up for many different reasons¹¹⁹. Here are a few:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide emotional support and coping mechanisms to those people who are undergoing a difficult time in their lives, and are willing to be part of a support group. • To provide information for its members so that they can understand the disease and be able to educate their family members, friends, colleagues, neighbours about the disease. • To draw strength from other members experiences. • To share information around treatment, care and healing. • To educate people about antiretroviral medication and to encourage people to keep taking their medication.

15-18+ years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	With the right care, respect and support, people living with HIV can lead fully productive lives across the lifespan	<p>PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV CAN LIVE A NORMAL PRODUCTIVE LIFE¹²⁰</p> <p>About three decades ago being diagnosed with HIV was considered a death sentence. Today, people with HIV can live long and healthy lives. With the right treatment and care, people with HIV can live a normal lifespan. People who have a their virus levels suppressed by HIV treatment can live as long as those not infected with HIV.</p>

UNDERSTANDING, RECOGNIZING AND REDUCING THE RISKS OF STIS, INCLUDING HIV

9-12 years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	The immune system protects the body from illness and helps people stay healthy	<p>What is your immune system¹²¹?</p> <p>A: “Your immune system is a highly integrated physiologic system that protects you from internal threats as well as external threats such as infections, toxins and malignancies.” It acts as a protector to our body thus helps us humans to grow, develop and live longer.</p>

Key Learning Idea	Content
<p>People can acquire STIs, including HIV, as a result of having sex with someone who already has an STI, and there are ways people can lower their vulnerability to infection</p>	<p>Sexually Transmitted Infections are infections transmitted by intimate body contact and/or sexual intercourse with an infected person. Sexual intercourse, non-penetrative genital contact, anal and oral sex can all transmit an infection. An infection may eventually cause a disease, which is why STI's are also often referred to as Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD's). For example, one can get an HIV (the virus) that eventually leads to AIDS (the disease).</p> <p>People (especially women) may sometimes have an STI without noticing any symptoms for a long time. Most STI's can be cured if managed early and correctly.</p> <p>HOW TO LOWER VULNERABILITY TO STIs¹²²</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use latex (rubber) condoms every time they have sexual intercourse. • Avoid having a sexual relationship with multiple partners; in fact the best way to avoid getting AIDS is to stay with one person who does not have the HIV virus and who does not have sexual relationships with other people. • Avoid causing scrapes, cuts or scratches in the genital area when having sexual intercourse; women who have been circumcised are at increased risk of catching the virus, since sexual intercourse is more likely to cause bleeding and cuts.
<p>HIV is a virus that can be transmitted in various ways, including unprotected sex with someone who is living with HIV</p>	<p>HIV TRANSMISSION¹²³</p> <p>HIV can be transmitted via the exchange of a variety of body fluids from infected people, such as blood, breast milk, semen and vaginal secretions. HIV can also be transmitted from a mother to her child during pregnancy and delivery.</p> <p>It is important to note that people with HIV who are taking ART and are virally suppressed do not transmit HIV to their sexual partners. Early access to ART and support to remain on treatment is therefore critical not only to improve the health of people with HIV but also to prevent HIV transmission.</p>
<p>There are ways that people can reduce their vulnerability to STIs, including HIV</p>	<p>Behavioural Strategies¹²⁴</p> <p>Adolescents could adopt the following to curb risky behaviours.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abstain from sex if under 18. • Use condoms every time. • Reduce the number of sexual partners.
<p>Testing is the only way to know for sure whether someone has an STI, including HIV, and treatment exists for HIV and most STIs</p>	<p>Getting Tested and Talking to Health Care Providers¹²⁵</p> <p>Adolescents and young people can take the following steps to help prevent HIV when infected or exposed. These steps can also be used to help someone living with HIV.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get tested and treated for other STIs and encourage all partners to do the same. • Talk to a health care provider right away (within 3 days) about post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) if have come into contact with HIV.

<p>12-15 years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Sexual health services can offer HIV testing, treatment, provision of condoms, and some may provide PrEP and PEP or VMMC, among other services that can help people assess their vulnerability to HIV and access testing and treatment as needed</p>	<p>Content</p> <p> Refer to topic above</p>
<p>15-18+ years</p>	<p>Key Learning Idea</p> <p>Communication, negotiation and refusal skills can help young people to counter unwanted sexual pressure or reinforce the intent to practise safer sex (i.e. consistently using condoms and contraception)</p>	<p>Content</p> <p>Examples of application of communication, decision-making and negotiation skills to overcome risky situations ¹²⁶.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 A peer who gets drunk and gives in to sex easily for peer pressure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs to have the ability to overcome peer pressure and influence, and also • Needs more self-confidence and critical thinking to assess what is good or bad for him to take the right decisions. 2 One who gives in to temptations of having sex with a physically attractive person <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need critical thinking to control oneself by evaluating the dangers involved • Need decision making ability to reject a sexual invitation or • Need decision-making skills, at least refuse unsafe sex. 3 Those who are shy of openly discussing condom use before having sex <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to get rid of fear and shyness by developing self-confidence. 4 Those who do not care much about people living with HIV and AIDS or who stigmatize victims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need knowledge to understand that proximity with HIV patients will not cause infection. • Need empathy and compassion to give help and love.

15-18+ years	Key Learning Idea	Content
	<p>Sexual health services can offer condoms, HIV testing, treatment; and some may provide PrEP and PEP or VMMC, among other services such as testing and treatment for other STIs, contraception and gender-based violence, which can help people assess their vulnerability to HIV and access testing and treatment as needed</p>	<p>COMBINATION PREVENTION APPROACH TO HIV¹²⁷</p> <p>It is an effective HIV prevention program that combines behavioural interventions, biomedical interventions and structural interventions. All combination prevention programs need to be supported with a strong community empowerment element and efforts to address legal and policy barriers, as well as the strengthening of health and social protection systems, plus actions to address gender inequality, stigma and discrimination.</p> <p>For example:</p> <p>Young people in high prevalence countries need more than condoms and behaviour change communications. They also require comprehensive sexuality education and access to effective HIV and sexual and reproductive health services without economic barriers, such as prohibitive costs, or structural barriers, such as parental consent laws</p> <p>A combination package for men who have sex with men should include easy access to condoms, lubricant and pre exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), as well as efforts to address homophobia</p>

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- 125 <https://whatworksinyouthhiv.org/youth-hiv/youth-sexual-health/stisstds>
- 126 https://www.dsw.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SRH-Facilitators-Training-Manual_DSW-2014-1.pdf
- 127 <https://www.avert.org/professionals/hiv-programming/prevention/overview>

SAVE LIVES AND SEEK JUSTICE

Norwegian Church Aid works to save lives and seek justice. Our support is provided unconditionally with no intention of influencing anyone's religious affiliation.

Norwegian Church Aid is a member of the ACT Alliance, one of the world's largest humanitarian coalitions. Together, we work throughout the world to create positive and sustainable change.

To save lives and seek justice is, for us, faith in action.

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