

Sex education for students with intellectual disability
and on the autism spectrum:

A PRACTICAL METHODOLOGY GUIDE



Ресурсни центар за специјалну едукацију

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Statement on the use of artificial intelligence

To support the development of the activities in this methodological guide, AI platforms including ChatGPT and Claude were used as idea generation tools. These platforms served as a springboard for creative brainstorming. The initial concepts generated were then thoroughly evaluated, modified and adapted by the project team. All activities were modified to be consistent with the learning objectives and scientifically based approaches. The activities were carefully adapted to ensure relevance, appropriateness and accessibility for students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum. The resulting activities reflect the expertise of the project team members rather than the direct output of AI.

Suggested citation

Strnadová, I., Bernoldová, J., Hayes, S., Revická, M., Eisner, P., Šimáčková, H., Đorđević, M., Sretenović, I., Nedović, G., Potić S., Ondřejková, M., & Jurčová Z. (2025). *Sex education for students with intellectual disability and on the autism spectrum: A practical methodology guide*. Nebud' na nule, z.s.

Responsibility for the content of the methodological guide in the English language version

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project was funded by ERASMUS+, co-financed by the European Union; project number and title of the project: 2023-1-CZ01-KA210-VET-000153711 *Sex education for students with intellectual disability and on the autism spectrum: A practical methodology guide.*

We would like to thank the following Czech, Slovak and Serbian schools and organizations for their close cooperation in creating the methodological guide:

- ARPIDA, Centre for the rehabilitation of people with disabilities, z.ú. (CZ)
- Association to help people with mental disabilities Nové Zámky, Social Services Home, Nové Zámky (SVK)
- Basic School Lužiny, Praha 5, Trávníčkova 1743, 155 00 (CZ)
- Community Centre Motýlek, z.ú. (CZ)
- Primary school "6. october", Kikinda (SRB)
- Primary school "Đura Jakšić", Belgrade (SRB)
- Primary school "Ljubomir Aćimović", Obrenovac (SRB)
- Primary school "Mića Stojković", Umčari (SRB)
- Primary school "Milutin and Draginja Todorović", Kragujevac (SRB)
- Primary school "Miodrag Matić", Belgrade (SRB)
- Primary school "Novi Beograd", Belgrade (SRB)
- Private school, Pod kopcom 75, Nové Zámky (SVK)
- School, Dukelská 26/30, Gíraltovce (SVK)
- School for primary and secondary education "Vožd", Belgrade (SRB)
- School for visually impaired pupils "Veljko Ramadanović", Belgrade (SRB)
- School for primary and secondary education "Mara Mandić", Pančevo (SRB)
- Secondary Vocational School, Sedlčany, Petra Bezruče 364 (CZ)
- Secondary school, primary school and kindergarten for the hearing impaired, Olomouc, Kosmonautů 4 (CZ)
- Social Services Centre in Gíraltovce, Gíraltovce (SVK)
- Textile design school, Belgrade (SRB)
- Vocational secondary School for professional rehabilitation of students with developmental and learning disabilities, Belgrade (SRB)

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

Terminology about disability

The authors respectfully acknowledge that there are differences in the ways people talk about disability. Some people with disability prefer person-first language (i.e., a person with disability), and some prefer identity-first language (i.e., autistic person)¹. In this guide the authors use person-first language, which reflects the predominant usage in the international context and the majority of literature reviewed. The authors use terms such as ‘challenge’ and ‘difficulty’ when referring to students, to be in line with the social model of disability and respect community preferences. Terms such as ‘impairment’ or ‘deficit’ are not used as they are considered ableist and not in line with the preferences of people with disability¹.

Although the term ‘special education needs’ is a common term used in relation to students with disability in the Czech Republic and Slovak Republic, internationally it is more common to use the term ‘disability’. This is because the term ‘special education needs’ is considered offensive by many people with disability and their advocates. For example, in Australia, people with disability do not support the use of euphemisms for disability, as it implies that there is something wrong with having disability¹. For the purpose of this guide, the term ‘special education needs’ will be used interchangeably with ‘students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum’. Additionally, based on the preferences of the autistic community, the term ‘autism spectrum’ will be used instead of ‘autism spectrum disorder’ as the use of the term ‘disorder’ is considered ableist and offensive^{2,3}.

Terminology about sex education

At present, there is no universally used term to describe the delivery of sex education to high school students. ‘Sexuality and relationships education’, ‘comprehensive sex/uality education’, ‘sexuality education’, and ‘sexual health education’ are but a few of the terms used globally. Throughout this guide, the term ‘sex education’ will be used to describe the delivery of sex education to students. The term ‘sex education’ refers to providing education that is evidence-based, age-appropriate, comprehensive, and sex positive, covering a range of topics about sexuality, sexual and reproductive health, and healthy relationships.



Disclaimer

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INTRODUCTION

What is this Guide about?

This Guide has been developed to support teachers in delivering sex education to students with disability using research-based interventions and teaching strategies. To promote effective teaching, the Guide outlines suggested lesson activities that utilise evidence-based practices (EBPs). EBPs are interventions for which highly rigorous applied research has proven their effectiveness. When EBPs are used with fidelity to teach sexuality education, there is a greater likelihood that students with disability will develop accurate knowledge, positive attitudes, and practical skills to make informed decisions about relationships and sexual health⁴.

Why is this Guide important for students?

Under the United Nations Conventions of the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCPRD)⁵ young people with disability have the right to access education, including sex education⁶. Delivering sex education is in line with meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by all United Nations members, which aim to provide quality education, good health and well-being, and gender equality for all people worldwide⁷. Sexuality and sexual relationships are core aspects of a person's identity and well-being⁸. Research demonstrates that young people with disability do not have the same access to sex education as their peers without disability⁹. Sex education that is provided for young people with disability is often focused on biology, protective behaviours and is rule-based¹⁰. These narrow and restrictive approaches do not include perspectives that people with disability are sexual agents and have sexual identities. Inadequate sex education exacerbates people with disability's vulnerability, as they are not taught about healthy relationships, consent, and how to make informed choices about intimate relationships¹¹. Research has shown that a lack of accessible and comprehensive sex education has significantly detrimental consequences for young people with disability¹¹. Specifically, people with intellectual disability have higher rates of sexual assault, being victims of domestic abuse and intimate partner violence, unplanned pregnancy, child removal, contracting sexual transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV/AIDS, and committing sexual offences^{10, 12}. The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability, also known as the Disability Royal Commission (DRC), published in 2023 in Australia, has also highlighted that people with disability experience reproductive violence and abuse¹². Reproductive violence and abuse can involve being subjected to forced or uninformed consent for procedures such as termination of pregnancies, sterilisation, menstruation suppression, and long-acting contraception¹². Researchers believe that providing young people with disability access to comprehensive, accessible sex education will promote students' well-being, self-determination and improves sexual health outcomes^{13, 14}. Furthermore, it is important that student voice is included in the development of sex education programs, as historically, sex education programs are developed based on incorrect assumptions and misconceptions about people with disability. Young people with disability report wanting to have intimate relationships, sex, marriage, and families¹⁵. They are interested in sexuality and have the desire to learn more about sex and relationships^{9, 16}. It has been reported that young people with disability want to be taught about sex and relationships by adults other than their parents, with a preference for this content to be delivered by their teachers¹¹.

Why is this Guide important for teachers?

Research has highlighted that there are several barriers for teachers delivering sex education to young people with disability. Understanding about content, access to materials and professional development are often lacking^{15, 17}. It is

reported that teachers often feel uncomfortable delivering sex education to students with disability¹⁵. Furthermore, teachers deliver content they are comfortable with, which often results in specific topics and content being omitted from educational programs¹¹. It has also been reported that teachers' personal biases and beliefs about what young people with disability should learn regarding sex education heavily influences the content that is delivered to students¹⁸. There is a strong need for teacher professional development, to develop skills, knowledge and understanding of how to deliver sex education to students with disability, this includes how to separate personal beliefs and biases when delivering this content¹⁸. Of significant importance, sex education that is taught to young people with disability needs to be accessible and delivered using teaching methods that are targeted to students with disability, and their learning needs need to be accommodated for¹¹.

Czech Republic

In the Czech Republic, students with disability are guaranteed "equal access to education". Students with disability attend mainstream or special education settings. Decisions regarding student placement in a special education setting is dependent on a range of factors, including the student's level of support needs based on their diagnosis and classification under the ICD-11¹⁹.

The Framework Educational Programs is the curriculum that is followed at all levels of schooling. Sex education is included under 'People and Health' within the Framework Educational Programs. The curriculum outcomes are 1) respects the importance of sexuality in connection with health, ethics, morals and positive goals, and 2) understands the importance of restraint in adolescence and responsible sexual behaviour.^{20, 21, 22}

The Republic of Serbia

In The Republic of Serbia, all children, regardless of their disability and level of support needs, have the right to attend regular programs in preschool, primary and secondary education. According to the current *Law on the Basics of the Education System*²³, a student with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum is entitled to an education that acknowledges and accommodates for their specific educational need. This may involve receiving additional support in teaching and learning, either individually or in a group setting, or attending a special educational setting. Since 2012, the curriculum for students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum in schools has been aligned with that of mainstream schools. Teachers adjust curriculum content, adapt learning goals, resource materials and lesson durations to accommodate student needs. The education system of The Republic of Serbia includes some provisions for addressing themes pertaining to sexuality. Typically, these subjects encompass physical well-being, understanding of human anatomy, adolescence and the human reproductive system, human and minority rights, gender-based violence, interpersonal connections, and gender and sexuality.

Despite the absence of mandatory sex education in The Republic of Serbia's school system, there is a significant demand for its implementation throughout all educational levels²⁴. Insufficient attention is given to sex education in schools, and parents frequently adopt a passive stance towards their children's sexual development, deeming them too young to engage with such content²⁵.

Slovak Republic

Inclusive education, guaranteed by the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, aims for all children and students to develop their potential in school, and adult life. Additionally, every child and student should feel included in the school environment and within wider society.

Each educational program for students with disability contains a framework curriculum, including topics such as healthy and unhealthy relationships, learning to respect diverse opinions and needs of others, and managing conflict and rejection²⁶.

The implementation of sex education in Slovakian schools is complex. While the absence and necessity of sex education in schools is evident, its implementation is met with resistance, mostly due to a lack of information, fear, and misunderstanding of sexuality and sex education.

How was the Guide developed?

The Guide was developed using inclusive research methodology. Inclusive research methodology is where researchers work in collaboration with community members to outline areas of concern and solutions to address community concerns²⁷. Ethics approval was provided by Charles University in Prague (Czech Republic), number UKPedF/12949/2024.

Community engagement

64 teachers and 73 students and young people with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum participated in focus groups. Focus groups were run separately for both stakeholder groups and included participants from the Czech Republic, The Republic of Serbia and Slovak Republic (Table 1).

Table 1 Student and teacher participants in the Czech Republic, The Republic of Serbia and Slovak Republic

Number of participants	Czech Republic	Slovak Republic	The Republic of Serbia	Total
Teachers	29	15	20	64
Students and young people with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum	23	16	34	73

In these focus groups, teachers were asked what they believe should be taught in sex education for students with disability, how these topics should be taught and concerns about content. They also discussed shared experiences of delivering sex education in their schools.

Students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum were asked about their experiences with and perceptions of sex education. They were also asked about their satisfaction with how the content of sex education is taught, and their recommendations for its delivery.

The data collected from the focus groups was analysed by our research team, using inductive content analysis²⁸. The findings were linked to the International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education (ITGSE) framework²⁹ and *The Standards for Sexuality Education* in Europe.

UNESCO International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education (ITGSE) framework

The ITGSE was developed in collaboration with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisations (UNESCO), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), The United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Women, and World Health Organisation (WHO). It provides a framework for sex education that is scientifically accurate, age-appropriate, culturally relevant, and grounded in human rights and gender equality²⁸. The ITGSE aims to help countries develop and implement sex education programs that equip young people with the knowledge, skills, and values to make informed decisions about relationships, their well-being and their sexual and reproductive health. Additionally, the ITGSE aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically linking to health, education, gender equality, and reducing inequalities⁷. The ITGSE provides a comprehensive, evidence-based curriculum framework covering a wide range of topics, including relationships, values, culture, human rights, gender, sexual and reproductive health, violence and staying safe, skills for health and well-being, and the human body and development. This framework has been used for this Guide as it aligns with international standards and best practices, ensuring that the information that is provided in this Guide is consistent with global health and education goals.

The ITGSE is organised around eight key concepts, each encompassing several topics. These key concepts form the foundation of a sex education program, ensuring that it covers all necessary aspects of sexual and reproductive health, rights, and relationships. Each of these key concepts is designed to be age-appropriate and developmentally suitable for different stages of a young person's life. By covering these comprehensive topics, the framework ensures that students receive a well-rounded education that empowers them with the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health, well-being and relationships²⁸. The 8 key concepts include:

1. Relationships
2. Values, rights, culture and sexuality
3. Understanding Gender
4. Violence and staying safe
5. Skills for health and well-being
6. The human body and development
7. Sexuality and sexual behaviour
8. Sexual and reproductive health

The Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe WHO framework (The Standards)

The Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe (The Standards), developed by the WHO Regional Office for Europe and the Federal Centre for Health Education, provide comprehensive guidelines emphasising a holistic approach that incorporates physical, emotional, and social aspects of sexuality. The Standards offer age-appropriate content starting from early childhood to adolescence within a rights-based framework that promotes sexual rights and gender equality. The Standards focus on empowering individuals with knowledge, skills, and attitudes for informed decision-making about their sexual and reproductive health, respecting cultural diversity, and promoting inclusivity. Content is evidence-based, and interactive, and participatory teaching methods are recommended to enhance learning outcomes. Additionally, The Standards emphasise the importance of teacher training and support to ensure effective delivery of sex education.

How do the ITGSE and the Standards complement each other?

The ITGSE and the Standards align closely in several key areas. They both incorporate a comprehensive approach to sex education, integrating physical, emotional, and social dimensions of sexuality. They provide guidelines tailored to different age groups, ensuring that the content is suitable for various developmental stages. They both emphasise a rights-based approach, promoting sexual rights and gender equality, and addressing issues such as consent and sexual abuse. Both frameworks aim to empower young people with the knowledge and skills needed to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health. They stress the importance of using scientifically accurate and evidence-based information in sex education. Both frameworks advocate for cultural sensitivity and inclusivity, ensuring that sex education is respectful of diverse backgrounds. They recommend interactive and participatory teaching methods to enhance engagement and positive learning outcomes. Both emphasise the necessity of providing adequate training and resources for educators to effectively deliver sex education.

What is included in this Guide?

Data analysis of the transcribed focus groups revealed 19 key topics that participants believe should be taught in schools. These key topics have been categorised under the 8 key concepts of the ITGSE framework and linked to The Standards (Table 2).

Table 2 **Key topics aligned to ITGSE and The Standards**

ITGSE	The Standards	Key topics from focus groups
Relationships	Relationships and lifestyles	1. Different relationships in our lives 2. Healthy and unhealthy relationships
Values, rights, culture and sexuality	Social and cultural determinants of sexuality (values/norms)	1. Know your laws: what does the law say about the age of consent and marriage, and about incest
Understanding gender	Sexuality	1. Gender identities 2. Sexuality and sexual identities
Violence and staying safe	Sexuality, health and well-being	1. Private and public spaces and behaviours 2. Different types of abuse 3. Safe use of technology 4. Pornography
Skills for health and well-being	Sexuality Emotions	1. Personal boundaries 2. Consent and saying “no” 3. How to deal with rejection
The human body and development	Sexuality, health and well-being The human body and human development	1. Personal hygiene 2. Erections, ejaculation and wet dreams 3. Menstruation
Sexuality and sexual behaviours	Sexuality	1. Masturbation 2. Sex
Sexual and reproductive health	Fertility and reproduction Sexuality, health and well-being	1. Pregnancy and pregnancy prevention 2. Sexual health: reducing the risks of STIs

For each of the 8 key concepts, we provide lesson plans, activities, resources, and teaching suggestions for delivering each topic to students with disability. Evidence-based practices have been integrated throughout the guide to support student learning.

How the key topics align with ITGSE



Evidence-based practices (EBPs)

The EBPs that are incorporated in this Guide include social narratives (SN), technology aided instruction and intervention (TAII), visual supports (VS), task analysis (TA) and modelling. For more information on EBPs for students with disability, please refer to the [Methodology Guide](#)³⁰.



Social narratives

Social narratives (SN) are brief, individualised descriptions of social situations³⁰. They can take a variety of forms such as social stories, social articles, social scripts, cartoons, comic strip conversations, power cards, video modelling and social autopsies. These narratives are often written in a story format and use visual aids such as pictures and cartoons to model the expected behaviour. They are designed to help students understand and navigate social interactions and improve their social skills. Research has shown SN to be particularly effective for on the autism spectrum in improving social understanding, reducing anxiety, learning specific skills and supporting communication³¹. SN are tailored to individual needs and can be used to address a wide range of social

situations, making them a versatile and valuable tool in inclusive education.



Technology-aided instruction and intervention

Technology-aided instruction and intervention (TAII) refers to the use of computers and software programs to deliver instructional material and enhance learning²⁹. Research has demonstrated that TAII can lead to significant improvements in academic performance and engagement for students with disability³². Studies have highlighted its effectiveness in teaching a wide range of skills and its ability to cater to diverse learning styles and needs. TAII often includes tools and features that make learning more accessible, such as text-to-speech, visual aids and computer programs.



Visual supports

Visual supports (VS) refer to the use of images, symbols, charts, and other visual tools to aid understanding, communication, and task completion²⁹. They are especially beneficial for students on the autism spectrum, students with intellectual disability, and students with other learning disabilities³³. VS can include visual schedules, first-then boards, choice boards, visual timers and behavioural charts. The use of VS has been widely researched and proven to be effective in enhancing learning, communication and behaviour.



Task analysis

Task analysis (TA) involves breaking down tasks into smaller, manageable steps, which are then taught sequentially²⁹. TA is often used to teach students with disability how to complete specific skills or activities³⁴. There are several benefits to implementing TA including simplifying learning, providing structure, promoting independence, and facilitating the generalisation of tasks and skills.



Modelling

Modelling involves demonstrating behaviours, skills, or task so that students can observe and learn how to replicate²⁹. This can be particularly useful in teaching social skills, such as how to say “no” assertively or how to ask for consent. Research has shown that modelling can be particularly effective for teaching social, academic, and behavioural skills³⁵. When educators use modelling, they provide a clear example of what is expected, which can be especially helpful for students who may have difficulty understanding verbal instructions alone. By observing an educator or a peer demonstrate these behaviours, students can better

understand and replicate them in their own interactions, thereby improving their social and relational skills in real-world setting. There are different ways that modelling can be used in the classroom, these include live modelling, video modelling, peer modelling and self-modelling.

Evidence informed teaching strategies

Teaching students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum requires implementing specific strategies to support engagement, learning, and retention³⁶. These students benefit from accessible learning materials presented in plain language and incorporating visuals³⁷. Given their potential difficulties with abstract concepts, teachers should use concrete hands-on activities and make explicit links to real-life examples relevant to each student³⁸. Additionally, repetition of key concepts and consistent classroom routines further promote effective learning³⁵.

Understanding your students and how they learn

To best support students with intellectual disability and/or autism, teachers should begin by reviewing existing student planning documentation to understand each student's identified support strategies and learning needs. Teachers can then develop deeper understanding through additional methods including assessment, student interviews, collaboration with parents and families, and review of allied health professional reports³⁵. Applying a strength-based approach that incorporates student interests into teaching and learning programs further enhances educational outcomes³⁹.

How to use this Guide?

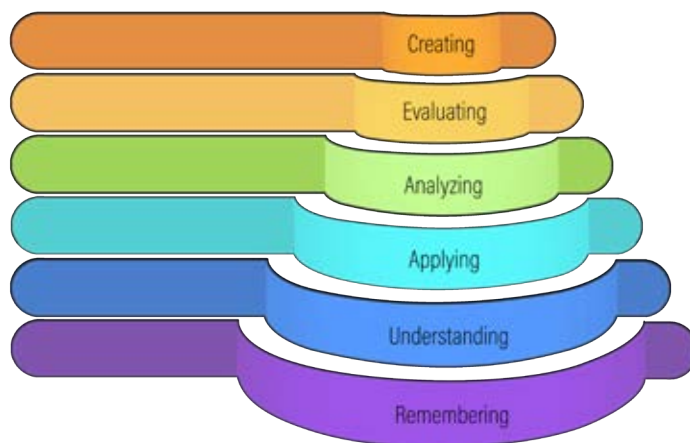
Sex education for students with intellectual disability and on the autism spectrum: A practical methodology guide serves as a resource for educators, outlining crucial topics and effective teaching strategies. The Guide focuses on supporting students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum aged 15 years and older. It is not a comprehensive curriculum, and teachers are encouraged to use this Guide as a part of their teaching and learning programs. The Guide covers essential subjects such as the legitimisation of sexuality and sexual needs, the legal and safe use of technology, the distinction between private and public spaces, and the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships. These topics will be addressed through the use of EBPs providing educators with concrete tools to teach these concepts effectively.

This Guide does not attempt to be a comprehensive sex education program. Teachers can utilise this Guide to develop tailored activities that meet the diverse needs and learning paces of their students. The Guide offers strategies to create a safe learning environment, sensitive to the potential for re-traumatisation and applying a trauma-informed approach to content delivery. By following the structured activities and methodologies presented, educators can facilitate group work and individual learning experiences that promote understanding and healthy behaviours related to sexuality and sexual health, ultimately fostering student self-determination.

The Guide includes 19 topics which were identified as essential for teaching high school students with disability. These topics are organised across the 8 key concepts outline in the ITGSE. Each topic has example activities and resources. Teachers can supplement the suggested activities and make appropriate accommodations for their students. When conducting these lessons, it is crucial that EBPs are implemented with fidelity. Additionally, the learning outcomes that are aligned to the 19 topics have been linked to Bloom's Taxonomy.

Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy is a framework for categorising educational goals. The Taxonomy outlines six levels of cognitive processes, from basic recall of facts to the creation of new ideas, emphasising higher-order thinking skills such as analysing, evaluating, and creating⁴⁰. This structure provides a systematic approach for educators to design curriculum and assessments that foster deeper understanding and critical thinking.



For students with disability, Bloom's Taxonomy can be particularly supportive by offering a clear and structured path for learning that can be tailored to individual needs. By breaking down cognitive processes into manageable steps, educators can create differentiated instruction that accommodates diverse learning preferences and paces. Bloom's Taxonomy encourages the use of various teaching methods, EBPs, and activities, such as social narratives and visual supports, which can be especially effective for students with disability³⁹. This approach not only helps in meeting educational goals but also in building confidence and competence in students as they progress through increasingly complex levels of thinking.

Table 3 **Learning outcomes linked to Bloom's Taxonomy**

Topic	Learning Outcome	Link to Bloom's Taxonomy
Different relationships in our lives	Students can describe the different relationships they can have as they get older.	Remember
	Students can demonstrate appropriate ways to ask someone on a date.	Apply
Healthy and unhealthy relationships	Students can identify healthy and unhealthy behaviours within a relationship.	Understand
Know your laws: What does the law say about the age of consent and marriage, and about incest	Students can recall the laws about age of consent and marriage, and laws about incest.	Remember
Gender identities	Students can give examples of different gender identities (male, female, trans man, trans women, non-binary person, intersex person).	Understand
	Students can describe transphobia.	Understand
Sexuality and sexual identities	Students can give examples of different sexualities and sexual identities.	Understand
	Students can describe homophobia.	Understand
Private and public spaces and behaviours	Students can define public and private spaces.	Remember
	Students can describe why particular behaviours are appropriate in private spaces, but not in public spaces.	Understand
Different types of abuse	Students can list and define different types of abuse (e.g., physical, emotional, sexual, financial).	Remember
	Students can explain the characteristics and signs of different types of abuse.	Remember
Safe use of technology	Students can list the basic rules for the safe use of technology.	Remember
	Students can describe the potential risks and dangers associated with unsafe technology use.	Understand
Pornography	Students can recall facts about the legal aspects of pornography, including age restrictions and consent.	Remember
	Students can apply knowledge about the impacts of pornography to discuss its potential effects on relationships and self-esteem.	Apply

Personal boundaries	Students can define personal boundaries and list different types of personal boundaries (e.g., physical, emotional, digital).	Remember
	Students can demonstrate how to set and communicate their own personal boundaries in various contexts (e.g., friendships, online interactions).	Apply
Consent and saying “no”	Students can explain the principles of consent.	Understand
	Students can describe the importance of mutual respect and communication in obtaining and giving consent.	Understand
How to deal with rejection	Students can list strategies for coping with rejection.	Remember
	Students can demonstrate healthy coping strategies when faced with rejection.	Apply
Personal hygiene	Students can list the basic components of personal hygiene (e.g., handwashing, dental care, bathing, using deodorant).	Remember
	Students can explain the importance of personal hygiene for overall health and well-being.	Understand
Erections, ejaculation and wet dreams	Students can describe how erections, ejaculation and wet dreams are natural and healthy parts of human development.	Understand
Menstruation	Students can recall basic definition of menstruation and identify its biological purpose.	Remember
Masturbation	Students can explain how masturbation can be a normal part of human sexuality and development.	Remember
	Students can outline where and when it is appropriate and not appropriate to masturbate.	Remember
	Students know how to ensure the necessary hygiene if they engage in masturbation.	Apply
Sex	Students can outline what sex is and what it can include.	Remember
	Students can understand that sex can be different in different relationships.	Understand

Pregnancy and pregnancy prevention	Students can explain the factors that contribute to the risk of pregnancy, including age, timing of intercourse, and contraceptive use.	Understand
	Students can recall the names and proper usage of different methods of contraception.	Remember
Sexual health – reducing the risks of STIs	Students can recall the definition of STIs.	Remember
	Students can explain the importance of practicing safe sex to prevent STIs.	Understand

Adapting and personalising for your students

Teachers are encouraged to review each lesson and adapt the content to meet the learning needs of the students within their class. Teachers should use their professional judgement and understanding of their students to inform how to teach each topic.

Each lesson can be delivered in isolation. The authors of this Guide recommend that teachers integrate these lessons into a curriculum that suits their students learning needs and pace.

Understanding the protocols for reporting student disclosures

Students in your class may have experienced sexual assaults, abuse, incest, or rape. It is crucial that you provide students with a ‘content warning’ about each of the topics you will teach, specifically ones that focus on sex, consent, unhealthy relationships, incest, and abuse. Stress to your students that they do not have to participate in lessons that they find triggering or uncomfortable, also explain that they can take breaks from lessons. Additionally, it is key that you are aware of the protocols for reporting disclosures of any type of abuse experienced by your as per existing processes in your context.

Key concept 1: Relationships



Overview of key concept

Relationships within the ITGSE framework focuses on supporting students in developing an understanding of the dynamics of various types of relationships including families, friendships, romantic relationships, and community interactions²⁸. It emphasises the importance of respect, empathy, and effective communication within these relationships. This includes understanding different types of relationships and their significance, building health relationships based on mutual respect and consent, and addressing conflicts and maintaining positive relationships²⁸.

This guide will specifically focus on two topics that were identified through our focus groups: 1) Different relationships as we get older, 2) Healthy and unhealthy relationships.

Topic 1: Different relationships as we get older



What does it mean?

Teaching students about the different relationships they may encounter throughout their lives, and how these relationships evolve, involves several key components. These include understanding family relationships, friendships, and intimate relationships. Students need to learn about the distinct characteristics of each type of relationship, social boundaries, effective communication skills, emotional regulation, and conflict resolution. Additionally, it is important to educate students on how to manage changes in relationships, such as understanding that as they grow older, it may no longer be appropriate to change clothes in front of family members unless they require support. Ultimately, students should be equipped with the skills necessary to establish and maintain healthy relationships.



Why is it important?

Teaching students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum about different relationships and how they evolve is critical for promoting independence and preparing them for adult life. These students need explicit instruction on appropriate behaviours within specific relationships to help them make informed decisions and recognise inappropriate behaviours from others. This is especially important, as individuals with intellectual disability are often sexually assaulted by someone in their environment and may not recognise their experiences as abuse^{16, 17}. Many young people with intellectual disability are discouraged from forming intimate relationships and lack opportunities to develop the necessary skills for healthy relationships^{9, 14, 41}. Despite these barriers, people with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum have the capacity and desire to explore intimate relationships and aspire to have relationships, marry, and have children^{9, 15}.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcome

Students can describe the different relationships they can have as they get older.

Students can demonstrate appropriate ways to ask someone on a date.

Accessible learning outcome

I can describe the different relationships I may have in my life as I get older.

I can show that I know how to ask someone on a date.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **Different relationships in our lives**

Note for teachers:

Teachers are to use their knowledge of students and their personal circumstances. Some students will not live with their parents or families.

Teachers should consider the cultural context of students' backgrounds, as some cultures discourage relationships before marriage.

It is possible that some students during a lesson on this topic may reveal that they have experienced sexual assault, that they have been raped, or have experienced abuse. We recommend that teachers warn in advance about what content will be covered in the given lesson. Teachers should also be prepared for potential disclosures and should know the exact procedure for providing support to these students (school counselor, crisis hotlines, and other forms of support). This procedure includes reporting the incident to the appropriate public authorities that deal with abuse and sexual violence in the given country. Teachers must know how to proceed, including the procedure for fulfilling mandatory reporting obligations.

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can describe the different relationships they can have as they get older.	Visual supports	Appendix 1: Relationships and different types of behaviour Appendix 2: Different relationships in my life
Students can demonstrate appropriate ways to ask someone on a date.	Peer modelling	Appendix 3: How can I tell someone that I like them? Appendix 4: How to invite someone for a date

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Ask students what kinds of relationships they have in their lives.

Prompts:

- What are the different types of relationships?
- What makes them different?
- What makes them similar?



Activity 1: Different relationships in our lives and their behaviours

The teacher will introduce the different classifications of relationships we can have in our lives. Using a whiteboard or a large piece of paper, the teacher will display the different classifications.

- Strangers

- Acquaintances
- Friends
- Close friends and family
- Intimate relationships
- Students will write, draw and use visual supports to display the different behaviours or activities students would do with the different relationships. Students can use [Appendix 1: Relationships and different types of behaviour](#).

Prompts:

- Strangers – don't talk to
- Acquaintances – say "hi" or wave, ask: "How are you?"
- Friends – go to the movies together, having a BBQ
- Close friends and family – hug and tell important things
- Intimate relationships (boyfriend/girlfriend) – cuddling and kiss

**Activity 2: Different relationships in my life**

Students will work individually to complete [Appendix 2: Different relationships in my life](#).

Students will write, draw and use visual supports to identify the different relationships they have in their lives by classifying them into the provided categories.

**Activity 3: How do these relationships change over time**

Teacher will lead students in a discussion about how these relationships can change over time.

Prompts:

- When you were a small child, it was okay to change your clothes in front of your family. Now you are teenagers, do you think you should change your clothes in front of your family? (Stress that this is different if you require support to change your clothes). There may be other situations where it can be different, for example checking for ticks, family changing rooms at the pool, etc.
- Do you think some of these relationships will become more important/less important as you get older?
- Do you think as you get older you would want to spend more time with close friends and a partner than with your family?
- What are some other things that could change as you get older (living arrangements, working etc)?

**Activity 4: Things to think about before you ask someone on a date**

There are no rules to asking someone on a date, but there are some things students should consider before they do. Some students may not have the skills needed for independent travel, buying movie tickets, or ordering and paying for items in a café. The teacher can help students think about what options they have and who can help them if they decide to go on a date.

Prompts:

- Safety: Who are safe people to ask on a date? (Someone at the bus stop or someone that has mutual friends with you.)
- Appropriate: How do you know if this person is appropriate for you to date? (If you get asked out by your support person, that is not appropriate. If you get asked out by someone you have mutual friends with, that would be appropriate.)
- Reciprocated: How do you know if someone might like you back? (Someone doesn't like talking to you or someone who likes sitting with you during lunch.)

- Common interests: It helps if you have interests in common with someone, as it would give you opportunities to do things together that you both enjoy. You don't have to have all the same interests.



Activity 5: How could you ask someone on a date?

There is no correct way to ask someone on a date. But you need to be respectful of that person and their response to your question.

Prompts:

- Ask them when you are on your own or other people can't listen to your conversation. You can ask the person to step aside with you for a moment.
- Give a suggestion of what you would like to do, think of something you have in common. "The new Star Wars movie is coming out; would you like to go on a date and see it together?"
- Be clear that you want to go on a date. If you say "hang out" or "catch up" the other person may think you want to do something as friends.
- Listen to their answer. You need to respect their decision. They do not have to tell you why, that is their choice.
 - If they say "yes", organise a plan. Remember it doesn't mean that your relationship has changed. It does not mean they are your boyfriend/girlfriend, and it does not mean that they have agreed to anything more than that date, such as kissing, hugging or having sex.
 - If they say "maybe" it could be because they want to think about it or need time to process. You can ask them "Can I ask you again next week?"
 - If they say "no" it may hurt your feelings, but they don't have to say "yes", it is up to them! You need to respect their response. This means that you don't ask them for an explanation, and you don't ask them on a date again⁴².

The teacher will distribute [Appendix 3: How can I tell someone I like them?](#) to the students. The students will try to come up with ways to tell someone they like them and how they can ask them out on a date.

Remind students:

1. Choose a private time/place to talk.
2. Ask to talk in private: "Can we step aside for a second? I want to talk to you."
3. Be clear: "I'd like to go on a date with you to see the new Star Wars movie."
4. Listen to their answer. Respect their choice.



Activity 6: How to ask someone on a date

The teacher will distribute [Appendix 4: How to invite someone for a date](#) to the students and read the scenarios aloud to the class. Students can volunteer to come up and practice how to ask someone on a date based on that scenario. Teachers will prompt students to the suggestions for asking someone on a date.

Scenario 1: Close friends	Scenario 2: Classmates	Scenario 3: Strangers
<p>Emma and Liam have been best friends since primary school. They share a lot of common interests and get along well. One day, Liam realises he likes Emma more than a friend and wants to ask her out on a date.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could Liam say to Emma? • What are some of the reactions Emma could have? • How should Liam respond to Emma and her reaction? 	<p>Mia and Ethan have been in the same math class for the past two years. They've worked on group projects together and chat occasionally, but are not close friends. One day after class, Mia approaches Ethan. Mia wants to ask Ethan to go on a date.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could Mia say to Ethan? • What are some of the reactions Ethan could have? • How should Mia respond to Ethan and his reaction? 	<p>Jo catches the bus to school every day. There is a young woman that catches the same bus as Jo. Jo thinks this young woman is pretty, but they have never talked to each other before. Jo wants to ask her out on a date.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it safe for Jo to ask this person out? • Is it appropriate?

Conclusion: Recap what was taught in this lesson. Ask students if they can tell you some of the ways that relationships change overtime.



Teacher reflection

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills for changing relationships and asking someone on a date?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

Topic 2: Healthy and unhealthy relationships



What does it mean?

Teaching students about healthy and unhealthy relationships helps them to build and maintain positive relationships throughout their lives. This includes students developing an understanding of the characteristics of healthy relationships and the characteristics of unhealthy relationships.



Why is it important?

Teaching students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum about healthy and unhealthy relationships and the behaviours within them helps students to develop skills for healthy decision-making regarding sex and relationships¹¹. Research has identified that people with intellectual disability are more at risk of experiencing sexual abuse as a result of not being taught about consent, personal boundaries and healthy relationships¹⁶.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcomes

Students can identify healthy and unhealthy behaviours within a relationship.

Accessible learning outcome

I can tell the difference between good and bad behaviours in a relationship.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **Healthy and unhealthy relationships**

Note for teachers:

Some students in your class might have experienced sexual assaults, abuse or rape. It is crucial that you provide students with a 'content warning' about the topic and that if they need a break or do not want to participate in these lessons, they do not have to. Additionally, it is important that you know the correct procedures for how to support students (school counsellors, hotlines and referral to additional support) and report incidents of sexual assault, abuse or rape. Be aware of the protocols for reporting disclosures.

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can identify healthy and unhealthy behaviours within a relationship.	Visual supports	Appendix 5: Healthy and unhealthy behaviours in a relationship

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Ask students what they think they know about healthy and unhealthy relationships.

Prompts:

- What are some healthy behaviours?
- What are some unhealthy behaviours?
- How do you think a healthy relationship should make you feel?
- How do you think an unhealthy relationship could make you feel?



Activity 1: What makes a relationship healthy?

As a class, watch the [What makes a relationship healthy?](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube. What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- What were some of the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships?
- What did the video say were the three things that all healthy relationships should have?
 - Respect
 - Equity
 - Communication
- What are some of healthy behaviours for the three things that all healthy relationships should have?



Activity 2: Healthy and unhealthy behaviours in a relationship

As a class, students will write, draw and use visual supports to express some of the different behaviours in a healthy relationship.

Prompts:

- What are some things you could do together?
- How would you talk to each other?
- How would you resolve a disagreement?
- How should that relationship make you feel?



Activity 3: Healthy and unhealthy behaviours in a relationship

Students will work individually or in a small group to match the visuals and key words to the different categories; healthy behaviours in a relationship, and unhealthy behaviours in a relationship.

Use the visual supports provided in [Appendix 5: Healthy and unhealthy behaviours in a relationship](#).



Activity 4: Healthy and unhealthy behaviours in a relationship

After students have completed the *Healthy and unhealthy behaviours in a relationship* sorting activity, have the class come together to discuss.

Prompts:

- What visuals/words did you put in the healthy behaviours in a relationship category?
- What visuals/words did you put in the unhealthy behaviours in a relationship category?
- Do we agree? Why or why not?

Conclusion: Recap what was taught in the lesson.

Ask students if they can recall the three things that all healthy relationships should have?

- Respect
- Equity
- Communication

Remind students of ways they can get support if they or someone they know is experiencing intimate partner violence (school councillor, trusted adult, or a support service).



Teacher reflection

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills for understanding healthy and unhealthy relationships and the behaviours of those relationships.
- Have I made it clear to students how they could get support if they are experiencing intimate partner violence?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

Key concept 2:

Values, rights, culture and sexuality



Overview of key concept

Values, rights, culture and sexuality within the ITGSE Framework explores the intersection of sexuality with human rights, values, and cultural contexts²⁸. It aims to promote respect for sexual diversity and gender equality. This includes understanding human rights and their relevance to sexuality, recognising the influence of culture and values on behaviours and attitudes, and promoting gender equality and respect for sexual diversity²⁸.

This guide will specifically focus on one topic that was identified through our focus groups:

- 1) Know your laws: what does the law say about the age of consent and marriage, and about incest.

Topic 1: Know your laws: what does the law say about the age of consent and marriage, and about incest



What does it mean?

Students with disability need to be explicitly taught about the key aspects of the law and how it relates to them. This includes laws about age of consent and marriage and, about incest. Students should be taught about the fundamental aspects of consent, emphasising its necessity in all sexual activities and the importance of enthusiastic, informed, and voluntary agreement. This includes the legal age of engaging in sex, as being under the legal age means the law has determined that you are too young to provide consent. Education on marriage laws should cover legal age requirements, rights within marriage, and the legal significance of marital consent. Legal definitions and implications of incest should be taught, so students can recognise and avoid unlawful and harmful relationships.



Why is it important?

Teaching young people with disability about laws related to consent, marriage and incest is vital for their empowerment and protection. People with disability have higher rates of experiencing sexual assaults and abuse, including incest^{9, 43}. Teaching young people with disability about the laws and their rights enables informed decision-making, fosters autonomy, and helps prevent exploitation and abuse. It ensures individuals understand their legal rights and responsibilities, promoting lawful and ethical behaviour while enhancing their ability to form healthy, respectful relationships.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcomes

Students can recall the laws about age of consent and marriage, and laws about incest.

Accessible learning outcome

I know the age of consent and marriage.
I know the laws about incest.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **Consent to sexual activity**

Note for teachers:

Some students in your class might have experienced sexual assaults, abuse or rape. It is crucial that you provide students with a 'content warning' about the topic and that if they need a break or do not want to participate in these lessons, they do not have to. Additionally, it is important that you know the correct procedures for how to support students (school counsellors, hotlines and referral to additional support) and report incidents of sexual assault, abuse or rape. Be aware of the protocols for reporting disclosures. Teachers need to be aware of the laws in their country regarding age of consent, age of marriage and laws about incest. These laws are different in countries throughout Europe and the world.

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can recall the laws about age of consent and marriage, and laws about incest.	Modelling	Appendix 6: Laws and consent Appendix 7: Laws and marriage Appendix 8: Laws and incest

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Ask students what they know about laws, specifically laws about sexual activity.

Prompts:

- Do you know what the word law means?
- Can you think of any laws that you know? (Can a 10-year-old drive a car? No, that is against the law.)
- Do you know if there are laws about the age you can consent to sex?
- Do you know if there are laws about how old you need to be before you can get married?
- Do you know if there are laws about sexual activity between family members?

A law is a rule made by the government that everyone must follow. Laws are there to keep people safe and ensure fairness. Laws about sex and sexual activity help protect your rights and ensure that everyone respects each other's boundaries and consent.



Activity 1: Laws and consent

Ask the students what they know about laws and consent. Write the students brainstorm on the whiteboard.

Prompts:

- How old do you have to be to give consent to sex?
- What does consent mean? Is there a law about giving consent?
- Why is there a law for age of consent?
- Is it against the law to have sex with someone under the age of 14? What if they want to?

Laws and consent:

1. You can give consent when you are 15 years old.
2. If you are under 15 you cannot give consent.
3. Consent is when both people are over 15 and agree to have sex with each other.

On a large piece of paper or on the whiteboard, display the rules about age of consent.



Activity 2: Scenarios for laws and consent

The teacher will remind students of the laws and consent.

1. You can give consent when you are 15 years old.
2. If you are under 15 you cannot give consent.
3. Consent is when both people are over 15 and agree to have sex with each other.

The teacher gives out to students [Appendix 6: Laws and consent](#) and reads a scenario aloud to the class. The class is to discuss the scenarios and if the people in the scenario are within the law or breaking the law.

Teachers will prompt students to refer to the laws of consent.

Scenario 1: Legal age for consent	Scenario 2: Consent	Scenario 3: Comprehensive consent
<p>Jack is 18, he is dating Cassy, who is 14. Jack and Cassy both want to have sex with each other.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is Cassy old enough to give consent to have sex? • Could Jack get in trouble if he had sex with Cassy? Even if Cassy said she wants to? 	<p>Alex and Taylor are both 18. Alex and Taylor are watching a movie one night at Alex's house. During the movie, they are kissing. Alex tries to take off Taylor's clothes, but Taylor says "No, I am not ready to have sex." Alex continues to pressure Taylor, saying it's a normal part of a relationship to have sex.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are Taylor and Alex legally able to give consent? • Did Taylor give their consent? • What is Alex doing? Think about what he is doing when someone has clearly said no. Is this okay? 	<p>Jordan and Cammy are both 19. They have been in a relationship for several months. They are ready to have sex with each other. They have a talk about what they want to do and what they agree on doing together. They make sure they have both given consent and are comfortable.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are Jordan and Cammy legally able to give consent? • Have they given consent to have sex? How do you know? • Is this a good example of consent? Why/why not?



Activity 3: Laws and marriage

Ask the students what they know about laws and marriage. Write the student brainstorm on the whiteboard.

Prompts:

- What does marriage mean?
- Do you think people have to be a particular age to get married?
- Do you think both people have to want to get married for it to be legal?
- Can you get married to a close relative?
- Can you marry more than one person?

Laws and marriage:

1. You have to be 18 years old to get married.
2. Both people need to consent to marriage.
3. You can only be married to one person at a time.
4. You cannot marry someone who is a close relative (parent or sibling).

On a large piece of paper or on the whiteboard, display the laws about marriage.



Activity 4: Scenarios for laws and marriage

The teacher will remind students of the laws and marriage.

1. You have to be 18 years old to get married.
2. Both people need to consent to marriage.
3. You can only be married to one person at a time.
4. You cannot marry someone who is a close relative (parent or sibling).

The teacher gives all students [Appendix 7: Laws and marriage](#) and reads it aloud to the class. The class is to discuss the scenarios and if the people in the scenario are within the law or breaking the law.

Scenario 1: Underaged engaged couple	Scenario 2: Pressure to marry	Scenario 3: Previously contracted marriage	Scenario 4: Marriage between siblings
<p>Amanda is 15 years old. Her boyfriend James is 17. James asked Amanda to marry him. He bought a ring and proposed at a fancy restaurant.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can Amanda and James get married? • Why/why not? • When would they be able to get married? 	<p>Bianca's parents have introduced her to a man named Fred. They are both 19 years old. Fred and Bianca's parents start to organise a wedding. Bianca does not want to get married, but her family is pressuring her. They say she should be married before she turns 20, that is the tradition.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does Bianca have to marry Fred? • Can people pressure or force you to get married? • What could Bianca do? 	<p>Sam and Fiona have been married for 2 years. Sam says he wants to get a second wife.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it legal for Sam to have more than one wife? • What is this called? 	<p>Jason and Lu are siblings. They want to get married because they say they are in love.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it legal for them to get married? • Why do you think it is against the law? • Is it okay for you to have a relationship or engage in sexual activity with a family member?



Activity 5: Laws about incest

On a whiteboard, the teacher asks the students to tell them what they know about laws and sexual activity with family members. The teacher will write up the student's brainstorm.

Prompts:

- What does incest mean?
- Have you heard that word before?
- Why do you think that it is against the law?

On a large piece of paper or on the whiteboard, display the laws and incest.

Laws and incest:

1. It is illegal to have sexual activity between relatives.
2. This includes parents and their children, siblings, and other close relatives like grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins.
3. Incest is against the law to protect people from being hurt or forced into relationships with close family members. These laws help keep families safe and healthy.

On a large piece of paper or on the whiteboard, display the rules about laws and incest.



Activity 6: Scenarios for laws and incest

The teacher will remind students of the laws and incest.

1. It is illegal to have sexual activity between relatives.
2. This includes parents and their children, siblings, and other close relatives like grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins.
3. Incest is against the law to protect people from being hurt or forced into relationships with close family members. These laws help keep families safe and healthy.

The teacher distributes the [Appendix 8: Laws and incest](#) to all students and reads a scenario aloud to the class. The class is to discuss the scenarios and if the people in the scenario are within the law or breaking the law.

Teachers will prompt students to refer to the laws and incest.

Scenario 1: Sexual intercourse between siblings	Scenario 2: Sexual intercourse between parents and children	Scenario 3: Sexual intercourse between parents and children	Scenario 4: Sexual intercourse between grandparents and grandchildren
<p>Lisa and her half-brother Tom sometimes kiss each other. They want to go on dates like a real couple. They are worried what people will say about them being in a relationship.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this relationship okay? • Is it against the law? • Why is this relationship called incest? • Why is it not okay for Lisa and Tom to kiss and be in a relationship. 	<p>Dan is 40. His wife died. He has a daughter Marie, who is 17 years old. Dan wants to have sex with his daughter Marie. Marie agrees.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this relationship okay? • Marie is 17 years old. Can she legally consent to sex? • Is it against the law? • Why is this relationship called incest? • Why can't Dan and Marie have sex? 	<p>Mrs. Alena is 35 years old. She doesn't have a husband. She lives only with her son Adam. Adam is 14 years old. Adam wants to have sex with his mother.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can Adam legally consent to sex? • Can Adam have sex with his mother? • Why is this relationship called incest? 	<p>Lucie is 16 years old. Sometimes her parents send her to her grandmother and grandfather for the weekend. When her grandmother falls asleep, her grandfather lies down in bed with Lucie. He touches her breasts, vulva and vagina. Lucie's grandfather tells her that he loves her very much and it will be their secret.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it okay that Lucie's grandfather touches her breasts, vulva and vagina? • Can a grandfather have sex with his granddaughter? • Should Lucie keep this a secret and not tell anyone? • Why is this relationship called incest?

Conclusion:

- Recap the key concepts discussed in the lesson.
- Ask students if they can explain one of the laws that was taught today.
- Ask students if they remember the age of consent and the age of marriage.
- Ask students if they know what incest is and why it is a law.

**Teacher reflection**

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- Did the lesson promote a safe and inclusive learning environment where students felt comfortable discussing consent and marriage laws and incest laws?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills about understanding the laws and what they are?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

Key concept 3: Understanding gender



Overview of key concept

Understanding gender within the ITGSE Framework focuses on gender identity, roles, and norms²⁸. It seeks to challenge stereotypes and promote a comprehensive understanding of gender. This includes defining gender and understanding gender identity and expression, analysing the impact of gender roles and stereotypes, and promoting gender equity and challenging harmful norms²⁸.

This guide will specifically focus on two topics that were identified through our focus groups: 1) Gender identities, and 2) Sexuality and sexual identities.

Topic 1: Gender identities



What does it mean?

Teaching students about different gender identities involves explaining that gender is a spectrum and can differ from the sex assigned at birth. It includes educating students about various gender identities such as male, female, transgender, non-binary, genderqueer, and intersex. The goal is to help students understand and respect that people can identify in many different ways and that each person's gender identity is valid and important.



Why is it important?

Understanding different gender identities is important for high school students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum as it fosters inclusivity, empathy, and respect for diversity. This knowledge helps students recognise and value the varied ways people identify and express themselves. Research has shown that people on the autism spectrum identify with a broad range of gender identities, more than that of people without autism⁴⁴. People on the autism spectrum also have higher rates of gender-dysphoria⁴⁵. Therefore, it is important for young people on the autism spectrum to have the knowledge about gender identities, so they can feel understood and respected for who they are, which is essential for their emotional and social well-being.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcomes

Students can give examples of different gender identities (male, female, trans man, trans woman, non-binary person, intersex person).

Students can describe transphobia.

Accessible learning outcome

I can explain different gender identities.

I can describe what transphobia is.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: Gender identities

Note for teachers:

Teachers should use their professional judgement when teaching this topic as students in your class may be questioning their gender identity or living as trans or non-binary.

This is a topic that could bring up students' experience of being subjected to bullying, ensure that your classroom is a safe place for all students and that you model appropriate language and attitudes for all students to feel included.

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can give examples of different gender identities (male, female, trans man, trans woman, non-binary person, intersex person).	Peer modelling	Video player Appendix 9: How to be a good ally to people with different gender identities
Students can describe transphobia.		

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Ask students what they know about different gender identities.

Prompts:

- What are some of the different gender identities?
- Do you think that people can only identify as boys/men or girls/women?
- Have you heard the word 'intersex' before?
- Have you heard the word 'transgender' before?



Activity 1: Range of gender identities

As a class, watch [The range of gender identities](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- What is a person's sex?
- What is a person's gender?
- Are they always the same?
- What are some of the different ways someone can identify?
- Do you remember the three rules that can help you:
 1. Don't make assumptions about someone's gender.
 2. Use affirmed names and pronouns.
 3. Be a friend or an ally.



Activity 2: My friend is transgender

As a class, watch the [My friend is transgender](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube.

Stop the video at 2:55, to facilitate a discussion.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- What did Jim say about gender and sex? Is this inclusive to people who are transgender or non-binary?
- Why did Cassie get upset with Jim and what he was saying?
- Do you think that what Jim said about their friend Glenda was kind and supportive?
- What do you think Jim could have done differently?

Watch the rest of the [My friend is transgender](#) video.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- Was it brave for Glenda to talk to Jim?
- Should Jim respect Glenda and not share their gender identity with other people?
- How could Jim have responded to Glenda using the rules:
 1. Don't make assumptions about someone's gender.
 2. Use affirmed names and pronouns.
 3. Be a friend or an ally.



Activity 3: How to be a good ally to people and their gender identities

The teacher will remind students of the three rules for being a good ally:

1. Don't make assumptions about someone's gender.
2. Use affirmed names and pronouns.
3. Be a friend or an ally.

The teacher distributes the [Appendix 9: How to be a good ally to people with different gender identities](#) to all students and reads a scenario aloud to the class, students can volunteer to come up and practice how to be a good ally based on that scenario. Teachers will prompt students to refer to the three rules of being a good ally.

Scenario 1: Your friend comes out to you as transgender	Scenario 2: Your friend is being bullied because of their gender identity
<p>You have been friends with Taylor since you were in primary school. They asked to come to your house. They want to tell you something very important. They come out to you as transgender. They no longer want to use he/him pronouns and now want you to use she/her pronouns. They ask you not to tell anyone because they aren't ready for other people to know yet.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could you say to Taylor when they come out to you as transgender? • Think about things you could say to make them feel supported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank you for sharing this with me • I am honoured that you feel safe to tell me this • Of course I will use the pronouns you identify with • I will not tell anyone, because that is your business and you should only tell who you want, when you are ready. • How could you support Taylor? • What kind of support do you think they may need? • Could you ask them what support they could need? 	<p>Your friend Alex identifies as non-binary. Alex is experiencing bullying at school because of their gender identity. People misgender Alex. They tease Alex for what they wear to school.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does Alex have a right to feel safe at school? • What could you do to support them? • What would you say to someone who is bullying Alex at school?

Conclusion: Recap what was taught in this lesson, emphasising the importance of being an ally and supporting friends who face challenges related to gender identity.

Ask students if they can tell you some of the different gender identities people might have.

Ask students to recall the 3 rules for being a good ally:

1. Don't make assumptions about someone's gender.
2. Use affirmed names and pronouns.
3. Be a friend or an ally.

Remind students that there is support available to them or their friends, whether from school counselors, trusted adults, or support organisations.



Teacher reflection

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- Did the students feel safe enough to openly discuss gender?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to gender identities and supporting their friends?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

Topic 2: Sexuality and sexual identities



What does it mean?

Teaching students about different sexualities and sexual identities involves explaining that sexuality is a broad and diverse aspect of human experience that encompasses a range of attractions and orientations. This includes educating students about heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, asexuality, pansexuality, and other sexual orientations. The aim is to help students understand that sexual identity is unique to each person and can vary greatly. This education promotes acceptance, respect, and empathy for the diversity of sexual orientations, encouraging students to appreciate and support both their own and others' sexual identities.



Why is it important?

Understanding different sexualities and sexual identities is important for high school students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum because it fosters acceptance and empathy towards the diverse ways people experience attraction and relationships. Additionally, research states that people on the autism spectrum report higher rates of sexual attractions beyond heterosexuality compared to their peers without autism⁴³. This knowledge helps students develop a positive sense of self and respect for others, reducing stigma and discrimination. It promotes a supportive environment where all individuals feel valued and understood, which is essential for their emotional and social well-being.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcomes

Students can give examples of different sexualities and sexual identities.

Students can describe homophobia.

Accessible learning outcome

I can list examples of different sexualities.

I can describe what homophobia is.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **Sexuality and sexual identities**

Note for teachers:

Teachers should use their professional judgement when teaching this topic as students in your class may be questioning their sexuality identity or living openly as gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual or pansexual. This is a topic that could bring up students' experience of being subjected to bullying, ensure that your classroom is a safe place for all students and that you model appropriate language and attitudes for all students to feel included. In addition to heterosexual and homosexual orientations, students may express or disclose a range of sexual interests or identities, some of which may be considered non-normative. It is important for educators to respond in a respectful, non-judgmental, and supportive manner, recognising that all students — including those with disability — have the right to explore and understand their sexuality in a safe and inclusive environment. If a student expresses or demonstrates a sexual interest that causes concern, particularly if it involves risk of harm to themselves or others, or includes non-consensual themes, educators should respond with sensitivity and discretion.

This may involve initiating a private, respectful conversation with the student and, where appropriate, involving parents or carers in a way that upholds the student's dignity and privacy.

If required, teachers should follow their school's established referral processes to connect students with a qualified professional, such as a psychologist, school counsellor, or sexologist, to support the student's wellbeing. It is essential that any concerns are managed confidentially and that information is not shared beyond those directly involved in supporting the student's needs. Educators should avoid assumptions and approach all conversations with the understanding that sexuality is diverse and that students with disability, like all students, benefit from accurate information, emotional support, and access to appropriate services.

Research tells us that individuals with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum are not inherently more likely to engage in inappropriate sexual behaviours because of their diagnosis. Instead, such behaviours often result from negative developmental experiences, limited social learning, poor communication skills, and a lack of appropriate sex education⁴⁶⁴⁷. Promoting healthy psychosexual development requires supportive family environments, clear communication, and sex education tailored to individual learning needs.

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can give examples of different sexualities and sexual identities.	Visual support	Poster paper
Students can describe homophobia.		Art supplies Appendix 10: Matching different sexual identities

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Ask students what they know about different sexual identities.

Prompts:

- What are some of the different sexual identities?
- Have you heard the words gay or lesbian before?
- Do you know what these words mean?



Activity 1: Sexual orientation explained

As a class, watch video the [Sexual orientation explained](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- Does everyone have a sexual orientation?
- Do we all have the same sexual orientation?
- Can you remember some of the different sexual orientations?



Activity 2: Draw the definition

Students are to work as a class or in small groups to complete the activity. Students add visuals and drawings to the definitions of different sexual identities. Students are encouraged to be respectful during this activity. For the activity, the teacher can distribute [Appendix 10: Matching different sexual identities](#).

- Heterosexual – men who are sexually attracted to women
– women who are sexually attracted to men
- Gay – men who are sexually attracted to men

- Lesbian – women who are sexually attracted to women
- Bisexual – someone who is sexually attracted to both men and women
- Asexual – someone who does not feel sexual attraction
- Pansexual – someone who is attracted to people of all genders



Activity 3: What is homophobia?

As a class discuss what homophobia means.

“Homophobia is when someone has negative attitudes towards gay, lesbian and bisexual people.”

Prompts:

- Have you heard or seen someone be homophobic?
- Have you seen homophobia in the media (on TV or in the news)?
- How do you think LGBTQIA+ people feel when someone is homophobic towards them?



Activity 4: How to be a LGBTQIA+ ally?

As a class, watch the [How to be a LGBTQIA+ ally?](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- What does it mean to be an ally?
 - “It is someone who does not identify as LGBTQIA+ but supports and stands up for people that are”.
- What were the suggestions from the video about being a good ally?
 - Let them know they can talk to you.
 - Stand up for them if they are being bullied for their identity.
 - Get involved in an organisation or group that supports the LGBTQIA+ community.
- What are some of the supports students can access?
 - school counselors,
 - trusted adults, or
 - support organisations.



Activity 5: Posters for supporting LGBTQIA+ people

Students can work individually or in groups to create a poster about:

- Raising awareness about homophobia, or
- Our school is a safe place for the LGBTQIA+ community.

Provide students with different resources including:

- Magazines
- Catchy slogans
- Visuals you have prepared (you can use the visuals from the *Sexual Identity Match* activity)
- Pens and poster paper

Prompts:

- What is the key message for your poster?
- Can you think of a catchy slogan?
- What visuals could you use to get your message across?
- Will you provide resource information like a support hotline or a website link on your poster?

Conclusion: Recap what was learnt this lesson, emphasising the importance of being an ally and supporting friends who face challenges related to their sexual orientation.

Ask students if they can tell you some of the different sexual orientations.

Ask students to recall the 3 suggestions for being a good ally:

1. Let them know they can talk to you.
2. Stand up for them if they are being bullied for their identity.
3. Get involved in an organisation or group that supports the LGBTQIA+ community.

Remind students that there is support available to them or their friends, for example, school counselors, trusted adults, or support organisations.

**Teacher reflection**

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- Did the students feel safe enough to openly discuss sexual orientation?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills for understanding different sexual identities and standing up against homophobia?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

Key concept 4:

Violence and staying safe



Overview of key concept

Violence and staying safe within the ITGSE Framework addresses various forms of violence, including sexual violence, and provides strategies for safety and support²⁸. This includes identifying different forms of violence, including physical, emotional, and sexual violence, understanding consent and the importance of boundaries, and learning strategies for personal safety and seeking help²⁸.

This guide will specifically focus on four topics that were identified through our focus groups: 1) Private and public spaces and behaviours, 2) Different types of abuse, 3) Safe use of technology and 4) Pornography.

Topic 1: Private and public spaces and behaviours



What does it mean?

Private and public spaces and behaviours refers to understanding the appropriate contexts and conduct for various aspects of personal and social interactions. Private spaces are areas where individuals have a right to privacy and personal boundaries, such as their homes or private rooms, where intimate behaviours and being naked can occur. Public spaces are areas shared with others, such as schools, parks, or social gatherings, where behaviours should adhere to social norms and respect for others' privacy. This concept teaches students about the differences between private and public settings, the importance of respecting boundaries in both contexts, and appropriate behaviours for each setting. It also helps students navigate their own comfort levels and understand social expectations, contributing to their overall sense of safety and respect in interactions.



Why is it important?

Research has shown that some people with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum have engaged in inappropriate sexual behaviours in public, such as masturbation⁴⁸. These inappropriate behaviours should be seen a result of lacking sex education, specifically about public and private behaviours and spaces, and not because the person's disability¹⁶.

Education about private and public spaces and behaviours is vital for high school students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum as it helps them understand and navigate the boundaries between personal privacy and social expectations. By learning where and in what setting certain behaviours are appropriate, students can better respect their own and others' boundaries, promoting healthier and more respectful interactions. Education on this topic fosters awareness of personal safety, reduces the risk of inappropriate behaviours, and supports students in making informed decisions about their actions in different settings and under different circumstances.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcomes

Students can define public and private spaces.

Students can describe why particular behaviours are appropriate in private spaces, but not in public spaces.

Accessible learning outcome

I know what a public and a private space is.

I know why I can do some things in private, but not in public.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **Private and public spaces and behaviours**

Note for teachers:

The concepts of 'private space' and 'public space' are abstract. Students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum often have difficulty with understanding abstract concepts.

It is important to build on the prior knowledge and understanding of students. This will help students to make sense of the abstract concepts 'private space' and 'public space'.

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can define public and private spaces.	Visual supports	Appendix 11: Public and private spaces Appendix 12: Privacy Appendix 13: Private Information
Students can describe why particular behaviours are appropriate in private spaces, but not in public spaces.	Peer modelling	

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Ask the class what they know about public and private behaviours and spaces.

Prompts:

- Have you heard these words before?
- What do they mean?
- What are some examples of public spaces?
- What are some examples of private spaces?
- What are some examples of public behaviours?
- What are some examples of private behaviours?



Activity 1: What is a private space and what is a public space?

The teacher provides students with a definition of 'private space' and 'public space'.

- A private space/privacy is where you are alone or with your partner. Nobody's watching. Nobody is listening. Privacy is a place where no one can just walk in and disturb me.
- A public space is where you are with other people in a shared space. People can see you. People can hear you.

They teacher display the images from [Appendix 11 :Public and private spaces](#).

For each picture, the teacher leads students in a discussion about the place in the picture, is it private or public, and what behaviours are okay in this space.

Prompts:

- Can someone see you here?
- Can someone hear you here?
- Are people with you here?
- If someone is there, what is your relationship to them?
- Is this space private or public?
- How are you supposed to behave there? Is nudity ok in this space?



Activity 2: Rules for public and private spaces

Using the visual supports from [Appendix 11: Public and private spaces](#) students are to come up with rules for private and public space. Rules can be written on a whiteboard or on a large piece of paper. Students can use words, visual supports or drawings to explain the rules.

Prompts:

- What can you do in a public space?
- What are you not allowed to do in a public space?
- What can you do in a private space?



Activity 3: Private and public spaces

The teacher distributes [Appendix 11: Public and private spaces](#) to the class. Students will work individually or in small groups to sort the visual supports into the corresponding categories. What is a private space? What is a public space?



Activity 4: Scenarios about privacy

The teacher distributes [Appendix 12: Privacy](#) to the class. The teacher reads the scenarios aloud to the class and facilitates discussion.

Scenario 1: Anna's bedroom	Scenario 2: Jan's privacy	Scenario 3: Frank and Paul want to have privacy together
<p>Anna is 17 years old. She has her own bedroom in her family home. Her room has a door, but the door is made of glass. This means that people can see into her room even with the door closed. Anna does not feel like she has privacy in her bedroom.</p>	<p>Jan is 17. She lives with her mother, father and 5-year-old brother. Jan has her own bedroom with a door that closes but does not lock. Sometimes people in Jan's family do not respect her privacy or the boundaries of her bedroom. Her family members will come into her room without knocking.</p>	<p>Frank and Paul are both 16 years old. They have been dating for 6 months. When Frank and Paul are together, they enjoy kissing and cuddling each other. They want to be more intimate with each other. They feel like they are ready to have sex. Sex is a private behaviour.</p>
<p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does Anna have privacy to change her clothes? (No, she does not, as her bedroom door is made of glass and people can see into her bedroom from outside the door.) Does Anna have privacy to masturbate? (No, she does not, as her bedroom door is made of glass and people can see into her bedroom from outside the door.) Does Anna have privacy to have sex or be intimate with her boyfriend? (No, she does not, as her bedroom door is made of glass and people can see into her bedroom from outside the door.) What could Anna do to have more privacy in her bedroom? (Anna could put up a sheet to cover the glass, she could make a collage with images she likes to cover the glass.) How can she talk to her parents about her privacy? What could she say to them? (Anna could discuss with her parents that because she is older, she wants to have more privacy, and she does not want people to be able to see into her room. She could discuss with them some solutions for how she could have more privacy.) 	<p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Her mother enters the bedroom without knocking. (How could Jan set some boundaries with her mother? Could she talk to her mother? Could she put up a sign saying "Please knock" on her door?) Her mother brings the washed clothes and puts them in the wardrobe. (Jan could talk to her mother about doing her own laundry or ask her mother to leave her clean clothes outside her bedroom which she will put away herself.) Her parents go into her bedroom to check that it is tidy. (Jan could discuss with her parents that she would like to be home when they do checks of her room. She could speak to them about what they expect her to do with her room and discuss how she could meet these expectations.) Her brother goes into her bedroom to play. He opens her drawers and looks at her belongings. (Jan could discuss with her parents that she doesn't want her younger brother to play in her room. She could also talk to her brother about her space and ask that he only plays there when he has asked and she has said it is okay.) 	<p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where would it be appropriate for them to have sex? (In a bedroom, alone and with the door closed.) Where would it not be appropriate for them to have sex? (In public spaces, or when someone could come into the room.) What makes a space private? (When you have privacy, you are in a private space, people cannot see you or what you are doing.) Why would Frank and Paul want to have their privacy when having sex? (They would not want people to interrupt them, they would want to be able to be relaxed and not worried someone would see them or come into the room without their knowledge.)



Activity 5: How do you manage your privacy?

Teacher is to lead a discussion, asking students about their privacy in their homes.

Prompts:

- Who do you live with?
- Do you have your own bedroom?
- Do you share a bedroom with siblings?
- Does your bedroom have a door?
- Do you have privacy in your home?



Activity 6: Scenarios about private and public information

The teacher introduces the concept of private information and public information.

Private information is personal information about you, your relationships, your experiences and your body, and your health care. This information is only for you and sometimes people you trust.

There is private information that is good to tell someone so that people can help you. For example, if something bad is happening to you (someone is hurting you, someone is taking your money, someone is sexually abusing you). You can share this private information with a trusted adult, a teacher, a counsellor, a doctor, or social services.

Prompts:

- Do you have people in your life that you trust to tell private information to?
- Are there some things that you don't tell anyone?
- Is it okay to keep private information to yourself?
- Why do you think private information should not be shared with everyone?
- What if someone is hurting you? It is private information, but you need help.
- Should you tell someone you trust? Who could that person be?

The teacher distributes [Appendix 13: Private information](#) to the class. They read the scenarios aloud to the class and facilitate discussion.

Scenario 1: Private information in public spaces	Scenario 2: Private information with an acquaintance	Scenario 3: Private information but I need help
<p>Anna is at the hairdressers. The hairdresser asks her “How are you today?”. Anna answers “I got my period today and I don’t feel well at all. Are you having your period today too?”.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this information private or public? • Should Anna be talking about this with a stranger? • Who do you think Anna could talk to about getting her period? 	<p>Tom is having lunch in the cafeteria. The gym teacher greets him and asks “Tom, I noticed you’re dating Jess. How is it working out for you?”. Tom replies “We haven’t had sex yet, but I hope we will soon. Do you also have a girlfriend, and do you have sex with her?”.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this information private or public? • Should Tom be talking about this with a teacher? • Is it okay for Tom to ask his teacher about his sexual experiences? • Is it okay for a teacher to tell a student about sexual experiences? • Who do you think Tom could talk to about wanting to have sex with his girlfriend? 	<p>Tom lives with his mum and stepdad. Sometimes his stepdad will come into his bedroom at night. Tom’s stepdad will sometimes touch his penis. Sometimes his stepdad force Tom to touch his penis. Tom does not like this and doesn’t know what to do.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this behaviour okay? • Do you think Tom needs help? • Do you think Tom should tell someone about this private information? • Who could Tom talk to?

Conclusion: Recap the key learnings of this lesson with the class.

Ask students if they can recall the differences between private and public spaces, and private and public behaviours.



Teacher reflection

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself.

- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills for identifying private and public spaces, and private and public behaviours?
- Do I need to adjust the scenarios, so they are more relevant to my students?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

Topic 2: Different types of abuse



What does it mean?

Abuse can significantly harm a person's physical and mental health and overall well-being. Forms of abuse include physical, emotional, verbal, spiritual, sexual, and financial abuse, as well as stalking and harassment. Developing knowledge, understanding, and skills to identify abuse, acknowledging that it should not occur, and learning how to get help promote self-determination and enhance overall well-being. Additionally, it supports young people with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum to have healthy relationships throughout their lives.



Why is it important?

People with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum may have difficulties identifying and reporting abuse due to a lack of knowledge of healthy relationships, appropriate boundaries, consent and what constitutes abuse¹⁶. Additionally, they may have difficulties expressing that they have experienced abuse due to challenges with communication skills, the proximity of their abusers and being discouraged from reporting⁴⁹. These challenges put people with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum at a greater risk of experiencing abuse⁹. It is crucial that students are explicitly taught to identify the differences between healthy and unhealthy behaviours in relationships, and the signs of abuse. Omitting this topic can put students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum at a higher risk of experiencing abuse and not reporting when it happens.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcomes

Students can list and define different types of abuse (e.g. physical, emotional, sexual, financial).

Students can explain the characteristics and signs of different types of abuse.

Accessible learning outcome

I know the different types of abuse.

I know the signs and behaviours of different types of abuse.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **Different types of abuse**

Note for teachers:

Some students in your class might have experienced sexual assaults, abuse or rape. It is crucial that you provide students with a 'content warning' about the topic and that if they need a break or do not want to participate in these lessons, they do not have to. Additionally, it is important that you know the correct procedures for how to support students (school counselors, hotlines and referral to additional support) and report incidents of sexual assault, abuse or rape. Be aware of the protocols for reporting disclosures.

It should be stressed to students that their school can offer them support if they have experienced abuse.

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can list and define different types of abuse (e.g., physical, emotional, sexual, financial).	Visual supports Peer modelling	Video player Appendix 14: Signs of abuse Appendix 15: Support during abuse
Students can explain the characteristics and signs of different types of abuse.		

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Explain to the class that you will be talking about things that could upset them or make them angry. If they need a break, they can take one, and if they want to talk to a teacher after the lesson, the teacher will be happy to listen.

Ask the class what they know about abuse.

Prompts:

- Have you heard that word before?
- What does it mean?
- Do you know any types of abuse?
- What are some behaviours you may see in an abusive relationship?



Activity 1: Intimate partner violence and how to get help

As a class, watch the [Intimate partner violence](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- What does intimate violence mean? "It is a pattern of behaviours used by one partner to control and maintain power over another partner in an intimate relationship".
- What are some of the types of abuse someone can experience? (Physical, emotional, stalking and harassment, sexual and financial).
- What are some ways you can get help if you or someone you know is experiencing intimate partner violence? (School councillor, trusted adult, or a support service).



Activity 2: Behaviours of abuse

The teacher distributes [Appendix 14: Signs of abuse](#) to the class. Students will work individually or in a small group to match the visuals and key words to the different categories of abuse (Physical, emotional, stalking and harassment, sexual and financial).



Activity 3: Class discussion – Behaviours of abuse

After students have completed the sorting activity, have the class come together to discuss.

Prompts:

- What visuals/words did you put under the different categories of abuse?
- Do we agree? Why or why not?



Activity 4: How to get help if you experience abuse

You will discuss with the class the different ways students can get support if they have experienced abuse. You will need to research what is available at your school and in your local area.

This should include:

- Talk to a teacher
- Talk to an adult you trust
- Talk to the school counselor/school psychologist
- Community services within your local area



Activity 5: Way to get support if you experience abuse

The teacher distributes [Appendix 15: Support during abuse](#) to the class. The teacher reads a scenario aloud to the class, students can volunteer to come up and practice how to get help and support if you have experienced abuse based on that scenario. Teachers will prompt students to think about the support that is available for students.

Scenario 1: Abuse at home	Scenario 2: Abuse in a relationship	Scenario 3: Abuse in a relationship
<p>David is 16 and wants to start dating. His mum won't let him. One day David's mum comes into the bathroom while he is having a shower. She touches his penis while he is in the shower.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this behaviour okay? • What type of abuse is this? • How could David get help? 	<p>Gabby has been dating Charlie for a year. Gabby really likes Charlie, but Charlie can make Gabby very sad sometimes. When Charlie gets angry, they will turn up uninvited to Gabby's workplace or when she is with her friends. Charlie will then yell at Gabby and call her mean names.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this behaviour okay? • What type of abuse is this? • How could Gabby get help? 	<p>Candice lives with her girlfriend Tammy. Tammy can be very controlling of Candice. There have been times when Candice is out with friends, and she realises that Tammy has stolen her credit cards and money.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this behaviour okay? • What type of abuse is this? • How could Candice get help?

Conclusion: Recap the key learnings of this lesson with the class.

Ask students if they can recall some of the different types of abuse and different ways to get help if they are experiencing abuse.

Remind students that they can talk to you if they need support.



Teacher reflection

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills for identifying abuse and ways to get help?
- Do I need to adjust the scenarios, so they are more relevant to my students?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

Topic 3: Safe use of technology



What does it mean?

Technology is now a part of our everyday lives. It is important that we learn to use technology responsibly and how to protect our personal information. It includes knowing the importance of privacy settings on social media, recognising and avoiding online predators, and understanding the risks of sharing personal information or explicit content. Educating

students about these aspects helps ensure their safety and well-being in the digital world.



Why is it important?

Learning how to safely use technology is of particular importance for young people with intellectual disability, as they are at greater risk of online abuse than those without intellectual disability⁵⁰. Challenges with social skills, limited social networks, wanting to be accepted, and higher rates of loneliness and depression are highlighted as increasing the risk of online abuse and exploitation for people with intellectual disability. Research has highlighted three potential online risks for people with intellectual disability. These include 1) engaging in antisocial and criminal behaviour, 2) experiencing negative contact online (such as bullying or private information being stolen), and 3) being exposed to harmful, manipulative and exploitative content⁵⁰.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcomes

Students can list the basic rules for the safe use of technology.

Students can describe the potential risks and dangers associated with unsafe technology use.

Accessible learning outcome

I know the basic rules for how to stay safe while using technology.

I can explain some of the risks of being unsafe while using technology.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **Safe use of technology**

Note for teachers:

Most, if not all, students in your class would have regular access to technology. Often technology use is not well supervised, and it has been harder to supervise now that most teenagers have their own mobile phones. Students must know how to make safe choices when using technology.

It is common for students to have experienced bullying or harassment online, ensure that you are sensitive to students' experiences and discuss with them ways they can get support if they have experienced bullying or harassment.

Some students may require individually tailor supports and interventions. Teachers can use social narratives as an intervention to target these behaviours. Refer to [Appendix 16: I only write to girls who say "yes"](#).

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can list the basic rules for the safe use of technology.	Task analysis Peer modelling	Video player Appendix 16: I only write to girls who say "yes" Appendix 17: Four rules to stay safe online
Students can describe the potential risks and dangers associated with unsafe technology use.		Pens Glue Scissors Appendix 18: How to stay safe online

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Ask the class what they know about staying safe online and why it's important.

Prompts:

- What devices and platforms/apps do you use to talk to people online?
- Do you like being in contact with your friends and family?
- What are some things we should be careful about when we are online?
- Why is it important to stay safe online?



Activity 1: How stay safe online

As a class, watch the [Being safe on the internet](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- What are some of the things we can do to stay safe online?



Activity 2: Introduce the 4 rules for staying safe online

These are some guiding rules that can help students stay safe online. Introduce these rules and ask the students to think about what they could do differently to follow each rule.

1. Protect personal information.
2. Create strong and secure passwords.
3. Recognise and avoid online scams or phishing.
4. Understand what cyberbullying is and how to deal with it.



Activity 3: Rules for staying safe online

The teacher distributes [Appendix 17: 4 rules to stay safe online](#) to the class. Students will be given activity sheet with the four key rules for staying safe online.

Think: Students will write and draw ideas for what they could do under each of the rules.

Pair: Students will partner up and discuss what they wrote on their worksheets. They can then add to their worksheets if they liked something their partner had.

Share: On a large piece of paper or on the whiteboard in the class, the teacher displays the 4 rules for staying safe online. Students will share what they had written on their worksheet. The teacher will write or draw under the 4 rules.



Activity 4: How to stay safe online

The teacher will remind students of the 4 rules to stay safe online.

1. Protect personal information.
2. Create strong and secure passwords.
3. Recognise and avoid online scams or phishing.
4. Understand what cyberbullying is and how to deal with it.

The teacher distributes [Appendix 18: How to stay safe on the internet](#) to the class and reads the scenarios aloud to the class. Students can volunteer to come up and practice how to deal with each of these scenarios. Teachers will prompt students to refer to the [Appendix 17: 4 rules to stay safe online](#) worksheet they have created.

Scenario 1: Strangers on the internet	Scenario 2: Scam messages	Scenario 3: Cyberbullying
<p>Alex receives a friend request on social media from someone they don't know. The person claims to have similar interests and wants to chat.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What should Alex do in this situation? 	<p>Emily receives an email from an unknown sender claiming she has won a free vacation. The email asks for personal information, including her full name, address, and credit card details.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What should Emily do in this situation? 	<p>Sophia is chatting online with a classmate, but the conversation takes a negative turn. The classmate starts sending hurtful and mean messages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What should Sophia do in this situation?

Conclusion: Recap the key concepts discussed in the lesson.

Ask students if they can list the 4 rules for staying safe online.



Teacher reflection

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

Topic 4: Pornography



What does it mean?

Teaching students about pornography use, its impacts, and legal aspects involves educating them about what pornography is and explaining that it is content created for adult entertainment. It is important to discuss the potential negative impacts of pornography, such as unrealistic portrayals of relationships and bodies, and how it can affect their understanding of healthy sexual behaviour and consent. Students should be made aware of the legal implications, including the age restrictions on accessing pornography and the consequences of sharing explicit content, which can be illegal and harmful.



Why is it important?

Understanding pornography use, its impacts, and legal aspects is crucial for high school students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum. It helps them develop a realistic and healthy understanding of sexual relationships. It safeguards them from forming distorted views about sex and relationships, ensures they are aware of the legal consequences of accessing and sharing explicit content, and promotes their safety and well-being by encouraging informed and responsible behaviour. This knowledge empowers them to make informed decisions and fosters a respectful approach to sexuality and relationships.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcomes

Students can recall facts about the legal aspects of pornography, including age restrictions and consent.

Students can apply knowledge about the impacts of pornography to discuss its potential effects on relationships and self-esteem.

Accessible learning outcome

I can talk about the laws about watching pornography.

I can talk about how watching pornography can have impacts on relationships and self-esteem and why.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **Pornography**

Note for teachers:

Many of your students likely have been exposed to pornography already.

We do not want students to feel shamed for watching pornography.

These lessons are about providing students with information so they can make healthy and informed decisions about pornography use.

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can recall facts about the legal aspects of pornography, including age restrictions and consent.	Visual supports	Video player Appendix 19: Pornography and the law
Students can apply knowledge about the impacts of pornography to discuss its potential effects on relationships and self-esteem.	Peer modeling	Appendix 20: Watching pornography

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Ask students what they know about watching pornography. We are focusing on the laws around pornography.

Prompts:

- What do you think counts as pornography (videos, images, writing)?
- Are you allowed to watch it?
- How old do you think you need to be to legally watch pornography?
- Do you think there are laws about watching pornography?
- Do you think what you see in pornography is real sex?

“Porn or pornography is any photo, video or writing that mentions or is about sexual activity. Porn is usually made to make the person watching it feel sexy or aroused. Watching pornography is a private behaviour.”



Activity 1: Laws about watching pornography

The teacher distributes [Appendix 19: Pornography and the law](#) to the class and reads the scenarios aloud to the class. Students together sort the visual supports into two categories based on the laws around pornography.

“Okay to watch” and “Not okay to watch”.

As the class goes through the visual supports, students discuss what the law says about pornography. For example the visual of a child “It is against the law to watch pornography that has people under the age of 18. That is called child pornography, and it is illegal.”



Activity 2: Watching porn is a private behaviour

The teacher distributes [Appendix 20: Watching pornography](#) to the class and reads the scenarios aloud to the class. Ask the class if they think watching pornography is a private or public behaviour and why?

The teacher reads a case studies aloud to the class, students will discuss the case studies based on the prompts provided by the teacher.

Scenario 1: Private information	Scenario 2: Watching pornography in a public space	Scenario 3: Watching pornography is private behaviour
<p>Sam and Jamie are talking about their personal interests in class. Jamie openly shares that they enjoy watching pornography. Sam feels uncomfortable and unsure about how to respond or handle the situation.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do you think Sam feels uncomfortable? • Do you think Jamie should talk about watching pornography in class? • Is talking about watching pornography a private or public behaviour? • Was Jamie respecting Sam's personal boundaries? 	<p>Frank is at school and goes into the boy's bathroom to use the toilet. Whilst he is at the urinal, he hears that someone is in a cubical watching pornography.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is watching pornography a private or a public behaviour? • Is it okay to watch pornography in a public bathroom? • Where would be an appropriate place to watch pornography? 	<p>John is a young adult with a support person named Lisa. Lisa assists John with his daily activities due to his disability. John and Lisa developed a close working relationship over time. One day, John decides to watch pornography on his personal device while Lisa is in his home. Lisa does not know that John is going to watch pornography while she is at his home.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some of the consequences of watching pornography when someone is providing you with support or assistance? • How do you think Lisa would feel in this situation? • What could John do differently?



Activity 3: Porn: Fact or fiction

As a class, watch the [Porn: Fact or fiction](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- Are the bodies of the actors in pornography realistic?
- If they aren't realistic, do you think watching pornography could make you feel bad about how your body looks?
- If people in pornography do not use contraception, does that mean you don't have to?
- Why is it important to use contraception in real life?
- Sometimes pornography can be violent or show you things that you find disturbing, is this how sex should be in real life?
- Do you think sex would be better and more enjoyable if you really cared for the other person?
- In pornography, do they discuss consent? Or agree on what they would like to do together?
- Why is consent important?

Conclusion: Recap the key concepts discussed in the lesson.

Ask students to recall the laws about watching pornography



Teacher reflection

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- Were the materials and resources used relevant and accessible? Did they enhance the learning experience and facilitate student engagement?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills for being critical about consuming pornography?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

Key concept 5:

Skills for health and well-being



Overview of key concept

Skills for health and well-being within the ITGSE Framework focuses on supporting students in developing life skills that contribute to overall health and well-being²⁸. This includes developing critical thinking skills, decision-making such as making informed choices about health and relationships, enhancing communication and negotiation skills such as how to effectively express your needs in a relationship, and emotional regulation skills²⁸.

This guide will specifically focus on three topics that were identified through our focus groups: 1) Personal boundaries, 2) Consent and how to say “no”, and 3) How to deal with rejection.

Topic 1: Personal boundaries



What does it mean?

Personal boundaries are rules that we set for ourselves and for others. They are unique to every person. For instance, while some people enjoy hugging friends upon meeting, others might prefer waving hello or shaking hands. Strong personal boundaries are crucial for establishing and maintaining healthy relationships as our personal boundaries help us feel safe and secure. They also clarify what we are comfortable with and what we will not tolerate from others.



Why is it important?

Understanding personal boundaries is essential for young people with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum. People with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum are more vulnerable to experiencing unhealthy relationships, including abuse and exploitation^{9, 12}. Developing an awareness of their own boundaries, how to establish and maintain their personal boundaries, and the personal boundaries of others can act as a protective measure. It can also help them to recognise what is acceptable for them and for other people. Developing these skills can help people with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum in developing and maintaining healthy relationships. Additionally, understanding personal boundaries is a key component of self-determination skills.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcomes

Students can define personal boundaries and list different types of personal boundaries (e.g., physical, emotional, digital).

Students can demonstrate how to set and communicate their own personal boundaries in various contexts (e.g., friendships, online interactions).

Accessible learning outcome

I can explain what a personal boundary is.

I can show how I could set a personal boundary.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **Personal boundaries**

Note for teachers:

It is advised that when you first introduce the topic of personal boundaries, you focus on physical boundaries. Physical boundaries are more concrete making it an easier concept for students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum to understand.

Once you feel that your students have an understanding of physical boundaries, you can introduce the other types of boundaries which include emotional boundaries and digital boundaries.

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can define personal boundaries and list different types of personal boundaries (e.g., physical, emotional, digital).	Live modelling Peer modelling	Hula hoop Appendix 21: Setting personal boundaries
Students can demonstrate how to set and communicate their own personal boundaries in various contexts (e.g., friendships, online interactions).		

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Ask students what they know about personal boundaries.

Prompts:

- Have you heard that word before?
- What is a physical boundary?
- Is a school or house fence a type of physical boundary?

“Personal boundaries are the rules we set for ourselves and for others. This can include how we liked to be spoken to, if and when we liked to be touched or how close we like to stand to someone.”



Activity 1: Teacher models personal boundaries

The teacher places a hula hoop on the ground and stands in it. “This is my personal boundary. This is where I feel safe and secure.” The teacher gives examples of who they would let into their circle and who they would not let into their circle and why. For example, “I am okay with my partner being in my person boundary. But I am not okay with the School Principal being inside my circle.”

The teacher passes the circle to a student and invites them to come into the circle. The teacher encourages discussion with the students.

Prompts:

- Who are you okay with coming into your circle?
- Who are you not okay with coming into your circle?
- What makes you feel comfortable or uncomfortable when it comes to physical touch from others?
- How do you like to be greeted by friends, family, a partner, or an acquaintance?
- Are there specific areas of your body that you feel uncomfortable with others touching? Why?



Activity 2: Brainstorm ways we can set personal boundaries

How do we tell people they are not respecting our boundaries?

The teacher explains that this can sometimes be hard because we don't want to upset people, but we are allowed to have boundaries and it is important for the people in our lives to respect them.

The teacher asks students what they could say when someone comes into their person space. Explain to students that they should use "I" statements to express how you feel and what you need. For example, say, "I feel uncomfortable when..." or "I need you to respect my personal space by..."

Students discuss examples of what they could say to someone else when they want to set a personal boundary.



Activity 3: Setting personal boundaries

The teacher distributes [Appendix 21: Setting personal boundaries](#) to the class and reads the scenarios aloud to the class. Students can volunteer to come up and practice how to set a boundary based on that scenario.

Scenario 1: Setting physical boundaries with a friend	Scenario 2: Setting physical boundaries with a family member	Scenario 3: Setting physical boundaries with a partner
<p>Emmy and Julia are good friends. They spend lots of time together. Sometimes Emmy feels that Julia comes into her personal space by hugging or touching her without permission. Emmy wants to set a boundary with Julia while still being friends.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could Emmy say to Julia? • How could Julia respond while respecting Emmy's boundary? • What could Emmy do if Julia doesn't respect this boundary? 	<p>David and his brother Mark have a playful relationship. David enjoys playing video games and kicking a soccer ball with Mark. Mark will sometimes tickle David even when he asks him to stop. David wants to set a boundary with Mark about how he touches him, and sometimes doesn't listen to him when he says "stop".</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can David say to Mark? • How could Mark respond to respecting David's boundary? • What could David do if Mark doesn't respect his boundary? 	<p>Alex and Sam have recently started dating. Sam will often touch Alex in public like hugging them or holding their hand. This makes Alex uncomfortable; they don't like being affectionate in public. Alex wants to set a boundary with Sam but is worried about upsetting them.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can Alex say to Sam? • How could Sam respond to respecting Alex's boundary? • What could Sam do if Alex doesn't respect their boundary?

Conclusion: Recap the key concepts discussed in the lesson, emphasising the importance of personal boundaries. Encourage students to practice setting and communicating their own boundaries in everyday situations. Highlight the benefits of understanding and respecting personal boundaries for maintaining healthy relationships and personal well-being.



Teacher reflection

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Did the lesson provide opportunities for students to reflect on and discuss their personal boundaries?
- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- Did the lesson promote a safe and inclusive learning environment where students felt comfortable discussing personal boundaries?
- How can I further support students in applying what they learned about personal boundaries in their daily lives?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills about personal boundaries?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

Topic 2: Consent and how to say "no"



What does it mean?

Consent means that a person has the right to make their own choices about their bodies and that they should feel comfortable and safe in expressing their willingness or unwillingness to engage in any activity. It involves clear and mutual agreement, and students should understand that they can withdraw consent at any time. Saying “no” means confidently and assertively expressing their boundaries, ensuring that their personal comfort and safety are respected. Consent can include engaging in sexual activity, consenting to medical procedures or going to the movies with a friend.



Why is it important?

For young people with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum, understanding consent and the ability to say “no” are vital components of sex education. It empowers them to make informed decisions about their own bodies and relationships¹³. This knowledge helps protect them from potential abuse and exploitation by ensuring they understand their right to refuse any unwanted contact or behaviour¹⁴. Understanding consent fosters the development of healthy, respectful relationships based on mutual agreement and respect for personal boundaries. It also enhances their self-advocacy skills, enabling them to confidently express their needs and boundaries¹³. Additionally, it provides essential knowledge about their legal rights and societal expectations regarding personal interactions. Learning these skills contribute to their well-being, autonomy, and ability to interact safely and respectfully with others.

Learning outcomes based on teacher’s and student’s perspectives



Learning outcomes

- Students can explain the principles of consent.
- Students can describe the importance of mutual respect and communication in obtaining and giving consent.

Accessible learning outcome

- I can explain what consent is and what it means.
- I can describe why respect and communication are important for giving and getting consent.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **Consent and how to say "no"**

Note for teachers:

Some students in your class might have experienced sexual assaults, abuse or rape. It is crucial that you provide students with a 'content warning' about the topic and that if they need a break or do not want to participate in these lessons, they do not have to. Additionally, it is important that you know the correct procedures for how to support students (school counsellors, hotlines and referral to additional support) and report incidents of sexual assault, abuse or rape. Be aware of the protocols for reporting disclosures.

Try to avoid abstract concepts when discussing consent, such as the tea analogy. Students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum have difficulties understanding abstract concepts and generalising learnings that are not concrete. Additionally, it is important to be open about talking about sex with young people to reduce stigma and taboos about sex and sexuality.

Some students may require individually tailor supports and interventions. Teachers can use social narratives as an intervention to target these behaviours. Refer to [Appendix 22: How to ask for permission](#).

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can explain the principles of consent.	Video modeling Peer modelling	Video player
Students can describe the importance of mutual respect and communication in obtaining and giving consent.		Appendix 23: How can I ask for consent? Appendix 24: How to say "no"

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Ask students what they know about consent.

Prompts:

- Have you heard the word 'consent' before?
- Can you think of any situations where it's important to ask for permission or consent?
- How can you show that you have given consent?
- How can you show that you don't want to give consent?

"Consent means agreeing to something freely, without feeling pressured. It is when someone says "yes" or gives permission for something to happen. Consent is important because it helps us respect each other's boundaries and make sure everyone feels safe and comfortable."



Activity 1: Consent and your boundaries

As a class, watch the [Consent and communication](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- Can you touch someone without their consent?
- Can you touch someone if they haven't heard you ask?
- What can you say if you don't want someone to touch you?

- If you say “yes”, can you change your mind and say “no”?
- What is the rule that Bear told us about consent? “You have to get consent before you touch someone. That means they have to verbally agree.”



Activity 2: Video Modelling of how to ask for consent

As a class, watch the [Ask. Listen. Respect: A video about consent](#) video from Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Action Alliance on YouTube.

Did the two teenagers in the video have consent to kiss?

Prompts:

- How did they get consent?
- Was it clear that they both wanted to kiss each other? How do you know that?
- What are some ways you can ask for consent?

“This is a good example of consent, because both people said that they wanted to do something together. They both verbally agreed”.



Activity 3: How to ask for consent

The teacher distributes [Appendix 23: How to ask for consent](#) to the class and reads the scenarios aloud to the class. The teacher reads a scenario aloud to the class, students can volunteer to come up and practice how to ask for consent based on that scenario.

Scenario 1: Asking a friend for consent	Scenario 2: Asking a family member for consent	Scenario 3: Asking your partner for consent
<p>You are at your friend’s house and see that they have the new video game you want to play. You would like to ask them if you can borrow the game to play at home.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How could you ask for consent to borrow the game? • How could you respond if your friend says “no”, they don’t want to let you borrow the game? 	<p>Your extended family is over at your house. You have a cousin name Sammy who is 5. You want to give Sammy a big hug to say hi.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you need to ask Sammy before you give them a hug? • How could you ask Sammy for a hug? • What can you say if Sammy says “no” and doesn’t want to give you a hug? • What can you say if Sammy says “yes” to a hug and then says, “that’s too much”? 	<p>You have been dating your partner Ky for a few months. You both really like each other. You want to kiss them for the first time.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you need to ask Ky before you try to kiss them? Why? • How could you find out if Ky wants to kiss you too? • How could you ask Ky for a kiss? • What would you say if Ky says “no, I don’t feel ready for us to kiss”?



Activity 4: What does saying no mean?

As a class, watch the [Consent explained: What is it?](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- Can someone touch you without your consent?
- If you don’t answer someone when they ask to touch you, have you given consent?

- If you have consented to holding your partner's hand, does that mean you have consented to having sex with them?
- If you have consented to having sex with your partner once, does that mean you have consented to having sex with them whenever they want?
- Can you change your mind at any time?

Reinforce with your students that:

- You must give consent for someone to touch you.
- If you are silent and do not respond, you have not given consent.
- If you say "yes", you can change your mind and say "no" at anytime.
- The other person needs to stop when you change your mind or say "no".
- If a person doesn't get consent or if they don't listen to when you say "no", get help from someone you trust.



Activity 5: Peer modelling how to say 'no'

The teacher distributes [Appendix 24 How to say "no"](#) to the class and reads the scenarios aloud to the class. Students can volunteer to come up and practice how to say "no" on that scenario.

Scenario 1: Saying "no" to physical touching	Scenario 2: You have changed your mind	Scenario 3: They don't listen when you say "no"
<p>Jamie and Clair are spending time together at Clair's house. Clair leans in for a kiss. Jamie does not feel like they are ready to kiss Clair, but they don't want to hurt Clair's feelings.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is Jamie allowed to say "no"? • How could Jamie say "no"? • What should Clair say when Jamie says "no"? 	<p>Eric and Jazzy are spending time together at Eric's house. Jazzy tells Eric they want to kiss them. Eric wants to kiss Jazzy too. After a few minutes of kissing, Eric starts to feel uncomfortable, they don't want to kiss Jazzy anymore.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is Eric allowed to change their mind? • How can Eric say "no" after they have said "yes". • How should Jazzy respond when Eric changes their mind? 	<p>Jessie and Danny have been dating for a few months. Jessie and Danny have had sex a few times. Jessie and Danny are kissing, and Danny tries to take off Jessie's clothes. Jessie says "no, I don't feel like having sex today". Danny doesn't listen to Jessie and keeps trying to take off Jessie's clothes.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is Jessie allowed to say "no" to Danny? Even if they have had sex before? • What could Jessie do? • How should Danny have responded when Jessie said "no, I don't feel like having sex today"? • If you were in this situation, who could you talk to about it?

Conclusion: Recap the key concepts discussed in the lesson, emphasising the importance of getting and giving consent.

- Ensure that your students can define consent.
- Highlight the significance of consent in establishing healthy and respectful relationships. Discuss how

consent is essential for maintaining boundaries, fostering trust, and promoting open communication.

- Remind students that they can change their mind at any time.
- Discuss how students can get help and who they could talk to if their boundaries are not respected.



Teacher reflection

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- Did I effectively communicate the definition of consent?
- Did the lesson provide opportunities for students to reflect on and discuss their understanding of consent?
- Did I emphasise that consent is revocable?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills about consent and saying “no”?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

Topic 3: How to deal with rejection



What does it mean?

Dealing with rejection means understanding and accepting when someone does not feel the same way you do or does not want the same things. It’s a normal part of life and happens to everyone at some point. It is important for students to be able to recognise and name the emotions that come with rejection, like sadness or disappointment, and have healthy coping mechanisms for how to deal with these feelings.



Why is it important?

Learning to deal with rejection is crucial for students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum because it enhances their emotional resilience, helping them recognise and manage their emotions in healthy ways. Research has noted that people on the autism spectrum can engage in stalking behaviours because of rejection, not understanding nonreciprocity feelings, having difficulties with social awareness and how to initiate relationships⁵¹. Learning how to manage rejection promotes healthy relationships by teaching respect for others’ boundaries and effective communication. It also ensures their safety and well-being by helping them understand social norms and seek support when needed.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcomes

Students can list strategies for coping with rejection.

Students can demonstrate healthy coping strategies when faced with rejection.

Accessible learning outcome

I can say some way I could cope if someone didn't like me the way I like them.

I can show how I can cope when someone tells me they don't like me the way I like them.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **How to deal with rejection**

Note for teachers:

Rejection is a common experience for all people, it is something that some of your students (if not all) have already experienced. It is important that students learn healthy ways to cope with rejection. Rejection should be normalised, share with students examples of times where you have experienced rejection. Explain how you have dealt with rejection in healthy ways.

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can list strategies for coping with rejection.	Visual supports Peer modelling	Video player Appendix 25: Zones of regulation Appendix 26: Cards with zones of regulation Appendix 27: How a person might feel after rejection Pens Glue Scissors Appendix 28: Who can I talk to Appendix 29: Strategies for coping with rejection Appendix 30: Feelings of rejection
Students can demonstrate healthy coping strategies when faced with rejection.		

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Ask students about a time where they felt rejected or didn't get something they wanted. Ask students about the different feelings they have had because of feeling rejected.

Prompts for rejection:

- Have you tried out for a team and didn't make it?
- Have you asked someone out and they said "no"?
- Has there been a time that you weren't included with your friends?

Prompts for feelings:

- How did that make you feel?
- What zone were you in? ([Appendix 25: Zones of Regulation](#))
- Is it okay to have these feelings?

“Feeling like you have been rejected is a normal part of life. It happens to everyone. It is important that we accept how another person feels, we have to respect their boundaries. It is okay for us to feel sad or disappointed. We need to find healthy ways for us to cope with these feelings.”

**Activity 1: Rejection: It happens to everyone**

As a class, watch [Rejection: It happens to everyone](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- Has everyone felt rejection before?
- Do we have to accept the other person’s decision?
- If someone doesn’t have the same feelings for you that you do for them, does that mean there is something wrong with you?
- What are some of the feelings we saw in the video? ([Appendix 25: Zones of Regulation](#))
- What were some of the ways the character in the video managed feeling rejected?

**Activity 2: How does rejection make us feel?**

The teacher distributes [Appendix 25: Zones of Regulation](#) to the class. The worksheet contains four fields in the colours of regulation zones (red, yellow, blue, and green).

The Zones of Regulation is a framework designed to help individuals understand and manage their emotions and behaviours ([Appendix 26: Cards with zones of regulation](#)). Emotions are categorising into four colour-coded zones: blue (sad or tired), green (calm and focused), yellow (frustrated or excited), and red (angry or out of control). *Zones of Regulation* can be used to teach emotional awareness and self-regulation by helping students identify their current emotional state and use strategies to move toward the “green zone”, where they are best able to learn and interact positively.

The teacher also distributes to the class the [Appendix 27: How a person might feel after rejection](#) with different feelings in visual supports and words. Inside the coloured boxes, students will write, draw and use visual supports about the emotions that they associate with rejection.

Prompts:

- What are some of the feelings a person could have when their feelings are not reciprocated (they do not feel the same way about you or they do not return your feelings)?
- How does rejection make you feel?
- What pictures show that feeling?

**Activity 3: How to deal with rejection**

As a class, watch [How to deal with rejection](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- What were the four steps that can help us deal with rejection?
 1. Accept the other person's decision
 2. Acknowledge how it makes you feel
 3. Talk to someone you trust
 4. Do something that you enjoy that makes you feel good



Activity 4: Healthy coping strategies

The teacher distributes [Appendix 28: Who can I talk to](#) and [Appendix 29: Strategies for coping with rejection](#) to the class.

Students will write, draw and use visual supports to create a 'Healthy coping strategies' table where they select different people for 'Who can I talk to when I am sad/angry' and 'Activities I enjoy and make me feel good'.



Activity 5: Peer modelling - Dealing with rejection in a healthy way

The teacher will remind students of the four steps for dealing with rejection in a healthy way:

1. Accept the other person's decision
2. Acknowledge how it makes you feel
3. Talk to someone you trust
4. Do something that you enjoy that makes you feel good

The teacher distributes [Appendix 30: Feeling of rejection](#) to the class and reads the scenarios aloud to the class. The teacher reads a scenario aloud to the class, students can volunteer to come up and practice how to deal with rejection in a healthy way based on that scenario. Teachers will prompt students to refer to the worksheets they have created 'How does rejection make me feel', and 'Healthy coping strategies'.

Scenario 1: Not getting into a sports team	Scenario 2: Not being invited to a party	Scenario 3: Asking your crush to the movies
<p>You love playing soccer and have been practicing with your friends at lunch every day. You tried out for the school soccer team. The coach announces the team members, your name is not called. You feel disappointed because you were looking forward to playing with your friends and being part of the team.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can you show you accept this situation? What could you do or say? • How does that make you feel? Let's look at your Appendix 27: How a person might feel after rejection worksheet. • Who could you talk to? Let's look at your Appendix 28: Who can I talk to worksheet. • What could you do to make yourself feel better? Let's look at your Appendix 29: Strategies for coping with rejection worksheet. 	<p>You hear your classmates talking about a party that is happening over the weekend. You realise that you were not invited. You feel left out and sad because you wanted to join in on the fun and spend time with your friends.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can you show you accept this situation? What could you do or say? • How does that make you feel? Let's look at your Appendix 27: How a person might feel after rejection worksheet. • Who could you talk to? Let's look at your Appendix 28: Who can I talk to worksheet. • What could you do to make yourself feel better? Let's look at your Appendix 29: Strategies for coping with rejection. 	<p>You gather up the courage to ask someone you have a crush on if they would like to go to the movies with you. They say "No, sorry. I have plans." You feel disappointed and a bit embarrassed because you were hoping to spend time with them.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can you show you accept this situation? What could you do or say? • How does that make you feel? Let's look at Appendix 27: How a person might feel after rejection worksheet. • Who could you talk to? Let's look at your Appendix 28: Who can I talk to. • What could you do to make yourself feel better? Let's look at your Appendix 29: Strategies for coping with rejection.

Conclusion: Recap the key concepts discussed in the lesson, emphasising that rejection is a normal part of life. Ask students if they can list the four healthy coping strategies for dealing with rejection.



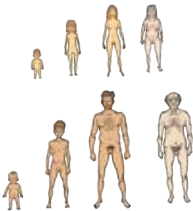
Teacher reflection

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- Were the learning outcomes clearly addressed and achieved? Did the students demonstrate an understanding of different strategies for coping with rejection?
- Were the materials and resources used relevant and accessible? Did they enhance the learning experience and facilitate student engagement?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills for students managing rejection?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

Key concept 6:

The human body and development



Overview of key concept

The human body and development within the ITGSE Framework emphasises the development of life skills that contribute to overall health and well-being, such as decision-making, critical thinking, and emotional regulation²⁸. This includes developing critical thinking and decision-making skills, enhancing communication and negotiation abilities, and managing emotions and stress effectively. Addressing personal hygiene; erections, ejaculation, wet dreams; and menstruation, can help students with intellectual disability and/or those on the autism spectrum develop critical thinking, decision-making, and emotional regulation skills in relation to their changing bodies.

This guide will specifically focus on three topics that were identified through our focus groups: 1) Personal hygiene, 2) Erections, ejaculation and wet dreams, and 3) Menstruation.

Topic 1: Personal hygiene



What does it mean?

Personal hygiene refers to the way a person takes care of their body and presentation by maintaining cleanliness and promoting health. This includes washing hands, taking a shower/bath, brushing teeth and hair, applying deodorant, and wearing clean clothes. Good personal hygiene is important for overall health, by preventing illness and promotes social acceptance and self-confidence.



Why is it important?

Personal hygiene is crucial for high school students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum because it directly impacts their health, social interactions, and self-esteem. Proper hygiene helps prevent infections and illnesses, which is particularly important for this population, who may have difficulties recognising and communicating health issues. Additionally, good hygiene practices can reduce social stigmatisation and isolation. Teachers need to support students in developing, practising, and mastering these skills. By mastering hygiene routines, students can gain a sense of independence and confidence, which contributes to their overall well-being and quality of life.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcomes

Students can list the basic components of personal hygiene (e.g., handwashing, dental care, bathing, using deodorant).

Students can explain the importance of personal hygiene for overall health and well-being.

Accessible learning outcome

I know what personal hygiene means and how to do it.

I understand why it is important to have good personal hygiene.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **Personal hygiene**

Note for teachers:

Some students will have difficulty with independently taking care of their personal hygiene because of challenges with remembering the steps, and difficulties with fine and gross motor skills required for these activities.

There are some practices you can incorporate into your daily classroom routines, such as having students wash their hands before and after eating breaks.

Some students may need family support with hygiene. Therefore, it may be important to talk with the family when addressing specific needs of a student. Some families may live in conditions that do not allow for regular hygiene. It is possible to help the family and provide them with contact information for local social services.

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can list the basic components of personal hygiene (e.g., handwashing, dental care, bathing, using deodorant).	Visual supports	Video player Appendix 31: Personal hygiene schedule Appendix 32: Why is personal hygiene important
Students can explain the importance of personal hygiene for overall health and well-being.	Peer modelling	

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Ask your students what they know about personal hygiene.

Prompts:

- What does personal hygiene mean?
- What are some things we do to have good personal hygiene?
 - Washing hands
 - Taking a shower/bath
 - Brushing teeth and hair
 - Applying deodorant
 - Wearing clean clothes
- Why was it so important to wash our hands during COVID?
- Do you think as we get older, we need to do more to have good personal hygiene?



Activity 1: Taking care of your body during puberty

As a class, watch the [Taking care of your body during puberty](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- What are some of the ways our bodies change during puberty?
 - Body odor

- Hair growth
- Acne
- What did the video say we should do everyday?
 - Wash our bodies with soap
 - Brush your teeth
 - Put on deodorant
 - Wear clean clothes (especially underwear and socks)
- Do you think there are some things that you could do better to take care of your personal hygiene?



Activity 2: Personal hygiene schedule

The teacher distributes [Appendix 31: Personal hygiene schedule](#) to the class. Students will work individually or in a small group to match the visuals and key words to the different categories; 'To do a few times a day', 'To do every day', 'To do a few times a week'.



Activity 3: Why personal hygiene is important

The teacher distributes [Appendix 32: Why personal hygiene is important](#) to the class. The teacher reads the scenario aloud to the class. The teacher then asks the students to reflect on why personal hygiene is important and what impacts it can have on their health and relationships.

Scenario 1: Dental care	Scenario 2: Taking care of your body	Scenario 3: Talking to your friend about their personal hygiene
<p>Every time Bobby has a check-up with the dentist he has to get fillings. Sometimes Bobby gets tooth aches which make him very uncomfortable. At school one of the kids in his class called him 'Bad breath Bobby', this made Bobby sad.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do you think Bobby gets tooth aches? • Why does Bobby need to regularly get fillings when he visits the dentist? • How do you think others feel when they talk to Bobby? • How do you think Bobby felt about being teased for having bad breath? • What could Bobby do differently? • Why is regularly brushing our teeth important? 	<p>Jasmin plays volleyball for the school team. She has volleyball training a few times a week. Jasmin has just started to go through puberty, she is getting hair on her body and recently got her period. One day Jasmin's mum picks up from volleyball training and immediately rolls down the car window, she tells Jasmin that she is starting to smell. Jasmin's mum tells her this is a natural part of growing up.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are a few things that Jasmin should start doing to manage her body odour and personal hygiene? • What do you think Jasmine needs to add to her personal hygiene schedule? 	<p>James and Peter are in grade 9, they have been friends since kindergarten. James notices that Peter is starting to smell. Some of the kids in their class have started to call Peter mean names because he is smelling. James started going through puberty last year and knows how to take care of his personal hygiene. James thinks that Peter has started to go through puberty and doesn't know some of the ways to have good personal hygiene.</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you think Peter would feel if he knew people in class are calling him mean names because he smells? • Should James say something to Peter? • How could James talk to Peter without making him defensive or hurt his feelings? • What are some of the things that James could mention to Peter about having better personal hygiene?

Conclusion: Recap the key concepts of the lesson, emphasising that our bodies change as we go through puberty and as a result we need to make sure we have good personal hygiene.

Ask students to recall some of the things we should do to have good personal hygiene.

Ask students if they think they could improve their personal hygiene in some ways.

Discuss with the class the impact of having poor personal hygiene, such as Bobby needing fillings, and Peter being called mean things because he smells.



Teacher reflection

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills of understanding the importance of good personal hygiene?
- How frequently should I revisit this topic as my students continue to go through puberty?
- Are there ways I can integrate ways of practicing or modelling good personal hygiene with my students in class? Such as washing our hands together before and after we eat food.
- Are there some products I should have available for my students in the classroom? Such as deodorant.
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

Topic 2: Erections, ejaculation and wet dreams



What does it mean?

Erections, ejaculation and wet dreams are normal parts of puberty and sexual development. Teaching students about erections, ejaculation, and wet dreams involves providing clear and age-appropriate information about these natural bodily functions. This includes explaining that erections are when the penis becomes hard due to increased blood flow, often as a response to sexual arousal but sometimes for no apparent reason. Ejaculation is the release of semen from the penis, which can occur during sexual activity or spontaneously during sleep, known as wet dreams.



Why is it important?

Understanding erections, ejaculation, and wet dreams is important for high school students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum because it helps them make sense of their bodily changes during puberty. This knowledge reduces anxiety and confusion, promotes a healthy and positive attitude towards their sexual health, and ensures they recognise these experiences as normal aspects of development. Educating them about these functions fosters body awareness and helps them manage their sexual health with confidence and understanding.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcomes

Students can explain how erection, ejaculation and wet dreams are natural, and a healthy part of human development.

Accessible learning outcome

I understand that erection, ejaculation and wet dreams are natural. They are part of going through puberty.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **Erections, ejaculation and wet dreams**

Note for teachers:

Teach this topic to the whole class as this is an important topic for all students to understand, regardless of their gender identity. It is then recommended that you provide a separate session with just the boys. This is so boys can ask questions they may not feel comfortable with asking in front of the girls. Have a Private Question Box that students can put their questions in. This allows students to ask questions privately. It also gives you an opportunity to view the questions, assess if they are appropriate and relevant, and do some research to confidently and accurately answer the questions.

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can explain how erection, ejaculation and wet dreams are natural, and a healthy part of human development.	Sorting activity	Video player Appendix 33: Myths versus facts Private Question Box

Lesson sequence

Introduction: You are to introduce the topic by explaining:

We will be learning about erections, ejaculation and wet dreams.

Discuss with the class what they already know about erections, ejaculation and wet dreams.

Prompts:

- Have you heard the words erections, ejaculation and wet dreams before?
- Do you know what they mean?
- When do you think people with a penis would start to experience erections, ejaculation and wet dreams?
- Do you think they are normal/natural?

Emphasise to the class:

- These are natural and health parts of going through puberty.
- They are not things to be embarrassed about.



Activity 1: Private Question Box

Put a box at the front of the classroom, explain to the class:

- You can add questions to the box at any time whilst learning about this topic.
- It is private and anonymous, so no one will know you are the person asking the question.
- I will then read the questions after class and if the questions are relevant and appropriate I will answer them during the last lesson.

Hand all students a piece of paper and ask them to write down any questions they have. All students (even if they have not asked a question) will then put the piece of paper into the box.



Activity 2: Boxers and Boners: A Puberty Guide

As a class, watch the [Boxers and boners: A puberty guide](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

What are some of the changes that can happen when boys go through puberty?

- What is an erection?
 - “It is when blood flows to the penis making it go hard”.
- What is ejaculation?
 - “It happens during sex or masturbation and is when the penis releases sperm”.
- What is a wet dream?
 - “It is when someone ejaculates whilst they are sleeping”.
- When do you think it is appropriate to talk about erections, ejaculation and wet dreams? (For example, should you talk about them on a public bus, or when you are in private with a close friend you trust?)
- Who do you think you can talk about erections, ejaculation and wet dreams with?

Remind students that they can add to the Private Question Box if they have any new questions.



Activity 3: Myths vs Facts

The teacher distributes [Appendix 33: Myths versus facts](#) to the class. Students can work interdependently or in a small group to complete the activity.

These are some common misconceptions people have about erections, ejaculation and wet dreams.

Students are to organise the statements into which category they think is most appropriate, is the statement a myth or is it a fact. Remind students that they can add to the Private Question Box if they have any new questions.



Activity 4: Private Question Box – Answer time

Prior to this activity it is important that you go through all the questions and evaluate if the questions are relevant and appropriate to the topic.

If you are unsure of how to answer some of the questions, please see the resources that are provided in this guide. It is important to provide students with accurate, age appropriate and evidence-based information.

Read out the questions you have selected are suitable for this topic from the Private Question Box. Ask students if they think they know the answer the question. Answer the question, providing accurate, age appropriate and evidence-based information.

Conclusion: Recap what was taught during the lesson emphasising that erections, ejaculation and wet dreams are a natural and health parts of going through puberty.

Ask students if they can explain what erections, ejaculation and wet dreams are.



Teacher reflection

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- Were the learning outcomes clearly addressed and achieved?
- If I am a woman, did the students respond to this topic being delivered by a female teacher?
- Would they feel more comfortable discussing this topic with a male teacher?

- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge and understanding about erections, ejaculation and wet dreams?
- How can I follow on from this activity in a 'boys only' session?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

Topic 3: Menstruation



What does it mean?

When a person with a uterus is of reproductive age (this includes trans men as well as cis women), an egg comes out of the ovaries and travels to the uterus every month. If the person does not get pregnant in that time, their uterine lining will shed, which results in bleeding from the vagina. This is known as menstruation or “having your period”. Menstruation can last for 3-7 days and nights. During this time, it is important to use sanitary items such as pads, tampons or menstrual cups. Menstruating can cause abdominal cramping and pain, as well as headaches, feeling bloated and being irritable. When a person is at the age where they are getting their period, it means that they can get pregnant. It is a natural part of human development which should not be considered taboo, it should not be stigmatised. The best way to do this is to have open communications with your students about menstruation.



Why is it important?

Women with intellectual disability have experienced a history of their menstrual suppression, often without their consent, due to fears of unplanned pregnancy and beliefs that women with intellectual disability will not be able to effectively manage menstrual bleeding every month⁵². This has included the use of long-acting contraception and hysterectomies. People with disability have a right to their personal and bodily autonomy. It is the job of educators to support their students by providing accurate and evidence-based information to support them in developing self-determination skills. Teenagers with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum should be taught about menstrual hygiene management⁵³. For high school students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum, understanding and managing menstruation can be challenging and may require specialised support. Educators should provide clear, straightforward explanations about what menstruation is, why it happens, and how to manage it. Using step-by-step guidance can help students understand the physical changes they experience and learn the necessary hygiene practices. Addressing menstruation in a sensitive and supportive manner is essential to ensure these students feel comfortable, confident, and capable of managing their menstrual health independently.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcomes

Students can recall the basic definition of menstruation and identify its biological purpose.

Accessible learning outcome

I know what getting your period means and why people with a uterus get them.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **Menstruation**

Note for teachers:

Teach this topic to the whole class as this is an important topic for all students to understand, regardless of their gender identity. It is then recommended that you provide a separate session with just the girls. This is so girls can ask questions they may not feel comfortable with asking in front of the boys. Students may have concerns about how much blood they will lose. The average blood loss during menstruation is 20-80 ml of blood over several days.

It is suggested to have a box of sanitary products (pads, panty liners and tampons) accessible to students in your class.

Discuss with parents that their child should have a period kit in their bag. This would include a change of underwear, a change of pants, spare pads, a plastic bag for clothing, and some pain relief if necessary.

Have a Private Question Box that students can put their questions in. This allows students to ask questions privately. It also gives you an opportunity to view the questions, assess if they are appropriate and relevant, and do some research before you answer them to confidently and accurately answer the questions.

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can recall the basic definition of menstruation and identify its biological purpose.	Modelling Task analysis Visual supports	Appendix 34: How to change a sanitary pad Private questions box

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Ask students what they know about menstruation.

Prompts:

- What does it mean?
- Why does it happen?
- Who will get their periods?
- Why do boys need to know about periods?
- Why do girls need to know about periods?



Activity 1: Private Question Box

Put a box at the front of the classroom, explain to the class:

Prompts:

- You can add questions to the box at any time whilst learning about this topic.
- It is private and anonymous, so no one will know you are the person asking the question.
- I will then read the questions after class and if the questions are relevant and appropriate I will answer them during the last lesson.

Hand all students a piece of paper and ask them to write down any questions they have. All students (even if they have not asked a question) will then put the piece of paper into the box.



Activity 2: All about getting your period

As a class, watch the [All about getting your period](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- What are some of the changes women experience during puberty?
- How often do women get their period?
- Why do women get their period?
- How long does a period last?
- What are some things you can use to catch the fluid during a period?
- How often should you change those products?
- Do some women experience discomfort when they get their period?
- Are periods normal and natural?



Activity 3: How to change a sanitary pad

The teacher will display the task analysis ([Appendix 34: How to change a sanitary pad](#)) on the board.

They will read out each of the steps of how to change a sanitary pad.

1. Bring a fresh pad with you to the bathroom
2. Wash your hands
3. Close the toilet door
4. Pull down clothes and underwear
5. Remove the used pad from your underwear
6. Fold the used pad up in toilet paper
7. Put the used pad in the sanitary bin
8. Unwrap the fresh pad
9. Put the wrapping of the fresh pad in the sanitary bin
10. Remove the strip on the back of the pad
11. Press the fresh pad onto your underwear
12. Pull up your underwear and pants
13. Wash your hands



Activity 4: Model how to change a sanitary pad

The teacher will model how to change a sanitary pad to the class. The teacher will need to be wearing pants and have a pair of clean underwear to put on top of their pants. The teacher will follow the task analysis, reinforcing the learning for students.



Activity 5: Private Question Box – Answer time

Prior to this activity it is important that you go through all the questions and evaluate if the questions are relevant and appropriate to the topic.

If you are unsure of how to answer some of the questions, please see the resources that are provided in this guide.

It is important to provide students with accurate, age appropriate and evidence-based information.

Read out the questions you have selected are suitable for this topic from the Private Question Box. Ask students if they think they know the answer the question. Answer the question, providing accurate, age appropriate and evidence-based information.

Conclusion: Recap the learning from this lesson. Emphasise that menstruation is a natural and normal part of going through puberty.

Ask students if they can explain what a period is, why people with uterus' get them.

Ask students what one product is that they can use to manage a period.



Teacher reflection

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills understanding menstruation and how to manage it?
- How frequently should I revisit this topic as my students continue to go through puberty?
- Are there some products I should have available for my students in the classroom? Such as pads, panty liners or tampons.
- If I am a male teacher, did the students respond to this topic being delivered by a male teacher or would they have felt more comfortable discussing it with a female teacher?
- How can I follow on from this activity in a 'girls only' session?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

Key concept 7:

Sexuality and sexual behaviour



Overview of key concept

Sexuality and sexual behaviour within the ITGSE Framework covers sexual orientation, sexual activities, consent, and safe sexual practices²⁸. It aims to provide accurate information and promote healthy sexual behaviour. This includes understanding sexual orientation and respect for diversity, learning about different sexual activities and their implications, and emphasising the importance of consent and safe sexual practices²⁸.

This guide will specifically focus on two topics that were identified through our focus groups: 1) Masturbation, and 2) Sex.

Topic 1: Masturbation



What does it mean?

Masturbation is a normal part of self-discovery during adolescence. It is a natural activity, and individuals have the right to touch their own bodies. Masturbation involves touching oneself to experience sexual pleasure, which can include stimulating various body parts such as the genitals, anus, breasts, nipples, or other areas that feel good, using hands or sex toys like vibrators and masturbators. Some people prefer using their imagination for masturbation, while others may use pornographic materials, such as books, images, or videos. Certain individuals, such as those with physical disability, may find it difficult or be unable to masturbate.

Masturbation is a normal and natural activity that should not be shamed. It is a private behaviour that should always be done in a private space, such as a person's home, and never in public. It is essential to understand the importance of maintaining privacy for such activities.



Why is it important?

Young people with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum have the same desires and sexual needs as people without disability, including the desire to masturbate^{16, 54}. There are misunderstandings and assumptions that people on the autism spectrum and/or those with intellectual disability cannot control their sexual urges⁴⁵. This misunderstanding is one of the reasons teaching students about masturbation is often omitted from sex education delivered to high school students with disability^{11, 45, 55}. This can lead to people with disability not being provided with important information, such as laws, social expectations, and appropriateness of particular behaviours. Omitting education about masturbation, specifically when it is appropriate (on your own and in private) and not appropriate (in public spaces, when others are around), can put people with disability at risk of harm or legal consequences⁴⁵.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcomes

Students can explain how masturbation can be a normal part of human sexuality and development.

Students can outline where and when it is appropriate and not appropriate to masturbate.

Students know how to ensure the necessary hygiene if they engage in masturbation.

Accessible learning outcome

I know that masturbation is okay to do and is a normal part of life.

I know where and when it is okay for me to masturbate.

I know how to be clean and hygienic when I masturbate.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **Masturbation**

Note for teachers:

For many young people, this topic can be very sensitive. Carefully monitor the atmosphere within the classroom.

Students will have different experiences and beliefs about masturbation. It is important that all perspectives are valued equally. It is just as okay to choose to masturbate as it is to choose not to masturbate.

Students should not be asked about their personal experiences with masturbation. This is to ensure that the classroom environment remains a safe place. The topic of masturbation is intimate and is a private behaviour. If a teacher is dealing with a situation where students are masturbating at school and wants to address this topic with them, it is appropriate to do so in private.

If the words masturbation or self-satisfaction are new and difficult for students to grasp, it is okay to use descriptions such “enjoying myself”, “touching my penis/vulva/vagina”.

Teach this topic to the whole class as this is an important topic for all students to understand, regardless of their gender identity. It is then recommended that you provide a separate session with just the girls and just the boys. This is so students can ask questions they may not feel comfortable with asking in front of their peers of the opposite gender.

The teacher prepares a Private Question Box where students can add their questions. This will give students the opportunity to ask questions anonymously. The teacher can then assess whether the questions are appropriate and relevant, and if unsure about the answer, can look up the necessary information before responding.

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can explain how masturbation can be a normal part of human sexuality and development.	Visual supports Task analysis	Video player Private Question Box Appendix 35: Where I can masturbate
Students can outline where and when it is appropriate and not appropriate to masturbate.		
Students know how to ensure the necessary hygiene if they engage in masturbation.		

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Ask students what they know about masturbation.

Prompts:

- Have you heard the words masturbation or masturbating?
- What do they mean?
- Do you think there are times when you can masturbate? What are they?
- Do you think there are times when you should not masturbate? What are they?
- Do you think there are places where you can masturbate? What are they?
- Do you think there are places where you should not masturbate? What are they?

Masturbation is a normal part of being human and having sexual feelings. It is important that we only ever masturbate when we are in private with no one else around. It is important that we never masturbate in public or around other people.



Activity 1: Private Question Box

Put a box at the front of the classroom, explain to the class:

- You can add questions to the box at any time whilst learning about this topic.
- It is private and anonymous, so no one will know you are the person asking the question.
- I will then read the questions after class and if the questions are relevant and appropriate I will answer them during the last lesson.

Hand all students a piece of paper and ask them to write down any questions they have. All students (even if they have not asked a question) will then put the piece of paper into the box.



Activity 2: Masturbation – Totally normal

As a class, watch the [Masturbation – Totally normal](#) video from Amaze.org on Vimeo.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- Is masturbation normal?
- Is it also normal not to masturbate?
- Where should you masturbate?
- Will you run out of sperm if you masturbate?
- Can you get pregnant from masturbating?



Activity 3: Where can I masturbate?

It is important that students learn that masturbation is a private behaviour. It is not something that should be done when they are in public spaces or with other people around.

The teacher distributes [Appendix 35: Where I can masturbate](#) to the class. Students are to work individually or in small groups to sort the visual supports into the correct categories: Where I can masturbate, Where I cannot masturbate.



Activity 4: How to be respectful and hygienic when I want to masturbate

Emphasise to students that masturbation is a natural activity to want to do. It is important that when you want to masturbate you are respectful (you only masturbate in a private space) and you are hygienic (you clean up and wash your hands).

Task analysis of steps:

1. I wash my hands
2. I go into a private space
3. I touch myself
4. I have an orgasm
5. I clean up my sperm or my sex toy
6. I wash my hands



Activity 5: Private Question Box – Answer time

Prior to this activity it is important that you go through all the questions and evaluate if the questions are relevant and appropriate to the topic.

If you are unsure of how to answer some of the questions, please see the resources that are provided in this guide. It is important to provide students with accurate, age appropriate and evidence-based information.

Read out the questions you have selected are suitable for this topic from the Private Question Box. Ask students if they think they know the answer the question. Answer the question, providing accurate, age appropriate and evidence-based information.

Conclusion: Recap the key concepts from this lesson, emphasising that masturbation is a natural and normal activity. It is important that when you want to masturbate you are respectful (you only masturbate in a private space) and you are hygienic (you clean up and wash your hands).



Teacher reflection

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Was the lesson adapted to different educational preferences and needs of the students?
- Did the students feel safe and able to perceive the topic as legitimate? If not, why?
- If I am a woman, did the students respond to this topic being delivered by a female teacher, did they question the interpretation with regard to my gender and the absence of my personal experience? (and vice versa).
- Did the students understand the legitimacy of masturbation in the context of the boundaries of social and legal norms? For example, do they understand that it's okay to masturbate, but I can't do it in front of my classmates in class?
- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of masturbation, its legitimacy and when it is/is not appropriate?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

Topic 2: Sex



What does it mean?

Sex is a natural and consensual physical behaviour between people that involves physical contact. It can include kissing, touching, mutual masturbation, oral sex, penetration of a vagina with a penis and anal sex. The types of sex people experience will be different depending on the context of their relationship (for example, if their relationship is heterosexual or queer), what individuals feel comfortable with, and what they want to explore together. Sex should be pleasurable and an enjoyable activity for all individuals involved. The teaching of this topic should emphasise the importance of mutual consent, respect for personal boundaries, and understanding the emotional and physical aspects of sexual activity.



Why is it important?

People with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum have often been seen by society as 'asexual', and not having the desire or capacity for intimate relationships^{10, 16, 18}. Education about sex is often omitted, or students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum are excluded from learning about it as a result of these beliefs¹³. Additionally, if sex education is taught it often does not focus on intimacy and pleasure¹¹. People with intellectual and/or on the autism spectrum have the same desire to form and engage in sexual relationships as people without disability¹⁵. Not teaching young people with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum about sex has significant consequences, it exacerbates their vulnerability, increases their likelihood of being abused, of having unhealthy relationships and unplanned pregnancies¹³.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcomes

Students can outline what sex is and what it can include.

Students can understand that sex can be different in different relationships.

Accessible learning outcome

I know what sex is and what it can include.

I know that sex can be different in different relationships.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **Sex**

Note for teachers:

Some students in your class might have experienced sexual assaults, abuse or rape. It is crucial that you provide students with a 'content warning' about the topic and that if they need a break or do not want to participate in these lessons, they do not have to. Additionally, it is important that you know the correct procedures for how to support students (school counsellors, hotlines and referral to additional support) and report incidents of sexual assault, abuse or rape. Be aware of the protocols for reporting disclosures.

Students will have different experiences and beliefs about sex, it is important to be sensitive to these differences.

Some students may feel guilty for having had sex, not yet having sex, or feeling that they should already be having sex.

Some students may experience frustration that their disability is an obstacle to having sex when they have the desire to.

Make connections to sex and healthy relationships. Ensure that you express that love is not necessary to having sex with someone.

Support the different sexual orientations of students, legitimise these relationships and provide them with the information they need to have healthy sexual relationships.

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can outline what sex is and what it can include.	Visual support	Private Question Box Appendix 36: Types of sex Appendix 37: Good sex, bad sex
Students can understand that sex can be different in different relationships.		

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Ask students what they know about sex.

Prompts:

- What does sex mean?
- What do you think is included as sex?
- What is and what is not sex?
- Do you think all people have the same kinds of sex?
- Do you think sex should be enjoyable to all people involved?
- What have you heard about sex from others?
- Who can you talk to about sex?
- When is it appropriate and when is it not appropriate to talk about sex?



Activity 1: Private Question Box

Put a box at the front of the classroom, explain to the class:

- You can add questions to the box at any time whilst learning about this topic.
- It is private and anonymous, so no one will know you are the person asking the question.

I will then read the questions after class and if the questions are relevant and appropriate I will answer them during the last lesson.

Hand all students a piece of paper and ask them to write down any questions they have. All students (even if they have not asked a question) will then put the piece of paper into the box.



Activity 2: Explaining Sex

Sex is intimate physical touching between people. It can include kissing, touching, mutual masturbation, oral sex, penetration of a vagina with a penis, and anal sex.

The teacher shows students pictures of some ways in which people have sex. The teacher can use [Appendix 36: Types of sex](#).

Prompts:

- Sex can lead to pregnancy; how can unplanned pregnancy be avoided?
- Do you think both people should be enjoying what they are doing when they are having sex?
- Will people in non-heterosexual relationships have the same kind of sex as a heterosexual couple? Why? What would be the same? What would be different?



Activity 3: Good sex, bad sex activity

Students will work individually or in a small group to match the visuals to the different categories; Good sex, Bad sex. The teacher can use [Appendix 37: Good sex, bad sex](#).



Activity 4: Class discussion – Good sex, bad sex

After students have completed the *Good sex, bad sex* sorting activity, have the class come together to discuss.

Prompts:

- What visuals did you put in the good sex category?
- What visuals did you put in the bad sex category?
- Do we agree? Why or why not?
- What do the things in each category have in common?



Activity 5: Are you ready to have sex?

As a class, watch the [Are you ready to have sex?](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- How do you think you will know if you are ready to start having sex?
- What are some things you should consider? (How you feel about that person, how they feel about you, how you think you will feel afterwards, is that person kind to you?)
- What are some things you should talk to the other person about? (Sexual history, types of contraception, how will you get contraception, have you agreed on what you are happy to do together, have you agreed that you will stop if either person wants to?)
- “It is your choice to say yes or no every time!”
- Should you wait until you are 100% comfortable?



Activity 6: Private Question Box – Answer time

Prior to this activity it is important that you go through all the questions and evaluate if the questions are relevant and appropriate to the topic.

If you are unsure of how to answer some of the questions, please see the resources that are provided in this guide. It is important to provide students with accurate, age appropriate and evidence-based information.

Read out the questions you have selected are suitable for this topic from the Private Question Box. Ask students if they think they know the answer the question. Answer the question, providing accurate, age appropriate and evidence-based information.

Conclusion: Recap the key concepts from this lesson, emphasising that sex needs to be consensual and enjoyable, and that sex will be different in different relationships.



Teacher reflection

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of what sex is?
- How frequently should I revisit this lesson?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

Key concept 8:

Sexual and reproductive health



Overview of key concept

Sexual and reproductive health within the ITGSE Framework focuses on contraception, pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV/AIDS, and access to sexual and reproductive health services²⁸. This includes providing information about contraception methods and their effectiveness, understanding pregnancy, prenatal care, and childbirth, learning about STIs, including HIV/AIDS, and prevention strategies, and promoting access to sexual and reproductive health services²⁸.

This guide will specifically focus on two topics that were identified through our focus groups: 1) Pregnancy and pregnancy prevention, and 2) Sexual health: reducing the risks of STIs.

Topic 1: Pregnancy and pregnancy prevention



What does it mean?

Pregnancy is the carrying of one or more embryos or fetuses within the uterus. It is the result of fertilisation of an egg by sperm.

Pregnancy prevention refers to the methods and practices that individuals can use to avoid unintended pregnancies. This includes understanding and effectively using various forms of contraception such as condoms, birth control pills, long-acting contraception, and emergency contraception, as well as abstinence.



Why is it important?

Women with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum have higher rates of unplanned and unwanted pregnancies than women without disability⁹. This can be linked to a lack of sex education in school, which results in decreased knowledge about pregnancy and reproductive health⁵⁴. Teaching pregnancy and pregnancy prevention is crucial for students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum as it equips them with essential knowledge and skills to make informed decisions about their sexual health and well-being. By understanding the biological aspects of pregnancy and the various methods of contraception, students can effectively prevent unintended pregnancies, reducing the potential for adverse outcomes. This education empowers students to take control of their reproductive health and promotes sexual self-determination.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcomes

Students can explain the factors that contribute to the risk of pregnancy, including age, timing of intercourse, and contraceptive use.

Students can recall the names and proper usage of different methods of contraception.

Accessible learning outcome

I know how women get pregnant.

I know some of the different ways to avoid getting pregnant.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **Pregnancy and pregnancy prevention**

Note for teachers:

Some students in your class might have experienced sexual assaults, abuse or rape. It is crucial that you provide students with a 'content warning' about the topic and that if they need a break or do not want to participate in these lessons, they do not have to. Additionally, it is important that you know the correct procedures for how to support students (school counsellors, hotlines and referral to additional support) and report incidents of sexual assault, abuse or rape. Be aware of the protocols for reporting disclosures.

Students will have different beliefs about pregnancy and contraception based on their cultural and religious values and upbringings. The information about contraceptive methods in this lesson is based on fact and options. As teachers, it is your job to provide students with this information and not to try to influence their choices.

Some parents may not wish for their child to learn about this topic due to cultural or religious beliefs. This needs to be managed based on your school's policies regarding whether students can be withdrawn from lessons based on cultural or religious beliefs. It could be beneficial to meet with parents and explain to them the content of these lessons and how they will be taught. Explain that the school is not trying to influence what students do with their body, the school is providing students with evidence-based information about pregnancy and pregnancy prevention methods.

Students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum have difficulty understanding abstract concepts and generalising knowledge that is not concrete. Additionally, it's important to talk openly with young people about sex to reduce the stigma and taboos surrounding sex and sexuality. Therefore, appropriate tools for teaching contraception use are models of penises and vaginas, rather than analogies or using non-anatomically correct models.

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can explain the factors that contribute to the risk of pregnancy, including age, timing of intercourse, and contraceptive use.	Visual supports Task analysis	Video player Appendix 38: How to effectively use a condom
Students can recall the names and proper usage of different methods of contraception.	Modelling	

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Ask students what they know about pregnancy.

Prompts:

- What is it?
- How does someone become pregnant?
- When can women start to have the potential to get pregnant?

Ask students what they know about pregnancy prevention.

Prompts:

- Have you heard of contraception?
- Does anyone know what this means?
- Does anyone know any examples of contraception?
- Why do people use contraception?



Activity 1: What is pregnancy?

As a class, watch the [Pregnancy and reproduction explained](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube. What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- How does someone get pregnant?
- Do you have to have sex to get pregnant?
- What kind of sex can lead to pregnancy?



Activity 2: What is contraception?

As a class, watch the [Tips for safer sex and pregnancy prevention](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube.

Contraception prevents unwanted pregnancy. Some types of contraception also protect against STIs.

There is contraception available for men and for women.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- Is it normal to be wanting to have sex or already having sex?
- Do you think it is a good idea to use contraception? Why?
- What can contraception help prevent?
- Can you remember some of the types of contraception that can be used?



Activity 3: How to use a condom effectively

The effectiveness of a condom depends on correct use.

As a class, watch the [Condoms: How to use them effectively](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube or the [What is a condom and how it is used](#) video from Planned Parenthood on YouTube.

The teacher uses [Appendix 38: How to effectively use a condom](#). The teacher performs a task analysis of how to use a condom using a model of a penis.

Task analysis – How to use a condom effectively:

1. Get the right size
2. Check the use-by date
3. Open carefully
4. Take the condom out
5. Check it is the right way round
6. Put on teat end up
7. Pinch out the air
8. Roll it all the way down to the base
9. When you are finished, hold the base while you pull out of your partner
10. Only take the condom off when you are completely out
11. Put the used condom back in the packet
12. Throw the used condom packet in the bin

**Activity 4: Model how to use a condom effectively**

The teacher will have a model of a penis and boxes of condoms available.

The teacher will demonstrate how to put on a condom using the steps of the task analysis.

Show a non-example. Put the condom on the wrong way and demonstrate how it cannot be rolled down the penis because it is inside out. Ask the class if they should still use this condom or get a new one.

**Activity 5: Students practice how to use a condom effectively**

This activity can be done in different ways, depending on the support needs of your students.

Students can either use the task analysis and follow the steps from reading them or looking at the visual supports.

For students who need more support, teachers can break down each step and demonstrate one-by-one, allowing the student to repeat the step modelled by the teacher.

**Activity 6: Order the steps for putting on a condom effectively**

Students can work individually or in a small group for this activity. Hand each group the task analysis that has been cut into separate steps. Students are to order the process of how to effectively put on a condom.

**Activity 7: Communicating with your partner**

It is important to have conversations with your partner before you have sex. This is to make sure you are both happy to do the same things and have decided on the method of contraception you will use.

It is important that these decisions are made together, and you are both comfortable with what you agree to.

Scenario: Before we have sex

Anna and James have been dating for a year. They want to have sex together for the first time. What do you think they should talk about?

Prompts:

- Have you had sexual partners before me?
- Did you use a condom during sex?
- When were you last tested for STIs?
- What would you like to do? Vaginal sex? Oral sex? Anal sex?
- How will we protect ourselves? Shall we use a condom? Or another type of birth control?

Conclusion: Recap what was taught in the lesson.

Ask students if they can recall some of the different types of contraception that can be used.

Ask students for some of the reasons contraception should be used during sex.

**Teacher reflection**

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills for pregnancy prevention?
- How frequently should I revisit this topic?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

Topic 2: Sexual health: reducing the risks of STIs

**What does it mean?**

Sexual health refers to physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being in relation to sexuality. Key examples include practicing safe sex through the use of condoms and contraception, regular health check-ups and STI screenings, and fostering emotional well-being regarding one's sexual orientation and identity. Additionally, it involves being informed about sexual health, having access to reproductive healthcare services, and understanding and exercising sexual rights, such as making decisions about one's own body and accessing necessary health services without discrimination.

Reducing the rates of STIs is a critical component of promoting sexual health. This includes educating students about the transmission, symptoms, and prevention of STIs, such as the correct and consistent use of condoms, regular STI testing, and open communication with sexual partners.

**Why is it important?**

People with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum have higher rates of STIs than people without disability^{9, 16, 42}. Some research has indicated that their rates of contracting STI is eight times higher than that of people without intellectual disability⁹. The lack of education about sexual and reproductive health is believed to contribute to these statistics, and that it exacerbates people with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum's vulnerability to contracting STIs^{9, 42}.

By providing comprehensive information and fostering a non-judgmental and supportive environment, education about sexual health helps students develop responsible attitudes and behaviours, reducing the prevalence of STIs and promoting overall sexual health. This education also emphasises the importance of seeking medical advice and treatment when necessary, thereby ensuring students are well-informed and empowered to protect their health and the health of others.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcomes

Students can recall the definition of STIs.
Students can explain the importance of practicing safe sex to prevent STIs.

Accessible learning outcome

I know what STI means and what they are.
I know that practicing safe sex can prevent STIs.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **Sexual health: reducing the risks of STIs**

Note for teachers:

People who have contracted sexually transmitted infections, especially HIV, face significant stigmatisation. This topic should be presented by teachers in a way that does not deepen this stigmatisation.

It is important that teachers provide students with accurate information about prevention and about where to go for testing. Teachers should prepare telephone numbers and links to local clinics that offer sexually transmitted infection testing. Teachers should discuss support options with students if they need them.

It is important to mention that in Eastern Europe, there is an increase in sexually transmitted infections including HIV. Preventive measures are crucial, including accurate education about the importance of using condoms and dental dams during sexual activities.

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can recall the definition of STIs.	Scenarios	Video player Red, orange and green cards Appendix 39: Distinguishing risk in sexual activities
Students can explain the importance of practicing safe sex to prevent STIs.		

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Ask students what they know about STIs

Prompts:

- Do you know what STIs are?
- What does STIs stand for?
- Can you name any of the types of STIs?
- Can you think of how to avoid or reduce the chances of getting STIs?



Activity 1: What are STIs?

As a class, watch the [What are STIs?](#) video from Amaze.org on YouTube.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- What are STIs?
- Can you get STIs from any sexual activity?
- What are some of the symptoms of STIs?
- How frequently should you get tested for STIs if you are sexually active?
- What are the two things you should do if you are sexually active?



Activity 2: Risk levels of sexual activity

The teacher uses [Appendix 39: Distinguishing risk in sexual activities](#). Students have different coloured cards that related to the risk of catching an STI, red card: high risk, orange card: medium risk, green card: no risk.

The teacher distributes and reads the scenarios aloud to the class. As the teacher reads through the scenarios students are to think of the type of risk for each scenario and use their coloured cards to explain the risk.

Red card: High risk,

Orange card: Low risk,

Green card: No risk.

No risk ✓

Low risk !

High risk ✗

Scenario 1: No risk, masturbation	Scenario 2: No risk, abstinence	Scenario 3: High risk, sex without protection
Ema and David have been dating for six months. They like to touch and kiss each other. Sometimes when they are alone in a bedroom, they masturbate in front of each other.	Andrea is a 17-year-old girl. Andrea decided that she won't have sex with anyone. Andrea is abstinent. This means she will not have any sexual activity with another person.	Pavel is a 19-year-old young man. Pavel likes to go to nightclubs on weekends. When he is at a nightclub, he will often go home with a woman he just met. Pavel will have unprotected sex, this means he does not use a condom.
Scenario 4: No risk, sexting	Scenario 5: High risk, signs of infection	Scenario 6: Low risk, sex with protection
Alex started dating Jana. Alex and Jana are texting each other. They talk about sex in their text messages.	Patrick is 16 years old. He had sex with his friend Barbara at a party. They did not use any contraception when they had sex. Patrick's penis burns when peeing. His penis has red bumps on the shaft. A few weeks later, Patrick gets a new girlfriend called Anna. He wants to have sex with Anna.	Alice likes to socialise. She meets new men at bars. Alice enjoys sex. She often changes sexual partners. Alice regularly uses condoms.



Activity 3: What to do if I am worried?

The teacher reads a scenario aloud to the class, students are to think of solutions to the problem in the scenario.

Scenario: Before we have sex

Thomas is 20 years old. Thomas had sex with a friend. He didn't use a condom. His penis itches when he urinates. Thomas thinks that he might have contracted an STI. What can Thomas do now?

Prompts:

- Do you think Thomas needs help?
- Who could Thomas go to for help?
- Can Thomas confide in someone?
- Where could Thomas go to get a checkup and test?

It is important to emphasise to students that they should see a doctor (their GP or a gynecologist) if they think they need help. They can also go to a sexual health clinic. If they are over the age of 14 (this changes country to country), they don't need to go with their parents. Everything discussed with a doctor is confidential, which means it is their private information and will not be shared with other people.

Students can also confide in someone they trust (e.g. parents, social worker, teacher).

Most infections can be treated, and most symptoms can be managed with medication.

Conclusion: Recap what was taught in this lesson.

Ask students if they can explain what an STI is and how they are transmitted.

Remind students of where they can go and who they can talk to if they need support.



Teacher reflection

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills of reducing the chances of contracting and STI?
- Where the scenarios relevant to my students? Do they need to be adjusted to be more relevant to my class?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

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Appendix 1: Relationships and different types of behaviour

[BACK](#)



Strangers



Don't talk to



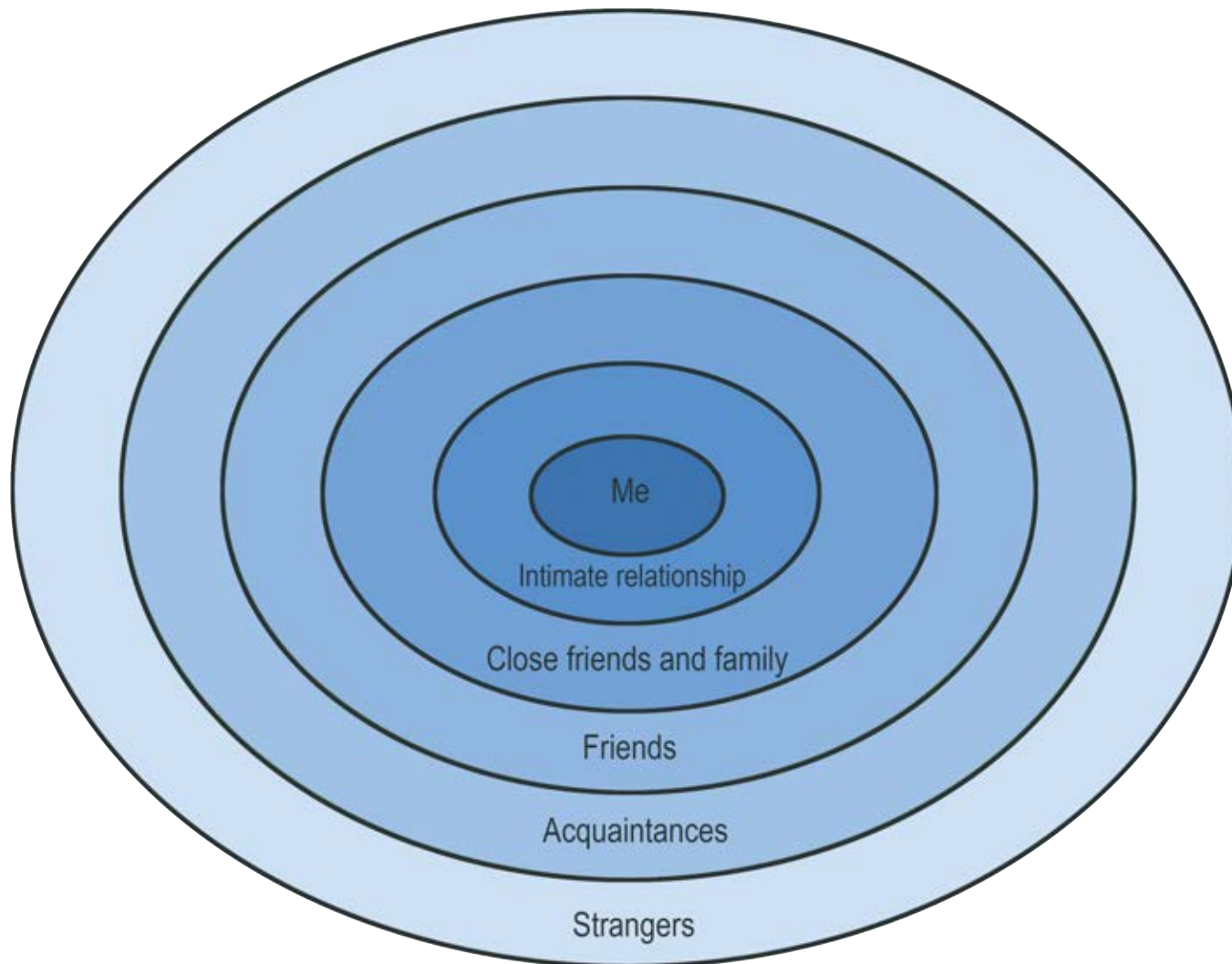
Acquaintances	Friends	Close friends and family
Say hi or wave.	Go to the movies together.	Hug
Ask: "How are you?"	Having a BBQ	Tell important things

Intimate relationships
Boyfriend/Girlfriend

Cuddling

Kiss

Appendix 2: Different Relationships in My Life

[BACK](#)

Appendix 3: How can I tell someone I like them?

[BACK](#)

	<p>“I might like to go on a date to _____.”</p> <p>“If I like someone, I could say _____.”</p> <p>“If someone says no to a date, I can _____.”</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choose a private time/place to talk. 2. Ask to talk in private: “Can we step aside for a second? I want to talk to you.” 3. Be clear: “I’d like to go on a date with you to see the new Star Wars movie.” 4. Listen to their answer. Respect their choice.

Appendix 4: How to invite someone for a date

[BACK](#)

Scenario 1: Close friends

Emma and Liam have been best friends since primary school. They share a lot of common interests and get along well. One day, Liam realises he likes Emma more than a friend and wants to ask her out on a date.

Scenario 2: Classmates



Mia and Ethan have been in the same math class for the past two years. They've worked on group projects together and chat occasionally but aren't close friends. One day after class, Mia approaches Ethan. Mia wants to ask Ethan to go on a date.

Scenario 3: Strangers

Jo catches the bus to school every day. There is a young woman that catches the same bus as Jo. Jo thinks this young woman is pretty, but they have never talked to each other before. Jo wants to ask her out on a date.

Appendix 5: Healthy and unhealthy behaviours in a relationship

[BACK](#)

Healthy Behaviours 	Unhealthy Behaviours 

My partner makes me sad	My partner controls me	I feel safe with my partner
We do activities we both enjoy	My partner steals my money	I feel happy with my partner
My partner listens to me	My partner hits me	



Appendix 6: Laws and consent

[BACK](#)

Scenario 1: Legal age for consent

Jack is 18, he is dating Cassy, who is 14.
Jack and Cassy both want to have sex with each other.

Scenario 2: Consent

Alex and Taylor are both 18.
Alex and Taylor are watching a movie one night at Alex's house.
During the movie, they are kissing.
Alex tries to take off Taylor's clothes, but Taylor says "No, I am not ready to have sex."
Alex continues to pressure Taylor, saying it's a normal part of a relationship to have sex.

Scenario 3: Comprehensive consent

Jordan and Cammy are both 19.
They have been in a relationship for several months.
They are ready to have sex with each other.
They have a talk about what they want to do and what they agree on doing together.
They make sure they have both given consent and are comfortable.

Appendix 7: Laws and marriage

[BACK](#)

Scenario 1: Underaged engaged couple

Amanda is 15 years old.
 Her boyfriend James is 17.
 James asked Amanda to marry him.
 He bought a ring and proposed at a fancy restaurant.

Scenario 2: Pressure to marry

Bianca's parents have introduced her to a man named Fred.
 They are both 19 years old.
 Fred and Bianca's parents start to organise a wedding.
 Bianca does not want to get married, but her family is pressuring her.
 They say she should be married before she turns 20, that is the tradition.

Scenario 3: Polygomy - more than one marriage

Sam and Fiona have been married for 2 years.
 Sam says he wants to get a second wife.

Scenario 4: Marriage between siblings

Jason and Lu are siblings. They want to get married because they say they are in love.

Appendix 8: Laws and incest

[BACK](#)

Scenario 1: Sexual intercourse between siblings

Lisa and her half-brother Tom sometimes kiss each other.
They want to go on dates like a real couple.
They are worried what people will say about them being in a relationship.

Scenario 2: Sexual intercourse between parents and children

Dan is 40.
His wife died.
He has a daughter Marie, who is 17 years old.
Dan wants to have sex with his daughter Marie.
Marie agrees.

Scenario 3: Sexual intercourse between parents and children

Mrs. Alena is 35 years old.
She doesn't have a husband.
She lives only with her son Adam.
Adam is 14 years old.
Adam wants to have sex with his mother.

Scenario 4: Sexual intercourse between grandparents and grandchildren

Lucie is 16 years old.
Sometimes her parents send her to her grandmother and grandfather for the weekend.
When her grandmother falls asleep, her grandfather lies down in bed with Lucie.
He touches her breasts, vulva and vagina.
Her grandfather tells Lucie that he loves her very much and it will be their secret.

Appendix 9: How to be a good ally to people with different identities

[BACK](#)

Scenario 1: Your friend comes out to you as transgender

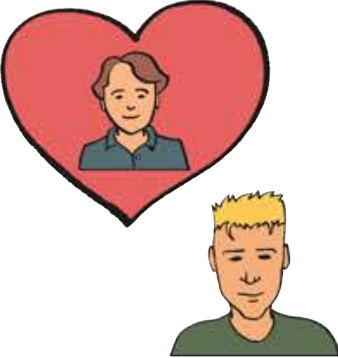
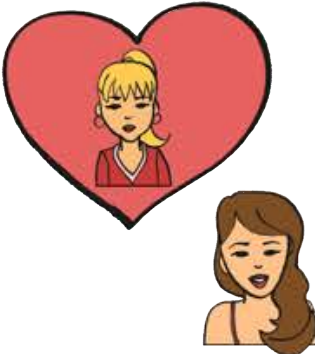
You have been friends with Taylor since you were in primary school. They asked to come to your house. They come out to you as being transgender. They no longer want to use he/him pronouns and now want you to use she/her pronouns. They ask you not to tell anyone because they aren't ready for other people to know yet.

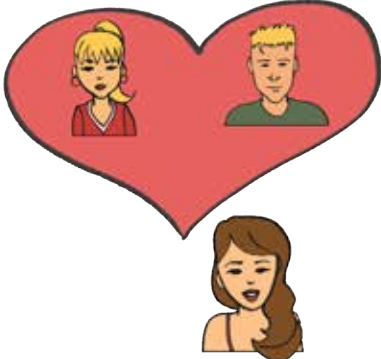
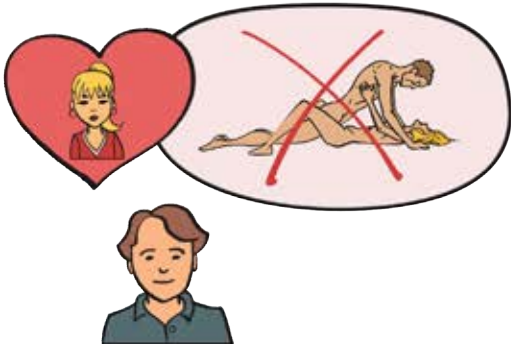
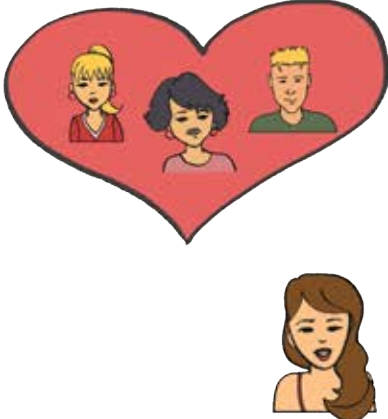
Scenario 2: Your friend is being bullied because of their gender identity

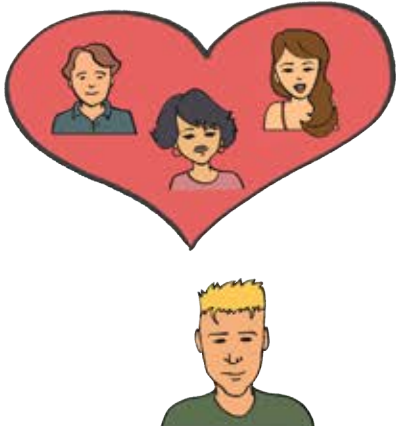
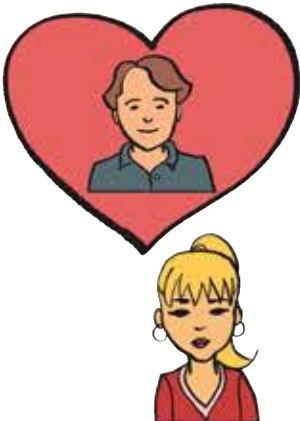
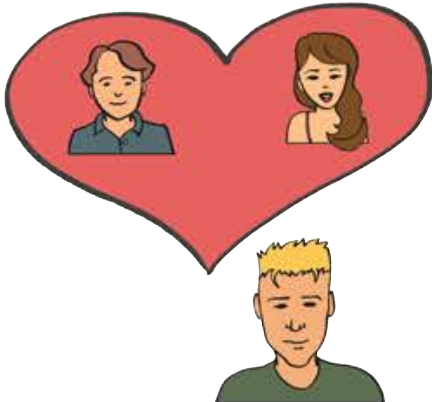
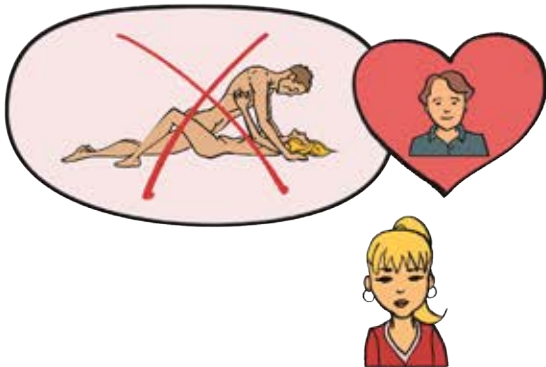

Your friend Alex identifies as non-binary. Alex is experiencing bullying at school because of their gender identity. People misgender Alex. They tease Alex for what they wear to school.

Appendix 10: Matching different sexual identities

[BACK](#)

Heterosexual	Gay	Lesbian
Women who are sexually attracted to men	Men who are sexually attracted to men	Women who are sexually attracted to women
Men who are sexually attracted to women		

Bisexual	Asexual	Pansexual
Someone who is sexually attracted to both men and women	Someone who does not feel sexual attraction	Someone who is attracted to people of all genders
		

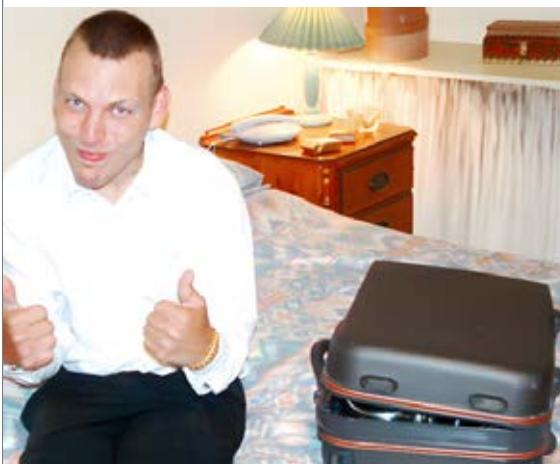
		
		
		

Appendix 11: Public and private spaces

[BACK](#)

Private space	Private space





Appendix 12: Privacy

[BACK](#)

Scenario 1: Anna's bedroom

Anna is 17 years old.
 She has her own bedroom in her family home.
 Her room has a door, but the door is made of glass.
 This means people can see into her room even with the door closed.
 Anna does not feel like she has privacy in her bedroom.

Scenario 2: Jan's privacy

Jan is 17.
 She lives with her mother, father and 5-year-old brother.
 Jan has her own bedroom with a door that closes but does not lock.
 Sometimes people in Jan's family do not respect her privacy or the boundaries of her bedroom.
 Her family members will come into her room without knocking.

Scenario 3: Frank and Paul want to have privacy together

Frank and Paul are both 16 years old.
 They have been dating for 6 months.
 When Frank and Paul are together, they enjoy kissing and cuddling each other.
 They want to be more intimate with each other.
 They feel like they are ready to have sex.
 Sex is a private behaviour.

Appendix 13: Private information

Anna is at the hairdressers.
The hairdresser asks her 'How are you today?'.
Anna answers 'I got my period today and I don't feel well at all.
Are you having your period today too?'

Tom is having lunch in the cafeteria.
The gym teacher greets him and asks ‘Tom, I noticed you’re dating Jess. How is it working out for you?’.
Tom replies ‘We haven’t had sex yet, but I hope we will soon.
Do you also have a girlfriend, and do you have sex with her?’.

Tom lives with his mum and stepdad.
Sometimes his stepdad will come into his bedroom at night.
Tom's stepdad will sometimes touch his penis.
Sometimes his stepdad force Tom to touch his penis.
Tom does not like this and doesn't know what to do.

Appendix 14: Signs of abuse

[BACK](#)

Physical abuse	Emotional abuse	Stalking and harassment
Sexual abuse	Financial abuse	

Hitting, pushing or punching you

Stealing your money

Hiding your wallet

Calling you mean names

Screaming at you

Touching you when you don't want
to be touched



Following you

Forcing you to have sex



Throwing things at you

Showing up uninvited





Appendix 15: Support during abuse

[BACK](#)

Scenario 1: Abuse at home

David is 16 and wants to start dating.
His mum won't let him.
One day David's mum comes into the bathroom while he is having a shower.
She touches his penis while he is in the shower.

Scenario 2: Abuse in a relationship

Gabby has been dating Charlie for a year.
Gabby really likes Charlie, but Charlie can make Gabby very sad sometimes.
When Charlie gets angry, they will turn up uninvited to Gabby's workplace or when she is with her friends.
Charlie will then yell at Gabby and call her mean names.

Scenario 3: Abuse in a relationship

Candice lives with her girlfriend Tammy.
Tammy can be very controlling of Candice.
There have been times when Candice is out with friends, and she realises that Tammy has stolen her credit cards and money.

Appendix 16: I only write to girls who say “yes”

[BACK](#)

Who is Paul?

Paul is a young person on the autism spectrum who attends high school. He has strong communication skills and can express his thoughts verbally. Academically, he performs well and enjoys technical subjects, computer games, and learning languages—he is fluent in two foreign languages.

Paul is introverted and prefers smaller group interactions over large social gatherings. He sometimes struggles with how to engage with his peers. Recently, he has shown interest in his female classmates and has attempted to contact them through online messages, text messages, and handwritten notes.

Recommendations made by Paul’s school counselling centre

Based on recommendations from the school’s counselling team, Paul receives primarily level one support (DSM-5, 2022). While he excels academically and has strong verbal communication skills, he benefits from additional guidance in developing social and emotional skills. A teacher’s assistant supports Paul in class, focusing on strengthening his social interactions, emotional regulation, and communication strategies to help him navigate peer relationships with confidence.



Phase 1 IDENTIFY SKILL OR BEHAVIOUR

An individual intervention was introduced following a classmate’s concern about receiving repeated messages from Paul during class and on social media. When she did not respond, he continued to send messages. Recognising that Paul is developing his understanding of social interactions and boundaries, the teacher implemented an individualised intervention to support him in building these skills.

Working alongside the teacher’s assistant, the team used a simple recording sheet to track how often Paul contacted a classmate during class or when a student reported receiving unwanted online messages. This data was collected over two weeks to understand patterns in his communication.

The teaching team then reflected on the key question: What is the target skill we want Paul to develop through this intervention? From this, they formulated the following SMART objective:

Paul’s SMART target

At the end of the month, Paul will only message classmates who agree to it.

Specific

Measurable

Achievable

Relevant

Time Bound



Phase 2 INVESTIGATE EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

To support Paul in developing his understanding of social interactions and boundaries, the teacher sought an evidence-based intervention. They consulted *AFIRM*—a free database grounded in rigorous international research—to identify an approach suited to Paul’s needs.






Phase 3 **SELECT EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES**




The teacher selected social narratives as an appropriate evidence-based practice to help Paul navigate social communication and peer interactions more effectively. Social narratives are an effective intervention to address social-emotional development for 16-year-olds on the autism spectrum.



Phase 4 **PREPARE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

The teacher starts with the social narrative draft. This is Paul's social story: **I only contact people who say "yes"**

	<p>I am in high school</p>
	<p>I want to have a girlfriend</p>
	<p>I like girls at my high school</p>

	<p>I want to message them</p>
	<p>Some people will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • want to be messaged • not want to be messaged
	<p>Some girls like my messages</p> <p>I can tell because</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they write back to me • they say nice things to me
	<p>This means</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can message them
	<p>Some girls do not like my messages</p> <p>I can tell because they</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do not message me back • say mean things to me • ask me to stop

	<p>This means I</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • must stop messaging them • will not message them again
	<p>If I am not sure, I need to ask</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Can I message you?"
	<p>If a girl</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not answer • tells me to "stop"
	<p>I need to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • listen to them • respect when they say "no" or "stop"
	<p>If I keep messaging them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it is harassment

	<p>Harassment means bothering or hurting someone.</p> <p>It can make them feel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scared • upset • unsafe
	<p>I will only message girls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who want me to message them



Phase 5 **IMPLEMENT EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE**

How was Paul involved?

intervention process. The teacher invited Paul to a meeting after class to discuss the situation with his classmate in a supportive and constructive way. She offered to help him better understand social expectations around dating and asked about his own thoughts on the topic.

To provide clear guidance, the teacher introduced a social narrative, which Paul read and engaged with. He agreed to meet weekly to review and adapt the story together. During these sessions, Paul contributed new ideas, and they collaboratively set goals. For example, they established a guideline: “I send a maximum of two messages per day to check in on a friend.” They then adjusted the story to reflect this.

Each week, they revisited the story, discussing progress and making updates based on Paul’s suggestions. After reading the story, the teacher posed reflective questions to encourage further discussion and understanding.



Phase 6 **MONITOR IMPLEMENTATION**

The teacher observes Paul and records changes in his behaviour. Once a week, Paul and his teacher reflect on his week’s behaviour and if he is implementing the correct behaviours described in the social narrative.

Appendix 17: Four rules to stay safe online

[BACK](#)

1. Protect personal information	2. Create strong and secure passwords
3. Recognise and avoid online scams or phishing	4. Understand what cyberbullying is and how to deal with it

Appendix 18: How to stay safe online

[BACK](#)

Scenario 1: Strangers on the internet

Alex receives a friend request on social media from someone they don't know.

The person claims to have similar interests and wants to chat.

Scenario 2: Scam messages

Emily receives an email from an unknown sender claiming she has won a free vacation.

The email asks for personal information, including her full name, address, and credit card details.

Scenario 3: Cyberbullying

Sophia is chatting online with a classmate, but the conversation takes a negative turn.

The classmate starts sending hurtful and mean messages.

Appendix 19: Pornography and the law

[BACK](#)

Okay to watch 

Not okay to watch 

I am under 18 years old	The actors are under the age of 18 years	Animals are in the pornographic film or images	Children are in the pornographic film or images	I am watching porn on my phone on the bus
I am watching porn on my phone in class	I am over 18 years old	I am alone in my room	I am in a public bathroom	People in the pornographic film are being hurt

Appendix 20: Watching pornography

[BACK](#)

Scenario 1: Private information

Jamie openly shares that they enjoy watching pornography. Sam feels uncomfortable and unsure about how to respond or handle the situation.

Scenario 2: Watching pornography in a public space

Frank is at school and goes into the boy's bathroom to use the toilet. Whilst he is at the urinal, he hears that someone is in a cubical watching pornography.

Scenario 3: Watching pornography is private behaviour

John is a young adult with a support person named Lisa. Lisa assists John with his daily activities due to his disability. John and Lisa developed a close working relationship over time. One day, John decides to watch pornography on his personal device while Lisa is in his home. Lisa does not know that John is going to watch pornography while she is at his home.

Appendix 21: Setting personal boundaries

[BACK](#)

Scenario 1: Setting physical boundaries with a friend

Emmy and Julia are good friends. They spend lots of time together. Sometimes Emmy feels that Julia comes into her personal space by hugging or touching her without permission. Emmy wants to set a boundary with Julia while still being friends.

Scenario 2: Setting physical boundaries with a family member

David and his brother Mark have a playful relationship. David enjoys playing video games and kicking a soccer ball with Mark. Mark will sometimes tickle David even when he asks him to stop. David wants to set a boundary with Mark about how he touches him and sometimes doesn't listen to him when he says "stop".

Scenario 3: Setting physical boundaries with a partner

Alex and Sam have recently started dating. Sam will often touch Alex in public, like hugging them or holding their hand. This makes Alex uncomfortable; they don't like being affectionate in public. Alex wants to set a boundary with Sam but is worried about upsetting them.

Appendix 22: How to ask for permission

[BACK](#)

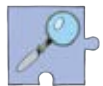
Who is Nicole?

Nicole is a young girl on the autism spectrum who attends Year 7 in a mainstream school. She has strong communication skills and is able to express her thoughts verbally. Academically, she manages the curriculum well and has a particular passion for music, enjoying the sounds of different instruments. She is also a confident reader, though she sometimes finds it challenging to understand more complex texts.

Nicole is a friendly and social student who actively seeks out interactions with her classmates. At times, she expresses affection in ways that may not align with social expectations, such as hugging classmates tightly or gently touching their faces. With support, Nicole is learning how to recognise personal boundaries while continuing to engage positively with her peers.

Recommendations made by Nicole school counselling centre

Based on recommendations from the school's counselling team, Nicole receives level one support (DSM-5, 2022). While she thrives academically and is highly engaged in learning, she benefits from additional guidance in developing her social, emotional, and communication skills. A teacher's assistant provides in-class support, helping Nicole build strategies to navigate social interactions and express herself in ways that foster positive peer relationships.



Phase 1 IDENTIFY SKILL OR BEHAVIOUR

individual intervention for Nicole was based on observations from her teachers. They noticed that she enjoys showing affection by hugging her classmates throughout the day, often approaching them unexpectedly. However, some of her classmates were uncomfortable with this, responding by stepping away or avoiding the interaction.

As part of sex education, the teacher had already introduced discussions on consent and peer relationships. Despite these lessons, Nicole continued to express affection through spontaneous hugs. To support her in understanding personal boundaries while maintaining positive social connections, the teacher introduced an individual intervention. With the support of a teacher's assistant, they used a simple recording sheet to track how often Nicole initiated hugs with her classmates. This data was collected over two weeks to gain insight into patterns of interaction.

The teaching team then reflected on the key question: What is the target skill we want Nicole to develop through this intervention? From this, they formulated the following SMART goal:

Nicole's SMART target

By the end of the month, Nicole will only hug her classmates if they give her permission.

Specific

Measurable

Achievable

Relevant

Time Bound



Phase 2 INVESTIGATE EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

To support Nicole in developing her understanding of social interactions and personal boundaries, the teacher sought an evidence-based intervention. They consulted *AFIRM*—a free database grounded in rigorous international research—to identify an approach suited to Nicole's needs.



Phase 3 **SELECT EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES**

The teacher selected social narratives as an appropriate evidence-based practice to help Nicole navigate social communication and peer interactions more effectively.




Phase 4 **PREPARE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**






The teacher starts with the social narrative draft. This is Nicole's social narrative:


How can I ask for consent?

	<p>I like being at school</p> <p>I have many friends at school</p>
	<p>I like to touch my friends</p> <p>Touching them by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • giving them a hug • holding their hand
	<p>When I am happy or excited, I want to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hug my friends tightly

	<p>Some of my friends do not like</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being touched • being hugged
	<p>They can feel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uncomfortable • angry

	<p>"To hug my friends, I need to get consent."</p> <p>Consent mean</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agreeing to something • not being pressured • saying "yes"
	<p>When I want to hug my friend I need to ask</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Can I hug you?"

	<p>I need to wait to hear an answer</p>
	<p>If my friend says</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Yes, you can hug me” <p>I can hug them.</p>
	<p>If my friend says</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “No, I don’t want a hug” <p>I cannot hug them.</p>
	<p>If my friend is silent, I cannot hug them</p> <p>Because they have not given consent</p>
	<p>I will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ask my friends • listen to their answer

	<p>I will only hug my friends if they</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • give consent
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Phase 5 **IMPLEMENT EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE**

How was Nicole involved?

Nicole was actively involved in the intervention process. The teacher invited her to a meeting after class to discuss the situation with her classmates in a supportive and constructive way. She offered to help Nicole better understand social expectations around consent and peer relationships, and asked about her own thoughts on the topic.

To provide clear guidance, the teacher introduced a social narrative, which Nicole read and engaged with. She agreed to meet weekly to review and adapt the story together. During these sessions, Nicole contributed new ideas, and they collaboratively set goals. They then adjusted the story to reflect this.



Phase 6 **MONITOR IMPLEMENTATION**

Each week, they revisited the story, discussing progress and making updates based on Nicole's suggestions. After reading the story, the teacher posed a reflective question to encourage further discussion and understanding. The teacher observed how Nicole was following the expectations of asking for permission and waiting for consent before hugging her peers. When the teacher observed this she would reinforce these behaviours "Nicole, you are being a respectful friend who is able stop and ask her peer if you can hug them".

Appendix 23: How can I ask for consent?

[BACK](#)

Scenario 1: Asking a friend for consent

You are at your friend's house and see that they have the new video game you want to play.
You would like to ask them if you can borrow the game to play at home.

Scenario 2: Asking a family member for consent

Your extended family is over at your house.
You have a cousin named Sammy, who is 5.
You want to give Sammy a big hug to say hi.

Scenario 3: Asking your partner for consent

You have been dating your partner, Ky, for a few months.
You both really like each other.
You want to kiss them for the first time.

Appendix 24: How to say “no”**BACK****Scenario 1: Saying "no" to physical touching**

Jamie and Clair are spending time together at Clair's house.

Clair leans in for a kiss.

Jamie does not feel like they are ready to kiss Clair, but they don't want to hurt Clair's feelings.

Scenario 2: You have changed your mind

Eric and Jazzy are spending time together at Eric's house.

Jazzy tells Eric they want to kiss them.

Eric wants to kiss Jazzy too.

After a few minutes of kissing,

Eric starts to feel uncomfortable, they don't want to kiss Jazzy anymore.

Scenario 3: They don't listen when you say "no"

Jessie and Danny have been dating for a few months.

Jessie and Danny have had sex a few times.

Jessie and Danny are kissing, and Danny tries to take off Jessie's clothes.

Jessie says, "No, I don't feel like having sex today".

Danny doesn't listen to Jessie and keeps trying to take off Jessie's clothes.

Appendix 25: Zones of regulation

[BACK](#)

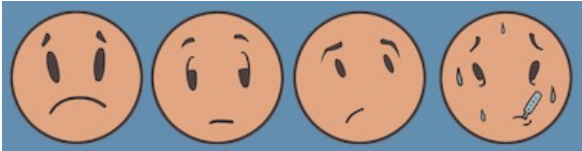
Red zone



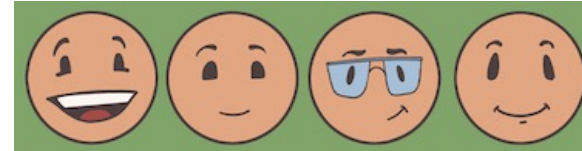
Yellow zone



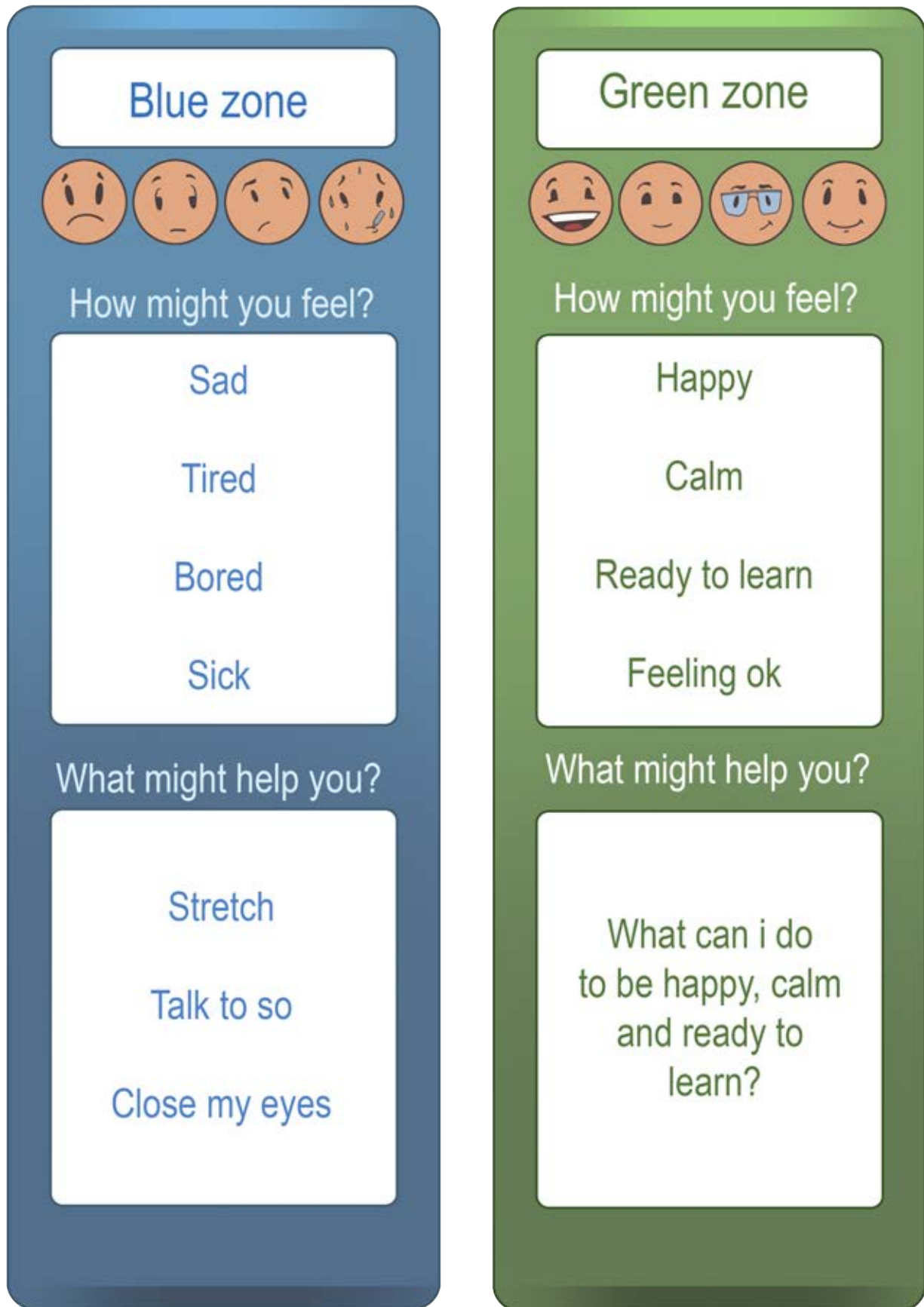
Blue zone

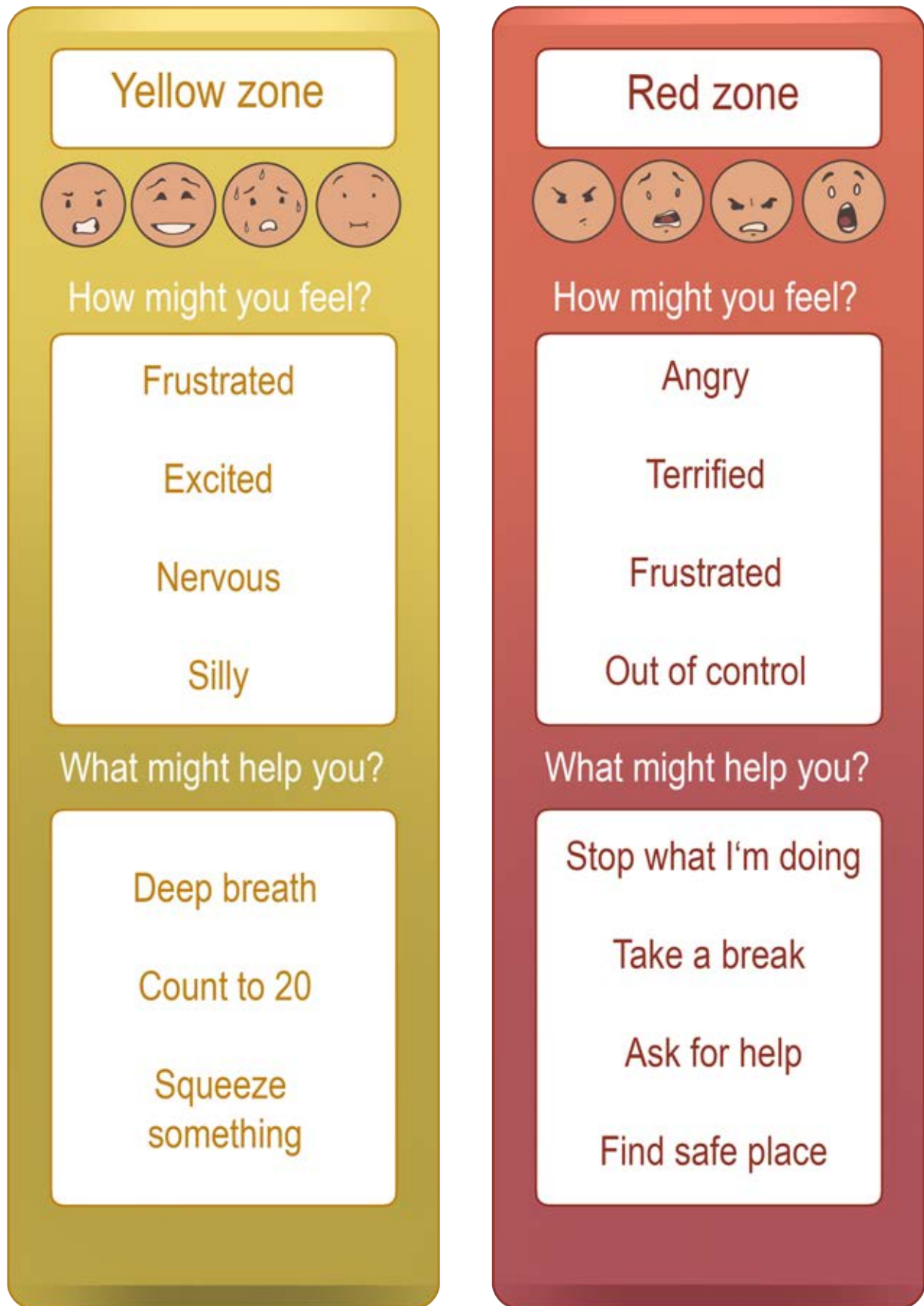


Green zone



Appendix 26: Cards with zones of regulation

[BACK](#)


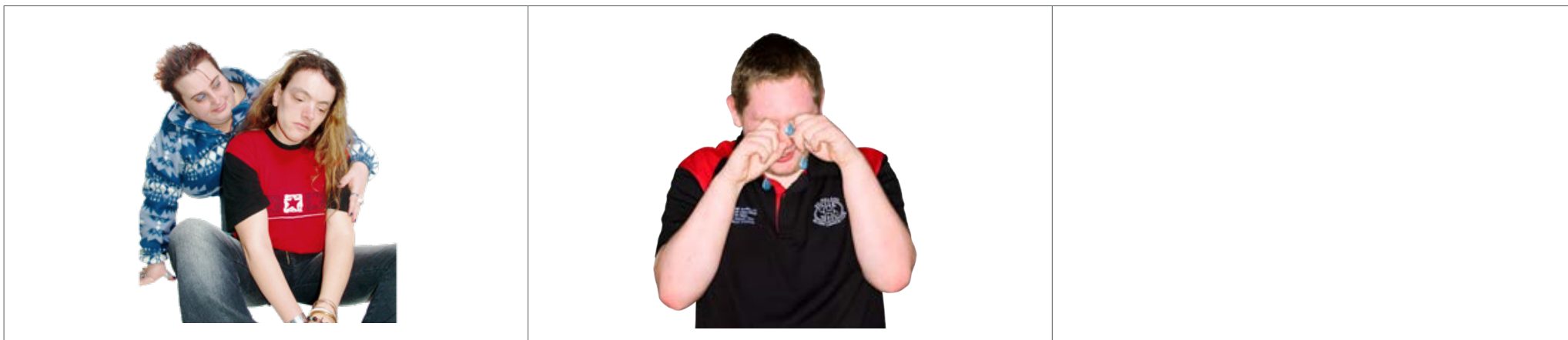


Appendix 27: How a person might feel after rejection

[BACK](#)

I feel sad	I feel angry	I feel frustrated
I feel disappointed	I feel happy	I respect that someone can say “no”
I feel okay	I feel lonely	





Appendix 28: Who can I talk to

[BACK](#)

	
<p>Family</p>	<p>Friend</p>
	
<p>Support person</p>	<p>Teacher</p>

Appendix 29: Strategies for coping with rejection

[BACK](#)


I spend time with my family



I play with the cat



I spend time with friends



I go for a walk

I go for a walk with the dog



Appendix 30: Feelings of rejection

[BACK](#)

Scenario 1: Not getting into a sports team

You love playing soccer and have been practicing with your friends at lunch every day.

You tried out for the school soccer team.

The coach announces the team members, your name is not called.

You feel disappointed because you were looking forward to playing with your friends and being part of the team.

Scenario 2: Not being invited to a party

You hear your classmates talking about a party that is coming up on the weekend.

You realise that you were not invited.

You feel left out and sad because you wanted to join in on the fun and spend time with your friends.

Scenario 3: Asking your crush to the movies

You gather the courage to ask someone you have a crush on if they would like to go to the movies with you.

They say "No, sorry. I have plans."

You feel disappointed and a bit embarrassed because you were hoping to spend time with them.

Appendix 31: Personal hygiene schedule

[BACK](#)

To do a few times a day	To do every day	To do a few times a week

Wash my hair

Brush my teeth

Wash my body with soap

Wear clean clothes

Wear clean underwear and socks

Wash my face



Brush my hair

Use deodorant



Wash my hands with soap

Have a shower





Appendix 32: Why is personal hygiene important

[BACK](#)

Scenario 1: Dental care

Every time Bobby has a check-up with the dentist he has to get fillings. Sometimes Bobby gets tooth aches which make him very uncomfortable. At school one of the kids in his class called him "Bad breath Bobby". This made Bobby sad.

Scenario 2: Taking care of your body

Jasmin plays volleyball for the school team. She has volleyball training a few times a week. Jasmin has started to go through puberty. She is getting hair on her body and recently got her period. One day Jasmin's mum picks her up from volleyball training and immediately rolls down the car window. She tells Jasmin that she is starting to smell. Jasmin's mum tells her this is a natural part of growing up.

Scenario 3: Talking to your friend about their personal hygiene

James and Peter are in grade 9, they have been friends since kindergarten. James notices that Peter is starting to smell. Some of the kids in their class have started to call Peter mean names because he is smelling. James started going through puberty last year and knows how to take care of his personal hygiene. James thinks that Peter has started to go through puberty and doesn't know some of the ways to have good personal hygiene.

Appendix 33: Myths vs facts

[BACK](#)

Myths	Facts

Wet dreams are a sign of a serious health problem.	Ejaculation can only happen during sexual activity or when you touch yourself.	You can stop or prevent wet dreams from happening.
I can sometimes get an erection when I don't want to get one.	Wet dreams are natural and normal.	Erections are natural and normal.
Ejaculation is natural and normal.	You can ejaculate without having an orgasm.	You only ejaculate when you have an orgasm.

Wet dreams cannot be stopped or controlled.

Erections only happen when I want them to happen.






Different people will have a different number of wet dreams. We are not all the same.




Appendix 34: How to change a sanitary pad

[BACK](#)

	<p>Bring a fresh pad with you to the bathroom</p>
	<p>Wash your hands</p>
	<p>Close the toilet door</p>
	<p>Pull down clothes and underwear</p>
	<p>Remove the used pad from your underwear</p>



Illustrations in this Guide come from the following source: wikiHow: <https://www.wikihow.com/Change-a-Sanitary-Pad#:~:text=Things%20You%20Should%20Know&text=Grab%20a%20clean%20edge%20of,your%20underwear%20so%20it's%20centered.>

	Fold the used pad up in toilet paper
	Put the used pad in the sanitary bin
	Unwrap the fresh pad
	Put the wrapping of the fresh pad in the sanitary bin
	Remove the strip on the back of the pad

	Press the fresh pad onto your underwear
	Pull up your underwear and pants
	Wash your hands

Appendix 35: Where I can masturbate

[BACK](#)

Where I can masturbate 	Where I cannot masturbate 





Appendix 36: Types of sex

[BACK](#)

Note for teacher: The images are depicted with barrier protection against sexually transmitted infections. The images show the correct use of dental dams and condoms.

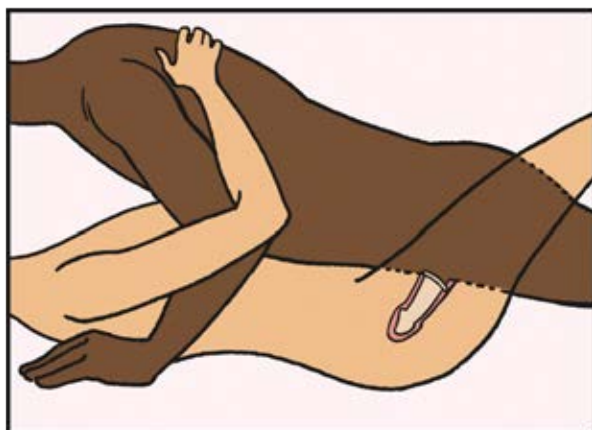
Oral sex



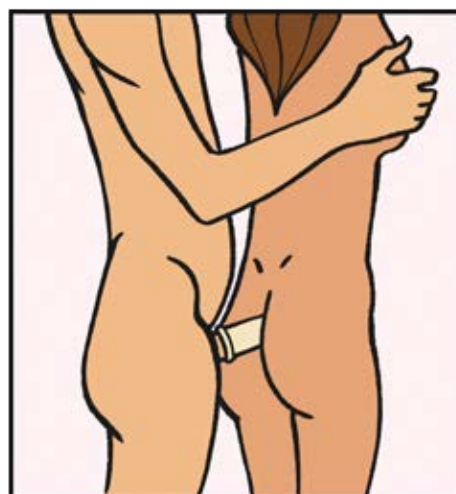
Oral sex



Vaginal sex



Anal sex



Hand job



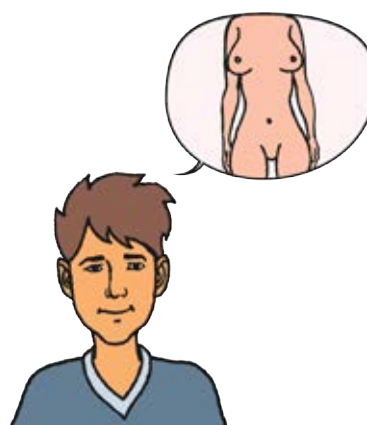
Fingering



Sexy touching



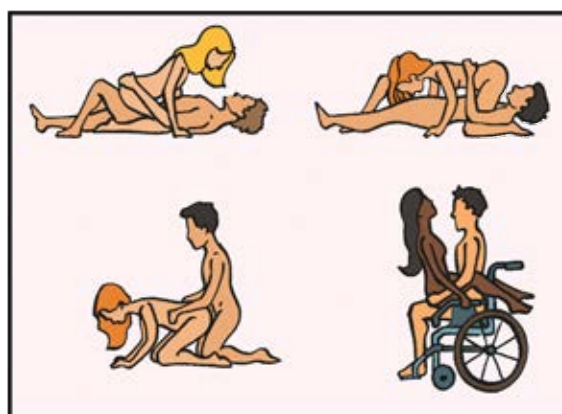
Sexy talk




Oral sex



Sexual activity








Appendix 37: Good sex, bad sex






[BACK](#)Good sex Bad sex 





Appendix 38: How to effectively use a condom

[BACK](#)

<p>1</p> <p>Get the right size</p> 	<p>Get the right size</p>
<p>2</p> <p>Check the use-by date</p> 	<p>Check the use-by date</p>
<p>3</p> <p>Open carefully</p> 	<p>Open carefully</p>
<p>4</p> <p>Take out the condom</p> 	<p>Take the condom out</p>
<p>5</p> <p>Check it is the right way round</p> 	<p>Check it is the right way round</p>

<p>6</p> <p>Put on teat end up</p> 	<p>Put on teat end up</p>
<p>7</p> <p>Pinch out the air</p> 	<p>Pinch out the air</p>
<p>8</p> <p>Roll it all the way down to the base</p> 	<p>Roll it all the way down to the base</p>
<p>1</p> <p>Hold the base while you pull out your partner</p> 	<p>When you are finished hold the base while you pull out of your partner</p>
<p>2</p> <p>Only take it off when you are completely out</p> 	<p>Only take the condom off when you are completely out</p>

<p>3</p> <p>Pop the used condom back into the packet</p> 	<p>Put the used condom back in the packet</p>
<p>4</p> <p>Throw the used condom packet into the bin</p> 	<p>Throw the used condom packet into the bin</p>

Appendix 39: Distinguishing risk in sexual activities

[BACK](#)
No risk ✓

Low risk !

High risk ✕

Scenario 1: no risk, masturbation

Ema and David have been dating for six months.
They like to touch and kiss each other.
Sometimes when they are alone in a bedroom, they masturbate in front of each other.

Scenario 2: no risk, abstinence

Andrea is a 17-year-old girl.
Andrea decided that she won't have sex with anyone.
Andrea is abstinent.
This means she will not have any sexual activity with another person.

Scenario 3: high risk, sex without protection

Pavel is a 19-year-old young man.
Pavel likes to go to nightclubs on weekends.
When he is at a nightclub, he will often go home with a woman he just met.
Pavel will have unprotected sex, this means he does not use a condom.

Scenario 4: no risk, sexting

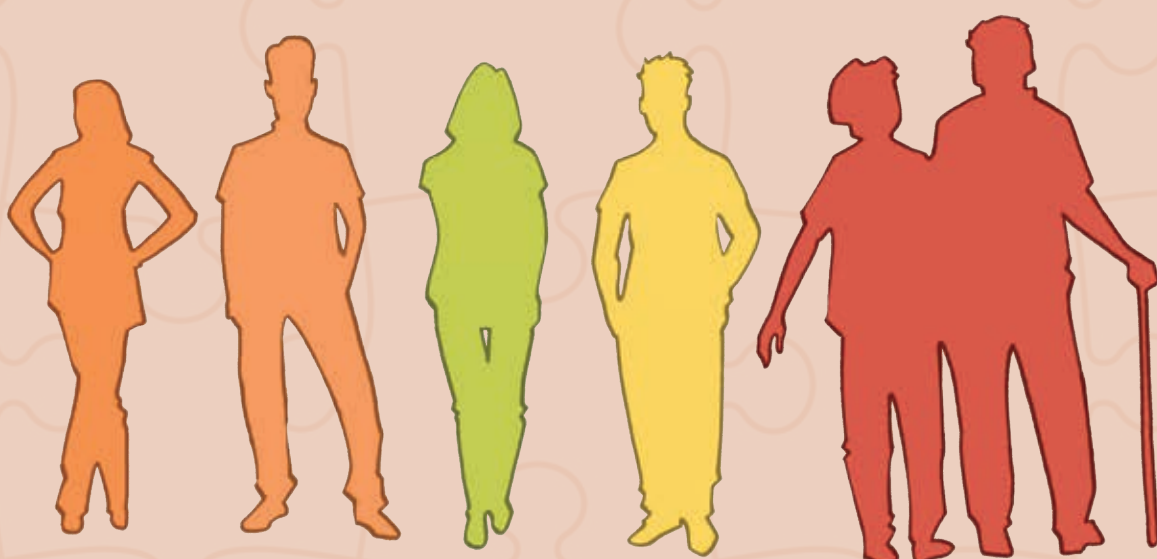
Alex started dating Jana.
Alex and Jana are texting each other.
They talk about sex in their text messages.

Scenario 5: high risk, signs of infection

Patrick is 16 years old.
He had sex with his friend Barbara at a party.
They did not use any contraception when they had sex.
Patrick's penis burns when peeing.
His penis has red bumps on the shaft.
A few weeks later, Patrick gets a new girlfriend called Anna.
He wants to have sex with Anna.

Scenario 6: low risk, sex with protection

Alice likes to socialise.
She meets new men at bars.
Alice enjoys sex.
She often changes sexual partners.
Alice regularly uses condoms.



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2023-1-CZ01-KA210-VET-000153711 Sex education for students with intellectual disability and on the autism spectrum: A PRACTICAL METHODOLOGY GUIDE