Navigating the journey: Sexuality education

Te takahi i te ara:
Whakaakoranga hōkakatanga

A guide for the Year 1-10 resources

Resources for New Zealand schools
Ngā rauemi mā ngā kura o Aotearoa
Ka puāwai, ka hiki ki te haere
A blossoming takes place, a journey is set out on

Family Planning is a not-for-profit, non-government organisation, providing sexual and reproductive health services through education and health promotion, clinical services, resource development and information, professional training, research, and advocacy. Family Planning gratefully acknowledges all those involved in the creation of this resource.

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Illustrations by Nikki Slade Robinson.
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What is the purpose of this resource?

The purpose of this resource is to provide key information for the delivery of relationship and sexuality education in primary and secondary schools in Aotearoa New Zealand. It supports the use of the Navigating the journey Te takahi i te ara resources for students in Years 1 to 10.

At Family Planning, we believe that all people have the right to:

• honest, accurate, and age-appropriate information about sexuality
• an awareness and understanding of sexual feelings
• the opportunity to clarify their own values and understand those of others
• access to good health care services
• lifelong learning about sexuality as a natural and positive part of living.

This philosophy allows us the freedom to reach our potential as human beings.

Navigating the journey Te takahi i te ara resources helps realise the philosophy of Family Planning by supporting schools and other education settings to deliver comprehensive, age-appropriate, and engaging education about relationships and sexuality. It suggests learning activities that are aligned with the intent of the health and physical education learning area of The New Zealand Curriculum and the Ministry of Education’s guidelines for relationship education and sexuality education.

We encourage you to select from and adapt the activities to suit the learning needs of your students and your wider school community.

What is sexuality education?

Sexuality education is one of seven key areas of learning in health and physical education. It aims to provide students with the knowledge, understandings, and skills to develop positive attitudes towards sexuality and to enhance their interpersonal relationships.

Sexuality education: A guide for principals, boards of trustees, and teachers is careful to differentiate sexuality education from sex education. The latter relates only to the physical aspects of sexual health and reproductive knowledge. Sexuality is a far broader concept that includes the physical, social, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of hauora (wellbeing).
An effective sexuality education programme provides students with the knowledge, understandings, and skills to develop positive attitudes towards sexuality and to enhance interpersonal relationships. It encourages students to enjoy their sexuality, have safe and fulfilling relationships, and take responsibility for their own and others’ sexual health and wellbeing.

The Education Review Office (2007b) has identified that schools with effective programmes spend at least 12–15 hours per year on sexuality education.

The *Sexuality education: A guide for principals, boards of trustees, and teachers* states that

Students require a range of developmentally appropriate learning opportunities in sexuality education. These include opportunities to develop:

- knowledge, understandings, and skills relating to sexual health and development: physical, emotional, mental, social, and spiritual
- knowledge, understandings, and skills to enhance their sexual and reproductive health. For example, knowledge about the process of conception, contraception, and the skills to make decisions that maintain and enhance their sexual health and experiences
- understandings and skills to enhance relationships, for example, in relationship to friendship, intimate relationships, love, families, and parenting
- critical thinking, reflection, and social-action skills related to issues of equity, gender, body image, sexualisation, risk, and safety.
- personal and interpersonal skills and related attitudes, including:
  - personal rights and responsibilities, including consent
  - the skills needed to examine people’s attitudes, values, beliefs, rights, and responsibilities
  - attitudes of respect for themselves and other people
  - attitudes of care and concern for themselves and other people
  - ethical values
  - effective communication skills, problem-solving, and decision-making skills. (MOE, 2015. p. 12)

Visit Family Planning’s website to learn more about what sexuality education is.
Research on sexuality education

*Sexuality education: A guide for principals, boards of trustees, and teachers* is based upon New Zealand and international research about why sexuality education is important and how it should be delivered in schools. As you plan the sexuality education programme for your classroom or school, it is important to keep the following messages in mind:

- Holistic, well-planned programmes taught by informed teachers make a significant difference to the learning and overall sexual health of young people
- Sexuality education programmes should take a positive view of sexual development as a natural part of growing up. They should engage, empower, and inform rather than focus on risk
- Programmes need to be connected with students’ lives, relevant, interactive, and student-centred
- Māori students thrive when “being Māori” is affirmed by schools and their culture is valued. Teachers require support to challenge their attitudes and teaching practice in relation to Māori students.
- It is important to allocate sufficient time to the sexuality programme; at least 12–15 hours per year in years 1–10 and provide intensive courses for senior secondary programmes
- Young people who identify as non-heterosexual, transgender, and gender diverse face many challenges in the school setting, including feeling marginalised and isolated. They face greater barriers than others in accessing health care
- Current issues that need to be included are: consent and coercion; the sexualisation of young people; the effects of pornography; and examining heteronormativity (the bias that opposite sex relationships are normal). Young people’s perspectives and views need to be given a voice
- Social and emotional learning and violence prevention education are vital for young people to be able to engage positively and critically in a fast-changing, globalised world. Sexuality education provides a context for exploring communication, assertiveness, problem-solving, and decision-making within a range of relationships, including those with friends, whānau, the local and national community, and people we meet online.
Sexuality education and The New Zealand Curriculum

Sexuality education: A guide for principals, boards of trustees, and teachers stresses the importance of explicitly linking sexuality education programmes with the vision, values, principles, and key competencies of The New Zealand Curriculum.

Vision

The New Zealand Curriculum vision includes the aspiration that our young people will develop the values, knowledge, and competencies to enable them to live full and satisfying lives. Sexuality education helps young people develop these competencies in relation to an essential aspect of their lives.

Principles

Sexuality education should be consistent with principles outlined in The New Zealand Curriculum. In particular, schools should ensure that their sexuality education programmes:

- acknowledge the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and the bicultural foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand
- reflect New Zealand’s cultural diversity and values the histories and traditions of all its people
- is non-sexist, non-homophobic, non-transphobic, non-racist, and non-discriminatory, affirming each student’s unique identity and addressing their learning needs
- has meaning for students, connects with their wider lives, and engages the support of their families, whānau, and communities.

Values

Sexuality education provides a valuable context for encouraging, modelling, and exploring the curriculum values, in particular:

- innovation, inquiry, and curiosity, by thinking critically, creatively, and reflectively
- diversity, as found in our different cultures, languages, and heritages
- equity, through fairness and social justice
- integrity, which involves being honest, responsible, accountable, and acting ethically
- respect for themselves, others, and human rights.
Key competencies

Sexuality education promotes growth in all five of the key competencies.

The key competency of **thinking** is developed as students:
- make sense of information about sexuality and sexual growth and development, and about gender, relationships, and the societal issues associated with sexuality
- think critically about the new information
- examine their own and other people’s attitudes, values, beliefs, rights, and responsibilities regarding sexuality
- consider how to solve problems in their relationships with other people
- reflect on their learning and the part that sexuality plays in their lives.

The key competency of **using language, symbols, and texts** is developed as students examine the social and cultural influences on how people learn about and express their sexuality, including in the mass media, social media, and online. For example, they may investigate the impact of stereotypes on people’s perceptions of themselves and others.

The key competency of **managing self** is developed as students:
- gain a positive sense of personal identity and the ability to establish and maintain healthy relationships
- gain insight into their personal growth and development
- gain the knowledge and skills they need to make healthy decisions and identify and access support where needed.

The key competency of **relating to others** is developed as students:
- gain the emotional and interpersonal skills they need to create healthy relationships that are respectful of diversity
- learn to express themselves openly, honestly, and respectfully
- learn how to access support where necessary and to listen to and support others.

The key competency of **participating and contributing** is developed as students are supported to understand and value the diversity of people’s experiences and identity and to contribute to inclusive classroom and school communities.

Relevant key competencies are mentioned throughout the activities in this suite of resources.
Sexuality education and the health and physical education learning area

*The New Zealand Curriculum* sets out the expectation that schools will develop health education programmes that enable students to “develop competencies for … reproductive health and positive sexuality” (p. 23). As well as this specific reference to sexuality education, health education programmes are expected to help students:

…build resilience through strengthening their personal identity and sense of self-worth, through managing change and loss, and through engaging in responsible decision making. They learn to demonstrate empathy, and they develop skills that enhance relationships. Students use these skills and understandings to take critical action to promote personal, interpersonal, and societal well-being. (p. 23)

**Achievement objectives and learning intentions**

*Sexuality education: A guide for principals, boards of trustees, and teachers* sets out suggested learning intentions that derive from the strands and achievement objectives for the health and physical education learning area. It does so in relationship to four foci:

- Knowledge, understandings, and skills relating to sexual health and development: physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual.
- Knowledge, understandings, and skills to enhance sexual and reproductive health.
- Personal and interpersonal skills and related attitudes.
- Understandings and skills to enhance relationships; think critically about sexuality in society. (p.15)

Each of the activities in the *Navigating the journey Te takahi i te ara* resources are designed to help support learning towards one or more of these learning intentions. You will find tables summarising these connections in the introduction to each resource.
Underlying concepts

Four inter-related concepts underpin learning in health and physical education. The learning activities include connections to the underlying concepts and demonstrate how they are being developed.

The concept of *hauora* reminds us of the importance of taking the holistic approach to sexuality education captured in Mason Durie’s (1994) *Te Whare Tapa Whā model* of health and wellbeing. The whare has four sides: taha tinana (physical wellbeing), taha hinengaro (mental and emotional wellbeing), taha whānau (social wellbeing), and taha wairua (spiritual wellbeing).

The *socio-ecological perspective* encourages us to think about the social and cultural influences on how we learn about and express our sexuality. For example, our feelings, values, and beliefs about gender roles, sexual orientations, and attractiveness are strongly influenced by our whānau and community and the expectations expressed through the media and legal system.

*Health promotion* is about ensuring students learn to take care of their own and others sexual health and to identify and access support. Health promotion helps students identify cultures of exclusion and advocate for change. It includes students learning to take action to promote sexual health, and healthy relationships, for example, by advocating for improved access to health services or by campaigning against discrimination. Sexuality education is most effective when supported by school policies and practices and by the establishment of healthy classroom environments.

Examining *attitudes and values* gives students insight into the effect that their own attitudes and values have on sexuality-related behaviour, relationships, and on how people view sexuality in society. Sexuality education fosters attitudes of care and concern for self and others, values of respect and social justice, and understandings about rights and responsibilities.
How are the *Navigating the journey Te takahi i te ara* resources structured?

**Year levels and curriculum levels**

The *Navigating the journey Te takahi i te ara* resources consist of six individual resources for use with students at different year levels and this background resource. The resources are organised in year levels that would typically align to the curriculum levels outlined in the following table. It’s likely that you will have students working above or below these levels and will need to adapt the activities accordingly.

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<td>Year 10</td>
<td>Level 5</td>
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**Themes and activities**

Each resource contains a bank of activities from which you can design a programme that offers your students connected, holistic learning from lesson-to-lesson and from year-to-year. We encourage you to make adaptations and additions to suit your students’ needs. We have suggested indicative times for activities, alternate year learning opportunities and extension tasks.

The activities are organised into five themes. These themes continue and progress through the resource suite to support schools in delivering a coherent, school-wide sexuality education programme.

The themes are:

- Establishing a positive learning environment *Te whakarite i tētahi ao ako huapai*
- Who am I? *Ko wai au?*
- Relationships *Ngā whanaungatanga*
- Growing and changing *Te tipu me te huri o te tangata*
- Staying safe *Te noho haumaru*
Teacher tips
Each learning activity is annotated with teacher tips and ideas for linking students’ learning at school to their learning at home. Keep an eye out for these icons:

💡 Teacher tips

🏠 Links to home and community
Sexuality education and the metaphor of navigation

The *Navigating the journey Te takahi i te ara* resources uses the metaphor of navigation to describe a person’s lifetime journey of growth and learning as a sexual being. It is a flexible concept that you are invited to develop with your students to ensure it has meaning for them. The metaphor is unpacked in the image of a landscape, representing the social, cultural, and physical landscape through which we each navigate.

Whosoever we are, our tūpuna (ancestors) were once navigators who used the stars to travel the oceans. Even today, travellers on sea and on land use the Southern Cross to find their way safely home. In these resources, the five *whetū* (stars) of Te Pae Mahutonga (the Southern Cross) represent the five learning themes.

The *awa* (river) represents our life’s journey and the *waka* (boat) represents the concept of travel. While the themes provide guidance for this shared learning experience, we are each on our own unique journey that will include individual inquiry and exploration.
The *Whare Tapa Whā* model of hauora (Durie 1994) has endured for over 30 years. As we strengthen in the four dimensions of hauora, we gain the strength and resilience needed to navigate and find meaning in the journey.

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<th>Resources in our environment</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Taha hinengaro</strong> (mental and emotional wellbeing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Taha whānau</strong> (social wellbeing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Taha wairua</strong> (spiritual wellbeing)</td>
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We are shaped by the people in our lives and the places where we live. The *maunga* (mountains) represent the human and physical resources in our environment. The healthier our environment, the healthier we will be.

The *forest of Tāne* represents the key competencies. Our learning about sexuality should connect with and promote growth in each of the key competencies.

The *whenua* provides the foundation for who and what we are. It is a foundation made up of our whakapapa, language, culture, and identity.
You can use this imagery as the basis for constructing a wall chart – a shared landscape – upon which you and your students can capture key learning. This can be done as a ritual at the end of each activity when you come together to reflect upon the learning. Working through this process provides you and the students with opportunities to revisit and monitor the learning, identifying where they are on their learning journeys and where they may want to go next.

If you wish to use this imagery, it can be found in the Appendix.

You will find your own approach, but one would be to:

• come together as a class to identify key terms and concepts from the day’s learning
• have the students move into groups, assign each group a term, and ask them to compose a relevant message that reflects what they have learnt
• have each group place their term on the relevant part of the display and read out their message
• organise the messages into a large book that is stored with the display
• over time, add any other work or visual material to relevant parts of the display.

This process might also be done online, using a drawing tool to create the landscape and annotating it digitally. As well as the group activity, or instead of it, you might have each individual student sketch and fill in their own personal landscape.
Planning your sexuality education programme

A sexuality education programme should incorporate activities across the five themes. In the introduction to each resource, you will find a table that summarises the lessons for each theme, the key concepts that are covered, and the suggested learning intentions they will help you to address.

We encourage you to select from and adapt the learning activities to suit the diverse needs and interests of your students. From year to year, employ a spiral approach and ensure that student learning progresses from year to year in a way that builds on and extends prior learning.

Planning at the whole-school level

Sexuality education: A guide for principals, boards of trustees, and teachers emphasises that “Health education is a whole-staff, whole-school responsibility” (p. 33). It needs to be embedded in the curriculum, in the school’s support services, and in a school culture that is genuinely inclusive, ensuring that all members, staff and students, feel visible, safe, and valued.

The Relationship education programmes: Guide for schools (p. 6-7) explains that effective curriculum based and whole-school programmes have these characteristics:

• informed by theory and evidence
• involve the whole school and are community and strength-based
• are integrated into The New Zealand Curriculum
• are of sufficient time and intensity
• aim to change behaviour, as well as knowledge and attitudes
• aim to influence specific risk and protective factors/core competencies
• address stereotyping and promote respect for diversity
• examine environmental influences
• are developmentally and culturally responsive
• target specific personal and social skills and ensure these are practised
• are personally relevant
• use interactive teaching (tuakana-teina)
• use well trained educators/teachers
• evaluate both process and outcomes. (p. 6-7)

The guidelines explain what schools are required to do and how. It includes advice on how to evaluate the effectiveness of your programme.
Community engagement

Health education is the only area of the school’s curriculum for which the law specifically requires the board of trustees to consult with the school’s community; a consultation that takes place every two years.

Genuine consultation enables you to design a programme that addresses the needs of your students and reflects the beliefs of the community. There is no prescribed process, but it should provide parents and whānau with accurate, relevant information about the draft statement on the delivery of health education and with the opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions.

*Sexuality education: A guide for principals, boards of trustees, and teachers* has a chapter on community consultation and Family Planning can offer support. We also recommend this pamphlet, which was released at the same time as the guidelines: *Sexuality education: Information for parents, families, and whānau.*

Parental consent

Following consultation and the adoption of the statement on the delivery of health education, schools do not need to seek permission from parents or caregivers on their child’s participation in the sexuality education programme. However, parents do have the right to withdraw their child from any elements of the sexuality education programme.

Being inclusive and valuing diversity

It is important to be inclusive of learners, parents, and communities from all angles of diversity including Māori, Pasifika and other cultures. The *Relationship education programmes: Guide for schools* states:

All relationship education programmes need to be inclusive of all learners, including Māori and Pasifika worldviews. These worldviews focus on nurturing potential, identifying opportunity, investing in people and local solutions, and tailoring education to the learner. Both communities should be consulted in the schools, homes, marae and churches. Interventions should be grounded in Māori and Pasifika ways, which involve Māori and Pasifika peoples and distinct traditions. There is no generic Pacific community so interventions must acknowledge diversity within Pacific peoples. (p. 7)
Sexuality education: A guide for principals, boards of trustees, and teachers gives considerable attention to how schools can actively include all its people. It explains cultural models of health and wellbeing, such as *Te Whare Tapa Whā* (Durie, 1994), the *Waka Model* (Kerr, 2013), the *Pōwhiri Model* (Waretini-Karena, 2014) and the Samoan model of *Fonofale* (Pulotu-Endemann, 2001). It offers practical suggestions for what schools can do to counter discrimination and ensure equal participation for all.

Effective sexuality education programmes support and acknowledge diverse genders, identities, and sexual orientations among students and communities. Stereotypes and assumptions are challenged with an emphasis on inclusiveness and the right to self expression. Discrimination against those who identify as gender and identity diverse can be explored through contexts such as toilet facilities, school balls and uniforms.

In *Navigating the journey Te takahi i te ara* resources, *the landscape approach*, outlined at the start, provides an opportunity to respond sensitively to each student’s individual and group identity. The option for students to write and draw their own individual experience provides an opportunity to openly celebrate and appreciate what we share, and how different our journeys are. This also supports monitoring and reflecting upon their learning. Together, they allow for both you and the students to assess their progress in relationship to the key competencies and learning intentions.

**Establishing positive learning environments**

Each resource in *Navigating the journey Te takahi i te ara* begins with the theme, “Establishing a positive learning environment Te whakarite i tētahi ao ako huapai”. While this is always important, it is especially so when the learning is focused on such personal parts of our lives.

In *Promoting student health and wellbeing: Relationship education: Guidance for schools addressing relationship violence and promoting positive gender relations*, Tasker states:

The teacher needs to create an atmosphere of trust and support, so students can openly share their ideas and ask questions. Students need to feel safe from criticism and embarrassment if they are to engage in academically and emotionally-challenging activities. Such positive environments will contribute not only to achieving academic learning outcomes, but also to improving personal and social learning outcomes for students.

A positive learning environment will enable positive social interaction, promoting respect, concern for others and shared responsibility for learning. (2013, p. 12)
Effective pedagogy

The New Zealand Curriculum identifies seven features of effective pedagogy:

- creating a supportive learning environment
- encouraging reflective thought and action
- enhancing the relevance of new learning
- facilitating shared learning
- making connections to prior learning and experience
- providing sufficient opportunities to learn
- teaching as inquiry.

You can find specific information about effective pedagogy in sexuality education in Sexuality education: A guide for principals, boards of trustees, and teachers and Promoting student health and wellbeing. The latter describes an inquiry approach for planning and delivering programmes of work in relationship education.

Competent educators need training in sexuality education, an openness for the subject, and motivation to teach it. Family Planning offers courses to help support you to develop and deliver your programme. Visit the website to learn more about the resources we offer to support sexuality education in schools. Note that there are also many resources that individuals can access, and that these include face-to-face, online, or phone consultations.

Answering student questions

Students will have many questions to ask within this learning context, just as they do with any other learning area. These questions can be useful in guiding the planning of future learning opportunities. Teachers need to be prepared to answer questions on a wide range of topics and are legally entitled to answer any question asked. Before answering, it is important for teachers to consider their own knowledge as in many cases it is crucial to give the correct information.

Knowledge of a school’s / organisation’s policies and procedures in relation to disclosures of bullying and abuse assists preparation in responding to and supporting students sharing personal information. There will be times when teachers will need to refer students to counselling support staff or external support organisations. Taking time to connect with students regularly on an individual basis and in small groups is extremely worthwhile. This will encourage them to open up and seek support when needed. This will also provide insight into the effectiveness of sexuality education programmes and possible next learning steps.
Some student questions may be surprising or even shocking. Keep your expression neutral and answer the question without judgement or disapproval. If unsure, seek clarification from the student before answering. Sometimes a question provides information about a student and may require follow up or a referral to support services. When a question is specific to the student asking, consider if the whole class needs to hear the answer or whether it would be best discussed on a one to one basis.

Honesty is important but it is recommended that teachers do not answer personal questions. Use techniques like “some people believe… and others think… Does anyone else want to share their thoughts about…?”

There will be times when a question cannot be answered straight away. This may be because more information or time are required to prepare the answer. Ensure that the student gets their answer as soon as possible, as there may be some urgency.

If it is decided not to answer a question, provide a reason for this and do so positively so that students feel safe to continue asking questions. For example, it may be a personal question, or the next lesson will be covering it.

Sometimes it can be helpful to invite someone with expertise in sexuality education or sexual health to do some team teaching with you. Take time to plan and prepare for this together as classroom teachers are the best people to deliver programmes as they are more likely to have positive connections with students, whānau and the school community. Identify the intentions for the learning, and ways to measure and evaluate the success. Family Planning Health Promoters can provide such support.

**Question box**

Using a question box enables students to ask questions anonymously. Set up one of these by using a box converted into a postbox with paper and pens nearby, or use a digital postbox format. Find strategies to support junior students who are learning to write to ask questions.

Ensure that student anonymity is always protected and that all questions can be viewed only by the teacher/s. Some students may want to own their questions and to talk individually with their teacher, so find ways that enable this to happen.

Check and answer the questions regularly and plan time to answer questions during each sexuality education session.
Develop guidelines for using the question box with your students. These could include:

- Students must not ask each other to disclose their questions.
- Personal questions directed to teachers or students won’t be answered.
- Everyone submits something on paper (a drawing, or short statement) so that individual students cannot be connected to specific questions.

The following are examples of the types of questions students may ask within the context of sexuality education. They could be used to prepare and practise responses within teaching teams.

- What do you do when you really like a girl but are too shy to tell her?
- How do you get a person out of an abusive relationship?
- What do you do if people ask you lots of questions about your parents splitting up?
- Why does it hurt so bad when you’ve been dumped?
- Why are my friends being mean to me on Instagram?
- What if someone is homosexual and their family is homophobic?
- Why does my foreskin hurt when I wash it?
- Do urine and periods come out of the same place?
- At what age do you think girls are physically/mentally ready to have a baby?
- Do you get pubic hair, breasts, and hairy armpits all at the same time?
- I have my period. How can I tell my mum without feeling embarrassed?
- How come when you have sex, it feels nice?
- Can you masturbate too much?
- How do you know if you’ve got chlamydia?
- How does an abortion happen?
- If someone gives their consent to sex, can they change their mind afterwards and accuse you of rape?
- How much porn is too much?
Student disclosure of abuse or assault

There may be times when students disclose that they are being or have been hurt or touched in unsafe ways. Disclosures of abuse and assault need to be taken seriously. It is important that you are familiar with your school’s disclosure policy so that correct procedures are followed.

Policies need to include specific steps of action to be taken and agencies and services in your area that can offer help and support to students, whānau, and the school. Policies also need to be regularly reviewed and improved.

When a student discloses about abuse or assault, it is important that you tell them that they’ve done the right thing by telling someone, that what happened is not OK, it is not their fault, and that you are going to help them be safe by following the school’s policy.

Assessing learning

Sexuality education: A guide for principals, boards of trustees, and teachers addresses assessment on page 26. In Navigating the journey Te takahi i te ara resources, the “ritual” around reflecting upon learning at the end of each activity is a useful, additional way of noticing where students are in their thinking and learning. So, too, is the Question Box, and offering an opportunity for them to raise questions and concerns in anonymity.

Digital safety

Most young people have quick and easy access to digital media and need support in developing digital citizenship skills and strategies to interact online in positive and safe ways. This also includes being selective regarding what they choose to view. Social media provides a range of ways for young people to communicate with each other, including sexting. Sexuality education programmes provide opportunities for young people to be able to think critically about their use of digital media, making informed decisions, and seeking support when they are feeling unsafe and/or hurt.

Netsafe offers schools and whānau support in a positive approach to technology and managing online challenges in safe ways.
**Pornography**

Young people’s access and exposure to online pornography is a growing concern for many schools and whānau. While pornography can feel like a difficult topic to discuss and teach about, it’s an important part of talking with students about healthy relationships, consent, media and sex in the digital age.

In preparation to provide learning opportunities, it may be helpful to consider the following:

- People hold diverse beliefs about pornography; some think pornography is objectionable and harmful while others think pornography is a positive aspect of their sexual expression and sexuality.
- Pornography doesn’t usually show real bodies or real sex so it’s usually not a reliable way to learn about sex, sexuality or safer sex.
- Pornography is a performance with actors. Consent is generally not sought or given. Safe sex practices like condom use are usually ignored.
- Pornography often shows women with little power and/or as victims of violence.

Sexuality education provides opportunities for students to develop critical thinking skills and an ability to question messages being communicated on-line.

Students and whānau need to know where to go to get support and counselling and learning opportunities can develop their knowledge of services available. *Netsafe* provides a range of material for schools and whānau developing their knowledge about supporting young people managing the accessing and viewing of pornography.

Working in partnership with parents and whānau regarding pornography and safe access and use of digital media at home can provide students further necessary support.
Consent

Students need learning opportunities to develop skills to be able to ask for and give consent in a range of contexts. In preparation to provide learning opportunities, you may find it helpful to consider the following:

• consent is when both people say and show “yes” to an activity
• a sexual activity without consent is sexual violation and illegal. It’s never okay
• at any time someone can change their mind about an activity and expect their partner to respect the decision. Also, if ‘yes’ has been said once to a partner, it doesn’t mean it has to be “yes” every time
• people cannot consent to sexual activities if they are unconscious, drunk or high on drugs
• The age of consent for sex in Aotearoa New Zealand is 16.

Sexuality education provides opportunity for students to deepen their understandings about consent and feeling safe in relationships. This is a context that *Navigating the journey Te takahi i te ara explores* throughout the Years 1-10 resources.

Multi-level and modern learning environments

In a modern learning environment, you have a wonderful opportunity to be very deliberate about how you organise groupings for different activities. Smaller groups in smaller spaces are preferable to providing a safe and more private environment to allow for student sharing and discussion. You also have the opportunity to use your teaching resource strategically, sharing the planning and identifying together how you will monitor students and be available to them when they need support.
References


Kerr, H. (2013). Presentation on “Whānau, Hapū and Iwi well-being: The Waka as a Model” Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XycH_nrF7vFs


Appendix

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