Overview
GDHR strongly promotes and advocates the Health Promoting Schools Framework as a way of supporting a comprehensive approach to achieving educational and health outcomes.

What is a health promoting school?
A Health Promoting School is a school that is constantly strengthening its capacity as a healthy setting for living, learning and working.¹

A health promoting school:

• Fosters health and learning with all the measures at its disposal.

• Engages health and education officials, teachers, teachers' unions, students, parents, health providers and community leaders in efforts to make the school a healthy place.

• Strives to provide a healthy environment, school health education, and school health services along with school/community projects and outreach, health promotion programs for staff, nutrition and food safety programs, opportunities for physical education and recreation, and programs for counselling, social support and mental health promotion.

• Implements policies and practices that respect an individual's wellbeing and dignity, provide multiple opportunities for success, and acknowledge good efforts and intentions as well as personal achievements.

• Strives to improve the health of school personnel, families and community members as well as pupils; and works with community leaders to help them understand how the community contributes to, or undermines, health and education.

Health promoting schools focus on:

• Caring for oneself and others.

• Making healthy decisions and taking control over life's circumstances.

• Creating conditions that are conducive to health (through policies, services, physical/social conditions).

• Building capacities for peace, shelter, education, food, income, a stable ecosystem, equity, social justice and sustainable development.
Health Promoting Schools Framework

Background Note

- Preventing leading causes of death, disease and disability: tobacco use, HIV/AIDS, STDs/BBVs, sedentary lifestyle, drugs and alcohol, violence and injuries, unhealthy nutrition.
- Influencing health-related behaviours: knowledge, beliefs, skills, attitudes, values, support.

The Health Promoting Schools framework

The Health Promoting Schools Framework developed by the World Health Organization encourages a whole school approach to addressing health issues, including relationships and sexual health education. The framework consists of three areas: Curriculum, teaching and learning; School organisation, ethos and environment; and Partnerships and services.

The framework is useful to keep in mind when planning sexual health education within a school. The following strategies can be implemented in schools to promote a whole school approach to student health.

Curriculum, teaching and learning

- Make use of the Growing and Developing Healthy Relationships (GDHR) resources
- Share resources between neighbouring primary and high schools, e.g. Magno-mate reproductive kit
- Provide an adequate specific budget for resources/professional development/health committee
- Encourage input of students, parents and teachers into relationship and sexual health education
Health Promoting Schools Framework

Background Note

- Ensure issues addressed through curriculum programs and teaching materials consider all students' learning styles and needs
- Ensure programs and teaching materials consider all students' learning styles and needs
- Integrate learning areas across the curriculum, e.g. library research, literature, design and technology, art
- Promote health education strategies on staff noticeboard
- Utilise positive peer role models
- Organise a panel discussion by students emphasising safe ways to party
- Create a student photographic display which highlights positive relationships

School organisation, ethos and environment

- Develop, implement and review school sexual health guidelines/policies
- Integrate health services, including student counselling
- Identify a specific ‘health’ room within the school
- Set up a ‘hang out’ room to display messages and posters that celebrate sexual diversity
- Sexual Health Week activities
- Staff health promotion
- Involve parents (/caregivers/guardians/significant role-models) and community members in sexual health education
- Get feedback from parents, teachers and students on school health policy development
- Professional development for teachers on GDHR materials
- Professional development for staff on affirming diversity and inclusive language.
- Use inclusive language in newsletters and other correspondence

Partnerships and services

- Organise relationship/sexual health education courses for parents
- Encourage parents to work with their sons/daughters on the GDHR take home activities
- Involve parents in school relationship/sexual health education guidelines/curriculum decisions
### Health Promoting Schools Framework

#### Background Note

- Include relationship/sexual health education information in school newsletter
- Conduct a health conference for high school students. Make use of external agencies/presenters, e.g. Freedom Centre, Sexual and Reproductive Health WA, WA AIDS Council
- Have young people model some of the strategies from the GDHR materials for parents at the P & C meeting
- Conduct a parent survey on current sexual health knowledge and present a follow-up parent information night
- Put health displays/ student made models in local library
- Create an urban art wall with a relationship theme


### Relevant resources

#### Websites

**WA Health Promoting Schools Association** (WAHPSA)

The WA Health Promoting Schools Association advocates and supports a whole school and community approach to health and wellbeing. The Association achieves this through education, coordination and collaboration with school communities and health agencies.

**Australian Council of Health and Physical Education and Recreation** (ACHPER)

The professional association representing teachers and other professionals working in the fields of health and physical education. ACHPER provides programs and services that support continuing development of knowledge, skills and professional practice.

#### Postscript
This Background Note relates to the following Learning Activities:

- Puberty part 1
- Puberty part 2

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