

## Sample letter to parents/caregivers – Secondary schools

Dear Parent/Carer

Health education is an important area of the WA Curriculum that all schools are required to teach in Years PP-10. This includes topics such as: safety; nutrition; mental health and wellbeing; alcohol and other drug education; and respectful relationships. With internet access and social media at the touch of a finger, it is vital that children are given accurate and reliable health information in a safe and supportive environment.

Teachers at this school are taking positive measures to help students understand all aspects of their health including their relationships, sexual health and sexuality, and how this relates to their lives now and in the future.

Relationships and sexuality education covers a wide range of topics including:

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|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> identifying emotions              | <input type="checkbox"/> respectful relationships             | <input type="checkbox"/> growing bodies                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> expressing emotions appropriately | <input type="checkbox"/> communication skills                 | <input type="checkbox"/> body image and media          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> positive thinking                 | <input type="checkbox"/> positive coping strategies           | <input type="checkbox"/> puberty                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> resilience                        | <input type="checkbox"/> managing changes                     | <input type="checkbox"/> pregnancy, conception & birth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> personal strengths                | <input type="checkbox"/> peer influence                       | <input type="checkbox"/> consent                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> family & cultural identity        | <input type="checkbox"/> bullying & discrimination prevention | <input type="checkbox"/> STIs and BBVs                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> personal identity                 | <input type="checkbox"/> online safety                        | <input type="checkbox"/> sex and the law               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> beliefs and values                | <input type="checkbox"/> decision making skills               | <input type="checkbox"/> help seeking                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> trusted networks                  | <input type="checkbox"/> risk taking                          | <input type="checkbox"/> health literacy               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> protective behaviours             |   | <input type="checkbox"/> sharps & blood safety         |

Content is introduced at age and developmentally appropriate stages but the principles, issues and skills development to assist young people to make health-enhancing decisions remain constant. Relationships and sexuality education should not suddenly begin in secondary school, rather it needs to build upon what has been covered in primary school. Topics such as friendships, public and private body parts, expressing emotions appropriately, puberty changes, respectful relationships, managing changes, and pregnancy are covered in primary school. At secondary level topics include gender and power, reproduction, pregnancy, contraception, sexual health, consent, rights and responsibilities in relationships, finding reliable sources of information, managing risks and keeping safe.

We acknowledge that relationships and sexuality education is primarily the responsibility of the parents and carers. School programs aim to build upon home education and support young people to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to make informed choices about their relationships and sexual health.

Evidence shows that comprehensive school based relationships and sexuality education:

- ☐ provides additional opportunities for young people to learn about and discuss relationships and sexual health issues outside their homes
- ☐ increases confidence and ability to make informed decisions
- ☐ delays first sexual intercourse
- ☐ decreases the frequency of sexual intercourse
- ☐ decreases the number of sexual partners
- ☐ reduces risk taking
- ☐ increases the use of safer sex practices

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□ helps to prevent unintended pregnancy and sexually transmissible infections among young people

Relationships and sexuality education is a shared responsibility between parents/carers, schools and the community. This is an opportunity for us all to work together to promote positive attitudes, behaviours and the development of important life skills.

[\*Talk Soon. Talk Often. A guide for parents talking to their kids about sex\*](#) is a free resource from the WA Department of Health which offers tips for all ages and stages of development from birth to adulthood. We will be sending home a copy of this book and encourage you to discuss these important topics with your child at home.

(We would also like to invite you to our parent workshop on XX/XX/XX which will showcase some of the resources we will be using and allow you to have any questions answered.)

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