

Influence of the media

Curriculum links

WA Curriculum

Sub-strand: Personal identity and change

- Impact of societal and cultural influences on personal identities and health behaviour.

Sub-strand: Healthy and active communities

- Health information, support services and media messaging about relationships, lifestyle choices, health decisions and behaviours.

Sub-strand: Interacting with others

- Influences on sexuality and sexual health behaviours, including the impact decisions and actions have on own and other's health and wellbeing.

International technical guidelines on sexuality education

Key concept 2.3 Culture, society and sexuality

- It is important to be aware of how social and cultural norms impact sexual behaviour while developing one's own point of view.

Key concept 4.3 Safe use of information and communication technologies

- Sexually explicit media can result in unrealistic expectations about sexual behaviour, sexual response and body appearance.

Key concept 5.4 Media literacy and sexuality

- Negative and inaccurate media portrayals of men and women can be challenged to influence behaviour positively and promote gender equality.

Materials

- Internet access
- Teaching Resource: [Digital Era online article](#) - one per pair

Before you get started

- Pornography is something that is becoming much more accessible for young people and something that they are being exposed to much earlier than in the past. Pornography is how some young people receive sex education. Current thinking suggests that these factors can affect young people's expectations of each other and themselves, and also how young people form healthy relationships with others. See the Guide: [Young people and the accessibility and influence of pornography](#) for more information on this topic.
- It is possible that a student may have been involved in a traumatic experience relating to pornography and sexual harassment. It is important that teachers are familiar with the Guide: [Dealing with disclosures](#) and have a risk management strategy in place.

Learning activities

Assessing media: Wrecking ball song lyrics

20 minutes

Using a case study, students discuss the necessity of sexualised imagery in the media.

1. Read the lyrics to the Miley Cyrus song *Wrecking Ball* without telling the students the name of the song or artist (the lyrics can be downloaded from the internet).
 - It's likely students will know this popular hit first released in 2013, but may never have thought about what the lyrics mean.
 - Ask students to consider what the song is about and what it means using the [think-pair-share](#) strategy, and then share responses with the class.
2. Show the students the *Wrecking Ball* YouTube clip (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=My2FRPA3Gf8>) [3:41min]. Ask:
 - *What are your initial thoughts and feelings about the clip?*
 - *Do you feel the sexual behaviour in the video clip is consistent with the message of the song?*
 - *How does the video clip accurately reflect or not reflect the lyrics?*
 - *If you were 11 or 12 years of age watching this video clip, what impression do you think it would have on you?*

Assessing media: Digital era article

20 minutes

Using an online article, students analyse the impact pornography has on young people and their intimate behaviours. Students extend their knowledge to assess whether pornography is contributing to the normalisation of sexual violence and gender equity in our community.

1. Provide each pair of students with a copy of the Teaching Resource: *Digital Era online article* to read independently.
2. In small groups, students discuss the following questions.
 - *What is the article about and who is it aimed at?*
 - *How are men and women represented in mainstream advertising, music videos and popular culture? (think about the setting, the activities they are engaged in, the language that is used by, and about, men and women, etc.)*
 - *Women are often underrepresented in the media, creating the message that women are unimportant or invisible. Can you think of examples of this?*

- *How do you feel about the article? Do you agree with the claims made?*
- *How does today's violent pornography found in advertising, music videos and popular culture negatively impact young people and their intimate behaviours?*
- *How is pornography contributing to the normalisation of sexual violence and gender inequity in our community?*
- *What might young people think about gender and sexuality if they only got their information about these topics through advertising, music videos and popular culture and did not receive sex education like you are getting?*

3-2-1 Reflection

1. Ask students to share their responses from the group task.
2. Discuss differing views and any misconceptions (e.g. sex vs gender).
3. Highlight the [Think u know](#) and esafety.gov.au websites for support and further information.

External resources

The practical guide to love, sex and relationships

A teaching resource from the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University.

Topic - Porn, what you should know

- critically thinking about sexual imagery - what is
- Working things out.

Health promoting schools

Background teacher note: [Health promoting schools framework](#).

