

## TALKING TO YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX

We all want young people to move safely from childhood, through adolescence into adulthood and to develop respect for themselves and others.

In school, we contribute to this in Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and our wider PSHE programme. Since September 2020, RSE has been a compulsory area of the curriculum. RSE involves learning about ourselves - our emotions, our identity, our relationships, sexuality, sexual health and behaviours. Learning about these aspects continues throughout our lives. However, there are some key things which young people need to consider as they approach adulthood. Most of what young people learn about these topics takes place at home and in the community and we support this learning in school.

We hope this leaflet will give you some information about what young people are learning at school and what you can do to support your child.



Parents have the right to withdraw their child from areas of the curriculum which the school defines as Sex Education. For more information about our definition of Sex Education and the details of the right to withdraw, see our RSE policy.

### WHY SHOULD PARENTS AND CARERS TALK TO THEIR CHILDREN ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX?

Young people tell us they want their parents to be the first ones to talk to them about puberty, sex and relationships.

If families start talking to their children about puberty, sex and relationships they are less likely to get ideas that worry or confuse them and they learn that it's alright to talk about these things at home and to ask questions.

Young people learn most about values and relationships from family experiences. Close, loving relationships are the best way of showing a young person how your family 'does things' based on your values and beliefs.

If families talk about relationships and sex openly and honestly, young people are:

- more prepared for puberty and the changes they experience
- more likely to resist pressure to have unwanted sex
- more likely to delay having sex for the first time
- more likely to use contraception if they do have sex
- less likely to have an unplanned pregnancy or to get a sexually transmitted infection.

## WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE LEARN ABOUT RSE IN SCHOOL?

### Key Stage 3 (Year 7/8/9)

<p>Why do some people want to have a girlfriend/boyfriend and what makes these relationships positive?</p> <p>Why do people decide to get married, become civil partners or form stable long-term partnerships?</p> <p>What information do I need about my body, brain, emotions and relationships during puberty?</p> <p>What do I understand by the term 'sexuality' and how do I show respect?</p> <p>Why might someone share a sexual image of themselves and what are the risks and the law?</p> <p>How can I give and get enthusiastic consent?</p> <p>How has my need for privacy changed and what are my rights over my body?</p> <p>How am I responsible for my personal hygiene?</p> <p>Which infections can be spread by sexual activity and how do condoms work?</p> <p>Can I identify sources of reliable information?</p>	<p>Changing relationships</p> <p>Trust, honesty mutual respect</p> <p>Love</p> <p>Gender differences</p> <p>Puberty</p> <p>Masturbation</p> <p>Media &amp; technology</p> <p>Body image</p> <p>LGBTQ, diversity &amp; prejudice</p> <p>Sexting</p> <p>Consent</p> <p>FGM</p> <p>STIs &amp; HIV/AIDS</p> <p>Contraception</p> <p>Privacy &amp; confidentiality</p>
<p>Can I communicate sensitively in my relationships?</p> <p>What is coercion and what does it look like in intimate relationships?</p> <p>Do I understand what sex is and the physical and emotional effects?</p> <p>How does the media portray sex and how might this affect people's views?</p> <p>What is the level of sexual activity amongst my peers?</p> <p>How will I know if I feel ready for an intimate/sexual relationship?</p> <p>Which technology safety rules are of special importance in intimate relationships?</p>	<p>Negotiation</p> <p>Anticipating sexual relationships</p> <p>Coercion</p> <p>Pornography</p> <p>Social norms</p> <p>Personal morality</p> <p>Sexual orientation and LGBTQ</p>

Which sexual behaviours pose risks for transmission of STIs and HIV/AIDS?	Consent
What do I understand about different forms of contraception?	Safer sex
What are the responsibilities of parent/carers for teenaged children?	Contraception
Can I identify trusted sources of support for sexual health?	Sources of support
	E-safety

#### Key Stage 4 (Year 10/11)

How can I delay sexual intimacy until I am sure I am ready?	Assertiveness
What are the characteristics of an abusive intimate relationship?	Exploitation/CSE
What is domestic abuse?	Abuse and FGM
What are the experiences of young parents?	Domestic violence
Why do some people adopt or foster children?	Pornography
How do lifestyle choices affect fertility and foetal development?	Young parents
How does fertility change over your lifetime?	Adoption/ Fostering
Why do people choose cosmetic or aesthetic procedures?	The foetus & fertility
How might media portrayals of sex influence people's views?	Cosmetic procedures
What are the terms for describing different identities?	Sexual attraction
What are the views of different faiths/cultures about sex and relationships?	Hetero/homosexuality
How does the use of alcohol/drugs affect safety in relationships?	Non-binary gender
What is a consensual sexual relationship?	Trans/cis gender
What does the law say about rape and consequences?	Abortion
What are honour-based violence and forced marriage?	Alcohol, drugs & sex
How will health care professionals treat my personal information?	Consent and rape
What are the options when a pregnancy is unwanted?	Victim blaming
How do I access local services?	Confidentiality
	Criminal convictions

## HOW CAN I TALK TO MY CHILD ABOUT SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS?

- Talk while you're doing something else – washing up, driving.
- Enjoy talking. Laugh with each other, not at each other – it can reduce embarrassment and stress.
- Listen rather than judge. Ask them what they think.
- Answer questions and don't be afraid to say you don't know.
- Always respond. Give the message it's good to talk about relationships and sex.
- If it feels too personal, talk about people in books, films or soaps.



## WHAT DO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE THINK?

Young people want to talk to their parents/carers about relationships and sex, but that can be daunting if you've not started yet. One group of 10-16 year olds came up with these helpful pieces of advice for parents:

- Take responsibility for talking to us. Don't just wait for us to ask.
- If we ask you things, always tell the truth. Don't put it off or say 'I'll tell you when you're older.'
- Don't be angry and try not to be embarrassed.
- Don't save it all up for a one-off 'birds and bees' lecture. We'd rather you talked naturally, little and often.
- Wait until we're at home and on our own together to avoid embarrassment.
- Make sure we know what you're talking about and let us ask you questions.
- If we ask what a word means, ask us what we think the word means first.
- Don't laugh at us or post on social media about what we have been talking about.
- If you don't know something, be honest and say that you don't know.
- Give us books or leaflets and share online information, but talk to us too.
- Don't expect school to tell us everything – we want to hear from our parents/carers too.

## USEFUL CONTACTS

FPA [www.fpa.org.uk/help-and-advice/advice-for-parents-carers](http://www.fpa.org.uk/help-and-advice/advice-for-parents-carers)

PARENT CHANNEL TV [Youtube channel](#)

SEX EDUCATION FORUM [www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/media/6360/talk-to-your-children.pdf](http://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/media/6360/talk-to-your-children.pdf)

THINKUKNOW [www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/)

NHS [www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Talkingaboutsex/Pages/Talkingtoyourteen.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Talkingaboutsex/Pages/Talkingtoyourteen.aspx)

## HOW ELSE CAN I SUPPORT RSE?

- You can ask at school for more information about the RSE provided.
- If you are interested in supporting the school in reviewing RSE, please let us know.



## RSE SOURCES OF SUPPORT FOR PARENTS

### ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS

Thinkuknow [Parents Microsite](#)

NSPCC [Talking to your child about Sexting](#)

NSPCC [Talking to your child about staying safe on line](#)

### SEXUALITY

Stonewall [Coming Out a Guide for Parents](#)

Stonewall [So you think your child is gay](#)

FFLAG [A Guide for Families and Friends - LGB](#)

Family Lives [Coming out](#)

The Kite Trust [thekitetrust.org.uk/](http://thekitetrust.org.uk/)

## GENDER IDENTITY

Mermaids [Parents' Advice](#)

Gendered Intelligence [Guide for Parents and Family Members of Trans People in the UK](#)

FFLAG [A Guide for Families and Friends Transgender](#)

## PORN

NSPCC [Online Porn Advice on how to talk to your child](#)

Family Lives [Porn](#)

Lucy Faithful Foundation [What's the Problem – A Guide for Parents of children who have got into trouble on line.](#)

## HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

NSPCC [Positive Parenting guide](#)

NSPCC [Talking about difficult topics](#)

FPA [Talking with Teenagers](#)

Family Lives [Healthy Relationships](#)

Family Lives [Talking about Consent](#)

Centre 33 [centre33.org.uk/](http://centre33.org.uk/)

## SEXUAL HEALTH

Family Lives [Teenage Pregnancy](#)

Family Lives [Teenagers having Sex](#)

DHIVerse [www.dhiverse.org.uk/](http://www.dhiverse.org.uk/)

Cambs CCard [www.ccardcambs.com/](http://www.ccardcambs.com/)

iCASH [www.icash.nhs.uk/](http://www.icash.nhs.uk/)