

Session: Education and Sexual Health: Rethinking Practice

Author:

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Title: Best practice delivery of relationships and sexual health education in schools

All children and young people are entitled to good quality relationships and sexual health (R&SH) education. This education must provide relevant learning opportunities to enable students to develop necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to participate in respectful, pleasurable and safe relationships now and into the future.

SHine SA (Sexual Health information, networking and education) has successfully supported schools for over 15 years in the area of R&SH, implementing a best practice approach - based on national and international research. This presentation will outline our model of support; underpinning principles; key factors for success; and the challenges/issues that need to be addressed to ensure sustainability, consistency and relevance.

SHine SA builds the confidence and competency of school-based educators to deliver a comprehensive curriculum that meet the requirements of both the *Australian Curriculum* and the SA Department for Education and Child Development's *Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum*. We provide professional development programs, curriculum resources and much valued ongoing personnel support. Our aim is to enable teachers to create safe and supportive school environments, deliver effective curriculum, and establish partnerships with parents/families and community agencies.

For the curriculum to remain relevant, engaging and authentic, SHine SA is informed by ongoing feedback from teachers and young people. We have been responsive to emerging issues including sexualised images in popular media, impact of technology and pornography, and have long been inclusive of sexual diversity and gender diversity. At times it has been necessary to advocate for all young people to have access to this education, mindful of differing views within society. Ultimately, it is the educators who have recognised the quality, relevance and benefit to young people of this education and endorsed the SHine SA program with 94% of state secondary schools participating.