

Our Voices

Student designed activities for sexuality and relationships education

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Engaging
Young People in
Sexuality Education
Research Project



SHINESA




University of
South Australia



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Teachers are encouraged to consider how they might incorporate student voice within their lessons. The student resources that were developed in this project, are included here as is the process we used in working with the students. Teachers may be interested to see what students developed, use the activities in discussion with their students, and modify the approach according to their needs.

We found that by inviting students to have a say in their learning about relationships and sexual health they became excited and engaged, and the learning became more relevant to their lives.

Research Team

Introduction

This report provides details of a research project that involved young people in the development of new teaching and learning resources in the area of sexuality and relationships education.

The project explored the following questions:

- What are young people's views on school-based sexuality and relationships education?
- What influences young people's ideas about sexuality and relationships?
- How can young people be engaged in the development of new ways to teach sexuality and relationships education?

The first research question was addressed by surveying over 2,400 adolescents about what they thought of the sexuality education they received, and how it could be improved. A comprehensive report on this research is available at:

www.youthsexuality.com.au

The second and third research questions were explored by working with thirteen Year 9 and 10 students at Woodville High School, a large multicultural secondary school in Adelaide. The students who volunteered to work with us formed a very diverse group in terms of gender, sexual orientation, and religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Central to our approach was a commitment to giving students a bigger say about issues that affect what and how they learn in sexuality and relationships education. We wanted to do this because:

- past research has shown that adults, rather than students, determine what is taught in sexuality and relationships education
- students have a right to have a say about matters that affect them, particularly in sexuality and relationships education
- students have the knowledge, skills and motivation to contribute to decisions about sexuality and relationships education
- their contributions are likely to promote gender and cultural diversity in the curriculum
- involving students promotes fairer and more equitable relationships in schools and challenges hierarchical power-based ways of working

We planned and led five half-day workshops to teach our students about:

- participatory research that involves students as co-researchers
- what other students thought were the 'most often used', 'most effective', and 'most fun' learning activities in sexuality and relationships education (from the survey)
- thinking 'outside the square' to develop new ways to teach sexuality and relationships education
- using 'critical' approaches to evaluate suggested new ways to teach sexuality and relationships education
- planning, developing and trialling new teaching approaches

Early in the teaching and learning process students were asked why they had volunteered to be a part of the project and what personal skills and interests they brought to the group. The range of motivations, skills and interests students brought to the project was diverse. They had expertise in music, technology, drama, language, and art, and wanted to be involved in the project because it was 'interesting', 'a bit of a challenge', and 'it's important for us to have a say in these things'.

Students worked in small groups to present draft ideas and receive feedback from each other and the research team.

The topics and products chosen and developed by the groups were:

- **Diversity of Sexual Attraction**

Product: A song about diversity of gender and sexual attraction, together with discussion questions

- **Love**

Product: Three scripted plays about love

- **Breaking Up**

Product: A poem and written scenarios about ending relationships

- **Sexting**

Product: An animation about sexting

- **Gender and Sexual Diversity**

Product: A board game about gender and sexual diversity

We faced many challenges working with students in ways that encouraged their participation, creativity and willingness to 'have a say' about improving sexuality and relationships education. These included:

- Challenging traditional roles, relationships, and taken-for-granted 'ways of doing things' at school so that students assumed greater responsibility for planning curriculum activities. Yet, despite our efforts to use participatory methods, some students were initially reluctant to engage in the process. We think this was because most students weren't used to having the freedom to develop new ways of doing things in sexuality and relationships education.

- Accepting that some students were uncomfortable with some of the issues we discussed (masturbation, sexual pleasure, gender and sexual diversity, gendered violence). We emphasised students' freedom to investigate topics of their choice. If they didn't feel comfortable, they didn't have to pursue those topics.
- Recognising and embracing student diversity. There was no such thing as a single student 'voice' but many 'voices' due to differences in race, class, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, interests, knowledge, skills and personality.
- Minimising the intrusiveness of data gathering processes (video and audio-taping; 'listening-in' to group discussions). We responded to students' complaints about 'being recorded all the time' by taking field notes instead of audio-taping their conversations.
- Acknowledging how busy students were. All were volunteers who undertook their investigations on top of their normal schoolwork. The school assigned a dedicated teacher to help students plan and manage their extra workload. This proved to be a strategic appointment as the teacher scheduled regular small-group meetings and used an online communication platform (EDMODO) to keep group members connected.

The benefits of using a participatory research approach included:

- achieving relatively high levels of student engagement
- achieving greater depth of investigations
- developing creative, student-designed learning activities
- utilising students' skills in ICT, music, languages, art and design, and problem solving
- recognising and acknowledging the importance of 'student choices, interests, passions, and ambitions' in sexuality and relationships education

How we worked with the students

Engaging Young People in Sexuality Education Workshops

August, September, October 2016

Aim: To explore with students participatory research, the importance of ethics and the law and critical literacy. To engage young people in the creation of new sexuality and relationships education resources and teaching approaches.

Workshop 1 (3 hours): Introduction. Exploring participatory research. Sources of information about sexuality.

Welcome, introductions.

Clarification of purpose for working together. After a series of activities led by the researchers, students will, in small groups, work on the development of new sexuality and relationships education resources and teaching approaches.

1: Group Norms

- Students in pairs (with someone they do not know well), make a list of group norms for the next 5 sessions, record on the board. Discuss why they are important, particularly in a sexuality education classroom. The list could include:
 - Right to pass
 - Confidentiality, importance of not making personal disclosures that could be harmful or someone may later regret: don't ask personal questions, don't use names in personal stories (e.g. 'I know someone who.....', or 'I saw on TV.....')
 - Respect for others and their ideas (respect needs to be explored with practical examples of what it does or does not look like)
 - No put downs

2: What is 'participatory research' (PR)?

- Using iPads and smart phones, ask pairs (again with someone they do not know well) to do a web search for brief definitions of 'participatory research'. Limit time to 5 minutes. Ask students to record. Share.
- From student notes, distil 5–6 key features of PR.
- Students to look at notes on PR, record the 3 they think are the most important and also record what they would like to see and what they would not like to see during our sessions together. Share.

3: Analysing survey data

- Stage 1 of this project surveyed over 2,400 students. One of the questions asked students about 'most often used' and 'most trusted' sources of information about sexuality. Show participants a graph of this data. The Stage 1 report can be accessed via the website: www.youthsexuality.com.au

- Ensure students can read the graph/explain what the graph is saying. Briefly summarise to assist students to read the graphs to follow.
- Give each small group a copy of the graph and sticky notes and ask students to write a word that best describes their reaction to the results or ask them to use the following words: Agree, Disagree, Surprise, Indifferent, Expected, Problem, Positive.
- Ask students to place their sticky notes on the data.
- Ask students to discuss the difference between used and trusted. What is it about some sources that they may be easy to access but not necessarily trusted?

4: Real life sources of knowledge

- Show students the following list of dichotomous ways of looking at sources of information: official/unofficial; secretive/open; nearby/far away; old/new; safe/dangerous; trustworthy/untrustworthy; accessible/inaccessible; legal/illegal; personal/impersonal. Ask students to identify from the 'most used/ trusted' list of sources of information which ones could fit each of the dichotomous categories. Discuss as a group.
- Ask students to form pairs. Ask students to discuss how 'some of their friends' find out information about sexual matters. Ask them to 'tell some stories' while maintaining the anonymity of 'their friends'. Share with group.
- Brainstorm ways that these 'stories' could be depicted visually, aurally, and textually (e.g. photos; short YouTube videos; cut outs from magazines; drawings; poetry; works of art; music; written texts).

5: Sexuality definition

- Ask students in small groups to come up with a definition or words describing aspects of sexuality, record on butcher's paper, share with the group.
- Show students the WHO definition.

Sexuality is a central aspect of being human throughout life and encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and relationships. While sexuality can include all of these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors. WHO 2014

- Discuss if it is broader than they thought.

6: Planning

- Group round to consider personal strengths for this project, what students bring to the process.
- Ask students to get into small groups and consider 'What influences young people's ideas about sexuality?' then to consider how they could record/depict these. (This probably replicates list developed above i.e. film, photos, stories etc.)
- Share with the whole group.
- Their task/homework, for the following session: to look at one of their ideas about what influences young people's ideas about sexuality and record it via film, photo, story, poem, music etc.
- Summary and future plans.

Workshop 2 (3 hours): Is it legal? Becoming critical.

1: Share homework with whole group

2: Examples of methods of representing human sexuality influences

- Present several examples such as: educational video *Porn, What You Should Know* from an online resource (www.lovesexrelationships.edu.au) developed by the Australian Research Centre for Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS); Police video *Tea and Consent*; short story chapter from novel called *Totally Joe*.

3: Reaching some conclusions

- Following a general discussion about what was learnt from each presentation, ask each pair to identify 4–5 salient ‘findings’ from their work and write them on butcher’s paper.
- Give each pair 6 voting stickers and ask them to indicate, in several voting rounds, which ‘findings’ are the most:
 - Interesting
 - Novel
 - Weird
 - Worrying
 - Predictable
 - Helpful for sexuality education
 - Relevant to sexuality education
 - [other criteria suggested by participants]

4: Analysing survey data

- One of the questions was ‘Topics students wanted in greater depth in their sexuality and relationships education’. The following topics were the top responses to this question: Violent relationships; Gender diversity; Love; Starting relationship; Staying safe online; Ending relationship; How to have sex; Different sexual acts; Masturbation; Sexual pleasure; Pornography.
- Discuss : Were you surprised by any topics or were there other topics that should be included?

5: Planning

- Ask students to form the group they want to work with on the final task (preferably group of 3) and choose one of the topics from ‘Topics wanted in greater depth’. Spend some time planning/talking about their project, how the topic is to be presented.

6: Is it legal?

- Ask groups to consider the following limits of doing what they plan.
 - Is it legal?
 - Is it safe?
 - Is it ethical?
 - Is it consistent with our group norms?
 - Does it ensure participants’ anonymity?

- Consent: Ensure clarity around use of film of either other students or general public (if filming general public they can not be identifiable, so they need to be filmed from the back, shoulders down or from a distance – remember seeing on TV pixelated or blurred faces). If filming students in this school for the purposes of this project, product is not to be shared. Other guidelines still apply.
- Is it 'do-able'?
- Anything else?
- Discuss as a group the above.
- Now ask students to consider their plans. Can they answer 'No' to any of these questions? Further time for planning.

7: Critical literacy practices

- What do students understand by critical literacy? 'Crap detector' – ability to look critically at things you read or see such as media articles, items on TV, things people say to you, by asking questions to clarify the issue, the perspectives presented, any biases, determine if the facts being presented are being based on evidence.
- Students given a recent article in the media from ABC News Gold Coast about students being suspended over the sending of naked photos on mobile phones. Students are asked to read it and comment, particularly on assumptions being made, assess what is being said, the position the journalist has taken.
- Students given the following set of questions they can use now and in the development of their resource:
 - What do you think is the main issue here?
 - Is it an important issue? Why?
 - What assumptions are being made? By whom?
 - What evidence is presented to support particular assumptions, claims or points of view?
 - What further evidence would you need to support their claims or points of view?
 - Do others support these claims or points of view?
 - Are there alternative actions that could be put in place?
 - What effect would they have?
 - How are your views different from or similar to those expressed in the article?
 - So what? Why is it/isn't it important to ask these questions?
- Show students a 2-minute segment of *Sex on the map* (an educational animation made in Sweden for teenagers) and ask them to consider some of the questions from their sheet.
 - What is their reaction to it?
 - What was the purpose for its development?
 - What assumptions are made?
- Students use remaining time to plan their project.
- Students come back for final 5 minutes and read the Critical Literacy wordle sheet and write down a definition of Critical Literacy.

8: Homework task

- Preliminary plan to share with the whole group next week.

Workshop 3 (3 hours): Planning your activity. Making it fun and effective.

1: Warm up

- Reflection in pairs. Share a memory of when you learned something. Discuss: Where was it? Who taught you? How did you learn? How did you feel?

2: Share preliminary plans

- Students in groups. Select one group's plan and, using butcher's paper, complete a brief PMI analysis (Plus-Minus-Interesting). Share reflections.

3: Analysing survey data

- Share data from student survey about 'most often used', 'most effective' and 'most fun' learning activities used in sexuality and relationships education.
- Explain that students can either write a word that best describes their reaction to the results or ask them to use the following words: Agree, Disagree, Surprise, Indifferent, Expected, Problem, Positive.
- Students in groups of 4 do a 'Placemat activity' to discuss connection or importance to them of learning activities in the classroom being fun vs effective. As a group summarise discussion and share with the whole group. Ask students to consider this when determining their topic, means of exploring the issue and the learning that they hope will take place when their activity is used.

4: Becoming 'critical'

- Discuss the benefits of becoming 'more critical' when addressing particular topics in sexuality education – pornography, respectful relationships, sexualisation of childhood, sex and the media, etc. (30 min)
- Ask students to reflect on the practicalities of using a 'critical' approach in sexuality education.
- Ask students to practise using 'critical literacies' on *Trusted Moments* short film.
- Record comments on butcher's paper. (30 min)

5: Planning

Summary and future plans. Students to work over the next 4 weeks with their groups on their topic, and the means of depicting the issue and providing some learning activities. Reminder of discussions about legal/ethical issues.



Workshop 4 (1.5 hours): Becoming advocates of change

Activity: Presentation of student work so far

Students, teachers and researchers provide feedback.

Workshop 5 (2.5 hours): Final Presentations

Activity: Presentation of student final products

As a part of their presentation students are asked to explain:

- their topic and what they have developed
- why they think the resource is important, relevant and needed
- the process they went through to produce their resource
- what was hard or challenging about the process
- what was the most enjoyable part of the process
- any advice for others who may develop teaching resources for students
- what they learned by being involved in the project

Students, researchers and teachers provide feedback.

Activity 1

Song – Promised Land

This activity begins with a song called Promised Land. The verses talk about the discrimination bisexual, transgender and homosexual people experience. The chorus provides optimism through guidance and support to the ‘Promised Land’.

The activity continues to explore gender diversity and diversity of sexual attraction through a series of discussion questions.

Note: The activity is presented here as students presented to the research team and has not been edited or altered by us in any way. Students had limited time to develop their activity.

Diversity of Sexual Attraction

Promised Land Lyrics

Verse 1

Growing up I liked boys but I liked girls too, you're always hatin', discriminating, yo
whats the attitude? I like what I like and so do you, man, its all the same love so why
am I denied to? All this confusion is an illusion. Why does my heart stop? 'cos my
heart stops for a second when I see you, so I just stare at my feet.

chorus

So raise your voice I'll hold your hand and guide you to this promised land. I know
that this is hard for you, cos I've felt all the pain that you do.

Verse 2

I am a transgender, I'm not self centred, I'm an agnostic queer. I'm looking left, I'm
looking right and everyone's looking right here 'cos I don't pass, I'm not a boy, I'm
not a girl, I'm not the same. And everyone is struggling to use my name. mm m

chorus

So raise your voice I'll hold your hand and guide you to this promised land. I know
that this is hard for you, cos I've felt all the pain that you do.

Verse 3

Coz I'm homosexual, you make life hard for me. Just because I like boys you won't let
me be. It's not a life style, it's not a choice so you taunt me, won't let me free.
There's a difference between you and me, so you haunt me you wont let me be.
But being gay doesn't change who we are.
But being gay doesn't change who we are.

Bridge

We refuse to be the ones to pay, all because we swing some way.
We refuse to be the ones to pay, all because we swing some way.

Chorus

So raise your voice I'll hold your hand and guide you to this promised land. I know
that this is hard for you, cos I've felt all the pain that you do.

Outro

We refuse to be the ones to pay, all because we swing some way.
We refuse to be the ones to pay, all because we swing some way.

PROMISED LAND QUESTIONS

Before listening to Promised Land:

1) What do you know about Gender Diversity vs Diversity of Sexual Attraction? What is the difference?

After listening to the Promised Land:

2) What have you learnt about Gender Diversity and Diversity of Sexual Attraction?

Looking at the lyrics:

3) Different verses of the song focused on different types of sexualities or gender. What types of Gender and Sexualities can you identify in the song?

Stepping in their shoes:

4) You identify as a bisexual person who has not "come out" to friends and family. You have heterosexual friends who have not "come out" either. You are confused. Is it expected that people from different sexualities "come out" or announce their sexuality?

5) Why is it/is it not expected?

6) Why is it/is it not expected of heterosexual people?

7) What are some risks for coming out to friends and family?

8) Is this fair? Why/why not?

Breaking it up:

9) Write a new verse to add on to the song, based on a sexuality that you choose.

Continuing on:

10) Imagine you are a heterosexual person. Does this mean you are attracted to every person of the opposite sex?

11) Generally, how many people are you interested in at a time?

Imagine you are a homosexual person.

12) Does this mean you are attracted to every person of the same sex?

13) Generally, how many people do you think you would be interested in sexually at one time?

Scenario:

14) Your best friend comes out to you as a bisexual. What behaviours can you display to ensure your friend feels safe, supported and respected.

Looking Deeper:

15) Ninety percent of LGBTQI+ students hear anti-LGBTQI+ comments at school. Eighty four percent of LGBTQI+ students report verbal harassment at school. How might someone feel if they were not supported or respected? How might this affect their time at school?

16) What are positive/negative reactions towards someone who is a part of the LGBTQI+ Community?

Positive

Negative

FACT: Twenty eight percent of LGBTQI+ students drop out of school because of harassment and bullying.

http://www.endabusewi.org/sites/default/files/resources/lgbt_youth_facts_and_stats.pdf

Activity 2

Play scripts about Love

This activity presents three short scripts for plays:

- **My love is controlled**
- **My love is taken for granted**
- **My love is forbidden**

Students, in small groups, rehearse the plays then perform them for the rest of the class.

Each script is followed by a series of questions about why characters behave the way they do. Students are then asked to change the script for a positive outcome.

Note: The activity is presented here as students presented to the research team and has not been edited or altered by us in any way. Students had limited time to develop their activity.

Love

Instructions for My Love is Controlled

For this play to work you will need to find a group of 3 people

- Narrator
- Alisa
- Stella

All 3 people should have a copy of the script and rehearse it before performing in front of the group.

- I. Scene 1: Narrator opens the role play
- II. Scene 2: Stella talks about Alisa outfit
- III. Scene 3: Stella checks Alisa's phone

Pose the questions to the audience at the end of the play to encourage discussion.

These discussions can be done in small groups or as a whole class.

Ask the students to change the script to make the play have a positive outcome.

My love is controlled

Love is a pure and beautiful thing. Everyone craves it, desires it, and most of all, dreams about it. For those who say they don't, haven't had the pleasure of experiencing it. But when they do it's like oxygen. The best kind of affection is young love, much like Romeo and Juliet, because it is the strongest and most passionate. Everyone wants to be one of those lucky ones; finding that person to fall head over heels for in an amorous and beautiful relationship. But what happens when one controls the other, and the other is blinded by what they THINK is love?

Alisa is an active girl who likes to hangout with friends and go shopping. She is well-liked by her peers and always invited to friend's party and other social events. She likes to dress in the latest fashion and works part-time at a local fashion shop.

Alisa met her partner, Stella, through friends and coincidentally, they go to the same university. Their love developed quickly and they decided to live together. Stella suggested that their bank accounts be merged and for Stella to be the primary card holder as, "This will make it less confusing when tracking our earnings and spending". This means that Stella will be the only person who can withdraw money from an ATM, but promised to make it work by providing Alisa with pocket money. This means that Alisa can't use the money without Stella's permission.

One day, Stella and Alisa plan to go to shopping together
Before they leave their home...

Alisa walks out of the bedroom with her new outfit on.

Stella: Why are you wearing that? It's too short. You better get changed!

Alisa: But why... I had this for ages.

Stella: Do you want people to stare at your ass?

Alisa : No.....

Stella: *checks Alisa's phone and sees a text message that Alisa has been receiving from one of her friends Mariana.

The text says : Hey, let's go shopping today, it'll be get fun!!

Stella: *Is very mad*

Why are you texting Mariana?

Alisa: What are you talking about?

Stella: *throws the phone at Alisa* that's what I'm talking about!!

Alisa: Wait, why would you check my phone anyway, don't you trust me?!

Stella: Well if you weren't trying to do things behind my back, I wouldn't have too.

Alisa: She's just my friend!

Stella: *Stella slaps Alisa*

Don't talk back to me!

Alisa: Starts to cry

Stella: Sorry I didn't mean to do that, I just want good things for you and I. Now, finish getting changed

Let's Problem Solve

1. If you were Alisa how could you challenge Stella's behaviour?
2. Why do you think Stella behaves the way she does towards Alisa?
3. Change what the characters say in the script so that the relationship becomes positive for both parties.

Instructions for "My love is taken for granted"

You will need to find a group of 4 people

- Narrator
- Alen
- Nina
- Mark

All 4 people should have a copy of the script and rehearse it before performing in front .

Scene 1: Narrator opens the role play.

Scene 2: Alen and Nina are walking in the city.

Scene 3: Nina gives Alen some money

Scene 4: Nina approaches to Alen to the cinema.

Scene 5: Alen and Nina are at the cinemas.

Scene 6: Nina sees new friend Mark

Scene 7: Alen gets mad at Nina

Scene 8: Alen starts pushing Nina abusively

Pose the questions to the audience at the end of the play to encourage discussion.

These discussions can be done in small groups or as a whole class. Ask the students to change the script to make the situation a positive one.

My love is taken for granted

Love is a pure and beautiful thing. Everyone craves it, desires it, and most of all, dreams about it. For those who say they don't, haven't had the pleasure of experiencing it. But when they do it's like oxygen. The best kind of affection is young love, much like Romeo and Juliet, because it is the strongest and most passionate. Everyone wants to be one of those lucky ones; finding that person to fall head over heels for in an amorous and beautiful relationship but what happens when one takes advantage of the other?

Alen and Nina are

Walking in the city

Alen: Can you give me some money?

Nina: Sure what for?

Alen: Just give me the money, I don't like to be asked questions.

Nina: *Gives money*

Alen: *Buys alcohol*

Nina: Let's go to the cinemas. You keen for a movie?

Alen: You're paying, right?

Nina: *Silent* Yeah, I guess.

Alen: You better pay.

Goes to cinemas

Alen: *Sees friends* "Go inside the cinema, I'm just gonna say "hi" to a mate.

Nina: *Sadly* Okay, I'll wait for you.

Alen: Don't wait, I might not make it, but I'll wait for you until the movie finishes.

Nina: Okay, see you. *Says to self* He's always denying me, it's unfair.

Movie finishes

Nina: *Sees an old friend*

Mark: Nina, I haven't seen you for so long!

Nina: Hey mark, same here, have been carried away with my job!

Mark: You work now? Nice!

Alen: *Sees Mark and Nina*

Nina: Okay, I'll get going now!

Alen: *Starts attacking Mark* Who the hell are you? Don't you dare talk to her!

Mark: Hey relax, I'm just a friend. Nina please explain!

Nina: Alen please let's go!" "Leave him alone!

Alen: *Let's go of Mark, and walks away madly*

Nina: Mark, I'm so sorry for what happened!

Mark: It's fine!

Nina: *Follows Alen quickly*

Alen: *Holds Nina's hand and walks*

Nina: Babe, are you okay?

Alen: I'm fine, but I told you that you can't have guy friends!

Nina: I'm sorry.

Alen: *Starts drinking from his leftover alcohol*

Walking

Nina: Alen, stop drinking please.

Alen: Don't tell me to stop drinking!

Nina: Please stop!

Alen: *Let's go of Nina's hand and slaps her* I told you to not tell me what to do!

Nina: *Starts crying* Why are you doing this, I love you!

Alen: *Starts pushing Nina *

Let's Problem Solve

1. What can Nina do to challenge Alen's behaviour?
2. Who owns the problem? a) Nina b) Alen c) Mark. why do you think this way?
3. How do you think the scenario should've ended to make a positive impact on Nina's life?
4. Change what the characters say in the script so that the relationship becomes more positive for both parties.

Instructions for "My Love is forbidden".

For this play to work you will need to find a group of 4 people

- Narrator
- Sarah
- John
- John's mother

All 4 people should have a copy of the script and rehearse it before performing in front of the class.

- I. Scene 1: Narrator opens the role play
- II. Scene 2: Elsa and Sarah talk about John
- III. Scene 3: Break time, John and Sarah start talking to each other
- IV. Scene 4: Sarah and John send each other cute texts
- V. Scene 5: Narrator, time goes by and Alex and John get into a relationship
- VI. Scene 6: John and his mother get into an argument and the relationship is revealed to the mother
- VII. Scene 7: John's mother had a go at Sarah's mother
- VIII. Scene 8: Sarah and John see each other and seek a solution

Pose the questions to the audience at the end of the play to encourage discussion.

These discussions can be done in small groups or as a whole class.

Ask the students to change the script to make the play a positive one.

My love is forbidden

Love is a pure and beautiful thing. Everyone craves it, desires it, and most of all, dreams about it. For those who say they don't, haven't had the pleasure of experiencing it. But when they do it's like oxygen. Love is the greatest feeling of all. Yet the best kind of affection is young love, much like Romeo and Juliet, because it is the strongest and most passionate. Everyone wants to be one of those lucky ones; finding that person to fall head over heels for in an amorous and beautiful relationship. But what happens when two worlds collide?

Both being from two distinctly different cultures and having a family rivalry. Shouldn't that be enough to stop any kind of love between two people?

It was a beautiful summer morning in the school of Brooklyn Harbour as I found myself gazing outside the classroom window expecting the unexpected as I did everyday. I looked through the window, of the classroom.

Sarah: Omg who is that?

My heart stopped for a second and began to race and I couldn't stop myself staring at him.

Sarah: He is so cute.

Elsa: Who are you talking about?

Sarah: The cute guy in the red jacket sitting with all of those boys.

Elsa: Oh him, he is "Mr Popular."

Sarah: Oh really? Well he is hot!

Elsa: Are you blushing?

Sarah: No!

Elsa: " Oh my god you are, you like him.

Sarah: Well..

Elsa: " Oh my god no way! You like Mr Popular. You should go talk to him.

Sarah: I don't know, I'm kinda scared.

Elsa: Go for it just do your thing.

Narrator: 2 hours later it's recess time. Sarah courageously, finally decides to talk to Mr Popular.

Sarah: Hi my name is Sarah.

John: Hey, I'm John.

Narrator: Sarah and John spoke to each other for the rest of recess and John asked Sarah for her phone number. Later on that day, Sarah received a text message from John.

John: Hey u:)

Sarah: Hiiiiii

John: How are you?

Sarah: I'm really good, you?

John: Well I'm speaking to you so I'm great

Sarah: Awwwww

John: Hey wanna play a game

Sarah: Sure

John: But it can't be hide and seek

Sarah: Why not

John: Coz a girl like you is impossible to find

Sarah: Awwwww thank you

John: I just wanted to say I'm glad I met you and I think you are cute

Sarah: Same

John: What....

Sarah: I think that you are cute as well

John: Thanks

Narrator: John and Sarah messaged each other for another two weeks until they became "a thing" but not realising that their parents hated each other for their cultural differences. Their love was soon going to be disrupted by the anger and hate their parents had for each other.

John and Sarah were in a very healthy and happy relationship until a few months later John and his mother had an argument and she took away his phone and found out that he was in a relationship with the daughter of Alia. A woman from the cultural group she dislikes.

Johns mum: JOHN!!!

John: Yes Ma.

Johns mum: Who is this girl on your phone that is calling you Bae?

John: Well.... it's my friend.... my girlfriend.

Johns mum: You are to end the relationship with that girl.

John: Why?

Johns mum: Your father and I have decided that she will have a bad influence on you and our culture. So you are to end the relationship immediately.

Narrator: John remained silent as he didn't want to make his parents unhappy nor end the relationship. He stormed off into his room and slammed the door.

Two days later John and Sarah's mother bumped into each other, John's mother started to rage at Sara's mother about why their children are in a relationship. Sarah mother didn't know about the relationship until her horrific encounter with John's mother, so she stormed off home and screamed at Sarah to end the relationship as it would never work out because of the hate between the two parents. Both Sarah and John were not allowed to communicate with each other.

A week later John and Sarah met up at school and they started to talk.

Sarah: Hi (Sarah sighs)

John: Hey (John looks down)

Sarah: I guess you know that our parents don't want us to be together anymore.

John: Yeah, what should we do?

Let's Problem Solve

What could John and Sarah do to change their situation so that it becomes more positive?

What action could you take if your parents told you you couldn't see someone anymore because of their culture? Who would you talk to for help?

How do you think the scenario should've ended to make a positive impact on both parties?

If you were the parents how would you feel finding out that your child is with someone you dislike for cultural reasons?

Change what the characters say in the script so that the relationship becomes more positive for both parties?

Activity 3

Poem – The End

This activity begins with a poem called The End. The poem considers ways to end a relationship in a respectful and caring way.

The activity continues to explore ending relationships with a series of questions followed by three scenarios. For each scenario students are asked to explore choices, consequences and outcomes for ending the relationship.

Note: The activity is presented here as students presented to the research team and has not been edited or altered by us in any way. Students had limited time to develop their activity.

Breaking Up

The End

How do you end
What you've created?
A relationship
Breaking both hearts.

What to consider?
What time is right?
Don't forget place,
Think about the other.... for whom you once cared for.

Why the break up?
Is there something missing?
What was it about that person that you liked most?
Part of the relationship eating away?
Eating away but these thoughts can become corrosive.

Find the right place
Private but not isolated.
Private but not.
Cherished.

Are you fearful about the situation?
If it's abused and controlled,
Don't be alone
Don't be vulnerable to rumours
These rumours will be corrosive like salt water on iron.

Are you resolved?
Find the right time
Find the right place
And muster all of your strength.

Not fearful? Be gentle, take your time

Be kind, be considerate.
You don't know how heir feeling.
Try to stay as calm as a river stream.
And there are words and phrases that must not be used.

What are the words and phrases?
Don't say ' It's not about you, it's all me' this is seen as a cop-out
Words like 'but, maybe and if you would only'
The situation will escalate.

Be firm with what you say.
There is no need for blame.
Questions will be asked and should be answered.
Please take a moment right now as you are reading this
And think to yourself, how would you end it?

Poem instructions

Read the poem.

Discuss how you would end a relationship. Consider time, place and what to say.

Write your own poems about ending a relationship or you can write a new stanza to add to the poem.

10 questions to ask yourself before ending it

If you want to end a relationship that your in and unsure about the outcome ask yourself these 10 questions that can help:

- 1) Does this relationship bring out the best of me?
- 2) Do I feel happy or upset a majority of the time?
- 3) Am I sacrificing more in this relationship than I should?
- 4) Do we share the same goals for the future?
- 5) Are we fighting more than laughing?
- 6) Do we make time for each other?
- 7) Do I really love him/her or the person I want them to be?
- 8) Would I regret it later if I didn't end the relationship now?
- 9) Do they add value to my life?
- 10) Would my life be better without them?

5 things that someone can do to end a relationship early

Lots of people want to have a relationship but they may make one of the five mistakes or more. These mistakes can end a relationship pretty much before it begins. The five mistakes are: over sharing with your partner, calling them 'The One' confessing your undying love, lying, becoming obsessed and being negative.

Choose Your Own Adventure Instructions

1. Read each scenario
2. Discuss the choices and consequences
3. Agree as a group on one of the 3 choices.
4. Teacher reveals outcomes to class once choices have been made.

Choose your own adventure

Ash and Alex

Ash: you are Ash. You have been in a relationship for over a year. Alex, your partner, wants to continue the relationship and has said that they love you. The thing is, you want to end it but you don't want to hurt Alex and would like to stay friends.

Choices:

1. Break up over the phone.
2. Go up to them during their favourite song and tell them "it's over" and walk away.
3. Sit down with them and talk it out.

Consequences

1. Over the phone is almost always not the answer to ending a relationship and it might hurt Alex and make him lose respect for you.
2. You could hurt Alex and your reputation could be lowered.
3. This option could confuse Alex or make him angry at you.

Outcomes: Ash and Alex

1. **Alex** agrees to end the relationship but thinks less of you and is hurt because you wouldn't break up face to face.
2. Alex doesn't understand, he is hurt and doesn't know what he did wrong and is insecure in their next relationship.
3. After sitting down and talking, Alex understands why you want to end the relationship. Alex appreciates that you took the time to talk face to face and you remain friends for years to come.

Charlie and Jo

Charlie: You are Charlie. You have been in a relationship for 3 months, but in the past month Jo (Charlie's partner) has been assaulting you (emotionally/physically/financially) and telling you it is your fault. You know you need this relationship to end but you think Jo will respond violently.

Choices:

1. In a private place tell Jo you no longer want to be with them.
2. End the relationship over the phone.
3. Ask a friend or family member you trust to come with you and help you try to end the relationship calmly and peacefully.

Consequences

1. This might be a bad move if you are in a relationship with an abusive partner that has been known to assault you in the past and you break up with them in private they will be more likely to assault you than if you were in public or with a friend.
2. Over the phone is almost always not the answer to ending a relationship. While safer than talking to the abusive partner in person, it is a sure fire way to anger them. As a smaller issue, it may make your friends think less of you if they don't know/understand the situation.

3. While good at first, because it can make the abusive partner think before they act, it may make them angrier possibly leading to social problems (lies, rumours, etc.)

Outcomes: Charlie and Jo

1. Jo takes the break up badly and things turn violent. You spend the next 3 weeks in hospital.
2. Although you are physically safe, Jo is openly hostile from now on and starts rumours about you.
3. Jo is polite in front of the family/friend, but after is openly hostile towards you. (Possibly leaving the situation with family/friend)

Jonathan and Mark

Jonathan: You are Jonathan. You're in a relationship that you want to end, Your partner Mark is suicidal. You fear that ending the relationship will cause Mark to kill himself. He always tells you that without you, he wouldn't be here. Ending the relationship seems like a bad idea but you want to end it and have no idea how to do so.

Choices:

1. Talk to him face to face and try to explain to him that it will be ok and try to get him in contact with someone who can help.
2. Stay with him because he says he will kill himself.
3. Don't formally break up and just start seeing other people.

Consequences:

1. It might not work, Mark might take offence to what you are saying and kill himself anyway.
2. You don't feel happy with Mark and they might still kill himself.
3. Finds out and kills himself.

Outcomes: Jonathan and Mark

1. Mark understands and says that he will go and talk to the parent/doctor/therapist ect.
2. You feel really unhappy staying with Mark and get depressed that you have to stay and care for Mark.
3. Mark sees that you are seeing other people and commits suicide.

Choose Your Own Adventure Outcomes

Outcomes: Ash and Alex

Alex agrees to end the relationship but thinks less of you and is hurt because you wouldn't break up face to face.

Alex doesn't understand, he is hurt and doesn't know what he did wrong and is insecure in their next relationship.

After sitting down and talking, Alex understands why you want to end the relationship. Alex appreciates that you took the time to talk face to face and you remain friends for years to come.

Outcomes: Charlie and Jo

Jo takes the break up badly and things turn violent. You spend the next 3 weeks in hospital.

Although you are physically safe, Jo is openly hostile from now on and starts rumours about you.

Jo is polite in front of the family/friend, but after is openly hostile towards you. (Possibly leaving the situation with family/friend)

Outcomes: Jonathan and Mark

Mark understands and says that he will go and talk to the parent/doctor/therapist ect.

You feel really unhappy staying with Mark and get depressed that you have to stay and care for Mark.

Mark sees that you are seeing other people and commits suicide

Getting over your ex

The break up might be hard but you have to remember why the relationship was ended. It's going to take time to accept what has happened, but this can give you the time learn about yourself.

If your trying to get over your ex the best ways are to: keep busy, try something new, staying positive and talking to someone you trust about it.

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Activity 4

Animation about Sexting

This activity involves a short animation, a txt conversation, between two students who are in a relationship. The girl encourages her boyfriend to send her a sext. Unfortunately another student accesses her phone and sends the sext on to others.

The students who created this short animation felt strongly that, although they knew photos posted online are no longer within their control, what they did not know was the legal ramifications of producing, having in their possession or disseminating sexually explicit material.

The activity begins with a short question and answer discussion about what they know about sexting, followed by watching the short film and further questions.

Unfortunately the students did not have time to finish the film but it would be a useful starting point for discussion about the legal implications, possible outcomes and possible actions in this situation.

View the film at: <https://youtu.be/fQGYOGmFykQ>

Note: The activity is presented here as students presented to the research team and has not been edited or altered by us in any way. Students had limited time to develop their activity.

sexting

Class Plan for the what's your worth video "Instruction Manual"

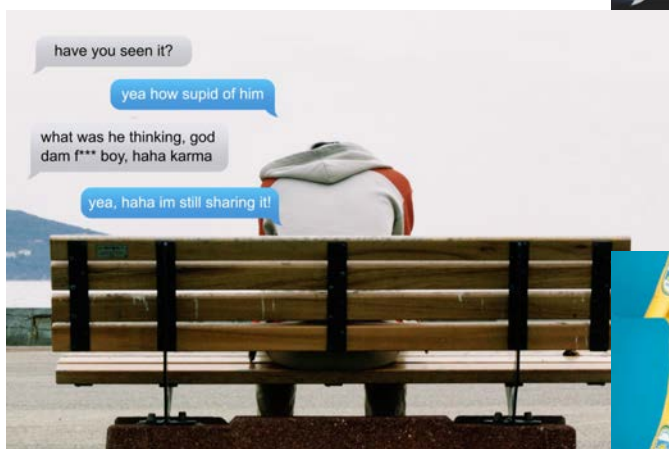
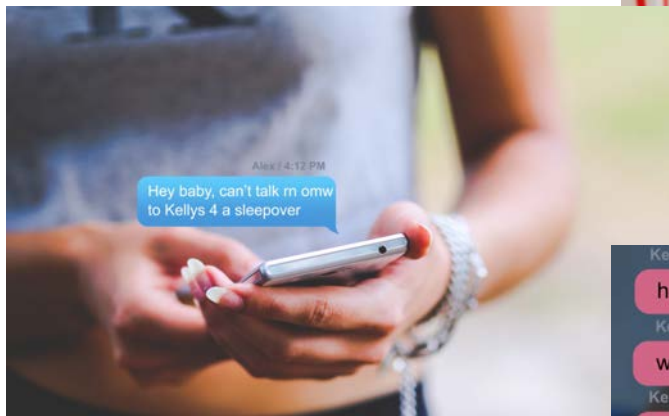
Ask the class what they know about sexting and explicit/ pornographic photographs of under aged student and how it is portrayed in the media before watching the video.

Discuss the role of underage males and females and who the media / advertisement for safety online and which gender is it mostly directed to.

Watch the video and hand out what's your worth? Worksheet. After watching the video fill in the worksheet.

Ask if students learnt something after watching the video and what stood out to them.

Lesson suggestion should be around 30-50 minutes



View the film at:
<https://youtu.be/fQGYOGmFykQ>

WHAT'S YOUR WORTH?

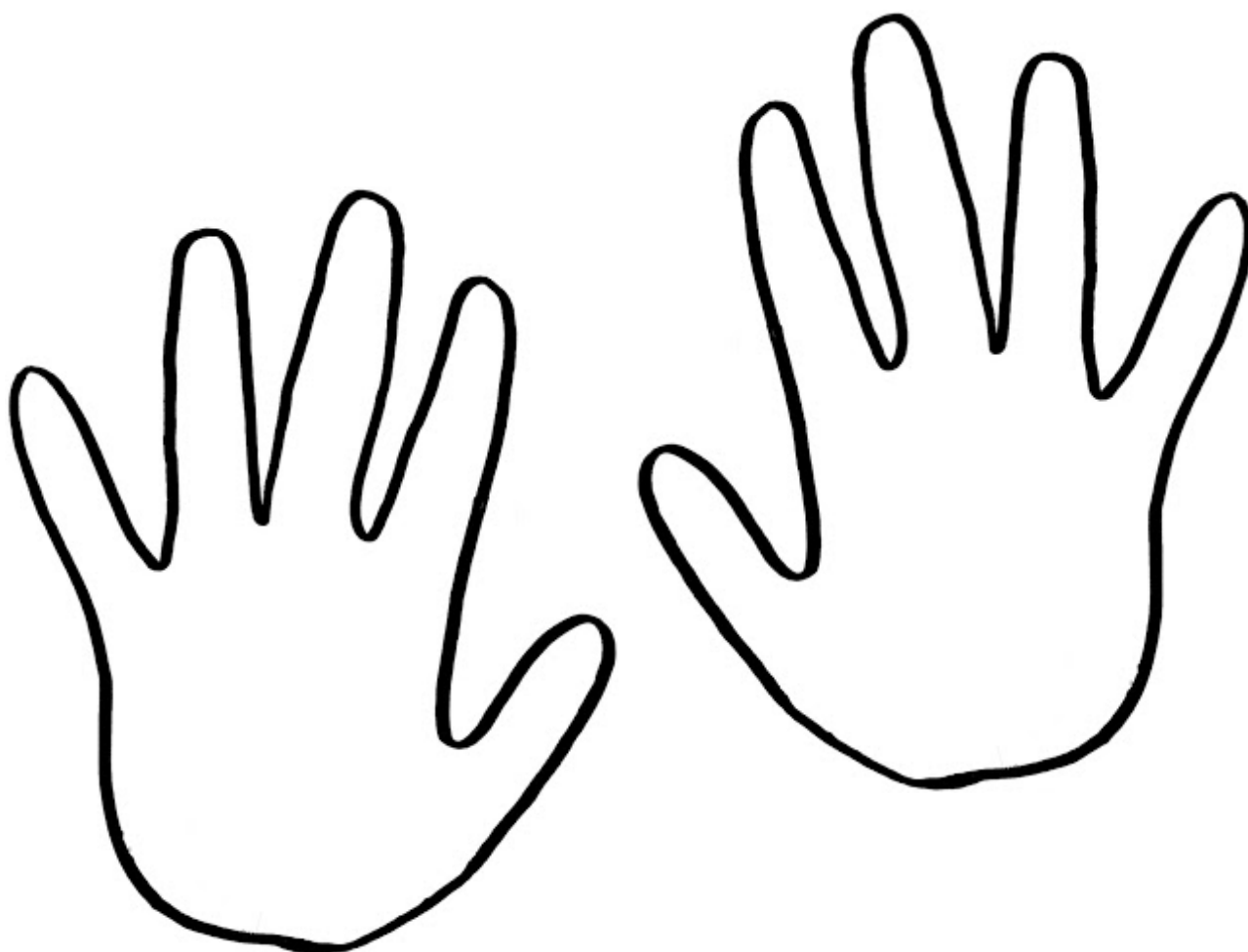
1. In a small group, discuss the video. What did you learn, unlearn or relearn?

Learn: _____ Unlearn: _____

_____ Relearn: _____

2. What do you think is meant by the slogan: "How much is your worth?"?

3. On each finger of one hand, list 5 things you may feel or behave like if you were in Alex's situation. On the other hand, list 5 people you could turn to for support if you or a friend were in a similar situation.



Activity 5

Gender: A Diverse Trivia Game

This game explores gender diversity and diversity of sexual attraction through a series of question and discussion cards. Students play the game in small groups collecting points for correct answers.

Note: Students did provide answers to their questions but many of them were worded differently to the definitions provided through SHINE SA resources so researchers chose to omit their answers.

Gender diversity and diversity of sexual attraction were issues the students felt strongly needed more time and information given to in relationships and sexual health education. Gender diversity and diversity of sexual attraction are concepts that are not well understood by many people and definitions are complex and often contested.

Teachers are encouraged to use this activity with their students not only to find the answers to the questions but to explore the complex and sometimes confusing language and labels used when a person identifies their sexual attraction or gender identity, or when describing that of others.

It is recommended that teachers use this activity after they have researched each question or consulted SHINE SA resources.

Gender and Sexual Diversity

(Print double sided)

'Gender: A Diverse Trivia' Instructions

Equipment

This game requires 3-4 players.

- Multicoloured die x1
- Green coloured cards x15
- Yellow coloured cards x15
- Red coloured cards x15
- Blue coloured cards x9
- Multiple sheets of scrap paper (one piece for each player)
- Tally sheet x1 (to keep score)
- Blank cards x9

Object

To be the player that has obtained the most points within the given time limit.

Setting Out

- Organise tally sheet, writing each player's name in the slots.
- Organise cards, making four piles, one for easy cards, medium cards, hard cards and discussion cards.
- Give each player one sheet of scrap paper for them to write their answers to the discussion questions onto.

On Your Turn

1. Roll the die
2. One player collects one card that's colour corresponds with the colour displayed on top of the die.
3. The question printed onto the card is read for you to answer.
4. Once you have answered, you are told whether you are correct or incorrect by the same player as before.
5. You then receive or don't receive a certain amount of points depending on what card was used and your answer results.

Correct Answers

Easy Cards

If a player answers a question on a easy card correctly, they then receive one point and the card is placed at the bottom of the easy deck.

Medium Cards

If a player answers a question on a medium card correctly, they then receive two points and the card is placed at the bottom of the medium deck.

Hard Cards

If a player answers a question on a hard card correctly, they then receive three points and the card is placed at the bottom of the hard deck.

(Print double sided)

Discussion Cards

If a player answers a question on a discussion card that is chosen as the best answer, they then receive three points and the card is placed at the bottom of the discussion deck. If the player likes both answers then the two players receive two points each.

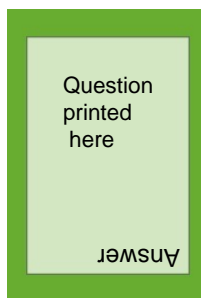
Wrong Answers

If a player answers a question on a **Easy Card**, **Medium Card** or **Hard Card** incorrectly, they are not given any points and the card is placed at the bottom of the deck. The correct answer is also be revealed

If a player answers a question on a **Discussion Card** that is not chosen as the best answer, they do not receive any points and the card is placed at the bottom of the deck.

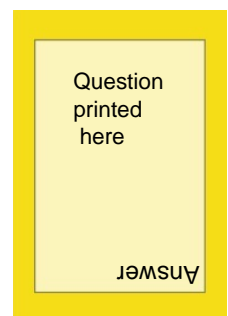
The Four Types Of Cards

The **Easy Card**, **Medium Card** and the **Hard Cards** all have a specific colour, a question printed on the top of the card and a answer to the question in a smaller font printed upside down at the bottom of the card.



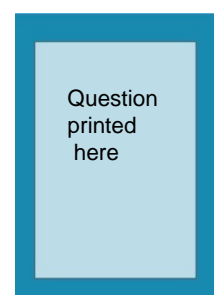
This is the **Easy Card**. They are coloured **green**, corresponding to the green squares on the die and the questions printed onto these cards are at an easy difficulty. There are fifteen of these cards in the game and they are worth only **one point** since they are easier than the other types of cards to answer.

This is the **Medium Card**. They are coloured **yellow**, corresponding to the yellow squares on the die and the fifteen questions printed onto these cards are at an medium difficulty. There are fifteen of these cards in the game and they are worth **two points** since they are slightly more challenging to answer than the Easy Cards.



This is the **Hard Card**. They are coloured **red**, corresponding to the red squares on the die and the questions printed onto these cards are at an hard difficulty. There are fifteen of these cards in the game and they are worth **three points** since they are harder to answer than the Easy Cards and Medium Cards. There are nine cards with flags printed onto them along with a question. When you ask what flag the player is looking at, cover the answer with your hand and show them the flag only. Most of these cards have multiple choices to make them slightly easier.

This is the **Discussion Card**. They are coloured **blue** and are used to create discussion amongst players. They are played when someone scores ten points and there are nine of these cards in the game. This player picks up a discussion card and reads it to the other players. These players then have one minute to write their answer down on their piece of scrap paper and hand it to



(Print double sided)

the player who asked the question. When both players have answered or when the time is up the best answer will be chosen and they will receive **three points**.



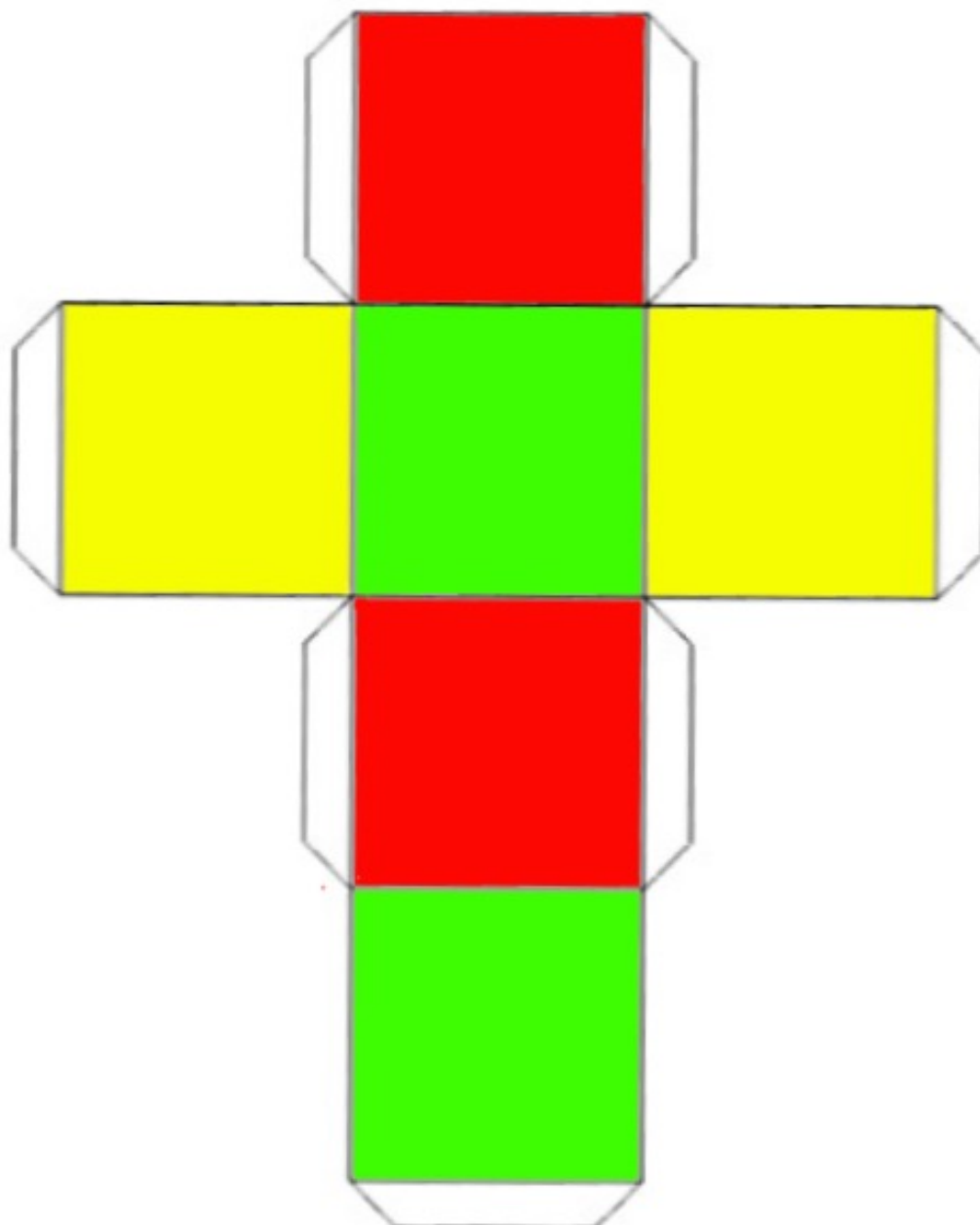
This is the **Blank Card**. They are coloured **grey** and are used to encourage engagement of the players if they have any gender diversity related questions they would like to add into the game. If the players have a question they would like to add into the game, they simply write the question, the answer and the difficulty of the card with a pencil and place it into the pile corresponding to the chosen difficulty of the card.

Recommendations

We recommend you to:

- play with a 15 minute time limit
- playing a quick session of this game before a unit and after a unit to discover what you've learnt about gender diversity.
- for your first game, play without the discussion cards. It would be hard to create a discussion without having much prior knowledge towards gender diversity.
- get students to reflect on what they've learnt about gender diversity after playing the game.

(Print double sided)



**What does the L in
'LGBTQI+' stand
for?**

**What does the B in
'LGBTQI+' stand
for?**

**What does the G in
'LGBTQI +' stand
for?**

**What does the T in
'LGBTQI+' stand
for?**

**What does the Q in
'LGBTQI+' stand
for?**

**What does the I in
'LGBTQI' stand
for?**

**What does it mean
to be homosexual?**

**What does it mean
to be
heterosexual?**

**What does it mean
to be bisexual?**

**What does it mean
to be homophobic?**

**What does it mean
to be transphobic?**

**What does it mean
to be multigender?**

**When you are a
male attracted to
the same gender,
what is your
sexuality?**

**When you are a
female attracted
to the same
gender, what is
your sexuality?**

**When a person
possesses negative
feelings towards
homosexuality
they are?**

**What does
androgynous
mean?**

**What does it mean
to be cis gender?**

**What does it mean
to be
genderqueer?**



What is this flag?

**What does it mean
to be pansexual?**

**What does it mean
to be asexual?**

**What is the
difference
between
bisexuality and
pansexuality?**

**What does butch
mean?**

**What does it mean
to be polysexual?**

Define two-spirit

What is gender identity?

What does gender expression mean?

If someone dresses and acts feminine one day and dresses and acts masculine another, or even dresses and acts non-binary some days what is that defined as?

What is sexual attraction?

What is romantic attraction?



What is this flag?

- A) Gay Pride
- B) Bisexual Pride**
- C) Polysexual Pride



What is this flag?

- A) Pansexual Pride**
- B) Gay Pride
- C) Trans Pride



What is this flag?

- A) Heterosexual
- B) Bisexual Pride
- C) Polysexual Pride**



What is this flag?

- A) Asexual Pride**
- B) Polysexual Pride
- C) Pansexual Pride



What is this flag?

- A) Gay Pride
- B) Asexual Pride
- C) Polyamory Pride**



What is this flag?

- A) Transgender Pride**
- B) Gay Pride
- C) Lesbian Pride



What is this flag?

- A) Transphobic Pride
- B) Bisexual pride
- C) Genderqueer Pride**



What is this flag?

- A) Intersexual Pride**
- B) Homophobic Pride
- C) Transgender Pride



What is this flag?

- A) Homosexual Pride
- B) Straight Allies Pride**
- C) Genderqueer Pride

**What does
'sexuality' mean?**

**What is gender
diversity?**

**What is the
difference
between gender
and sex?**

**What is the
difference
between
polyamory and
polysexuality?**

**What does 'gender'
mean?**

What does 'sex' mean?

What's the importance of accepting your gender and sexuality?

What does gender acceptance feel, look and sound like within a school environment?

How could you support a friend who is being punished at home for being transgender?

Give examples of what you could do to support a friend who just came out to you?

What is the difference between romantic and sexual attraction?

Why do you think LGBTQI+ people feel like they need to hide who they are in today's society?

What are some reasons why people choose to be homophobic?

How would your relationship with someone effect your reaction to their coming out? (friend, family, etc.)

Should coming out be considered a big deal in society? Why or why not?

What the students, teachers and researchers said

Song – Promised Land (Diversity of Sexual Attraction)

I had goose bumps – it is so good. (Student)

I almost cried. (Student)

It's a really good idea having a song – it is really powerful. (Student)

It is something you can really learn from to see the perspective of somebody else. The slogan or key line 'we refuse to be the ones to pay, all because we swing some way' is a really powerful message to say to teens that it doesn't matter what you identify as. It's really good, yeah. (Student)

In this area we often don't get personal and passionate because we have to be a bit removed but you and your approach weren't. It was authentic and deeply felt and I think that's a strength in what you did. (Researcher)

I also think that getting advice from people you know and then using their words in your song was a brilliant stroke. Really well done. (Researcher)

Play scripts about Love (Love)

I read all of them and my reaction is 'wow!' They are very well written and 'real'. They are sexually diverse as well as there is one gay couple in there which is also really good. (Student)

We haven't seen the plays acted out but I think they would be really good. Definitely. (Student)

Excellent range of dramatic scenarios. They were well written. With 'My love is forbidden', it would be good to unpack culture, nationality, customs, language differences, and any previous history of conflict between the two cultures. (Teacher)

- *What is being suggested for the 'My love is forbidden' scenario is that the cultures should be identified. But when you focused on the issues you had people from the same religion. True? (Teacher)*
- *Yes, but from different tribes. (Student)*
- *I don't think it needs to be from identified cultures because that would target those cultures. It is a problem with all cultures. (Student)*
- *I think it is nice how broad it is so that students can interpret it the way they want to and that there isn't one set thing. They can be creative rather than reading it from a script that is very structured. What they have is perfect and they shouldn't change it. (Student)*

I like the three aspects of love that you chose. The message that it sends is that love isn't simple but quite complicated and involved. I really liked your questions and activities as they encourage people to take different perspectives. This is a real strength. (Researcher)

We tried to take relationships from different perspectives and how people would see it. We targeted high school kids as these things happen daily. People are in relationships all the time. (Student self-reflection)

Poem – The End (Breaking Up)

It's very different – that's what I like about it. (Student)

I don't have a lot of relationships but if I did it's kind of hard to find a way to break things up. The poem is great, everything is great. I think it will be really useful as nobody talks face to face when they are trying to break-up and that's crucial. (Student)

I think it is a really important topic. In our survey [of students about sexuality and relationships education], the most important things kids want to learn about are 'love', 'how to start a relationship', and 'how to end a relationship'. This is really topical and relevant to kids your age. (Researcher)

It's really powerful in a respectful way. (Researcher)

I like the values you put into it. It's not just about technical stuff [about how to break-up] but about underlying values to do with respecting each other, about thinking about the other person, and how important their feelings are. That's a fantastic message. And to use poetry to deliver that – how novel is that? (Researcher)

You covered some important issues in the poem and related scenarios. However, some work is needed with an English teacher to craft the poem a little more. (Teacher)

– *What are your ideas about that? (Teacher)*

– *I don't think it needs it personally. (Student)*

– *Poetry is so unique and so individual that I would be a bit sad if a teacher changed it. I would be very hesitant getting someone else to 'fix it up' (Researcher)*

– *I wouldn't like to get advice from someone else about how to make the poem technically better. You know what I mean? (Researcher)*

– *Yeah. (Several students)*

Animation about Sexting (Sexting)

It was great – you just need to finish it off. That medium was definitely hard to work with. (Teacher)

As you said it was a bit 'cringy', but that's good because it was relatable. (Student)

[My partner] was telling me that we needed a sound-over, no a voice-over, but I didn't realise that until I saw the draft. It didn't really get the message across in the way that we wanted to. We think a voice-over is really important to our product, with some music in the background as well. (Student self-evaluation)

The ideas behind your product can work well in the classroom. By engaging students with something like this that they can relate to, that they might have seen or experienced or may not have. I would love to see your final product where these good ideas come to fruition. I'd love to trial this in my classroom. (Teacher)

I think the concept is fabulous. There is so much there that is so good. It is a different topic to what everyone else has done so it is worth pursuing but only if you have time to do it. (Researcher)

I think it so timely. It is so relevant now so there is a bit of urgency on our behalf for it to be finished. It's needed – kids need to see it. (Researcher)

I really appreciate the time it will take [to add a voice-over] and that this is on top of everything else that you are doing. What we have is what you have been able to do so far and that is fabulous if it goes no further. But it would be a pity to put that much time into it and not finish it. (Researcher)

Gender: A Diverse Trivia Game (Gender and Sexual Diversity)

It was such a creative way of learning a topic that is so hard to make a little bit less touchy. Everybody can play it and everybody can gain knowledge without feeling attacked. When I was playing, it was just really good fun. (Student)

I liked your emphasis on a fun and practical activity because what came out of our survey [of students about sexuality and relationships education], was that students, like you, want to have fun when they learn. This is a big revelation, isn't it!! You reinforced the importance of having fun. (Researcher)

Your decision to trial it with your classmates was a good one as you learnt from them as well. (Teacher)

Reflections

Reflections by Teacher, Woodville High School

Curriculum and pedagogy are two areas I enjoy exploring and evolving. I was intrigued by the idea of giving students a voice within the Health classrooms. The idea is consistent with my beliefs that students' interests, passions and ambitions should be valued and that they should be given opportunities to develop independence and critical and creative thinking skills, rather than be followers within the classroom.

With Woodville High School being represented by a multicultural student body (over 60 different cultural groups), I saw this as an opportunity to access diverse and varied cultural views in relation to sexual health education.

I had a dedicated role throughout the program and this was supported by the school's leadership team. Students were regularly consulted and supported through scheduled small-group meetings and the online communication platform, EDMODO. My role evolved over time and aimed to refine student topics without suppressing their ideas. My approach with the students was to be non-judgmental and respectful while having high expectations of their commitment to the program and development of their product. Students moved through a cycle of drafting, trialling, modifying and refining by 'testing' their products on other groups. Feedback was provided to student groups through a PMI task (Plus-Minus-Interesting) and this is when refinements and re-testing were able to take place.

I reinforced the key themes of participation, consultation and student initiative and encouraged students to put themselves in the place of other students who may be receiving their product. In this way, I challenged students to create effective and fun learning activities which demanded critical thinking and deep reflection.

Although a student voice approach is challenging and unsettling, it is necessary as it enables students to channel their strengths and become producers of information rather than consumers. Throughout the journey of this program, I noticed high levels of engagement, greater depth of investigation, critical and creative thinking and retention of learning, development of innovative learning activities, increased use of ICT, music, art and design skills.

Reflections by the researchers

There were many positive outcomes from this project. The high levels of collaboration between the students showed the benefits of embracing the ideals of participatory research and making a commitment to giving young people a greater say in sexuality and relationships education. Highlights were:

- **High levels of engagement and ‘fun’.** By encouraging the students to form small interest-based working groups, we were able to co-create an environment in which they could articulate and defend their ideas, and exchange different views, without the stress-inducing ‘gaze’ of the whole class. The level of engagement and willingness to contribute to the discussion of ‘sensitive’ topics was noticeably higher in students’ working groups than in the whole group. The students enjoyed the relative anonymity of working in pairs and small groups. They also ‘played’ more and had fun while working together. Achieving these high levels of engagement took longer than we thought it would for reasons we discuss in the final section of our reflections below.
- **Acceptance of, and respect for, difference and diversity.** Whether it was due to our group norms about ‘respecting everyone’, or whether it was a consequence of being part of a very diverse student population at their school, all but one of the students demonstrated a commitment to respecting sexual, gender, cultural and religious diversity. Four of the five topics selected by students had a ‘respecting diversity’ theme.
- **Evidence of critical thinking.** Comber & Simpson (2001, p.301) maintain that when teachers and students think critically about issues, they ‘ask complicated questions about language and power, about people and lifestyle, about morality and ethics, and about who is advantaged by the way things are and who is disadvantaged’. This was the case in this project as students consistently questioned gender-based assumptions about female and male sexuality and regularly ‘called-out’ sexist thinking and language. This was important as they researched their topics and made decisions about the reliability and credibility of the sources they used or discarded.
- **Use of complementary skills and abilities.** As in any group of young people, these students had a diverse array of interests, skills and abilities. By ‘playing to their strengths’, each group negotiated different roles for their members. For example, the two students who developed the sexting animation had very different but complementary skills; one had strong IT skills while the other had excellent writing skills. In the group of four girls who developed the sexual diversity board game, one was a good organiser, one was a ‘content expert’, another had good design and construction skills, while the final member injected fun and humour into their tasks. This complementarity ensured that group members made different but valuable contributions to the achievement of their learning goals.
- **Development and use of communication networks.** As the students were of different ages and from different classes in what was a large secondary school, staying in contact with each other was an ongoing challenge. To overcome the problem of being physically disconnected between workshops, the students used social media to keep in contact. The four game developers set up a Facebook group, the two song writers worked separately but then met afterhours in a home recording studio, while the two working on the sexting animation barely met but used email to exchange work. All students used the school intranet and EDMODO, a dedicated communication, collaboration, and coaching platform set up by their teacher. By staying linked-up in these ways, the pairs and groups were able to pursue their tasks despite being physically separated for much of the time.

These were significant benefits that justified the time and effort invested by all who participated in the project.

In the introduction to this resource we wrote briefly about some of the challenges we faced getting young people involved in the development of new teaching and learning resources in sexuality and relationships education. With time to reflect on what the students achieved, we would like to conclude with a more in-depth discussion of two issues we had to address during the teaching and learning process.

Perhaps the most pervasive issue we faced was the power of the 'taken-for-granted' practices and ways of doing things' in secondary schools that helped define and constrict how we worked with the students. Other teachers and researchers have recognised the limits on changing even small aspects of schools because of the organisational frameworks that govern the way they run – their timetables, curriculum based teaching groups, 'egg crate' school buildings, and quite limited forms of student consultation (Hattam & Sullivan, 2016, p.55). The prevailing power relationships in most secondary schools serve to privilege and preserve teachers' and other adults' authority over students' 'voices'. These structural and cultural influences impacted on the way we worked with students in quite profound and, sometimes, seemingly trivial ways. For example:

- We were subject to the restrictions of the school timetable; students were expected to be at places at particular times. This limited our flexibility and students' time commitments.
- All students wore school uniforms even though some of the activities they developed (the song about sexual and gender diversity, for example) demonstrated the incongruity of all

students, regardless of their gender or sexual orientation, wearing male–female gendered clothing at school.

- Students did not use our given names even though we referred to each other as 'Jane', 'Bruce' and 'Nat' and gave them 'permission' to use our given names. Students usually addressed us as 'Miss' or 'Sir' or didn't use names or titles at all.
- Students were slow to take up our invitation to 'have a greater say' about their sexuality and relationships education. The first few sessions we spent with the students were characterised by long silences, and awkward and tentative responses to our requests for student contributions. While this may have been due to the newness of our relationship with the students, we also think that perceived status and power differentials between us, as researchers, teachers and adults, and the students, as young people and learners, may have inhibited their initial participation.

Students' reluctance to break out of traditional adult–child and teacher–student relationships demonstrates the difficulty of implementing flatter, less hierarchical working arrangements with students who have been thoroughly 'schooled' to 'know their place in the scheme of things'. This has implications for what can be realistically achieved in 'participatory' approaches to research involving young people who have spent their lives subjected to adult authority.

The second challenging issue we faced related to one of the group norms we discussed early in the project. It sought to protect participants' privacy and to reduce the possibility of personal disclosures that could harm them. During the course of the project, it became apparent that a blanket 'ban' on personal self-disclosures was not a universally accepted group norm. For example:

- One boy openly and consistently identified as 'a homosexual male'. When he explained how he consulted his same sex attracted friends about the development of his resource, he disclosed his sexuality without elaboration. There was no obvious reaction from his peers who appeared to know and accept that he was gay. We didn't 'protectively interrupt' the student to prevent him from disclosing as we thought that it would have been disrespectful to do so.
- One girl described herself as 'a pansexual person' who was knowledgeable about sexual diversity. Her spontaneous disclosure occurred as she described her role in the development of her team's resource. There was little reaction from her peers and we chose not to try to silence her, again out of respect for her freely made decision to disclose her sexual orientation.
- Several students declared at various times that they were 'not sexually active' but vitally interested in human sexuality and intimate relationships. While this was personal information, we again chose not to intervene to 'shut down' the discussion.

While these students didn't mind sharing information about themselves, others were more circumspect and cautious. Other groups refused to confirm or deny any autobiographic influences in the development of their resources, choosing instead to locate their discussion of issues within broader cultural contexts and not from their personal experience. Other groups cited several online resources as the sources of their inspiration and information, rather than first hand, personal experience. These examples show how important it is to listen to students and be guided by their wishes, rather than paternalistically applying generalised 'rules of engagement'.

These reflections on both the benefits and challenges of engaging young people in participatory design work in sexuality and relationships education reveal the complexity of the field. While we have shared the practical ways we undertook this work with a diverse group of

students at Woodville High School, we would like to reaffirm the need to commit to the principles of consultation, cooperation, and shared decision making. From working with these students we learned that:

- Students should have a greater say in the design and development of sexuality and relationships education teaching and learning strategies. Students want to have a greater say; they appreciate having opportunities to use their 'voices' to influence sexuality and relationships education.
- Students are capable of making significant contributions, given their diverse and complementary skills and abilities.
- Students need support to negotiate and, in some cases, challenge the structural parameters of school life that inhibit greater participation in the design and development of sexuality and relationships education teaching and learning strategies. They need 'adult allies' (Elliott, 2015) to help them do this work.
- Not all students are the same and should not be treated the same. Listening, negotiating, and being flexible with students is more important than implementing general principles or strategies rigidly.

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