Positive and Protective
Self protection – Young people

Facilitator Kit
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Information for the facilitator

This workshop has been written to be delivered to foster and kinship carers working within the Child Protection System. Your audience may also include staff from the following services: Child Safety services; Foster / Residential / Alternative care services; other staff that work with carers or with children and young people in care. Facilitators will need to draw on the content knowledge of the target group to provide relevant examples and anecdotes throughout the training. It is recommended that you are familiar with at least the following readings:


- Secondary Students and Sexual Health: 2013 - Results of the 5th National Survey of Australian Secondary Students and Sexual Health. La Trobe University, Anne Mitchell, Kent Patrick, Wendy Heywood, Pamela Blackman and Marian Pitts. April 2014  

- Settings and Solutions: Supporting access to sexuality and relationships information for children in care. FPQ, Holly Brennan 2008  

- Other resources for parents and carers are available to download from True Relationships and Reproductive Health at [http://www.true.org.au/Resources/All-Resources?retain=true&RefineModule=891&StartTax=26](http://www.true.org.au/Resources/All-Resources?retain=true&RefineModule=891&StartTax=26)

Preparation checklist - Have you?

v12016
read through the Facilitator Guide and PowerPoint slides
read through the Facilitator Notes to get more information regarding activities and discussion
read relevant readings/research
chosen relevant activity resources from the approved activity library

Symbols used in the guide to help facilitators tailor the presentation to the audience

When you see the following symbol:

Provide examples, anecdotes, statistics and scenarios here to make the content relevant to your audience.

This activity asks participants to be active and involved. Reinforce the working agreement to maintain a safe environment for people to participate. Participants have the right to pass if they feel uncomfortable.

This activity asks participants to do a written activity in their participant workbook.

Support for participants

This course addresses issues of sexual abuse. The information and/or discussion may be challenging for participants and may trigger traumatic memories and experiences for some people. Particular groups may be more likely to experience emotional responses, especially if the children and young people the staff work with have experienced abuse and neglect. As the facilitator, it is important to be prepared to respond to the needs of participants.

- take the time to raise this issue in Group Working Agreement
- acknowledge emotional responses and the gravity of sexual abuse
- dispel myths which may contribute to misinformation / misinterpretation
- know and have available the names and referral details of relevant support / counselling services in the area
- be prepared to talk with people during breaks
- encourage participants to seek support if required and to employ self-care strategies
## Facilitator Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Resources</th>
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|      | **REGISTRATION** | Attendance list  
Name tags / pens |
| 10 min | **INTRODUCTION** | SLIDE 2 – Course outline  
Facilitator notes - Group working agreement  
Poster paper  
Blu tac  
Pens |
| 5 min | **SEXUALITY** | Whiteboard /  
Poster paper and |

**REGISTRATION**
- Check off attendance list as people arrive.
- Distribute nametags.

**INTRODUCTION**
- Introduce yourself to the group and acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land.
- Discuss housekeeping details – toilets, smoking areas, emergency exits, break time, start and finish times.
- Show SLIDE 2 – Course outline and discuss facilitators’ role, including debriefing, referring people if needing support, taking responsibility for your own learning. Remind participants that discussion will take place during the workshop regarding sexuality, sexual development and sexual abuse. These topics may be confronting for some participants. It is important to acknowledge this and remind participants that they may need to use self-management skills throughout the day. The facilitator can make themselves available during the break or provide referrals for support if required.
- Talk about the Participant workbook that each participant will receive. This will be used throughout the day and will assist participants in making notes or documenting key points.
- Brainstorm a group working agreement. Write this on poster paper and display for participants to see during the workshop. Remind participants that they are participating in their role as foster/kinship carers to renew or learn new skills for working confidently with the children and young people in their care. They are not here to disclose personal information. Write up other rules as they arise. Refer to Facilitator notes: Group working agreement for further information.
- Ask participants to introduce themselves to the group and explain what they hope to get out of the workshop that will be relevant to their role as a carer.
- Ask for a general indication of how long people have been involved in the child protection sector, ie, 0-5 years, 5-10 years, 10 or over. Reflect back to the group that between everyone in the room there is a lot of experience in supporting children in care, and that most often it is the interaction that participants can have with each other that is the most valuable part of a workshop like this one.

**SEXUALITY**

*Before we start talking about sexuality and self protection, it is value to think about what sexuality means to us and what is might mean to others. It is essential to establish what sexuality is and what is ‘normal’ sexual behaviour and development, to accurately identify and proactively respond to sexual behaviours that may be concerning or offending.*

**Activity: Sexuality brainstorm**

**Purpose:** To establish definitions of sexuality.
- In pairs (or whole group) ask participants to discuss, *What is Sexuality?*
- Bring discussion back to whole group and write responses on the whiteboard.
- Process physical, social, emotion and spiritual aspects and link responses to definitions used in the following slides. This is an important task to clearly process with participants, remembering to highlight the holistic nature of sexuality. Clarify with participants that sexuality is far more than just a physical activity.

- Show SLIDES 3-6 – What is sexuality?, “Sexuality is, What is sexuality? & Sexuality Components

- HANDOUT – Participant workbooks

- Workbook activity 1 – What is sexuality?

- This workshop for foster/kinship carers focuses on sexual behaviour not on violence, swearing, spitting etc. However, some of the same principles can apply to other behaviours. This workshop will be talking about and using only examples of sexual behaviour.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIAL LEARNING</th>
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<tr>
<td>Social learning is one way we gain information about how to behave through observation and experience.</td>
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- Ask participants how, when and where we learn about sexuality? Remind participants that this activity is not about personal disclosures, rather just ideas regarding the journey of people learning about themselves as sexual beings.

- Show SLIDE 7 – How do children and young people learn about sexuality and relationship?  
  What messages about sexuality might a child or young person pick up from their experience of the world? Use the topics on the slide to guide the discussion, i.e., child, family, peers, school and society. Discussion could include interaction between genders; male/female roles, shame, identity, sense of belonging, educational opportunities, systems abuse, impact of poverty, sexuality being a taboo topic, community/family structure.

  Even when we think we’re not teaching about sexuality, children are learning.  
  Is this the only way we want children and adolescents to learn about sexuality?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workbook activity 2 – Social learning and sexuality</th>
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- Show SLIDE 8 – Ecological model of behaviour  
  This model shows how the relationships and social interactions closer to the individual have a greater impact, but also reminds us that there are other influences occurring across the broader social and cultural context. It can help reinforce that if we are to support children and adolescents, especially those with sexual behaviours of concern, we need to be working across a number of levels to give clear and consistent messages. For example, if a school is providing behaviour support to a child, it is important for staff to work with the child, his/her family/carers, other students, the wider school community and relevant community services.

| pens |
| SLIDES 3-6 – What is sexuality?, “Sexuality is, What is sexuality? & Sexuality Components |
| Participant workbooks |
| SLIDE 7 – How do children and young people learn about sexuality and relationships? |
| SLIDE 8 – Ecological model of behaviour |
## VALUES AND ATTITUDES

It is important to also recognise that our values and attitudes influence our behaviour. Therefore it is vital to be aware of our own personal values and attitudes in order to develop clear professional boundaries and a positive approach to supporting healthy sexuality.

- **Show SLIDE 9 – How do you manage your personal values and beliefs in your professional role?**

  Process this slide, simply by asking participants to examine their personal values, beliefs and attitudes.

- **Workbook activity 3– Values and attitudes**

  - **Show SLIDE 10 – Guidelines for values discussions**

    It is essential to be aware of your own values, attitudes and beliefs about sexuality in order to manage responses to sexual behaviours in positive and supportive ways. As foster/kinship carers, it is important to support children and young people to develop their own beliefs, decision making skills, tolerance and respect for diversity.

## SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- **Show SLIDES 11-12 – Adolescent sexual behaviour**

  The information on these slides is from the *Secondary Students and Sexual Health: 2013 - Results of the 5th National Survey of Australian Secondary Students and Sexual Health*. This research highlights that young people are sexual beings and many are sexually active. This reflects development and becoming sexually mature. Our laws about age of consent are there to protect young people from manipulation and abuse from adults. If we think young people may be sexually active, we need to be asking questions about safety, risks, harm, abuse and their ability to make informed decisions NOT just questions about morals and values. This research provides some broad data that sets the context for what types of sexual behaviours young people in Australia are engaging in.

- **Show SLIDES 13-14 – Children and young people in care**

  We know that children and young people in care have poorer sexual health outcomes than children and young people who are not in care. If we compare some of the statistics for children and young people in care with the results of the La Trobe University study we can clearly see the disparity. The information on these slides is from *Settings and Solutions: Supporting access to sexuality and relationships information for children in care*. Some key points:

  **HIV risk** – 38% of young people in care thought that they may be at risk of having contracted HIV as compared to 1 in 10 from the general sample.

  **Intercourse** – 86% of young people in care had experienced intercourse as compared to 40% of secondary students in the general sample.

  **Fatherhood** – (from a Swedish study) 1 in 20 males in care compared with 1 in 140 become teenage fathers.
**Sought info** – 25% of young people in care have never spoken to anyone about a sexuality related issue. 88% of the general sample had spoken to their mothers (56%), female friends (55%), the school sexual health program (49%) and pamphlets (44%)

- **Show SLIDE 15 – Angel** as an example of a young person not knowing who they could talk to.
- **Workbook activity 4 – Sexual behaviour and young people**

### RATIONALE FOR SELF PROTECTION EDUCATION

Self protection education is about providing young people with information and skills that can help prevent abuse, without making them frightened of their world. Whilst it is the adult’s responsibility to create safe environments and help young people be safe, there are some skills young people can be taught to help minimise the risk of sexual abuse.

Self protection education involves teaching topics such as assertiveness, feelings, relationships, body awareness, rules about touch, types of touch, knowing how to identify unsafe situations and how to get help from trusted adults.

Young people in care may have complex and diverse needs in the area of self protection education. The following slide further explains the need for self protection education.

- **Show SLIDE 16 – Rationale for self protection education**
  
  Self protection education is for everyone. This is inclusive of young people who may have harmed others with their sexual behaviour as well as young people who have been harmed.

- **Show SLIDE 17 – Benefits of self protection education**
  
  Explain to participants the need for a clear rationale. Having a rationale can help clarify the importance of self protection strategies as well as identify the needs of the young people to be supported. The rationale can also highlight self protection strategies as a basic human right as well as for assisting young people in care to be offered clear and accurate information.

- **Workbook activity 5 – Rationale for self protection education.**
  
  Sexuality and self protection can be challenging topics for parents / carers to address with young people. One of the common barriers to talking about these issues centres around a lack of clarity and confidence of adults in a child’s life – particularly when that child is in care.

  Discuss as a group reasons why sexuality and self protection issues may not be addressed, eg, no policy, not my role, fear of triggering abuse memory.
# SEXUAL ABUSE AND SUBSTANTIATION OF ABUSE

15 mins

**Show SLIDE 18 – What is sexual abuse?**

It’s important to establish a definition of sexual abuse. The facilitator may choose to ask the group this question first before showing the slide, to elicit discussion and then use the slide to process. Discussion might include: the importance of using accurate language (it describes and acknowledges the seriousness of abuse), legal framework, adult to child + child to child (‘sexual assault’ refers to adult to adult harm).

- **Show SLIDE 19 – Prevalence of sexual abuse**

*Professor Freda Briggs speaks about sexual abuse as the most common crime in our society today while also being the most commonly denied.* This quote may provide base for brief discussion. Allow participants time to process and encourage discussion about each point. Acknowledge that sexual abuse most frequently occurs in the context of relationships, thus making it a very complex issue. This is a significant factor for children and young people disclosing abuse; for adults reporting and for ensuring appropriate support and therapy is provided for survivors of abuse.

Statistics show that many children in care may have already experienced sexual abuse prior to coming into care. Information about abuse is not always given to the carers, eg, *a child in care may have experienced sexual abuse but have been removed from their biological family for other reasons.*

In one study 42% of children had experienced abuse and this information was not given to carers (Farmer and Pollack, 2003, p104). Some information suggests that children who have already experienced sexual abuse once may be more likely to be victims/survivors again if they are not assisted to be safe. It is also believed that children in care or who have been in care are at greater risk of experiencing sexual abuse than their peers who are not in care.

- **Show SLIDES 20-21 – Indicators of sexual abuse**

Generally, we are looking for clusters not just individual indicators. If we suspect harm or abuse, it is our responsibility to report it – we want to make it stop!

**Workbook activity 6 – Sexual abuse**

- **Show SLIDE 22 – Substantiations of abuse**

  This information relates to the substantiated types of abuse once a child enters the child protection system. Point out that often when there is one type of abuse there are also others. The statistics for emotional abuse include children and young people that have witnessed domestic violence.

- Accurate statistics regarding children in care and sexual abuse are difficult to establish. This is due to several factors:
  1. high rates of non-disclosure of sexual abuse,
  2. sexual abuse not being recorded in child protection statistics when sexual abuse is not the primary reason for child protection orders or under reporting of incidences of sexual abuse.

- **Show SLIDE 23 – Queensland children receiving child protection**
services

- Show SLIDE 24 – Substantiations by age and sex
- Ask the group why they think the 15 – 17 years age group are least likely to be the subject of substantiation.
- Some discussion points could include:
  - Age – often a factor that child protection workers take into account when determining how to respond. The younger a child the more vulnerable they are perceived to be.
  - Stringent policy and procedure for children under the age of 12months – including response times.
  - More monitoring/potential medical intervention for younger children – therefore more likelihood of abuse being reported or picked up.

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<th>child protection services</th>
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<tr>
<td>SLIDE 24 – Substantiations by age and sex</td>
<td>SLIDE 24 – Substantiations by age and sex</td>
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5 mins

**TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICE**

*Trauma experienced in childhood and in early adulthood is increasingly being recognised as one of the primary social determinants of health and wellbeing. This is because violence and abuse experienced by young people can have severe, pervasive and lifelong effects on their health, 'identity, relationships, expectations of self and others, ability to regulate emotions and view of the world’*

Elliott et al. 2005; as cited in NSW Kids and Families (2014, pg. 97)

- Show SLIDE 25 – Trauma
  Many children and young people in care will have experienced trauma as a result of abuse and neglect prior to coming into care. It is important that carers have an understanding of how this trauma may impact on their leaning about relationships and sexuality.

- Show SLIDE 26 – Principles of Trauma Informed Practice – these principles utilise a strengths based approach when working with children and young people with trauma backgrounds.

- Show SLIDE 27 – So what does this mean for relationships and sexuality?
  Children and young people with trauma backgrounds still have the potential to resilient and develop a healthy sexuality and self concept. It is also important that assumptions are not made about sexual behaviour always being as a result of having experienced abuse. Refer to the following recommended readings for further information.


10 mins

**RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES**
A disclosure is when someone communicates they have been/are being sexually abused. Disclosure of sexual abuse is often a complex process, but it is also a critical time in initiating intervention to stop abuse. Children and young people can disclose that they have experienced abuse in a number of ways. Sometimes it can be through behaviour or it might be a direct verbal disclosure. Disclosure of sexual abuse is often a complex process, but it is also a critical time in initiating intervention to stop abuse.

Disclosures can be received when talking about self protection. Remember to take all disclosures seriously, believe the child and follow policy and procedure to ensure safety of the child that is being supported.

- Show SLIDES 28-29 – Disclosure and Process of Disclosures and discuss (Refer to Facilitator Notes – Disclosures for further information).

Provide examples to engage participants in discussion. There have been many examples raised in the Royal Commission into Institutional Abuse. Discussing these examples may open up group discussion about the complexity of child sexual abuse.

When we consider the historical context of secrecy surrounding sex and sexual abuse, we can see that there is also a history of avoidance and denial. Changing this cycle of denial and avoidance requires us to listen, understand and act to protect children and young people from abuse.

**ACTIVITY:** In pairs or small groups, discuss and make a list of some of the reasons a child or young person might not disclose abuse, or withdraw their disclosure. Also make a list of reasons why a parent/carer may not disclose/report abuse.

- Show SLIDE 30 – Responses to a disclosure

A child might feel discouraged when disclosing because of the inappropriate response from the person they disclose to. An inadequate initial response may mean that the child does not attempt to disclose again, fearing what reaction they will receive. It is important for people to listen and support the child without being the investigator. It is important to take notice and inquire as to what has happened in order to let the child know you have listened and taken them seriously and so that you have the details to report and put in place support.

- Ask participants if they are familiar with the disclosure policy for foster and kinship carers. What does it require them to do? Where could they find information about this? The Carer Handbook is a valuable source of information.

Acknowledge that at times the subject of child abuse can be a difficult one to think about. Remind participants that the facilitator is available during the break if participants need to debrief following this session.

**REDUCING THE RISK OF SEXUAL ABUSE**

**Activity:** Reducing the risk

- **Purpose:** To identify strategies that may reduce the risk of sexual abuse children and young people in care.
### Workbook activity 7 – Reducing the risk

Ask participants to form four groups. Allocate each group one of headings below.

- Children in care
- Foster/kinship carers
- Organisations
- Society

Participants should write their ideas for what strategies that these four groups can implement to reduce the risk of sexual abuse to children and young people in care. Exercise 3 in the Participant workbook can be used to record ideas.

Briefly process each group’s ideas as a large group. Refer to, *Facilitator notes: Reducing the Risk* for further examples.

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**LEARNING ABOUT SELF PROTECTION**

*It is never too early nor too late to start self protection education. Children are never too young to learn about being safe and who they can talk to if they need help.*

- Ask participants what content should be included in an effective self protection program for children and young people in care?

- Show **SLIDE 31 – Self protection education involves teaching young people about:**

**Activity: Self Protection Education**

**Purpose:** To identify strategies for teaching self protection.

- Workbook activity 8 – Self protection education topics

Form four working groups and give each group one self protection topic. The topics are:

1. Understanding our body and feelings
2. Assertive communication
3. Healthy relationships and safer sex
4. Getting help and feeling safe

Ask groups to brainstorm strategies for how they think they can teach children and young people in their care about the self protection topic they have been given.

Facilitator to move around the groups to assist as required.

Strategies may include answering questions, role modelling, using learning moments including television programs like soapies, news and current affairs, reading brochures and books together, story telling, singing, making posters and scrap books, drawing together, making signs and using redirection, role play, using dolls and doll houses. Remind participants to be as creative as possible with their ideas.

Discuss as a large group.

Facilitator will then process the four topics one by one in the remainder of the workshop, giving additional suggestions and strategies to support participants’ lists. It is important that all of the participants’ strategies are valued in the following section of the workshop.

Often the participants will come up with very good strategies, as they are the ones who know the children in their care and their learning needs more clearly.
**WHERE TO START?**

Sexuality education is about supporting a young person’s sexual development in a gradual, safe, healthy and positive way. Teaching about sexuality and self protection is an ongoing responsibility, not just a one–off talk about the ‘facts’.

As carers, you can support the development of self protection skills through your everyday interactions with the children in your care.

- Discuss where participants think may be a good place to start a self protection program with children and young people.

Let participants know that there may be different starting points for talking about self protection but that in today’s workshop we will start with bodies and being private.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Understanding bodies and feelings</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Ask participants to brainstorm why we talk about bodies and feelings in a self protection program.</td>
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One of the most important and effective strategies to support healthy sexual development is to ensure young people have an understanding about their body. This includes an understanding of their reproductive body parts and how they work, the changes their body experiences during puberty and that their body belongs to them and that they can decide who can touch them.

- Show SLIDES 32-33 – Body parts and body ownership and Body ownership

**Anatomical language**

- When talking about bodies, particularly reproductive (or private) body parts, it is important to encourage young people to use anatomically correct terms. Using correct language for body parts normalises these body parts, gives messages that these body parts are not embarrassing or shameful and communicates that it is ok to talk about these parts.

- Using anatomically correct language provides children and young people with a vocabulary to communicate about their bodies in clear, accurate terms, to ask for help if they need it and to be understood by staff, parents and carers.

- Some children may not have heard of or used anatomically correct terms for private body parts. They may perceive that they will get in trouble for using this terminology. Use of correct language by carers and adults will support young people to learn these words and use them in communication.

**Language of sexuality**

Discuss the effect of language on values. Mention use of appropriate language, assumptions implicit in some euphemisms and the effect of these. Emphasise the role of foster carers to use correct language rather than child like language or slang. This is important to clarify, as it is part of their role as foster carers to use correct language.

- When talking with young people, it is important to emphasise the rules about being private in your household. Public and private refers to teaching about private body parts, places, behaviours and discussion/talk.

**Demonstration: Naming body parts**
**Purpose:** To identify the names and functions of private body parts.

*This is a simple activity that participants can do at home with a pen and paper.*

- This activity involves drawing, labelling and describing the functions of body parts. Draw two outlines on the whiteboard or on poster paper. These may look like the outline of a gingerbread person.

- Ask participants one at a time to name a body part that is missing. This may be any part of the body including eyes, ears, hair and mouth. Ask the participant to come up to the outline and draw the body part that they have nominated onto one or both of the body outlines. Ask the participants to describe the function of the body part, for example eyes are for seeing, winking, pulling a funny face and crying. This helps to highlight the importance of each body part.

- Some people may mention the private parts of the body straight away. When conducting this activity with young people, they may be similar or they may avoid talking about the private parts. Accept each body part suggestion, if clothes are mentioned tell participants that the body outlines are in a private place, like the bathroom and it is ok to have no clothes on. This encourages participants to see that private parts of the body are just as normal and important as other parts of the body.

- When private body parts are suggested choose one of the body outlines to be female and one to be male. Draw the private body part. Write the name of the private body part. Describe the function of each body part to reinforce that all body parts have a purpose. Female private parts to include: breasts, nipples, vulva and vagina. Male private parts to include: penis, testicles, and scrotum. For both male and female, discuss bottom and anus.

- **Workbook activity 9 – Understanding bodies**

  **Understanding feelings**

  Learning about and understanding feelings can be a challenge particularly for young people who have experienced abuse, or who have moved around in care many times, or who have learning needs or disabilities. Many young people have not had anyone talk to them about feelings. To be able to develop safe, mutual relationships young people need the skills to understand and be able to communicate their feelings and needs.

  - Ask participants why it is important to talk about all feelings with regard to self-protection and not just talk about scared feelings?

  - Show SLIDE 34 – Why talk about different feelings? Using the board, brainstorm which feelings they may need to cover, including warning feelings.

  - Using art, music and movies can be a great way to talk about feelings. For many young people, feelings may be expressed through the arts or sport.

  Go back to the suggestions made by participants in **Workbook exercise 8** and reinforce the other strategies that were suggested by the group for the topic of Understanding bodies and feelings.

  - **Workbook activity 10 – Understanding feelings**

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<th>20 mins</th>
<th>2. <strong>Assertive Communication – Decision making and negotiation skills</strong></th>
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<tr>
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<td>The key to any healthy relationship is mutual respect and being able to talk, listen and understand one another. Whether it is family, work, peers or sexual</td>
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relationships, the development of assertiveness skills is valuable in negotiating positive, respectful and safe outcomes.

- Ask participants to brainstorm why we talk about communication in a self protection program with young people.

- Show SLIDE 35 – Why talk about communication?
  - Healthy relationships and a safe approach to sexual activity require honest communication and the opportunity to make decisions free from pressure.
  - Ask participants to brainstorm some of the common lines (pressure lines) that they have heard when one person is trying to persuade another person to have sex.

- Workbook activity 11 – Assertive communication

**Activity: Pressure lines and ‘I’ statements**

**Purpose:** To identify strategies to respond to pressure in relationships.

- Workbook activities 12 and 13
  - Ask participants to work in pairs and to choose to complete exercise 12 or 13. Remind participants to answer this as an adolescent.
  - Process briefly as a group and discuss the application of this activity with young people.
  - Discuss with participants that when negotiating in relationships an individual needs to be assertive. Being assertive doesn’t mean being aggressive and angry. It means being honest about what you think and feel and expressing this clearly to the other person. Often when communication in relationships, people experience strong emotions about what is happening. For effective communication it is important to let the other person know your needs and to express how you are feeling. This can be done using “I” statements.

- Show SLIDE 36 – Creating an ‘I’ statement

- Show SLIDE 37 – Examples
  - Refer to Facilitator Notes –Using ‘I’ statements when negotiating safe sex to assist with processing
  - Discuss with participants the need to support young people to develop their communication and negotiation skills. Effective communication is a key contributor to respectful, supportive and safe relationships

2. Go back to the suggestions made by participants in Workbook exercise 8 and reinforce the other strategies that were suggested by the group for the topic of Assertive Communication.

3. Healthy relationships and safe sex

Young people in care have the same types of relationships as other young people. In addition, they may also have a lot more people in their lives that are involved as a result of care. They may also sometimes need clear accurate information to help them interpret relationships and relationship rules.
• Ask participants to brainstorm why we would teach about relationships in a self protection program with the adolescents we support.

• Show SLIDE 38 – Why talk about relationships and touch?

• Show SLIDE 39 – Relationship continuum
The Relationship continuum concept can be used to discuss the different type of relationships (Close, Friend & Acquaintance) and identify appropriate behaviours, touch and activities for each type of relationship. It can also be used to discuss the qualities of the people in each category and the type of activities and personal space that is appropriate, eg, close relationships may include people who are kind and trustworthy and who can hug and kiss us.

As young people go through puberty and move from being a dependent child to an independent adult, their relationships change. Young people may want to spend more time with their friends and less with their family, and when they are at home, spend more time in private.

• Many young people become interested in forming close relationships with others during adolescence. It is common for young people to develop strong feelings for people of the other sex, or for the same sex, or for both sexes.

• Having these feelings is a healthy way for young people to learn about relationships and sexuality. These can be short lived crushes, which may or may not extend to more serious relationships as adolescence progresses. Each young person is different. Some people form committed relationships very early, while others show little or no interest until later.

• Ask participants to think about some of the messages that a child or young person who has experienced/witnessed abuse may pick up about relationships?

• It may be that many have had limited exposure to positive, healthy relationships in their lives. Young people in care may need support to understand and value the qualities of close relationships (this includes sexual relationships).

• Explain that a sexual relationship is an example of a close relationship. A sexual relationship can be defined as a relationship between two people that may include intimate physical touch, contact and / or emotional feelings, even though it may or may not include sexual intercourse. For many it includes romantic love and attachment.

• Discuss the application of this discussion with young people and how it could be used to reinforce safe sex, emotional safety, being ready and feeling okay about sex. Young people need to understand that being in a sexual relationship does not have to result in sex.

• Let young people know that: Making decisions about sexual relationships and sexual activity can be very difficult; there are lots of things to think about. It can be very helpful to talk to someone about how you feel and what you are thinking. Talking to someone you trust can help you to be safe. For many young people no one has ever talked to them about the importance of relationships or sexual activity feeling good.

• Workbook activity 14 – Healthy Relationships

Activity: Plenty of fish In the sea
Purpose: To identify qualities that are important in close relationships.
- Spread out all of the Fish cards face down on the floor.
- Tell participants we are going fishing. Explain that each fish has something on the back about a relationship. They have to decide if that quality is something to keep in a relationship, throw it back to swim another day, or so awful that no one deserves it and is thrown onto the riverbank.
- Each participant has a go at fishing. They have to say to the group what they would do with their fish and why. Then discuss as a whole group.
- Talk about having to make important choices and decisions as adults about relationships and sex.
- Discuss the application of this activity with young people. Remind participants that talking with young people about self protection also involves talking about positive, mutual relationships. Remember that sometimes young people may be drawn towards abusive relationships with peers rather than strangers or family members as the offenders.

### Rules about touch

*It is important for young people to understand that their body belongs to them and they can decide who can touch them. This refers to any type of touch including touch in a sexual relationship.*

- Ask participants what laws need to be explained when it comes to being sexual or sexual relationships. Discuss how those laws can be explained using plain English.
  1. 16+: the law says people must be 16 years to make this choice
  2. Consent: only ok of both people want to
  3. Not in the same families: applies to first cousins and the exception is mum and dad/adult relationship within the family
  4. Privacy: sexual behaviour is private and must take place in a private place (where no one else can see) such as in the bedroom with the curtains and door closed.

- Show **SLIDE 40 – Rules about sexy touch.**

### Safer sex

*If we consider the research, we know young people are already making choices about sex and young people in care have less access to sexual education than their peers. If young people lack knowledge about sexual and reproductive health and relationships, they are highly vulnerable to unwanted sex, sexual violence, unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. How can we support young people to make appropriate choices?*

- Show **SLIDE 41 – What is safer sex?**
  Discuss with participants that children and young people in care are at greater risk of contracting STIs and having an unplanned pregnancy than their peers. Research indicates that 33% to 73% of young people in care are reported to not use contraception or practice safe sex regularly. (Brennan 2008).

- Go back to the suggestions made by participants in **Workbook exercise 8** and reinforce the other strategies that were suggested by the group for the topic of Healthy relationships and safe sex.

- **Workbook activity 15 – Safer Sex**
## 4. Getting help and feeling safe

One of the objectives of self-protection skills is for young people to identify a personal network of trusted people to whom they can turn when needing help or feeling unsafe.

- **Show SLIDE 42 – Why teach problem solving skills?**
- **Ask participants to brainstorm where young people could go for support or information if they were confused or unsure about a particular issue or were feeling unsafe? (Examples: family, foster carers, teachers, friends, Kids Help Line, FPQ, local youth services.)**

### Workbook activity 16 – Getting help and feeling safe

**Activity: Accessing community agencies**

**Purpose:** To identify community agencies relevant to sexual health issues.

- **Ask participants to imagine the next activity as if they were answering the questions as an adolescent.**

**Workbook activity 17 - Accessing community agencies (to record discussion)**

- **Ask participants to brainstorm which agencies young people could go to or contact if they:**
  1. Were being bullied
  2. Were experiencing unwanted touching
  3. Were having sexual intercourse and wanted to have a pregnancy test or to make certain they didn’t have an STI

- **Ask participants to consider what issues may impact on young people accessing these agencies and services, eg, embarrassed, concerns about confidentiality and judgmental attitudes, cost, transport, youth friendly.**

- **Process as a large group. Discuss with participants that these would be valuable scenarios to discuss with the young people in their care to build problem solving skills and open communication challenges.**

- **Have brochures from local agencies available for participants. Encourage participants to take brochures to discuss with the young people in their care.**

- **It is important for young people to identify at least four adults, besides the ones they live with, as part of their safety network. Safety networks should include:**
  1. trusted adults they know personally who they could talk to (eg: mother, father, foster carers, auntie, uncle, teacher, close family friend.)
  2. people in the community who are in an official role, eg, police, safety house (on the way home), security guard (at the shopping centre), school personnel, community and church contacts, Kids Help Line.

- **A simple way to identify and record safety networks is to trace a hand and write the relevant people in alongside the fingers – Workbook activity 18 – Safety networks**

- **Go back to the suggestions made by participants in Workbook activity 8 and reinforce the other strategies that were suggested by the group for the topic of Getting help and feeling safe**
PUTTING IT ALL INTO PRACTICE

Young people in care may have complex and diverse needs in the area of sexuality and self protection education. The following activity is designed to develop your problem solving skills to support young people as issues arise.

Activity: Adolescent self protection scenarios
Purpose: To develop participant’s problem solving skills.

- Workbook activity 19 – Putting it all into practice
- Ask participants to form 6 groups. Hand out 1–2 scenarios to each group.
  Participants discuss and complete the following questions in the workbook:
  1. What are the issues in the scenario?
  2. What strengths or abilities does the young person in the scenario have?
  3. What could you say or do to support the young person?
- Briefly process each scenario as a large group. Facilitator to add suggestions and ideas to assist. See following examples.

  Sam:
  1. safety/internet use/self protection skills and awareness/risk taking
  2. computer use/friendly/ability to travel independently
  3. feelings/early warning signs/relationship skills/personal safety/risk taking/internet use/grooming

  Paris:
  1. sexual assault
  2. communication skills
  3. getting help/emergency contraception/decision making around reporting/positive relationships/risk taking and alcohol

  Becca and Samual:
  1. past experience of sexual abuse, very friendly and open
  2. good bond, like to play and be active/friendly/settled
  3. feeling and warning signs/bodies and being private/relationships and types of touch/getting help and staying safe

Highlight the need for self protection education to help prevent sexual abuse; to respond to past sexual abuse; to address sexual harassment and to assist with the development of relationship skills.

CONCLUSION

- Show SLIDE 43 – Support strategies for children and young people.
  Facilitator to summarise content of session.
- Show SLIDE 44 – Looking after you – it’s important!
  Working and caring for children and young people who have experienced abuse can be very difficult. It is essential for all carers to have strategies in place to support themselves in times of high stress in order to be still able to help the children and young people that they support.
- Allow time at the end for any questions and supply contact details of facilitator or support organisations to the participants should further information be required.
• Handout evaluation form and collect completed evaluation forms.
• Show SLIDE 45 – Thank you!
Bibliography


Secondary Students and Sexual Health: 2013 - Results of the 5th National Survey of Australian Secondary Students and Sexual Health. La Trobe University, Anne Mitchell, Kent Patrick, Wendy Heywood, Pamela Blackman and Marian Pitts. April 2014


Facilitator notes - Group working agreement

The following are examples of points that may be included in participant's Group Rules or Working Agreement.

Confidentiality:
- Omit Names
- Omit other identifying details
- Only give facts which are pertinent to the situation or story
- Respect other participant's confidentiality, eg: if people tell personal stories
- Use professional judgment in sharing information
- Less is better
- Think how you’d feel if the situation were reversed

Look after yourself:
- Find someone to debrief with
- Speak with a counsellor
- Relaxation techniques
- Stress management

Respect each other including:
- Each other's opinions
- Each other's values and beliefs
- Being non-judgemental

Mobile phones:
- Will they be switched on, off or to vibrate?
Facilitator notes - Social learning (children in care)

- **Family**: May be neglect/abuse, may not know birth family, witnessed unhealthy relationships, fragmented contact with siblings, parental attitudes to genital area/masturbation, different messages in different care environments, ie, rules changing about what is acceptable behaviour/language etc.

- **Peers**: Stigma of being a kid in care, may have changed schools, difficulty developing/maintaining friendships, lack of opportunity for spontaneous friendships/outings, more vulnerable to exploitation.

- **School**: May not be stable, educational outcomes lower, the language in schools is not geared for difference, ie, *take this form home and get Mum or Dad to sign it*. Where does this leave a child who has a carer? Impact of language on sense of worth/value. Issues of fitting in when you don’t have the right uniform/books etc. What else do young people learn at school?

- **Society**: What messages are there in media/magazines about body image, what it means to be young etc, (Gen Y bagging), our laws about behaviour etc

- For some children and young people in care this traditional model could be turned on its head and rather than the family having the major influence it could be that due to lack of consistency of care society becomes the main location for social learning.
Facilitator notes - Responding to disclosures

1) **Believe the person**
   - Listen
   - Don’t question that it happened, just accept what they are telling you
   - Congruent body language
   - Try not to look panicked or shocked
   - Don’t jump to conclusions

2) **Don’t ask questions**
   - Don’t ask *any* questions about what happened or even if the person is sure that it happened
   - Don’t ask any leading questions (This could impact on the acceptance of statements as evidence, may mean you can’t support the person in court, may confuse the person, or may put words in their mouth)
   - Don’t investigate
   - Offer supportive statements, eg, *I can see you’re upset*
   - Can only ask a clarifying question if you were not sure of what was said, eg, *Can you tell me that again*

3) **Be sensitive and supportive**
   - Appropriate body language, eg, open posture, not too much distance or not too close, some eye contact, sit and listen calmly
   - Acknowledge that it is difficult to tell someone, it was good to have told someone
   - Acknowledge that it is not their fault
   - Lean forward
   - Offer tissues or a drink

4) **Truthful response**
   - Don’t make promises you can’t keep, eg, Won’t tell parents, perpetrator will go to jail – not always the outcome
   - Give information about what will happen next – immediate response, eg, have to tell boss/police
   - It is not your role to find out more. It may be necessary for the person to speak further with someone else to obtain more detailed information
   - Don’t give information about other people’s responses, eg, You will be removed from home, the Department of Communities worker will come to your house, the perpetrator will go to jail

5) **Other supports available**
   - Tell the person they have a right to access other support services, eg, counselling, immediate or ongoing medical checks, legal advice
   - You don’t have to provide/organise support services but may refer to someone else to do this, eg your Manager

**Always keep a written record of the disclosure and report the disclosure.**
Facilitator notes - Reducing the risk

The four categories represent ways in which members of these four groups can reduce the risk of sexual abuse to children and young people in care. The following are examples of ideas, which may be included in each category.

Change about society:
- Properly supported integration of young people in care
- Raise public profile of young people in care
- Educate people about sexual abuse
- Provide adequate support for foster carers
- Develop community awareness of sexual abuse services
- Universal sexuality education
- Improve counselling services for young people
- Develop community support networks

Change about organisations:
- Spot checks on staff/carer behaviour
- Sexual harassment/abuse policy
- Privacy Policy
- Provision of sexuality education to staff/carers and young people
- Acknowledge that it does happen and that the organisation is committed to stopping it
- Education for staff/carers in respecting young peoples rights
- Clear guidance for staff/carers regarding their responsibilities
- Provide access to staff/carers and young people for counselling
- More open to public scrutiny
- Screening of new staff/carers, not just for criminal record, but also attitudes, beliefs

Provide information to Foster/Kinship carers:
- Foster carers should not have sexual relationship activity with young people
- What is sexual abuse, its prevalence, how to recognise it and warning signs
- What to do – lines of reporting
- How to respect privacy
- How to empower young people in decision making, both generally and related to sexuality
- Provide wide range of socialisation opportunities

Provide information to children and young people in care:
- Recognising feelings, including fear and anger
- Basic sexual knowledge, including body parts, public and private, masturbation, sexual activity, circle of friends
- Their rights
- What to do if someone tries to sexually abuse them
- Saying no assertively
- Developing ability to make decisions in all areas
- Basic awareness of self – defence strategies
- How to network
- Who to tell
- Social and sexual behaviour that is age – appropriate and healthy
Using ‘I’ statements when negotiating safe sex

Example answers:

1. **When** you are not prepared for safe sex:
   
   I feel worried  
   because I know what risks are involved if we don't use a condom  
   and what I'd like is to keep kissing and touching without having intercourse.

2. **When** you say things like that:
   
   I feel worried  
   because I think there is more to our relationship than intercourse  
   and what I'd like is to go for a walk and a chat.

3. **When** you ask me to take a risk like this:
   
   I feel concerned:  
   because I know that there are risks involved every time couples have intercourse  
   and what I'd like is to wait until we get a condom.

4. **When** you complain about using a condom:
   
   I feel upset  
   because I really care about you and your feelings  
   and what I'd really like is to really try and include condom use in our sexual activity.

5. **When** you say that it's like having sex with a raincoat on:
   
   I feel upset  
   because we both know that there are too many risks if we don't use a condom  
   and what I'd like is for you to try using a condom.

6. **When** you suggest that I think you have a disease:
   
   I feel sad  
   because I was simply thinking about practising safe sex  
   and we cannot have sex unless we use a condom.

7. **When** you suggest using withdrawal:
   
   I feel worried  
   because I know it is not a very safe contraceptive method  
   and I will not have sex unless we use a condom.

8. **When** you talk to me like this:
   
   I feel confused  
   because I was being prepared for something we have both been interested in  
   and what I'd like is to stop now and have a talk about our relationship.
Fish Game
Print multiple copies of the fish and paste a statement on the back of each fish in preparation for the workshop
Suggested statements for fish game
These are just a few suggested statements for the fish game. There may be others that you would like to add.

Tells me he/she loves me and can’t live without me
Likes to pick my clothes and tells me what to wear
Gets jealous when I go out with other friends

Doesn’t like to hold hands with me in public

Tells me he/she loves me and can’t live without me
Likes to pick my clothes and tells me what to wear
Gets jealous when I go out with other friends

Doesn’t like to hold hands with me in public
Scenarios

Scenario 1
Sam, aged 15, has been chatting to people on the internet for the last month. This Friday night, Sam intends to meet up with Ricky, a person Sam has been talking to since last week. Sam is keen to meet up and is looking forward to wearing a recent purchase of clothing – a pair of new jeans. Sam is going to catch the bus into town to meet Ricky.

Scenario 2
Paris, aged 13, went to a party recently and came home distraught. The next morning when you talk to her she tells you she drank a lot and thinks that two boys took her into the bedroom and made her have sex. She says that she didn’t want to and doesn’t know what to do. She says that the boy’s names are Michael and Stuart and that they are both older. Even though she used to really enjoy school she now states that she doesn’t want to go back.

Scenario 6
Becca, aged 13, and Samual, aged 11, are a brother and sister who have been living in care together for 2 years. Becca and Samual have a strong bond and enjoy spending time together watching TV, playing video games and playing with the dog. They have an older brother Kristian, aged 17. They do not have contact with their brother or biological parents. When they came to the foster home their history of sibling sexual abuse by their older brother was reported. They are both friendly young people who are very trusting and open with all visitors and new acquaintances.