

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH EDUCATION FOR YOUNG MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

HUMAN RELATIONS - A SEXUAL HEALTH AND RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS PROGRAM FOR NEWLY ARRIVED YOUNG PEOPLE

WHAT WE DO

- Human Relations is a five-week program delivered to newly arrived young people attending Western English Language School (WELS) in Melbourne's west. Since its inception in 2001, the program has reached over 1,800 participants.
- The program prepares students aged 13 – 17 years for the transition into mainstream school by providing a safe and inclusive space to discuss sexual and reproductive health and relationships.
- The program is inclusive of all cultural and religious beliefs. Facilitators are there to provide information in a fun and engaging way to enhance young people's understanding of themselves, their relationships and their rights and responsibilities in Australia.

WHY WE RUN THE PROGRAM

- Young, newly arrived migrant and refugees often have interrupted schooling and limited access to reliable, accurate and culturally appropriate information about sexual health and relationships.
- The program is designed to redress knowledge gaps and resource young people with skills, knowledge and resources to make informed decisions about their health and relationships.
- Helps young people adjust to their new environment, lifestyle and system.

THE VALUE OF PARTNERSHIPS

- Delivered in partnership by Women's Health West, cohealth, WELS, Maribyrnong Youth Service and the Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health.
- Collaboration is key to the success of the program, with partners each bringing a unique area of expertise – such as gender equity, supporting refugee and migrant communities, and clinical care.

KEY STATISTICS

94%

There was a 94 per cent increase in students who stated it's not okay to have sex with your partner if they don't want to.

93%

There was a 93 per cent increase in students who recognised that women can legally access abortion in Australia.

100%

100 per cent of students understood that two people of the same sex can legally marry in Australia.

100%

100 per cent of students stated that it is not okay for your partner to control who you spend time with.

75%

There was a 75 per cent increase in students understanding the need for sexual consent in marriage.

PROGRAM TOPICS INCLUDE

- Puberty and periods
- Managing emotions
- Conception and pregnancy
- Gender and sexual diversity
- Healthy relationships and consent
- Contraception and unplanned pregnancy options
- Gender roles and stereotypes
- The rights and laws in Australia
- Accessing healthcare services

OUTCOMES

- Evaluation demonstrates improved knowledge and understanding of various SRH topics and healthy relationships
- Data also shows increased self-esteem and confidence in accessing the Australian healthcare system

PARTICIPANTS SAID

- "Thank you, we can't talk about this in my country"
- "You taught us to believe in ourselves"
- "It's okay to change your mind about sex and say no"
- "Girls can do what boys do"