



**SEXUAL
HEALTH
QUARTERS**

Feeling Good:

Bringing Pleasure Into Relationships & Sexuality Education

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BACKGROUND

The majority of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) delivered in Western Australia focuses on prevention of infection, unintended pregnancy, and sex assault; but it ignores the primary reason people are having sex: pleasure. The Guttmacher-Lancet Commission identified “pursu[ing] a satisfying, safe, and pleasurable sexual life, free from stigma and discrimination” as a sexual right.¹

Pleasure inclusive RSE:

- Affirms that sex should be pleasurable for everyone
- Challenges gender stereotypes
- Emphasises enthusiastic consent
- Empowers people to have enjoyable and safe sexual experiences

Young people are eager to learn more about sex than reproductive organs and biology. However, pleasure inclusive RSE is often not delivered in schools as many teachers report having few teaching resources and lack confidence and knowledge.² SHQ has undertaken activities to make pleasure inclusive RSE more readily available.

AIM

Increase young people's access to pleasure inclusive RSE.

WHAT WE DID

A holistic approach was adopted and three strategies were employed to target young people, people who work with young people, and their environment:

- 01.** Developed and delivered pleasure inclusive RSE to young people.
- 02.** Developed and delivered professional development for youth workers, teachers, nurses and allied professionals.
- 03.** Developed resources and promotional materials.

Existing educational resources and research were reviewed and pleasure-specific workshops were developed for young people and professionals. Qualitative and quantitative evaluations were conducted to measure engagement and changes in confidence to deliver pleasure inclusive RSE.

WHAT WE LEARNED

There is a continuing need for young people and professionals to receive pleasure-based RSE training and support. Preliminary feedback has reinforced the need for further activities.

HOW WE DID IT

Young People

- Reframed delivery of bodies: sexual & reproductive systems workshop from a pleasure perspective
- Weaved conversations of pleasure into every RSE module (e.g. consent, contraception, gender equality, ethical sex, respectful relationships, etc.)

Youth & Education Sector

- Developed a training workshop on how to incorporate pleasure into conversations about sexual health for teachers
- Adapted existing professional development (PD) training for youth sector workers to be framed from a pleasure perspective, delivered regionally and metro

Resource/Promotional Material

- Targeted social media activity (e.g. Clitoris Awareness Week, International Masturbation Month, etc.)
- Currently developing youth-friendly and anatomically correct 'typical' female reproductive system including clitoris for use in a clinic and with an education team
- Seven social media posts in Masturbation Month (May). e.g. Vulva cupcakes celebrating diversity (Facebook)

WHAT WE FOUND

Young People

- 18 pleasure-based RSE workshops delivered to 166 young people

“I didn't know it was OK for girls to enjoy sex”

Youth & Education Sector

- 100% of teachers (40) that attended our PD workshop reported feeling more confident to deliver pleasure-based RSE
- 95% of participants (22) in youth sector PD reported feeling more confident to include pleasure in conversations of sexual health

“It is much easier than I thought it would be to make little changes to come from a pleasure framework”

“Start using the word pleasure specifically! Thank you!”

“When I talk about consent going to try to start by talking about pleasure”

REFERENCES

- 01.** Starrs, A. M., Ezeh, A. C., Barker, G., Basu, A., Bertrand, J. T., Blum, R., ... & Sathar, Z. A. (2018). Accelerate progress—sexual and reproductive health and rights for all: report of the Guttmacher-Lancet Commission. *The Lancet*, 391(10140), 2642-2692.
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stylised clitoris

