

Year 9

Relationship and Sex Education RSE - Contraception

Although the average age for a young person losing their virginity is 16.8 years old, there is a social pressure and misinformed assumption that people are having sex at a younger age. In Year 9 some students may be considering having sex or sexual contact with others, or simply beginning to wonder a bit more about it. In order for students to know how to approach this safely, with consideration of risks and possibilities, we deliver the RSE unit at the start of Year 9. It is preferable for students to have this information well in advance of them needing it.

This unit looks at relationships and the choices that people are considering when starting a sexual relationship. It examines the different types of contraception and encourages students to think about the responsibilities and risks of having sex. It is important as it provides a platform for students to air any questions or concerns they may have in a safe, supportive environment, and it also informs students of the support that is available outside the school through health clinics. Our standpoint is still very much focused on relationships and we are providing students with a variety of tools that they can use at some point in their relationships. Considering delay and recognising when a relationship is positive are important features of this unit .

The subject matter can be embarrassing for us all so it is okay to laugh but if laughter begins to disrupt the lesson, a reminder of the school's behaviour policy will be given. We always start with the ground rules from the working agreement outlined in Year 7 - including asking questions and teaching using distancing techniques. The aim is to reduce embarrassment for all and to promote a safe, happy learning environment in the trickiest of situations. We then examine terminology which is tackled in a humorous and informal way designed to encourage discussion and to dispel myths. We explore the idea of consent - which is picked up in much more detail in Year 10 . Students revisit the condom demonstration from Year 8 although this time they have the opportunity to practise it themselves using condom demonstrators. There is no obligation to do this, but those students not taking part need to watch others to advise if they are making mistakes. We also explore responding to condom excuses as B&H Local Authority reports that some girls end up pregnant despite having a condom because the other person will not wear one. Role playing excuses and responses empowers everyone into knowing what to say in a given situation and in taking responsibility for their actions. Clarity is given about where to get help and support on all aspects of sexual health and students are reminded that this signposting could be useful for themselves or to impart to a friend

Detail is then provided on a variety of contraception types and students upskill themselves with up-to-date information from the Family Planning Association (FPA). In addition we also explore types of emergency contraception - our SAWSS data identified this as a weak area of knowledge in school as well as county-wide. We also begin to explore the consequences of not using protection and focus on the sexually transmitted infection (STI) chlamydia. Chlamydia is the most common STI in the UK with 1 in 10 young people being infected; in Brighton and Hove this is 1 in 8. Therefore,we feel that students need to know the symptoms, testing and treatments in order to be part of the solution.

Relationship and Sex Education RSE - Choices

This unit builds on the contraception unit and gives direct examples of the impact of not adhering to advice given in the previous scheme. It is placed at this point to develop students' understanding of

the impact of contraception and the very real impact if precautions are not taken. Students may have the opportunity to use the cyber babies as a demonstration.

We look at the choices that are available if a pregnancy occurs. It encourages students to think about issues such as parenting, abortion, adoption and the role relationships play in thinking about starting a family. It is an important message as it encourages students to reflect on the responsibilities of becoming a parent and the emotional and financial realities this brings.

Using a distancing technique we have created an imaginary relationship between two people and the students follow the story of what happens to them in their relationship . At various points the students are given tasks to consider the thoughts and feelings of the couple and to examine where mistakes have been made in their relationship and what lessons we can learn. We follow the couple through available options from abortion, adoption and parenting. The options are handled in a sensitive way looking at the pros and cons and intertwining this with the real local places that students would access for help and support.

Sexual Transmitted Infections - STIs

This follows on from the idea of healthy relationships but also on the chlamydia knowledge, further examples are given as to why students need to understand the importance of contraception This unit is delivered to encourage the students to think about the possible infections that can be transmitted during sex and how important the role of safe sex is in protecting them. It also outlines the support that is available if a student feels they may have an STI. This unit is a self-supported study which outlines types, symptoms, treatment and prevention. Students use the FPA leaflets which are both physical booklets and on-line to create a chart outlining key areas . They also use this knowledge to provide answers to teacher created case studies.

Healthy Sexual Behaviours

This spiral curriculum continues from Year 8 with age appropriate content. Student voice requested that we cover the area of consent in Year 9. Students explore the definition and look at the law and consent. Students discuss various common scenarios and their views on what can be done in these situations. We provide students with the skills and tools to deal with how to respond to uncomfortable situations, this is also an area which the students felt that they needed in their lives . In this short unit students communicate and debate scenarios , including stalking , they are also provided with reasons why there are barriers to seeking help but students are also given tips for assertive behaviour and signposts to support and advice.

We conclude this suite of lessons with a revisit of child sex exploitation. The students discuss healthy relationships and are introduced to both the wheel of power and control and the wheel of equality and respect , this provides them with the knowledge to evaluate their future relationships.

Drug and Alcohol Education

We know from the SAWSS data that young people of this age are growing in intrigue towards drugs, particularly alcohol. It is important that we develop their understanding of the risks and harm that their choices could have.

This unit encourages students to think about the responsibilities of drinking alcohol and/or taking drugs. By discussing the laws around substances, it makes students aware of the possible long-term consequences of drug offences. Students also explore the correlation between alcohol and drugs and risk-taking behaviour.

We begin with a recap on self-esteem as we know that those with higher self-esteem are less likely to engage in negative risk taking behaviour. We also revisit the steps to happiness as a method of promoting positive mental health.

Alcohol is still the most prevalent drug in society and so we explore the concept of binge drinking. In order to understand the definition, students need to know the UK guidelines and units. We talk about consequences of binge drinking, but we also suggest on-line tools to help to understand drinking habits such as a unit calculator.

Students are taught about poly-drug use, as we know locally that young people are unaware of the issues with taking multiple drugs in the same night. From here we teach about NPSs - Novel Psychoactive Substances-previously legal highs as the law has recently changed in regard to these. We focus on Spice as this in our local community and we explore the ethical journey of an NPS and the unscrupulous people involved in both production and supply. Students are taught about the four types of NPSs and their effects. Students are further provided with the opportunity to research drug types as a self-supported study looking at the ones which RU-OK? (a group who work with under 18's whose lives are affected by substance misuse in Brighton and Hove) know are the most prevalent in Brighton and Hove. We conclude the unit by looking at a simulated situation of risk and drugs in the form of a house party. This provides students with the opportunity to develop skills in assessing what makes a situation risky and to examine how to manage risk. We then apply this to another situation where poor drink and drug choices can lead to negative outcomes in rail safety so that students can see skills learnt are transferable.

Extremism

Students at this age have generally developed a maturity to be able to discuss topics of this nature. They are also at risk of being coerced if they are underprepared. It is vital that students understand the warning signs and what to do if they find themselves in situations in real life or on-line where they are being challenged into thinking or behaving in a certain way.

This unit enables students to consider how and when people become exposed to extreme views and the possible consequences of this type of exposure. It enables dialogue about how and why people can become so lost in a political cause and how radical views are then supposedly justified. Danger signs are also discussed and mechanisms where concerns can be shared with appropriate people are made available.

We explore the key concepts around understanding and preventing extremism. Students examine perceptions, views, values and opinions through a series of case studies. We look at how our identity is affected by a range of factors including the media and how social media can also distort situations or issues, can narrow understanding and appear to validate these narrow views.

Students learn to recognise peer pressure and look at strategies to manage it. We recognise 'group think' (where the cohesion of the group becomes more important than the choices or actions of the group) and develop strategies for managing it; noting the difference between friendship groups and gangs, and exploring strategies for managing pressure to join a particular group or gang, plus how to access appropriate support. The focus is on recognising when others are using manipulation, persuasion or coercion and how to respond. We want students to think critically about extremism

and intolerance in whatever form (including religious, racist and political extremism, the concept of 'shame' and 'honour based' violence) and to recognise the shared responsibility to protect the community from violent extremism and how to respond to anything that causes anxiety or concern.

Body Image

This unit is timed to build on previous units around self-esteem and mental health issues. Challenging the stereotypes and unrealistic views of body image for both males and females at this influential age is important, especially as this coincides with an increased on-line presence.

This topic encourages students to think about the societal influences on body image and the dangers that come from the messages that young people are bombarded with. It talks about the dangers of digital manipulation and how images today are unrealistic and propel people onto dangerous roads as they try to look like their idols. This unit is very important as it encourages young people to question the 'norms' in their world and think about their own self-esteem and the influences that undermine their confidence.

Students explore what body image is, how social media can impact on it and identify ways to reduce stress or anxiety caused by online pressure and to recognise the impact of social media on body image. We examine who to ask for advice and where to look for guidance on body image and online stress. We practice techniques for minimising stress that may arise from a negative perception of our body image influenced by social media. Students consider the distortion and lies of the media and focus on air-brushing and social media filters where we examine what is real and fake. From here we use resources from the disfigurement organisation Changing Faces where we explore disfigurement and societal reactions to it. Practical advice is given for meeting someone with a disfigurement and also advice for being disfigurement confident. This tracks back to previous work on self-esteem and we use disfigurement case studies such as that of Katy Piper and the character in Face by Benjamin Zephaniah to establish whether high self-esteem is linked to 'perfect' body image. Students consider the idea of self-confidence as they move through puberty and experience physical changes.

Bereavement

This is a very exciting and cutting edge project and we are a pioneer school for this area in Brighton and Hove. We are working with Project Eileen, a local based charity who focus on talking and dealing with bereavement and death. The aim is for students to understand why people die and to be able to discuss death in an open way. We use a distancing technique, the issues focus on a group of teenagers in a play format which de-personalizes the topic. The aim is to understand how we talk about death in our society, both now and in the past, and to explore how various cultures deal with death. Students consider which of these would be beneficial to adopt today in our society. Through the play students understand what grief is and the positive and negative ways it can be expressed and therefore to assess the impact of mental health. This should help them to understand how to cope with their own grief and to help others with theirs. As the students experience the sensitively handled death in the play they explore and begin to understand the reasons for having a funeral and the ways different people choose to say goodbye to a loved one who has died; and to understand how to memorialise someone who has died.

This unit deals with loss and anticipated loss so that the students understand what information a young

person needs to know to help them deal with the prospect of someone close to them dying. Each lesson concludes with a plenary designed to lighten the mood away from these heavier topics and students are warned of the lessons prior to the unit .