

## RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUAL HEALTH CURRICULUM IN ACTION

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**Introduction:** The **SHine SA Relationships and Sexual Health** Years 8-10 curriculum was initially offered to 15 secondary schools in South Australia in 2003 as part of pilot project. Subsequently, the curriculum has been continuously evaluated and refined annually to ensure content is realistic, relevant and engaging to young people. The curriculum is now implemented in 94% of SA government secondary component schools, as well as in a number of schools in the non-government sector.

**Methods:** SHine SA empowers and enables teachers in schools to provide relevant learning opportunities for their students in the area of relationships and sexual health (R&SH) with professional development, curriculum, resources and ongoing personnel support. Teachers in schools are best placed to deliver R&SH curriculum as they have established, ongoing and trusting relationships with their students and families and understand their students' particular needs. The content of the curriculum and the methodologies employed are informed by teacher, student and parent feedback and has been clearly linked to the mandated frameworks of *The Australian Curriculum* and, within SA, the *Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum*.

This presentation will illustrate how topics such as respectful relationships, gender, power and sexualised imagery in popular media are introduced and revisited each year. This scaffolding allows for students to bring different experiences and degrees of readiness to engage with the content while building on prior knowledge. The skills and knowledge acquired will effectively equip these young people to participate in respectful and healthy relationships, maintain positive sexual health, and to navigate an increasing sexualised world.

**Conclusion:** The success of the SHine SA curriculum is based on best practice, critical review processes and school based support. 93% of secondary students surveyed in 2015 identified that the course would be useful to them now or in the future.

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