

Changes in health and sexuality

- Most young people now look for information online, and this includes information about health and about sexuality.
- Pornography has become increasingly accessible and can be considered a significant cultural influence globally.
- Social media, internet sites with sexual content, and sexual bullying via instant messaging and apps are new issues that need consideration.

Will our culture, religious beliefs, and values be respected?

Schools aim to acknowledge and respect differences in culture and religion as part of being an inclusive community. If you are concerned about sexuality education, it is important to talk to your school first.

Does my child need to attend sexuality education?

You can write to your school's principal and request that your child is excluded from any part of the sexuality education programme. It is important, though, that you have a good understanding of what will be taught and why, so talk to your child's teacher first.

Are teachers trained for this work?

Your child's teacher will be qualified and registered. Secondary health teachers will have had specialised professional development in this area. Primary teachers may have received specialist professional development in sexuality education as part of their training, or attended courses and workshops in this area during the school year. Both primary and secondary teachers may work with outside presenters to deliver parts of their programme.

Where can I find information if I have more questions?

The first people to ask are your child's teachers. They should be able to answer most of your questions.

You can find out more about sexuality education by visiting:

parents.education.govt.nz

Children's confidence and knowledge in sexuality education are built when parents, whānau, family members, and schools work together in partnership.



SEXUALITY EDUCATION

Information for parents, families, and whānau



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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
TE TĀHUHU O TE MĀTAURANGA

You may be interested in how sexuality education is taught in New Zealand, how you can support your child's learning, and how you can have your say.

This pamphlet summarises the key points about current sexuality education. If you want to know more you can talk to your child's teachers or visit the link on the back page.

What is sexuality education?

Sexuality education is part of the health and physical education area of *The New Zealand Curriculum*, and sits within the broader area of relationship education.

In sexuality education children and young people learn about themselves and develop knowledge and skills about acting in positive and respectful ways with others.

Effective sexuality education takes a positive view of sexual development as a natural part of growing up. It is vital to the overall well-being of young people.

In New Zealand health and physical education is compulsory in years 1-10 and can be taken as an option in years 11-13 with NCEA achievement standards.

What is the sexuality education guide?

Schools may use the sexuality education guide to help them plan and develop their programmes. The guide has been updated to take account of new research and reflect social changes in the last decade.

What will my child learn?

The kinds of things your child will learn in sexuality education will be appropriate for her or his age. What children learn at each level is guided by the national curriculum, but individual schools and communities decide how this will be taught.

At primary school children are likely to learn about:

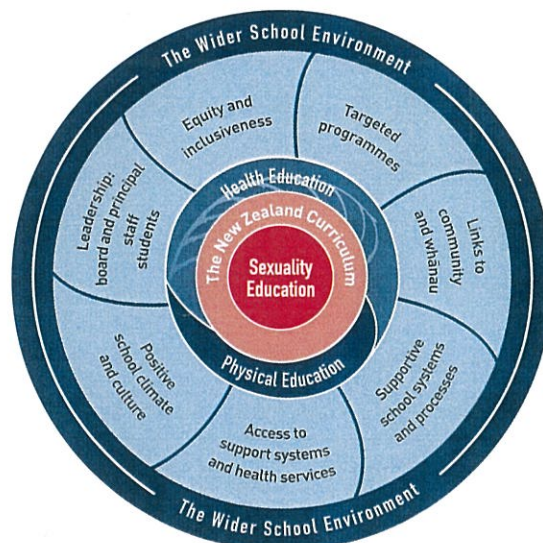
- friendships
- different kinds of families
- respect for each other and people who are different from them.

In the later years of primary they may also learn about:

- puberty
- body development and image
- human reproduction
- risks and issues that can arise online and when using social media.

At secondary school young people are likely to learn about:

- positive and supportive intimate relationships
- contraception
- managing their health
- the influence that society has on how we view things like gender and sexuality.

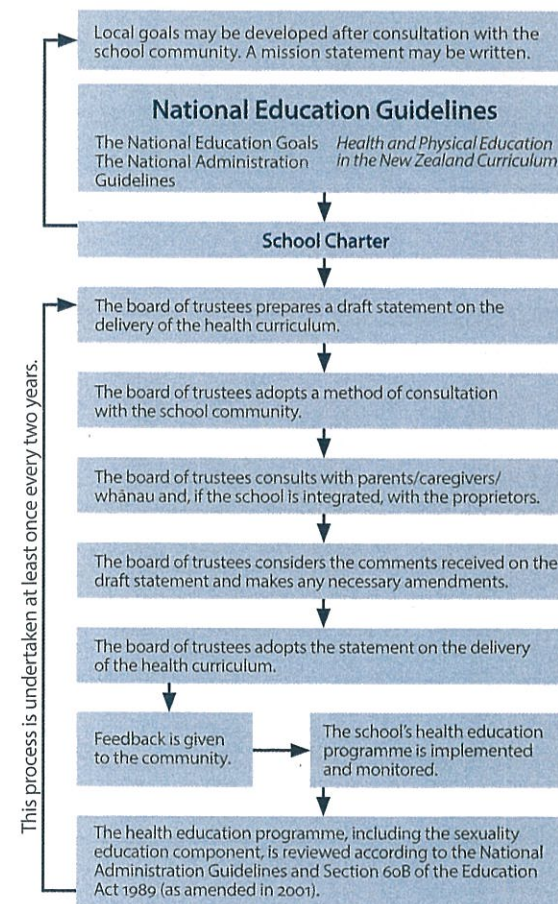


This diagram shows that sexuality education is part of the curriculum, and is also part of the wider life of every school.

Do schools have to consult with parents?

Boards of trustees must consult with school communities at least once every two years on their draft health curriculum. This may include how the school will implement health education, including sexuality education. Remember, this is your chance to ask questions, share your ideas, and express your views about what you would like to see happen in this part of the curriculum.

After community consultation the school's board will approve how the health curriculum is delivered. After this the school does not need to seek parents' permission for their children to take part in any part of the health education programme.



Legally, schools must comply with the National Education Guidelines. Under the guidelines boards of trustees must provide a safe physical and emotional environment for all students.