

# Sex, Sexuality, and boys' schools

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# Casual Sexism

- “You throw like a girl”
- Boys don’t read and girls don’t do math
- Female teachers referred to as “Miss” (Male teachers referred to as “Sir”)
- Only female teachers in the primary grades
- Assumption that boys will be interested in competitive sports
- Colours limited to certain sexes
- Misogyny and misandry
- Conflation of sex and gender

# Headlines (all in the past year)

- Teacher asked students to complete ‘survey’ of their sex lives and fetishes (Australia)
- High school sex video shocks Durban school (South Africa)
- Sexual abuse of students by teachers, coaches an “epidemic” (USA)
- High school gym teacher jailed for two year relationship with male student (Canada)
- Figures reveal scale of ‘sexual misconduct’ in schools by children as young as five (UK)

# Adolescent Sexual Behavior

- High school students in 2013
  - 47% have had sexual intercourse
  - 41% did not use a condom the last time, and 14% used no form of birth control
  - 15% had sex with 4+ people during their life
- Sexual risk behaviors
  - 24.5% used drugs or drank before last sexual intercourse
  - 10.5 % of high school girls report being raped (but 50%+ of sexual assaults go unreported and 80% of rapes are between individuals who are known to each other) – UK has PSA entitled “This is ABUSE” for teen rape prevention, Australia has “Let’s Stop it at the Start”

# The Problem

- Culture of Silence about Sexuality
  - Adults not comfortable in discussing the subject
  - Students do not know how to talk about sex, sexual expression or sexuality
- Double Standard
  - Behavior, dress, responsibility, sexual behavior
- Difference in emotional expression
  - Male – fight or flight, stress leads to action
  - Female – tend and befriend, stress leads to shutting down

# Source of Misinformation

- Internet
  - Pornography – evidence that this is leading to lack of sexual competency in young men – increase in rape?
  - Dating sites have been linked to an increase in STDs
- Video games and movies
  - Many depict women as sexual objects and the targets of violent attacks
- Lives of media celebrities – sports figures, movie stars, cybercelebrities
  - Temporary nature of relationships is standard

# Why comprehensive sex and sexuality education is essential

- Growing numbers of sexual predators in schools
  - Students are predators of other students
  - Some bullying is sexually based
- Increasing rate of sexual attacks both in and out of school, by students and on students
- Serious lack of knowledge and understanding of sex, sexual behavior and emotions, and the effect of sexual activity on boys and girls
- Concerns about non-binary, gender nonconforming, homosexual, and transsexual individuals

# Comprehensive Sexuality Education

- School needs to agree on what approach should be used that is consistent with mission and culture of school
  - Include students as well as parents and other stakeholders in determination of scope of course
- Basic biology – this should simply be included in the curriculum wherever it naturally fits
- Sex Ed Class – ages 9-11 (or at school entry)
  - Presentation of normal sexual development in both males and females, including conception, pregnancy, contraception, menarche, and menopause
  - Discussion of emotions, relationships, love, marriage, divorce, variations of sexuality, respect for others, sex in social media
  - Good role models by staff of respect, cooperation and equal treatment

# Atmosphere of Healthy Sexuality

- Discussion of sexual expression and sexuality in all aspects of the school
  - Students need to know that there are differences in beliefs about sexual expression, staff should be allowed to express their beliefs within reason
  - Abstinence education does **NOT** work
- All students need to be vaccinated against HPV by age 12, and know why
- Boys need to have the opportunity to work with girls on a regular basis in a non-graded, non-competitive environment - this is essential!

# How Prepared is Your School?

- Can you describe or discuss basic normal bodily functions such as digestion, elimination, metabolism, awareness of sensations
  - How about reproduction, contraception, STDs,
  - Is there someone in the school who is responsible for making sure students learn this information
- Is there someone in the school responsible for the emotional health of students
  - Would a student feel comfortable sharing information about his sexuality with that individual?
- Is there a sense of community and belongingness that encourages everyone to be a part of the school life?

# School Policy

- The school has a comprehensive sexuality program which includes:
- A basic sex education program
- Educating students on the subject of sexting and other display of sexually explicit materials on social media
- A stated policy for students who are cissexual, transsexual, homosexual, non-binary, or have parents who fall in these categories
- A procedure for dealing with staff and students who may have PTSD or other psychological issues as the result of sexual battery
- Providing safe spaces or appropriate assistance for students who feel threatened by staff or other students

# Conclusion

- Sources for information
  - [www.Bedsider.org](http://www.Bedsider.org)
  - [www.StayTeen.org](http://www.StayTeen.org)
  - [www.plannedparenthood.org/teens](http://www.plannedparenthood.org/teens)
  - [www.sexetc.org](http://www.sexetc.org)
  - [www.scarleteen.com](http://www.scarleteen.com)
  - [www.ashasexualhealth.org](http://www.ashasexualhealth.org)
  - [www.iwannaknow.org](http://www.iwannaknow.org)
  
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