

Template 1: Letter to Government Representatives

Your Name

123 Your Street
Your City, ST 12345
(123) 456-7890
no_reply@example.com

4th September 20XX

The Honourable Jane Doe

Senate/House Building Name
123 Address St
Anytown, ST 12345

RE: National Comprehensive Sexuality Education Curriculum

Dear Representative/Congresswoman/Senator/MP Doe,

I hope this letter finds you well. My name is _____ and I am a student in **[your school], [your city]**. I am writing to you concerning the lack of comprehensive sexuality education in our National Educational Curriculum.

According to UNESCO, sexuality education is important because "it equips children and young people with knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will empower them to: realise their health, well-being and dignity; develop respectful social and sexual relationships; consider how their choices affect their own well-being and that of others; and, understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives".

At the present time, our national legal framework does not require schools to teach sexuality education and, those rare schools that do, only target older students. Despite our country's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals and the Montevideo Consensus **[insert agreements that your country is a part of]**, there is a visible neglect in this particular area. Implementing a national Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) curriculum would be beneficial to students of all ages, as it is very hard to prevent sexual assault if young people do not properly understand consent and the law. Moreover, I have noticed that teenage pregnancies have increased exponentially in my neighbourhood, and upon speaking to the girls, the majority expressed that these were unwanted pregnancies due to the wrongful use or lack of contraception.

The cultural climate in **[country]** right now does not allow us to speak freely about the topics of sexuality and reproductive health as these are inevitably interlinked with religion. As a consequence, many young adults cannot discuss these important topics with their parents, their community leaders or their school, which results in them acquiring information from friends or the Internet, which are often flawed and misleading sources. Although many opponents claim that young people will become sexually active earlier in life if they receive

sex education, research shared by UNESCO has proven that this is a myth. In fact, young adults who receive sexuality education tend to start their sexual lives later.

Therefore, I would like to call for your support as **[Senator/MP/Representative]** to bring up this issue amongst your peers so that we can reform the National Curriculum and include a mandatory Comprehensive Sexuality Education section for all schools and throughout different age groups. In order to provide some support, I have attached a copy of the International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education published by UNESCO in 2018, which can serve as a reference for how to reform the curriculum.

I have mobilised several members of our constituency, including teachers from two different school boards, who want to participate in this campaign for better sex education and who classified this as a key issue in their voting preferences for next year's election.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Template 2: Conversation starters at school

As mentioned in the handbook, casual conversations at school can be a great opportunity to spark discussions about CSE-related topics like gender norms, LGBTQ+ positivity and sexual health misinformation. We've gathered below a few common scenarios that you may face and how you could respond to them to stir the conversation into a productive outcome.

1. If you hear 'guy talk' or 'locker room talk'

As a society we have normalised many sexist behaviours such as "guy talk", which we often associate with demeaning/objectifying comments about women. If you witness it happening, whether you're a guy or a girl, shut it down immediately. The sooner the better, don't think about it twice. You can say something as simple as **"hey, that's not cool"** or, if subtle comments don't work, you can explain to them why it's wrong to talk about women that way, that it arises from a sexist and patriarchal attitude. You can also remind them that women that they love may also be subject to these degrading comments coming from other men.

Suggesting a private chat with the main actor can also work- often this demeaning talk occurs in group contexts to reaffirm a position of masculinity or with the intention of making others laugh. You can say something along the lines of: **"Hey, what you said the other day about girls made me really uncomfortable. Do you realise how offensive it was?"** When you remove them from their context, they're vulnerable and have no one to support them, which may help to make it more clear to them why they were wrong to say what they said. If the person continues to make sexist comments you should report them to a teacher or a school authority you trust.

These conversations are a good opportunity to talk about the different forms that gender-based violence can take, sexist language/jokes can be a form of verbal abuse that must be taken seriously (**Ref to: Key Concept 3.3 Gender-based Violence**)

2. If you hear misinformation about sex

The reason why young people are often encouraged to talk to their parents about sex is because when they don't they usually turn to their friends who are often as confused or misinformed as themselves. If you hear that a friend is spreading misinformation about sex (e.g. that you can't get pregnant if you have sex during your period), gather evidence and kindly dispel what they're trying to say. Also make yourself available to answer questions if your friends still seem confused - you can then get information from your IPPF Member Association or reliable sources such as UNESCO. It also makes for a great opportunity to get support for a CSE school group!

"Actually, that's a common misconception, a woman can get pregnant if she has sex during her period. Sperm can live up to 5 days in a woman's body under the right conditions, and some women ovulate earlier than others. Did you guys know that? I didn't until recently"

3. If you see someone being peer-pressured into having sex

Support the person who's being pressured by telling the other people to stop or by deterring the subject. If you feel like it's worthwhile, try to challenge the group's assumptions about sex by asking questions. **"Why should someone have sex just because everyone else is doing it?" or "Stop using sex as a way to reaffirm your masculinity, it's toxic and unnecessary. Everyone should start their sex lives whenever they want, not when their friends tell them to".**

Template 3 : Quiz

Multiple-choice questions:

1. How long can sperm live in a woman's body?
 - A. 8 hours
 - B. 2 days
 - C. 5 days
 - D. 8 days

2. Which of these STIs (sexually transmitted infection) is curable?
 - A. Gonorrhoea
 - B. Hepatitis B
 - C. HIV
 - D. Herpes

3. The part of the uterus that opens into the vagina is the...
 - A. Fallopian tube
 - B. Ovary
 - C. Cervix
 - D. Corpus

4. Sperm travel from the epididymis to the...
 - A. Urethra
 - B. Vas deferens
 - C. Seminal vesicle
 - D. Penis

5. What is a dental dam and what is it used for?
 - A. It's a synonym for the contraceptive pill
 - B. It's a sex toy
 - C. It's a very thin piece of latex or polyurethane, typically 15cm by 15cm, which is used to cover the genitals during oral sex and anal oral sex
 - D. It's a synonym for dental floss

6. Which of the following is not an STI?
 - A. Herpes
 - B. Bacterial vaginosis
 - C. Chlamydia
 - D. Hepatitis B

7. If a man was having sex and the condom split, what should he do?
 - A. Nothing
 - B. Find out about emergency contraception if his partner is a woman
 - C. Go to a clinic, get tested for STIs, encourage his partner to do the same and find out about emergency contraception if his partner is a woman

True or false:

8. HIV can be transmitted through saliva.
9. You can catch an STI from a toilet seat.
10. If a guy pulls out before he ejaculates in a woman, she can still get pregnant.
11. Once you have had an STI and have been treated, you can't get it again.

12. Men have less sexual control than women, and experience sexual desire more strongly than women.
13. You can re-use a condom if you wash it out.
14. The patch/IUD/pill protects me from all STIs.
15. You can't get pregnant the first time you have sex.
16. Baby oil and vaseline are not good to use as lubricants with condoms.
17. Girls can't get pregnant if they have sex before getting their first period.
18. It is ok to have sex with someone who is asleep.
19. Lesbians can't get HIV.
20. Women don't masturbate.

Answers

1. C - 5 days¹ - "a woman's cervical fluid provides the sperm with the nutrients they need to survive during their journey to the ovum. The typical lifespan of a sperm in a woman's body is three days, but in the right conditions sperm can live up to five days" (Kindara, 2013)
2. A - Gonorrhoea - "Yes, gonorrhoea can be cured with the right treatment. It is important that you take all of the medication your doctor prescribes to cure your infection. Medication for gonorrhoea should not be shared with anyone. Although medication will stop the infection, it will not undo any permanent damage caused by the disease." (CDC, 2017). Although the symptoms associated with herpes, Hepatitis B, and HIV can be reduced to the point that they are undetectable, they will remain present in your body.²
3. C - the cervix is the narrow neck-like passage forming the lower end of the uterus.
4. B - the vas deferens is the duct which conveys sperm from the testicle to the urethra.
5. C - And they come in different flavours! Although they're not that easy to find at pharmacies, you can make one yourself by carefully cutting a condom, here's how to do it: <https://www.cdc.gov/condomeffectiveness/Dental-dam-use.html>
6. B - Bacterial vaginosis is a condition that happens when there is too much of certain bacteria in the vagina. This changes the normal balance of bacteria in the vagina. Although BV is most common amongst sexually active women, it is not considered to be an STI. However, it can increase your chance of getting one, so if you have any of the following symptoms, go see your doctor³:
 1. A thing white or grey vaginal discharge
 2. Pain, itching, or burning in the vagina
 3. A strong fish-like odour, especially after sex
 4. Burning when urinating
 5. Itching around the outside of the vagina
7. C - It is very important to get checked for STIs if a condom breaks and to urge your partner to do so. You must also remember to support your partner if they're a woman, it's not just her responsibility.
8. False - HIV is not spread through saliva, only through blood or body fluids. However, if both partners have sores or bleeding gums, blood from the HIV-positive partner may get into the bloodstream of the HIV-negative partner while kissing. However, HIV cannot be transmitted through air or water, saliva, sweat, tears, insects, pets or by sharing toilets, food, or drinks.⁴
9. False - You can't catch an STI from sitting on a toilet seat. Sexually transmitted infections are passed on through unprotected vaginal, anal or oral sex, or sharing sex toys. The only way to protect against STIs is to use a condom/dental dam every time you have sex.
10. True - Pulling out before ejaculation will not stop a woman from getting pregnant. A woman can get pregnant if a man doesn't ejaculate in her vagina, as sperm leak out of the penis before ejaculation. Men cannot stop sperm leaking from their penis, no matter how careful they are. The only way to avoid pregnancy is to use contraception.

¹ <https://www.kindara.com/blog/how-many-days-can-sperm-live-in-a-womans-body>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/std/gonorrhea/stdfact-gonorrhea.htm>

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/std/bv/stdfact-bacterial-vaginosis.htm>

⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/transmission.html>

11. False - You can get an STI you've been treated for again if you don't take the necessary precautions.
12. False - Both men and women are biologically designed to experience desire. Individuals may differ in the level of sexual desire they feel, but there is no evidence to show that there is any difference between men and women. Similarly, both men and women are capable of sexual control and are fully responsible for their choices and actions.
13. False - You should never use a condom more than once. It won't work properly. You need to use a new condom every time you have sex to protect against STIs and pregnancy. Make sure to use good quality condoms.
14. False. Birth control pills, patches and IUDs do not protect from STIs, they are intended to protect from unwanted pregnancy only. You need to take other measures to protect yourself from STIs, such as using a male or female condom.
15. False - A girl can get pregnant the first time she has sex. And a boy can get a girl pregnant the first time he has sex. It only takes one sperm to meet an egg, and then can happen from a single instance of unprotected sex. To avoid pregnancy, always use contraception correctly, and use a condom to protect against STIs.
16. True - Oil-based lubricants (like baby oil, vaseline and hand creams) can damage and tear condoms, and allow STIs to pass through. Only water-based lubricants should be used with condoms. Alternatively plain water is safe to use as lubrication too.
17. False - A girl can ovulate before having her first period which puts her at risk of pregnancy.
18. False - If a person is asleep, legally they are unable to give consent to sex. Having non-consensual sex with a person is rape - a criminal offence.
- 19 - False - Lesbians can get HIV (or any other STI) just like anyone else. Transmission of HIV can happen during sexual activity through exchange of female-female bodily fluids, or by infected needles or blood transfusions.
- 20 - False - Some women masturbate and some don't. Whatever you decide is fine. There's nothing wrong with masturbating, and it won't harm your health. Some people (women and men) find that it helps them to know what is pleasurable when it comes to sex.

Template 4: Letter to Headteacher

Your Name

123 Your Street
Your City, ST 12345
(123) 456-7890
no_reply@example.com

4th September 20XX

Jane Doe

Headteacher/Principal, School Name
123 Address St
Anytown, ST 12345

Dear Ms. Doe,

I hope this letter finds you well. My name is _____ and I am currently in **[your grade]** in Mr/Ms. _____ 's class. I am writing to you in regards to our sexuality education curriculum.

According to UNESCO, sexuality education is important because "it equips children and young people with knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will empower them to: realise their health, well-being and dignity; develop respectful social and sexual relationships; consider how their choices affect their own well-being and that of others; and, understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives".

Although our school provides "Life Skills" classes once a term, there is very little focus on sexual and reproductive health topics. Moreover, when we did discuss said topics, there was a strong focus on abstinence even though several of my classmates are already sexually active. There was no focus on the importance of contraception to prevent pregnancy and STIs or how to identify different types of sexual assault, such as the non-consensual sharing of intimate photos, which has been a huge issue in our high school in the past year **[in this area you can add specific examples based on your context using national data]**.

Upon consulting with my classmates and several of their parents, we have gathered signatures and formed a petition to expand the scope and scale of our sexuality education curriculum (please find the document attached). We have made an extensive analysis of the current curriculum according to UNESCO's newly updated guidelines and have proposed amendments as well as the creation of some new points. As leader of this project, I am hoping for a chance to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss said changes at length.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Template 5: Conversation starters with parents

Talking to your parents about sex is almost always a great idea. They will probably really appreciate you being open with them. They may even be relieved that you brought it up! Your parents can probably give you insight on whether you should start or continue a sexual relationship, they can suggest different forms of contraception based on their experience or provide support during difficult situations like an unwanted pregnancy, an STI, or sexual assault.

Here are some conversation starters you could get inspiration from:

- Did you have a boyfriend when you were in high school?
- Some of my friends are having sex. What do you think about that?
- What was it like to go out with girls when you were a teenager?
- My school is starting an LGBTQ+ group for allies and members, do you mind if I join it?
- A friend of mine recently started the pill but she says it's made her depressed, I don't understand how that works. Have you ever taken it?
- Is there a right age to start your sexual life? How did you know when you were ready?
- A friend of mine wants to start his sexual life but he feels like he can't talk to his parents about it because they have scolded him every time he's brought it up. Why do you think they act this way?
- How come the people in the movie didn't use protection?
- Dad, how did you first learn about sex? Did your parents give you the talk?
- I've heard that the IUD can be great for reducing cramps as well as protecting from pregnancy. Have you ever tried it?
- I've been recently thinking about abortion and I think I am pro-choice. I guess I feel like I'm the only one who should make decisions about my own body. What do you think, dad?
- A friend of mine was having sex and the condom broke. What should she do?
- Mom, I wanted to ask you about something... It's not that I am having sex, but I am curious about different forms of contraception. And I figured you would prefer for me to ask you instead of talking to my friends.

However, if you're not comfortable talking to your parents about sex, there are other people you can open up to: a sibling, a cousin, a counsellor or anyone older who you trust. If no one in particular comes to mind, visit your national Member Association or any sexual health clinic in the area, these places are there to support you without judgement.