

Positive Choices Year 8 Student Needs Report

Introduction

As part of the Positive Choices programme being implemented in your school in the 2018/19 school year, all year-8 students were asked to complete a survey in summer 2018 to assess student need in relation to school based relationships and sex education (RSE).

Students were asked questions about:

- how well RSE topics had been covered by their school;
- the topics they want to learn about in RSE in year 9;
- their knowledge of conception, contraception and STIs;
- their awareness of where to seek help and advice about contraception, STIs and abuse;
- parent/carer-child communication;
- the prevalence of sending and receiving naked and semi-naked pictures; and
- the prevalence of sexual harassment at school.

This report summarises student responses to the survey and outlines how the data should be used to tailor the Positive Choices programme to the specific needs of students at your school. The report should be read in conjunction with the guidance on the 'student needs survey' found in the Positive Choices manual.

The school should use the data presented in this report to:

- select the two additional 'add on' curriculum lessons
- identify the most important messages to promote in social marketing campaigns;
- inform the kind of information included in parent newsletters; and
- feed into the review of school sexual health services.

The data can also be used to inform any other initiatives your school is planning.

1. Who completed the survey?

Of 241* year-8 students on the school roll, a total of 212 (88%) completed the survey. Of those who completed the survey, 47% were male and 53% were female.

Across all six pilot schools a total of 1,137 surveys were completed. The table below suggests that your school was similar to the other pilot schools in terms of gender balance. Compared to the overall sample it is slightly more ethnically diverse a little less diverse in terms of sexuality.

	Your school		Average for all six pilot schools	
	n	%	n	%
Gender				
Male	99	46.7	576	50.7
Female	112	52.8	551	48.5
Prefer not to say	0	0%	7	0.6
Did not answer	1	0.5	3	0.3
Total	212	100	1,137	100
Ethnicity	n	%	n	%
White	107	50.5	607	53.4
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	44	20.8	131	11.5
Asian or Asian British	9	4.2	242	21.3
Black African, Black Caribbean or Black British	38	17.9	109	9.6
Any other ethnic group	13	6.1	40	3.5
Did not answer	1	0.5	8	0.7
Total	212	100	1,137	100
Sexuality	n	%	n	%
Straight or heterosexual	192	90.6	1,005	88.4
Gay or lesbian	0	0%	8	0.7
Bisexual	3	1.4	20	1.8
Other	1	0.5	12	1.1
Unsure/questioning	12	5.7	38	3.3
Prefer not to say	3	1.4	34	3
Did not answer	1	0.5	20	1.8
Total	212	100	1137	100

*Surveys returned from students who were absent on the survey dates have not been included in the needs data but will be included in the trial data.

2. What do students think of the relationships and sex education received at school?

We asked students how well various topics had been covered by their schools. In general most year-8 students agreed that most topics had been covered at least ‘okay’, ‘well’ or ‘very well’ by their school. The topics students were most satisfied with have been highlighted in green in the table below. You may, though, want to contrast the general satisfaction with (for instance) teaching about conception, with answers to some of the knowledge questions below.

The topics most frequently reported as being ‘not covered at all’ or covered ‘not well’ or ‘not well at all’ were: how to use a condom; what types of sexual activity are safest; sexual pleasure; masturbation; what the law says about pornography; and FGM. These are highlighted in amber in the table below. You may also want to discuss where there are marked gender differences in responses to the questions.

This information might be useful when considering what to include in parent newsletters or where to focus the classroom curriculum and student-led social marketing campaigns.

In your school, how well do you think the following topics have been covered?						
	Girls		Boys		All students	
	N	%	n	%	N	%
How the body changes in puberty	N	%	n	%	N	%
Not covered	8	7.3	2	2.1	10	4.8
Okay, well or very well	88	80	89	91.8	178	85.6
Not well or not well at all	14	12.7	6	6.2	20	9.6
Total	110	100	97	100	208	100
The correct names for the different parts of the genitalia/reproductive organs	N	%	n	%	N	%
Not covered	12	10.9	6	6.2	18	8.7
Okay, well or very well	77	70	84	87.5	161	77.8
Not well or not well at all	21	19.1	6	6.2	28	13.5
Total	110	100	96	100	207	100
Conception/how a woman becomes pregnant	N	%	n	%	N	%
Not covered	10	9	2	2	12	5.7
Okay, well or very well	85	76.6	88	89.8	174	82.9
Not well or not well at all	16	14.4	8	8.2	24	11.4
Total	111	100	98	100	210	100

	Girls		Boys		All students	
Contraception options/the different ways for you to protect yourself or a partner from getting pregnant	N	%	N	%	N	%
Not covered	19	17.1	7	7.2	26	12.4
Okay, well or very well	65	58.6	73	75.3	139	66.5
Not well or not well at all	27	24.3	17	17.5	44	21.1
Total	111	100	97	100	209	100
Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) (infections that are passed on through sexual activity)	N	%	n	%	N	%
Not covered	22	19.8	12	12.5	35	16.8
Okay, well or very well	51	45.9	64	66.7	115	55.3
Not well or not well at all	38	34.2	20	20.8	58	27.9
Total	111	100	96	100	208	100
How to use a condom	N	%	n	%	N	%
Not covered	47	44.3	28	29.2	76	37.4
Okay, well or very well	12	11.3	34	35.4	46	22.7
Not well or not well at all	47	44.3	34	35.4	81	39.9
Total	106	100	96	100	203	100
What types of sexual activity are safest	N	%	n	%	N	%
Not covered	41	37.6	28	28.9	69	33.3
Okay, well or very well	25	22.9	41	42.3	67	32.4
Not well or not well at all	43	39.4	28	28.9	71	34.3
Total	109	100	97	100	207	100
How to spot the signs of abuse in a relationship	N	%	n	%	N	%
Not covered	6	5.4	6	6.2	12	5.7
Okay, well or very well	95	85.6	83	85.6	179	85.6
Not well or not well at all	10	9	8	8.2	18	8.6
Total	111	100	97	100	209	100
Who to contact if you have experienced abuse	N	%	n	%	N	%
Not covered	5	4.5	0	0	5	2.4
Okay, well or very well	91	82	85	88.5	177	85.1
Not well or not well at all	15	13.5	11	11.5	26	12.5
Total	111	100	96	100	208	100
Sexual consent	N	%	n	%	N	%
Not covered	5	4.5	3	3.2	8	3.9
Okay, well or very well	93	84.5	89	93.7	183	88.8
Not well or not well at all	12	10.9	3	3.2	15	7.3
Total	110	100	95	100	206	100

	Girls		Boys		All students	
Sexual pleasure	N	%	n	%	N	%
Not covered	42	38.5	21	21.9	63	30.6
Okay, well or very well	25	22.9	48	50	74	35.9
Not well or not well at all	42	38.5	27	28.1	69	33.5
Total	109	100	96	100	206	100
Masturbation	N	%	n	%	N	%
Not covered	49	45.8	27	28.1	76	37.3
Okay, well or very well	13	12.1	29	30.2	43	21.1
Not well or not well at all	45	42.1	40	41.7	85	41.7
Total	107	100	96	100	204	100
What the law says about pornography	N	%	n	%	n	%
Not covered	40	36.7	31	32.3	71	34.5
Okay, well or very well	34	31.2	40	41.7	75	36.4
Not well or not well at all	35	32.1	25	26	60	29.1
Total	109	100	96	100	206	100
What the law says about sharing naked photographs by phone or online	N	%	n	%	n	%
Not covered	11	10.1	10	10.3	21	10.1
Okay, well or very well	77	70.6	71	73.2	149	72
Not well or not well at all	21	19.3	16	16.5	37	17.9
Total	109	100	97	100	207	100
How to resist pressure or say 'no' to doing something sexual that you don't want to do	N	%	n	%	n	%
Not covered	10	9.1	8	8.3	18	8.7
Okay, well or very well	88	80	81	84.4	170	82.1
Not well or not well at all	12	10.9	7	7.3	19	9.2
Total	110	100	96	100	207	100
How the media affects how we think about our bodies	N	%	n	%	n	%
Not covered	22	20.2	16	16.7	38	18.4
Okay, well or very well	66	60.6	59	61.5	126	61.2
Not well or not well at all	21	19.3	21	21.9	42	20.4
Total	109	100	96	100	206	100
FGM/female genital mutilation/cutting	N	%	n	%	n	%
Not covered	42	38.9	27	28.4	69	33.8
Okay, well or very well	31	28.7	40	42.1	72	35.3
Not well or not well at all	35	32.4	28	29.5	63	30.9
Total	108	100	95	100	204	100

	Girls		Boys		All students	
What it means to be in love	N	%	n	%	n	%
Not covered	24	22	16	16.7	40	19.4
Okay, well or very well	53	48.6	63	65.6	117	56.8
Not well or not well at all	32	29.4	17	17.7	49	23.8
Total	109	100	96	100	206	100
How to manage conflict and differences of opinion in relationships	N	%	n	%	n	%
Not covered	19	17.4	14	14.4	33	15.9
Okay, well or very well	58	53.2	67	69.1	126	60.9
Not well or not well at all	32	29.4	16	16.5	48	23.2
Total	109	100	97	100	207	100
The options available if you or your partner become pregnant - including abortion	N	%	n	%	n	%
Not covered	43	39.4	27	28.1	70	34
Okay, well or very well	35	32.1	41	42.7	77	37.4
Not well or not well at all	31	28.4	28	29.2	59	28.6
Total	109	100	96	100	206	100
How to know if you are ready to be intimate or have sex with someone	N	%	n	%	n	%
Not covered	46	41.8	28	28.9	74	35.6
Okay, well or very well	35	31.8	46	47.4	82	39.4
Not well or not well at all	29	26.4	23	23.7	52	25
Total	110	100	97	100	208	100
Sexual and reproductive rights (for example, the right not to face discrimination based on sexual identity or the right to make your own decisions about your sexual health)	N	%	n	%	n	%
Not covered	23	21.1	11	11.3	34	16.4
Okay, well or very well	62	56.9	72	74.2	135	65.2
Not well or not well at all	24	22	14	14.4	38	18.4
Total	109	100	97	100%	207	100%

3. What do students want to learn about in RSE in year 9?

Broadly reflecting the topics that students highlighted as being least well covered in the by previous RSE, when students were asked what topics they wanted to learn about in year-9, they highlighted: how to use a condom; masturbation; sexually transmitted infections; how to know if you are ready to be intimate or have sex with someone; what types of sexual activity are safest; contraception options; and what the law says about pornography.

In the table below the topics students thought it would be most important to learn about in year 9 are ordered by priority from most frequently to least frequently selected. Using the guidance on the student needs survey and the curriculum framework table in the Positive Choices manual, you should use this information to select the two 'add on' curriculum topics for your school. You might also want to use this data when considering what to include in parent newsletters or the topics of student-led social marketing campaigns.

Which of the following topics do you think it would be <u>most</u> important to learn about in year 9?						
	Girls		Boys		All students	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
How to use a condom	46	41.4	59	61.5	105	50.5
Masturbation	33	29.7	47	49	81	38.9
Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) (infections that are passed on through sexual activity)	45	40.5	31	32.3	76	36.5
How to know if you are ready to be intimate or have sex with someone	47	42.3	24	25	72	34.6
What types of sexual activity are safest	43	38.7	26	27.1	69	33.2
Contraception options (the different ways for you to protect yourself or a partner from becoming pregnant)	38	34.2	19	19.8	57	27.4
What the law says about pornography	24	21.6	31	32.3	56	26.9
Sexual pleasure	16	14.4	34	35.4	50	24
	Girls		Boys		All students	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
The options available if you or your partner become pregnant - including abortion	29	26.1	21	21.9	50	24

What it means to be in love	29	26.1	19	19.8	48	23.1
How the body changes in puberty	19	17.1	27	28.1	46	22.1
How to resist pressure or say 'no' to doing something sexual that you don't want to do	20	18	19	19.8	39	18.8
How to spot the signs of abuse in a relationship	25	22.5	11	11.5	36	17.3
Sexual and reproductive rights (for example, the right not to face discrimination based on sexual identity or the right to make your own decisions about your sexual health)	21	18.9	14	14.6	35	16.8
Sexual consent	20	18	13	13.5	33	15.9
Conception/how a woman becomes pregnant	21	18.9	9	9.4	30	14.4
How the media affects how we think about our bodies	23	20.7	7	7.3	30	14.4
What the law says about sharing naked photographs by phone or online	12	10.8	13	13.5	26	12.5
FGM/female genital mutilation/cutting	10	9	13	13.5	23	11.1
Who to contact if you have experienced abuse	14	12.6	6	6.2	20	9.6
How to manage conflict and differences of opinion in relationships	12	10.8	5	5.2	17	8.2
The correct names for the different parts of the genitalia/reproductive organs	9	8.1	3	3.1	12	5.8

4. What do students at your school know about conception, contraception and STIs?

Students responded to a series of true or false questions about conception, contraception and STIs. The table below lists the number and percentage of students who answered these questions correctly. The level of student knowledge at your school was broadly comparable to the average for all six pilot schools. Students across the board demonstrated particularly low levels of knowledge in relation to: doctor-patient confidentiality in the case of pregnancy under the age of 16; the efficacy of withdrawal as a reliable method of contraception; and the utility of the IUD (copper coil) as a method of emergency contraception. These are highlighted in the table below. Students at your school demonstrated a higher than average knowledge of the ability of young people under the age of sixteen to access free condoms and contraception. You may also want to pay attention to any gender differences in this data.

	At your school						Average for all six pilot schools					
	Answered Correctly						Answered Correctly					
	Girls		Boys		All students		Girls		Boys		All students	
Are the following statements true or false?	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
A girl can get pregnant the first time she has sex with a boy (TRUE)	73	66.4	62	63.9	136	65.4	308	56.7	302	53.6	615	55.2
Oral sex tends to be less risky for catching STIs (sexually transmitted infections) (TRUE)	16	14.5	29	29.9	45	21.6	71	13.1	130	23.1	202	18.1
All infections caught from having sex can be cured with medical treatment (FALSE)	56	50.5	52	54.2	109	52.4	196	36.2	223	39.8	421	37.9
If someone has an STI, they may not show any signs of it (TRUE)	55	50.9	56	58.9	112	54.9	220	40.8	246	43.9	470	42.4

If a girl under 16 tells a doctor she may be pregnant, legally the doctor must inform her parents (FALSE)	12	10.9	6	6.3	18	8.7	37	6.8	37	6.6	75	6.8
A girl can get pregnant if she has sex standing up with a boy (TRUE)	55	50.5	57	60	113	55.1	204	37.8	245	43.6	452	40.7
	At your school						Average for all six pilot schools					
	Answered Correctly						Answered Correctly					
	Girls		Boys		All students		Girls		Boys		All students	
A girl cannot get pregnant if the boy withdraws his penis from her vagina before ejaculation (coming) (FALSE)	11	9.9	12	12.5	23	11.1	54	10	67	11.9	121	10.9
Wearing two condoms is better protection against STIs and unplanned pregnancy than one (FALSE)	29	26.1	33	35.1	62	30.1	108	20	122	21.9	231	20.9
Young people under 16 can get free access to condoms and contraception from a sexual health clinic without their parents knowing (TRUE)	46	41.4	46	49.5	92	44.9	139	25.8	144	25.9	284	25.7

The IUD (copper coil) can be used as emergency contraception if inserted up to five days after having sex (TRUE)	7	6.4	6	6.6	13	6.4	34	6.3	51	9.2	87	7.9
If you need to use emergency contraception ('the morning after pill') to prevent pregnancy, it is most effective within 12 hours of unprotected sex (TRUE)	29	26.9	33	35.5	62	30.7	133	24.8	118	21.3	252	22.9

These data could be used to inform the focus of student-led social marketing campaigns and the content of parent newsletters. Your school, for example, may want to focus a campaign or newsletter item on reliable forms of contraception or the right of young people to access free, confidential medical advice providing they meet certain criteria.

5. How well do students feel they can communicate with parents and carers about personal matters?

Students were asked to indicate how easy they found it to talk to their male and female parents or carers about personal things. The table displays information for students who reported they found it 'quite easy' or 'very easy' to talk to a parent or carer about personal

Students answering 'quite easy' or 'very easy'													
	At your school						Average for all six pilot schools						
	Girls		Boys		All students		Girls		Boys		All students		
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
¹ Talking to a female parent or carer about personal things	97	88.2	87	90.6	185	89.4	442	81.5	461	81.7	907	81.5	
² Talking to a male parent or carer about personal things	64	64.6	74	80.4	139	72.4	271	54.9	405	75.4	678	65.4	
Talking to a female or male parent or carer about personal things	98	91.6	92	95.8	191	93.6	454	85.2	490	88.3	948	86.7	

For your school, the majority of students (94%) indicated that they had a parent or carer (female or male or both) with whom they found it 'quite easy' or 'very easy' to talk to about personal things. This was higher than the average for the whole sample of six pilot schools. Eighty eight percent of girls and 90% of boys who reported having a female parent or carer they live with or see regularly indicated that they found it 'quite easy' or 'very easy' to talk them about personal things. While 67% of girls and 72% of boys who reported having a male parent or carer they live with or see regularly indicated that they found it 'quite easy' or 'very easy' to talk to a parent or carer about personal things. These data broadly reflect that of other schools in the pilot.

These data could be considered when planning the content of parent newsletters. You may, for example, want to publish some of these data in the newsletter or consider including information that might prompt conversations between students and male parents or carers.

¹ Excludes students who reported not having a female carer they live with or see regularly.

² Excludes students who reported not having a male carer they live with or see regularly.

6. Do pupils know where to get help and advice about contraception, STIs and abuse?

We asked pupils if they knew where they could seek help and advice about contraception, STIs and abuse. The table below displays the responses for students answering 'yes' to these questions.

	Students answering 'yes'											
	At your school						Average for all six pilot schools					
	Girls		Boys		All students		Girls		Boys		All students	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Do you know where you could get medical advice from a trained health professional about contraception?	44	40.7	40	43.5	85	42.3	221	41.6	241	44.5	467	43.2
Do you know where you could get medical advice from a trained health professional about STIs (sexually transmitted infections)?	46	42.6	46	50.5	93	46.5	194	36.6	241	44.8	438	40.7
Do you know who you could speak to at your school if you were to experience unwanted sexual touching or sexual abuse?	60	55	58	63.7	118	58.7	340	64.3	328	61.2	674	62.8

Do you know who you could speak to at your school if you were to experience sexual harassment from another pupil?	59	54.6	58	63.7	118	59	366	68.9	337	62.4	708	65.6
Do you know who you could speak to at your school about contraception and sexual health?	53	49.5	48	52.2	102	51	242	46.1	240	44.6	487	45.4

Only 42% of students knew where they could get advice about contraception from a trained medical professional while only 47% knew where they could get advice from a trained medical professional about STIs. Around 50-60% of students knew to whom they could speak at their school about contraception and sexual health; if they experienced unwanted sexual touching or abuse; or sexual harassment at school. These data broadly reflect that across all pilot schools. The data could be used to lend support for the review of school-based and local sexual health services element of Positive Choices and could usefully be shared with staff and students carrying out the review.

7. How common is the sharing of naked or semi-naked pictures among students and sexual harassment at school?

We asked students if they had ever shared sexual images of themselves or received them from other people and if they had ever experienced sexual harassment at school before. The table below illustrates those responding ‘sometimes’ or ‘often’ to these questions.

	Students answering ‘sometimes’ or ‘often’											
	At your school						Average for all six pilot schools					
	Girls		Boys		All Students		Girls		Boys		All Students	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
I have shared with someone a naked or semi-naked image of myself	1	0.9	2	2.4	3	1.6	2	0.4	5	1	7	0.7
Someone has shared with me a naked or semi-naked image of themselves	4	3.7	6	7.3	10	5.2	27	5.1	24	4.8	52	5
I have experienced sexual harassment at school	4	3.7	0	0	4	2.1	12	2.3	3	0.6	15	1.4

Very few students at your school reported having sent naked or semi-naked pictures of themselves or receiving them from other people. Similarly, very few students reported having experienced sexual harassment at school. Rates were, however, marginally higher than the average for all the six pilot schools. From the evidence presented here, ‘sexting’ (sharing sexual images) is not common among year 8 pupils in this or all pilot schools. Sexual harassment rates are also low, although the data suggests that across the pilot schools girls are four times more likely to experience this than boys.