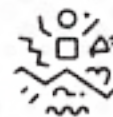




# CSE

## Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Booklet



RIGHT HERE  
RIGHT NOW

## Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) Booklet

This CSE booklet was developed by YUWA under Right Here Right Now Project. The booklet is based on International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education (ITGSE) and attempts to explain the eight key concepts and sub-topics under it in a simple, youth-friendly language. The book has been curated, written and designed by young people for young people.

### Author

Aastha Subedi  
Lirisha Tuladhar  
Manoj Kumar Panthi

### Illustrations

Sarin Bajracharya (comickaaji)

### Reviewed and coordinated by

Sijan Gelal  
Shreya Shrestha  
Bipana Shrestha

### Layout Designer

Saurav Thapa Shrestha

### Co-Designer

Sanskriti Pandey  
Pema Dolma Lama

Support for this project was provided on behalf of the Right Here Right Now Partnership. The partnership is funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

© Copyrights Reserved  
December 2023

---

### For further information please contact:



YUWA | Right Here Right Now Nepal Secretariat:  
88, Khursanitar Marga, Lazimpat-2, Bagmati Province Kathmandu, Nepal  
Tel: (+9771) 014519489 || P.O. Box 8973, NPC 593  
[www.yuwa.org.np](http://www.yuwa.org.np) || [www.rhrnnepal.org](http://www.rhrnnepal.org) || [info@yuwanepal.org](mailto:info@yuwanepal.org)

**Comprehensive  
Sexuality Education  
(CSE) Booklet**

# Acknowledgement

Welcome to the enlightening journey through the pages of this comic book on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE). In a world where open and informed conversations about sexuality are paramount, this comic serves as a creative medium to address essential aspects of sexual health, relationships, and personal well-being.

Through the artful combination of storytelling and visual elements, YUWA strives to present CSE in a thoughtful and inclusive manner. Our goal is to empower readers with accurate information, foster a sense of confidence in discussing sexuality, and promote a respectful and understanding approach to diverse perspectives.

As you engage with the characters and narratives within these pages, we hope you find a balance of entertainment and education. Our heartfelt thanks go out to everyone who contributed their expertise, passion, and creativity to make this project a reality, aiming to contribute positively to the ongoing conversation surrounding Comprehensive Sexuality Education. We extend our deepest appreciation to Right Here Right Now and YUWA for their constant support in bringing this book to reality. Additionally, we would also like to express our sincere gratitude to the National Health Education, Information and Communication Center, Family Planning Association of Nepal, Family Welfare Division, Visible Impact, SISO Nepal, YOSHAN, Dr Rajendra Bhadra, Dr Bhagwan Aryal, and all of whom played a crucial role in the review of this comic book on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE). The collaborative effort and dedication invested in this project reflect a shared commitment to promoting knowledge, understanding, and healthy discussions surrounding sexuality education.

Wishing you an informative and enjoyable journey through the world of CSE!

# List of acronyms

<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
<b>CEFM</b>	Child, Early, and Forced Marriage
<b>FGM</b>	Female Genital Mutilation
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>HPV</b>	Human Papilloma Virus
<b>ICT</b>	Innovation, Communication, and Technology
<b>LGBTQIA+</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual+
<b>MSM</b>	Men who have Sex with Men
<b>PLHIV</b>	People Living with HIV
<b>STDs</b>	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
<b>STIs</b>	Sexually Transmitted Infections
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization

# Defination and Terminology

**Sex** - Biological Sex, Organ, Genitals

**Gender** - refers to the range of characteristics which are socially constructed. This includes norms, behaviors and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl or boy, as well as relationships with each other. As a social construct, gender varies from society to society and can change over time.

**Gender identity** - means individual internal sense of their gender which may or may not correspond their biological sex as per the gender defined by the society

**Gender exprssion** - means the way they express and present themselves and the terminology they choose to describe themselves.

**Sex assigned at birth** - When an individual is assigned as male or female based on their genitila visible at birth. "Assigned male at birth" means when an infant is determined as a boy/male based on their genitals. "Assigned female at birth" means when an infant is determined as a girl/female based on their genitals.

**Transgender person** - People whose sex assigned at birth does not align or is different from their gender identity and expression ; Transgender women are women who were assigned male at birth; and Transgender men are men who were assigned female at birth.

**"Non-binary"** - should be understood as an umbrella term that encapsulates the diverse gender identities beyond the binary of male or female

**Sexual orientation** - Individual's sexual identity based on which gender they are sexually and romantically attracted to.

**Heterosexual / Straight** - People who are sexually and romantically attracted to persons of a different gender.

**Homosexual - Gay/Lesbian** - People who are sexually and romantically attracted to persons of the same gender.

**Bisexual** - People who are sexually and romantically attracted to persons of the same and a different gender.

**Pansexual** - People who are sexually and romantically attracted to persons of all genders.

**Asexual** - People who are not sexually and romantically attracted to anyone

**Intersex** is a umbrella term that describe variation of sex characteristics. Intersex people are born with sex characteristics (including genitals, gonads and chromosome patterns) that do not fit typical binary notions of male or female bodies. So far there are more than 40 sex variation among intersex people. For example, having both genital organs, having unclear genital organs, penis with uterus, vagina with prostate gland etc.

**Queer** is a umbrella term that describes socially marginalized sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics from the society.



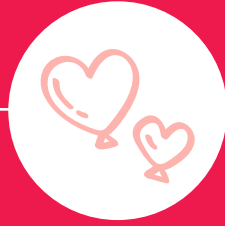


# Table of Contents

Key Concept 1	
<b>Relationship</b>	<b>1</b>
Key Concept 2	
<b>Values, Rights, Culture and Sexuality</b>	<b>9</b>
Key Concept 3	
<b>Understanding Gender</b>	<b>15</b>
Key Concept 4	
<b>Violence and Staying Safe</b>	<b>23</b>
Key Concept 5	
<b>Skills for Health and Well-being</b>	<b>31</b>
Key Concept 6	
<b>The Human Body and Development</b>	<b>41</b>
Key Concept 7	
<b>Sexuality and Sexual Behavior</b>	<b>49</b>
Key Concept 8	
<b>Sexual and Reproductive Health</b>	<b>55</b>



**A healthy relationship helps one to flourish and there is ample love, affection, mutual care, support, mutual respect, and understanding in the relationship.**



Key Concept 1

# Relationships



## 1.1 Families

Sudan was beaten by his father for being rude to his mother. He has still not been able to figure out what was wrong with his behavior. All his life, he has seen his father scolding his mother, beating her at times, and dismissing her opinions. Now let's dig deeper, this family consists of heterosexual partners and their children. Other families may have homosexual parents or single parents with their children. Some families may not have children at all and others child-headed. Family is the social unit and first school of the children where they learn values, beliefs, culture, mutual respect, mutual caring, love, and respect. Every family member has different needs, roles, and responsibilities and they take care of each other. Like Sudan, we also acquire values from parents/guardians and other family members. We also noticed that gender inequality is persistent in his family. The family has a major role in mitigating gender inequality and promoting equality, dignity, justice, and respect. We all have responsibilities for ourselves and other members. We usually take up new responsibilities as we grow older. For example, our major responsibility as 5 years old is to respect our parents, be polite to them, etc., and as we grow older and be a

parent, we have the responsibility to teach our children values and manners. We have responsibilities towards our friends, society, country and an entire world. Occurrence of the conflicts and misunderstandings between parents/guardians and children is common, usually notable during adolescents. These conflicts and misunderstandings are often resolvable. When one/many people in the family are sick, the role and responsibilities of the family members can change. For example, an elder child might have to take care of all the younger ones and sick parents if the family has one parent who has to work all day to earn and another parent who is bed-ridden due to disease. Not only diseases but marriage, pregnancy, refusal to an arranged marriage, experiences of gender-based violence, and sexual abuse also affect the structures of the family by changing the role and responsibilities of the family members. Nevertheless, our parents/guardians, siblings, cousins, and other members of extended families are our biggest support system. Families can support one another through hard times, and overcome challenges through mutual support.

**>>Occurrence of the conflicts and misunderstandings between parents/guardians and children is common, usually notable during adolescents. These conflicts and misunderstandings are often resolvable.<<**

There are many different types of families that exist around the world



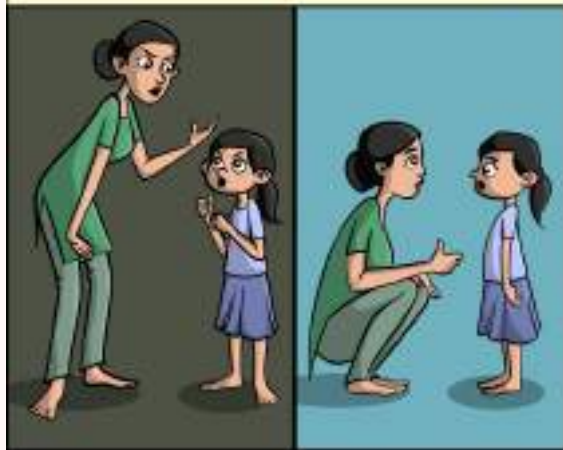
Gender inequality is often reflected in the roles and responsibilities of family members.



Families can promote gender equality through their roles and responsibilities.



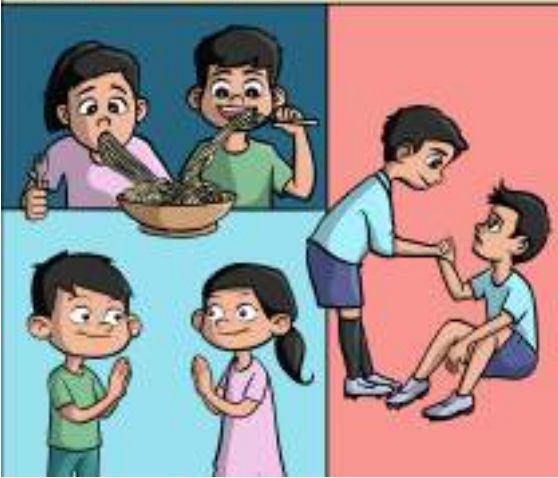
Conflict and misunderstandings between parents/guardians and children are common, especially during adolescence, and are usually resolvable.



Love, cooperation, gender equality, mutual caring and mutual respect are important for healthy family functioning and relationships.



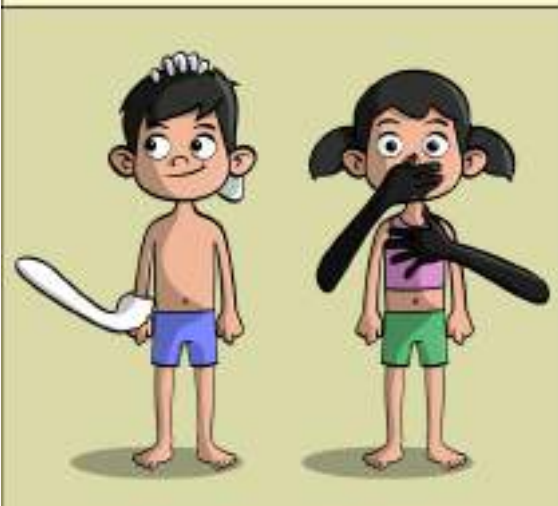
Friendships are based on trust, sharing, respect, empathy and solidarity.



Relationships involve different kinds of love (e.g. love between friends, love between student and teacher; love between parents, love between romantic partners) and love can be expressed in many different ways



There are healthy and unhealthy relationships



Friends can influence one another positively and negatively



Romantic relationships can be strongly affected by inequality and differences in power (e.g. due to gender, age, economic, social or health status)



## 1.2 Friendship, Love and Romantic Relationship

We have a lot of people in our life—parents, guardians, friends, romantic partners, neighbors, and so on. We express love and emotions uniquely in each relationship. The way we express, changes as we grow older. Relationships can be either healthy or unhealthy. A healthy relationship helps one to flourish and there is ample love, affection, mutual care, support, mutual respect, and understanding in this relationship. When in a relationship, people can influence each other. Likewise in friendship, friends can be of good or bad influence on us. With peer support, people can excel in academics and work, or with peer pressure, people can start doing drugs. So, we need to filter out the people and be with those who are good for our physical, mental, social, emotional,

and spiritual health. We also need to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes to avoid unhealthy sexual relationships. Unhealthy sexual relationships mentally drain the person with various forms of abuse and gender-based violence. The relationships that involve the exchange of goods and money for sexual contact are also unhealthy ones. We need to acknowledge that sexual contacts aren't mandatory to express love in relationships. Differences in power and inequality due to age, gender, health status, the social, cultural, and economic structure may negatively affect the relationship. It is, hence, healthy to assume equitable roles in relationships is necessary to maintain equality and balance of power.

## 1.3 Tolerance, Inclusion, and Respect

Have you closely observed the world around you? Have you noticed how unique each human being is from another? All of us are different. Some of us are romantically interested in people of the same sex; some of us like people irrespective of their gender; some of us belong to a well-to-do family and some, poor; some of us are healthy, and some of us are strong and we fight diseases like HIV, STDs, etc., regularly; our place of origins might be different, I may belong to different race and ethnic group than you and have different struggles than you. The world is diverse and beautiful because of these differences. No matter which background we are from, where we live, what we do, regardless of our sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, social, economic, and health status, HIV, pregnancy, or health status, all of us have a right to be treated with equality, dignity, and respect. Stigma and discrimination against another person based on these differences have bigger consequences on the health and well-being of victims. Having highlighted this, we must not forget that the perpetrators are also in need of support and rehabilitation. We all are responsible citizens, aren't we? As responsible citizens, it is our foremost duty to transform ourselves, society and make this world a better and safe place for

There are different family structures and concepts of marriage



Marriage before the age of 20 and forced marriages are harmful and illegal in our country as well as the majority of countries in the world.



Culture and gender roles impact parenting



There are many responsibilities that come with marriage and long-term commitments



People become parents in various ways and parenthood involves many different responsibilities





everyone. Sometimes, our patience might flicker while we wait for the change to occur since the change is a gradual process that takes time. Nonetheless, to fight stigma and discrimination, and promote inclusion, tolerance, and respect, we need to join hands, heads, and hearts for as long as it takes.

## 1.4 Long-term Commitments and Parenting

15 years old Yamuna living in Nepal is being forced by her parents to marry the son of a family friend. Yamuna is still a child in the eye of the law of Nepal. Yamuna isn't interested in marriage as of now. She wants to adopt and parent that child in her adulthood. The society of Nepal is hesitant to accept the type of life and family Yamuna wants. Child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM) is prevalent in Nepal and has harmful consequences on the children, family, and society and it is illegal in Nepal.

A family is a group of people related by blood marriage and adoption. Some family consists of heterosexual partners and their children; some of the homosexual partners and their children; some of single parent and children. People have the right to decide if, when and whom to marry and to bear a child or not. Marriage can last long or result in divorce, separation, and/or death of the partner. Anyone regardless of their gender identity, sexual orientation, HIV status, and disability status can be a parent. Some people want to become a parent, and some don't, and due to various situation-medical, social, economic, not everyone get to become a parent. With parenthood and long-term commitment comes a multitude of responsibilities to fulfill the needs and demands of the children and acknowledge the physical, emotional, educational, and economic needs of the children and create a supportive environment where they can speak about those needs. The discrimination against female children and the rate of illegal sex-selective abortion is high ranking in Nepal. It is also notable that the burden of the workload of parenting shared by male and female partners is unbalanced. Thus, parenting is affected by gender roles, values, beliefs, culture, and laws.

What should Yamuna do? We think that she should talk to trusted adults or guardians and exercise her right to decide for herself. She can also benefit from the legal and regulatory framework of the country.

**>>The discrimination against female children and the rate of illegal sex-selective abortion is high ranking in Nepal. It is also notable that the burden of the workload of parenting shared by male and female partners is unbalanced.<<**

Every human being is unique, can contribute to society and has a right to be respected



Stigma and discrimination are harmful



Stigma and discrimination on the grounds of differences are disrespectful, harmful to well-being, and a violation of human rights

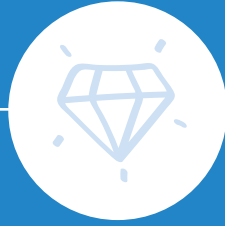


It is disrespectful and hurtful to harass or bully anyone on the basis of their social, economic or health status, ethnicity, race, origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other differences



It is important to challenge stigma and discrimination and promote inclusion, non-discrimination and diversity





Key Concept 2

# Values, Rights, Culture and Sexuality

## 2.1 Values and Sexuality

As human beings, we all have values that shape the way we perceive the world around us. Values are strong beliefs that we have about the issues that matter to us; those which influence our life decisions and behavior. These values can be personal or can be shared between families and communities. Some examples of values that are shared among people are respect and acceptance towards people of various caste, ethnicity, gender identity, and sexual orientation. But personal values might vary between individuals, which can invite conflicts, so it's important to understand and respect other people's values even if our values do not necessarily align together.

Oftentimes the values we acquire on sex and sexuality is from our family and community, and if these values stigmatize sex, it will have a negative influence on our decisions on sexual behaviors; e.g. children who learn that women in a relationship must be submissive/ subservient may grow up abusing women or being abused. Thus, it is really important to be in full awareness of one's values, where they are coming from, and how to act on them, so that we do not harm anyone while enjoying our sexual and reproductive rights. We must remember WE CAN ALWAYS ADOPT BETTER VALUES; e.g. values of gender equality, which will positively impact us and the people around us.

## 2.2 Human Rights and Sexuality

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the pioneering document that has guaranteed the rights of people around the world; Article 1 mentions, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights". It is important to note that human rights cover EVERYONE, so nobody can be discriminated against based on their race, gender, or sexuality thus every single person deserves to enjoy their human rights. Human rights are outlined by various international conventions and national laws alike and we must all be aware of them. E.g. The Constitution of Nepal, 2015 AD has guaranteed the right of every child to education, health, maintenance, proper care, sports, entertainment, and overall personality development from families and the state.

The constitution of Nepal recognized LGBTQIA+ rights as fundamental human rights, provided protection for gender and sexual minorities, and legalized homosexuality in 2007 as a result of a Supreme Court decision.

Human rights have an influence on our sexual and reproductive health; e.g. the Civil Code of Nepal, 2018 AD accepts marriage only between two consenting adults; a man and a woman, who are above the age of 20 years. This law has helped in reducing forced child marriages in Nepal, which violates children's sexual and reproductive

There are many sources of information that help us learn about ourselves, our feelings and our bodies



Culture, religion and society influence our understanding of sexuality



Social, cultural and religious factors influence what is considered acceptable and unacceptable sexual behaviour in society, and these factors evolve over time



It is important to be aware of how social and cultural norms impact sexual behaviour while developing one's own point of view



It is important to express support for people's human rights



rights. But we also must acknowledge that this law is not inclusive to people of marginalized gender identity/ expression, sexual orientation and sex characteristics, i.e. people belonging to the LGBTQIA+ community, as they may not fit into the 'man and woman' label. Hence, we must advocate for laws and policies that ensure nondiscrimination and promote the sexual and reproductive health of all people free from coercion and violence.

## 2.3 Culture, Society, and Sexuality

None of us are born with any specific set of values, but as we grow up, we pick up values; from our family, peer groups, society, and media, including social media. These various sources of information guide us in understanding ourselves, our bodies, and our sexuality. As we talk of society's influence on sexuality, we can't miss out on culture which is an important influencing agent of our sexuality; e.g. the untouchability practiced during menstruation or in its extreme form 'Chaupadi', these are guided by the culture. With time we see these discriminatory practices being slowly eliminated, as the culture and society evolve. We notice our society and the culture has created a moral boundary on sexuality regarding what is acceptable or not. Long-acting permanent methods of contraception for men i.e. sterilization was once considered taboo in our society, but we see this has changed over time. We hope to see a similar change in perception of the society towards people of marginalized sexual orientation and their sexual behaviors. Well, what we can do in this regard i- evaluate how society and culture have shaped our values on sexuality and develop our point of view that advances towards INCLUSION and EQUALITY, and educate people around us on the same.

It's important to know your rights and that human rights are outlined in national laws and international agreements



Everyone's human rights include rights that impact their sexual and reproductive health



Violations of human rights impacting sexual and reproductive health



It's important to know and promote human rights that impact sexual and reproductive health



It is important to identify personal values such as equality, respect, acceptance and tolerance



Values and attitudes imparted to us by families and communities are sources of what we learn about sex and sexuality, and influence our personal behaviour and decision-making



It is important to know one's own values, beliefs and attitudes, how they impact on the rights of others and how to stand up for them



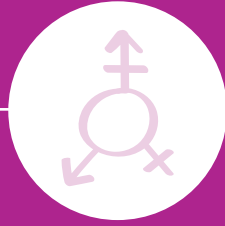
It is important to know one's own values, beliefs and attitudes, in order to adopt sexual behaviours that are consistent with them



As children grow up, they develop their own values which may differ from their parents/guardians







Key Concept 3

# Understanding Gender

### 3.1 Social Construction of Gender and Gender Norms

The difference between biological sex and gender must be known to an individual. It is crucial that the understanding of these terms be known from a time when an individual is in the growing phases of life i.e. during childhood. So there is an integral role of the families, peers, and the communities that individual lives in to provide the source of information and structure an understanding of sex and gender.

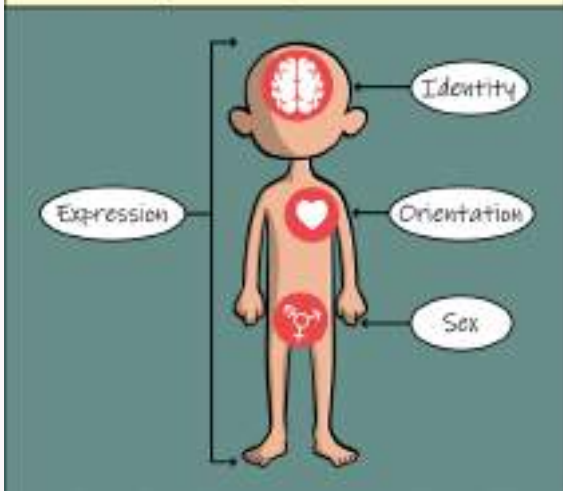
The understanding of gender is not limited to just the understanding of the differences, it is also equally important to empathize with the gender roles that shape the identity, desires, and attitudes of the people. The perspective of how an individual has understood gender portrays the attitude and gender roles they impose among themselves and apply them in their lifestyles. Beliefs and understanding can be the key to influencing an individual, society, and community towards the positive or negative actions towards creating a society with just gender roles and attitudes. In addition, gender roles also impose a vital role in romantic relationships among people. For example, gender stereotyping can lead to the suppression of gender identities

which leads to association with the wrong individual, leading to unwanted and unhealthy relationships, e.g. marriage with an abusive person which leads to harmful consequences in the future.

While we discuss gender norms, social, cultural, and religious beliefs are the main influencing factors. In Nepal, the traditional practices of major events like death rituals are accepted only by a male or the son. This depicts the gender roles in the religious aspects as well. Similarly, the women and females are confined to the household chores and are expected to serve as a housewife, especially after marriage, which contributes to assigning a gender role that harms individual rights. This issue of gender roles and gender understanding is the reason for most gender bias which causes people to harm themselves and others intentionally and unintentionally. The lack of understanding of gender leads to the lack of understanding of diverse sexual orientation and gender identities which demonstrates discrimination and negative consequences with issues of homophobia and transphobia on the rise.

**>>Gender inequality is something that is created and is influenced by the roles of power differences existing among the relationships and their understanding of the need for gender equality.<<**

It is important to understand the difference between biological sex and gender



Social and cultural norms and religious beliefs are some of the factors which influence gender roles



Gender roles and gender norms influence people's lives



It is important to challenge one's own and others' gender biases



Homophobia and transphobia are harmful to people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity



## 3.2 Gender Equality, Stereotypes, and Bias

While there has been the discovery of new diversities all around, there also has been the initiation of more bias all along in every aspect. The roots of inequality are fostered from the family, society, community and gradually spread towards blooming the buds of gender-based violence and bias. Gender inequality is chained to the gender stereotype thinking and understanding of individuals and the society due to which not just men and women but all other individuals with different sexual orientation and gender identities are affected in aspects of their choice, decision making, cherishing their rights, and making life decisions.

Gender inequality is something that is created and is influenced by the roles of power differences existing among the relationships and their understanding of the need for gender equality. However, these all understandings and the power dynamics are nurtured through the roles of social norms, values, and the gender roles an individual has been made accountable. Abuse example, a child

assigned female at birth who is brought up by the family allowed only to wear skirts, pink-colored clothes, given Barbie dolls to play with will find it difficult to switch to a different role in the future despite her wishes. The gender role that has been tagged since her childhood stays and affects her decision-making and her choices.

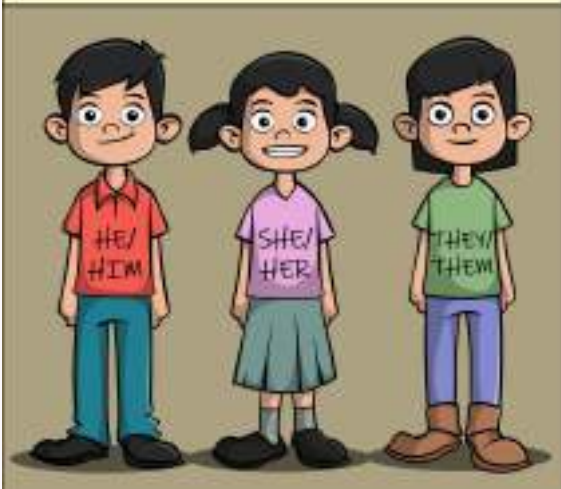
In addition, gender inequality may be the major factor to impact sexual behaviors and the ability to make and act on safe choices e.g. condom use, accessing SRH services. The prevailing gender inequality and differences in power affect sexual behavior and the risk of sexual coercion, abuse, and GBV. Therefore, it is important to realize the existing gender inequalities, stereotypes, and biases so that an individual as well as the society as a whole respects diversity, protects the rights of people of diverse identities, promotes gender equality, fosters healthier relationships, and guides one to make safer choices and decisions that would shape a healthy and happy life of an individual.

## 3.3 Gender-Based Violence

Violence against people committed on the basis of their gender is referred to as gender-based violence. Its roots are in detrimental norms, power abuse, and gender inequity. Any action that results in physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to anyone on the basis of their gender, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life is an act of gender based violence. Gender-based violence (GBV) might occur to anyone, at any place and at any time, irrespective of their identities.

GBV portrays itself in different forms such as sexual violence, intimate partner violence, online violence, physical abuse example wait, and much more. It is crucial that we

All persons are equally valuable, regardless of their gender.



Gender inequalities and differences in power exist in families, friendships, relationships, communities and society.



Stereotypes about gender can lead to bias and inequality.



Gender equality can promote equal decision-making about sexual behaviour and life planning.



Gender inequality, social norms and power differences influence sexual behaviour and may increase the risk of sexual coercion, abuse and GBV.



All forms of GBV are wrong and a violation of human rights



Gender stereotypes can be the cause of violence and discrimination



All forms of GBV by adults, young people and people in positions of authority are a violation of human rights



Intimate partner violence is harmful, and support exists for those who experience it



Everyone has a responsibility to advocate for gender equality and speak out against human rights violations such as sexual abuse, harmful practices and other forms of GBV



identify the different forms of violence and also understand that GBV, including intimate partner violence and rape, are crimes initiated by the misunderstanding of power and dominance, not about one's inability to control one's sexual desires. It may also be occurring in places like school, community, workplace, and at any locations where we are exposed to, knowingly or sometimes unknowingly.

Some of the examples of GBV that we commonly encounter are bullying, sexual harassment, psychological violence, domestic violence, rape, Child, early and forced marriage (CEFM). While we also consider that the GBV only occurs within women and men we often tend to forget these might also occur to people of marginalized gender identity and sexual orientations in form of homophobic, transphobic, or queerphobic violence. Mainly the gender stereotype can be contributing towards bullying, discrimination, sexual abuse, and violence.

However, it is integral that we identify the different types and forms of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), and whether we are the victim or bystanders and witness violence, we should always be aware and take safe steps to intervene. The safe steps on taking an action for the GBV may be as simple as talking and sharing with a trusted individual like one's parents or an adult. Similarly, it is crucial to also support GBV survivors and help them live happy life. There are spaces like UN Women, who have been initiating and taking the steps to eliminate all forms of GBV and it is our responsibility that we recognize the efforts and speak up for the best practices and prevention.



**The relationship in which partners actively communicate with each other about their likes and dislikes including sexual preferences and recognize the consent from the partners is the healthy one.**





Key Concept 4

# Violence and Staying Safe

## 4.1 Violence

As per a report by the World Health Organization (WHO), defining violence is an extremely complex phenomenon and is mostly a matter of judgment rather than science. Violence is an act shaped up with the attitude, understanding, and the inability to maintain the power dynamics. Violence can happen to anyone, anytime, and initiated by anybody and in any location. Violence can also occur in different diverse forms which can impact an individual in different levels and aspects including physical, mental, emotional, psychological, social wellbeing, and much more. Child abuse including sexual abuse and online sexual exploitation are some adverse forms of violence that impact the well-being of the individual. This is a complex yet most common form of violence that could be perpetrated by an adult or a trusted individual. Therefore, it is integral for a child to be well informed about the issue from the very beginning and communicate, take safe actions, and seek support from a trusted individual.

In addition, the forms of violence taking place between the intimate partner or romantic partner can often go unrecognized, hence it is crucial

to recognize and acknowledge that sexual abuse, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and bullying by adults, young people, and people in positions of power are never the victim's fault and are always a violation of human rights. In support of this situation, most of the married women are the victims of domestic violence from their partners, which they have normalized as a part of the culture which is a wrong understanding. This experience may also nurture a misconception about violence in the children which influences violent behaviors in the child.

Therefore, the adults must be responsible to guide the proper information dissemination of violence to their child as well as fostering a supportive environment for individuals to seek help, services and approach the trusted individual for support. While advocating, we should also appreciate the importance of speaking out against violence and human rights violations in all spaces including at school, home, online, and within the community so that we can foster a safe environment that encourages dignified and respectful treatment of everyone.

>>Child abuse including sexual abuse and online sexual exploitation are some adverse forms of violence that impact the well-being of the individual. This is a complex yet most common form of violence that could be perpetrated by an adult or a trusted individual.<<

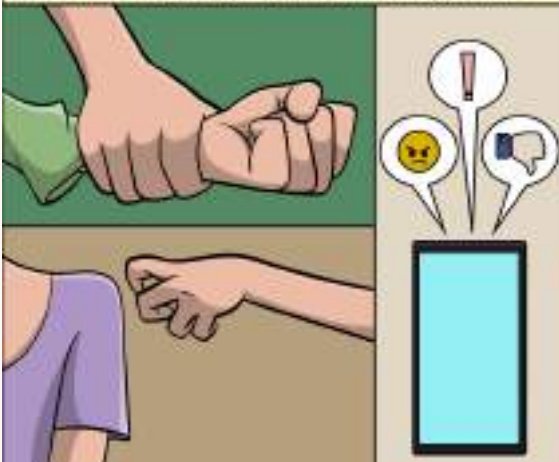
It is important for kids to be able to identify parents/guardians or trusted adults and communicate mistreatment if they are being abused



It is important to understand that violence between parents or romantic partners is wrong



Sexual abuse, sexual harassment and bullying (including cyberbullying) are harmful and it is important to seek support if experiencing them



Examples of intimate partner violence



Learn to approach trusted adults and services that support survivors and prevention of sexual abuse, sexual assault, intimate partner violence and bullying





## 4.2 Consent, Privacy, and Bodily Integrity

Although not very prevalent in Nepal, in most cases, when an intersex person is born, corrective surgery is performed when the person is too young to decide for themselves. This procedure violates the person's right to decide for themselves—whether they want to be male, female, or intersex. This also violates bodily integrity, i.e., autonomy and self-determination over their own body. But if the procedure were performed with the informed consent of the children, all these rights would have been protected. Consent is a vital component of a healthy relationship. It ensures the privacy and bodily integrity of the person and the right to be free from acts they don't consent to.

Everyone has the right to decide who can touch their body, their body parts, and how they can touch it. Any touch or expression that makes one feel uncomfortable is labeled as bad touch. One must be assertive about the discomfort caused by the bad touch and talk to trusted adults to figure out the solutions and solve the problems. The relationship in which partners actively communicate with each other about their likes and dislikes including sexual preferences and recognize the consent from the partners is the healthy one. Any sexual penetration performed without consent makes one feel vulnerable and violates their body rights— the right to live without fear, violence, and discrimination.

Everyone has the right to privacy and the right to decide about their own body. Any unwanted sexual attention violates both rights. Countering unwanted sexual attention to maintain privacy is a skill one must learn. Traditionally, women's need for sexual pleasure has been dismissed and it is believed that when in a relationship/marital bond, there is no need for sexual consent since society considers marriage as the license to sexual activity. The cases of marital rape, violence at the hand of the spouse are increasing due to the lack of consensual sexual activity. It is one's right to give or not give consent for a certain activity and one's duty to acknowledge consent or lack of consent and act the same way. Sometimes when one is rendered unconscious on drugs or alcohol, when one is a victim of Gender-based violence and due to social, economic, and cultural dominance, they are forced to participate in sexual activity, their right to give and refuse consent is dismissed/violated. According to the law of Nepal, any sexual penetration performed without consent is considered rape and sexual intercourse with anyone below the age of 18 even with the consent is also considered as rape. However, any sort of sexual activity either that be touching to penetration without an consent is harassment and must be addressed. With the practice of consent, relationship flourishes, becomes healthier and sexual experiences are pleasurable.

### 4.3 Safe Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

14 years old Bipana is both the online content creator and consumer. She likes to use social media like TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. She was only 2 years old when she was introduced to ICTs. Her relatives used to call her on the mother's phone and she used to talk gibberish with them. Her father used to calm her down with the videos found on the internet. When she was 11 Bipana received the sexually explicit picture of a man's private part on her Facebook, and she was very disturbed. Her mother noticed the change in Bipana's behavior and mood and asked her what was wrong. Bipana shared all about the incident, and with the help of her mother, she reported the culprit. The mother also taught Bipana the ways to maintain her privacy and stay protected on the Internet. The incidents of online sexual abuse, exploitation, bullying, body shaming and threats of violence are very common and these affect a large portion of consumers and creators each day. The adolescent age group is most vulnerable to these events. While these events are common, we must not forget the fact that the Internet is the portable platform of communication, entertainment, learning, and self-expression and there are arrays of opportunities for personal, professional development, and civic engagement. Parental guidance, appropriate legal and regulatory framework, quick reporting system are a must to ensure the safety of the consumers and creators.

Lakpa started consuming pornography at an early age and those videos were the major source of sex education for him. He finds it very difficult to indulge in a sexual relationship with his partners because he is insecure. The insecurity is because he looks different than the men in the pornography video, he doesn't have tight muscles like them, neither is he that tall and he is doubtful that his stamina too isn't as high as shown in porn. These kinds of promotion of harmful gender stereotypes, unrealistic portrayal of sexual behavior, sexual response, and body appearance in those sexually explicit media are affecting Lakpa and many like him by impacting their self-image, self-confidence, self-esteem, and perception. So, we should be able to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitude to filter the content of social media, maintain our privacy, and use the Internet for our good.

The internet and social media are ways of finding out information and connecting with others, which can be done safely but can also put people, including children, at risk of harm



Internet and social media use require special care and consideration



Private images and other media are easily accessible through social media and can promote harmful gender stereotypes



The internet, cell phones and social media can be sources of violence



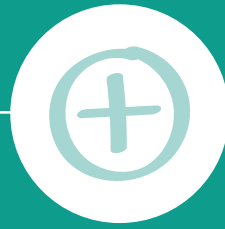
Social media use can result in many benefits, but also has the potential for moral, ethical and legal situations that require careful navigation





**Communication is the key to fostering a healthy relationship among all individuals including parents/guardians or trusted adults, and between friends.**





Key Concept 5

# Skills for Health and Well-being

## 5.1 Norms and Peer Influence

Having friends and peers is an inevitable aspect of life. However, peer influence is something that shows how an individual may move ahead in life. The positive and negative influences of peers determine the attitude, behavior, and decisions made by an individual. For example, a child who is in the peer circle of friends involved in drug abuse, alcohol consumption would also slowly drift towards applying similar behaviors as of the peers which will impact the lifestyle of the child in the present and future if it is not intervened in time. We can also refer to the example where a positive peer circle with a good reading habit exists that fosters a positive pressure upon the peers to nourish their reading and achieve a good performance, helping to better shape the present and future.

Peer pressures usually affect the most during the time of puberty and adolescence at the time when they are vulnerable to knowing and discovering their sexuality. This is the crucial time when an individual experiences the challenges to identify, accept and adopt the positive and negative peer influences along with the blend of the social norms in their life. As our life is constructed within society and its associated norms, it is not possible to omit the influence of social and gender norms and peer roles in affecting the various sexual decisions and behaviors. Most of the wrong decisions regarding one's sexual health and behavior are the results of negative peer pressures which must be duly identified and countered in time to avoid adverse effects. It is important to influence positive peer influence and demonstrate assertiveness by speaking out when someone is being bullied or pressured into making a sexual decision that they don't want to take.

## 5.2. Decision Making

Making a decision is one of the most difficult aspects for many people. However, everyone deserves to make their own decisions and all decisions have consequences that may be good or bad. At times it may always not be compatible to make a self-decision and thus may require seeking help from a trusted individual who can help to make the proper decision. The decisions especially made on sexual behavior, sexual and/or reproductive health can affect people's health, future, and life plan. This sexual decision-making can have potential social and health consequences on oneself and others, so it is very crucial to think and make the proper decision involving empathetic understanding.

Most rational decisions are influenced by different factors such as drugs and alcohol, poverty, gender inequality, violence, and so on. However, it is

**>>Decision-making is a skill that can be learned and acquired thus to make the right decision to address problemsone has to seek help and support from a trusted individual as well. <<**

Peer influence can exist in different ways and be good or bad



There are ways to challenge negative peer pressure and accept and promote positive peer influences related to adolescence and sexuality



Learn to collectively assert inclusiveness, support and respect for each other



Peers can influence sexual decisions and behaviour



It is possible to make rational decisions about sexual behaviour



Everyone deserves to make their own decisions and all decisions have consequences



Decision-making is a skill that can be learned and practiced



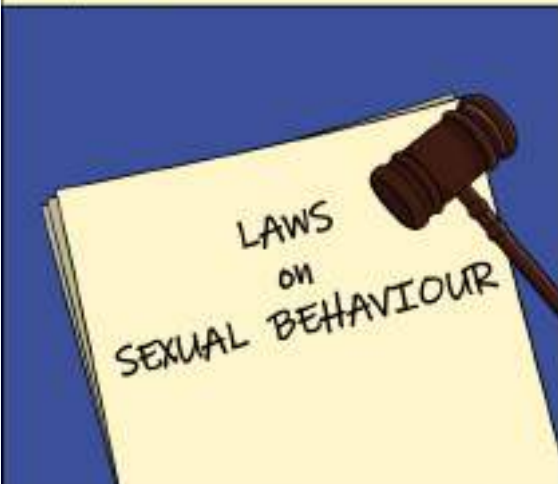
There are multiple influences on decisions, including friends, culture, gender-role stereotypes, peers and the media



Express empathy for others who are affected by their sexual decision-making



Sexual decision-making can result in possible legal consequences



important to acknowledge the importance of self-decision making and also be familiar with the different influencing factors such as national laws, societal norms, and other aspects. Also, decision-making is a skill that can be learned and acquired thus to make the right decision to address problems, one has to seek help and support from a trusted individual as well.

### **5.3 Communication, Refusal, and Negotiation Skills**

Effective communication is one of the most vital elements of a prosperous life. Communication is the key to fostering a healthy relationship among all individuals including parents/guardians or trusted adults, and between friends. Communication could be nurtured in different modes and styles where the most crucial fact to be considered is to express and understand wishes, needs, and personal boundaries. Every person has the right to express themselves by using verbal or non-verbal communication as a way to express messages to others. Often the lack of proper communication and the inability to communicate by saying 'yes' and 'no', hinders one's privacy and bodily integrity and is a central part of building happy relationships. These communications are moreover affected by the gender roles structured by society and people. Especially in the cases of sexual and romantic relationships, communication and negotiation pose a challenge to women and children in many cases.

Proper communication and negotiation for sexual consent may lead to safer sex practice. Whereas improper communication and lack of refusal may accelerate unwanted sexual pressure or reinforce the unwanted sexual activity. Therefore, there is a need to acknowledge that assertiveness and negotiation skills can also be learned to develop a healthy relationship and maintain mutual respect and understanding among individuals.

### **5.4 Media Literacy and Sexuality**

The role of media is considered as one of the most important aspects that shape our lifestyle. Through the different forms of media such as the radio, television, books, newspaper, internet, and social media we have been able to get a picture of the diverse forms of relationships. The media has been the source to influence most of the personal values, attitudes, and behaviors in an individual. We often tend to follow the way the media has portrayed the world to us, which directly and indirectly governs the way we act, think, and apply things in our lifestyle. Especially when we take the example of the media in creating a beauty standard that creates gender stereotypes among people and communities. Similarly, examples of negative media influence can be observed from the unrealistic ideals about sexuality and sexual relationships, which can affect people's perception of gender roles and self-esteem and also make one question themselves.

There are plenty of benefits of healthy communication between parents/guardians or trusted adults and children, and between friends and others



It is important to be able to express wishes, needs and personal boundaries, and understand that of others



There are many benefits of effective communication to personal, family, school, work and romantic relationships



Identify barriers that can stand in the way of negotiation with a romantic partner



Consensual and safer sex requires effective communication



There are different forms of media, which present information that may be correct or incorrect



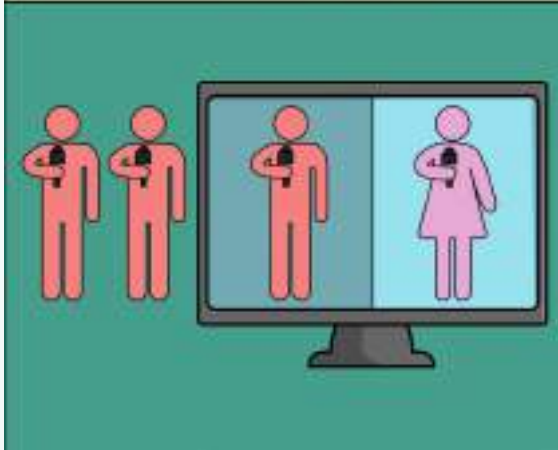
Media can positively or negatively influence values, attitudes, and norms about sexuality and gender



Some media portray unrealistic images about sexuality and sexual relationships, which can influence our perception of gender and self-esteem



Negative and inaccurate media portrayals of men and women can be challenged to influence behaviour positively and promote gender equality



There are many ways to challenge gender stereotypes and inaccurate portrayals of sexuality and sexual relationships in the media



It is thus important to critically assess the potential positive and negative influences of media on sexuality and sexual relationships and also promote the positive application of media in activities like safer sexual behavior and gender equality. Despite the different information regarding sexuality and gender through different media, one must be aware and be able to grasp and implement the impacting factors of media in their lives positively.

## 5.5 Finding Help and Support

Often, we find ourselves trying to sort out a problem all by ourselves when there is a need to seek help and support. In the journey of life, there are instances where seeking help can only be a solution and this idea needs to be taught to the children from the very beginning of their lives. All people have a right to be protected and supported, thus it is also our responsibility as an individual that we seek help when required and also provide help to those who are seeking it.

Most of the help and support is required when the problems are related to sexual and reproductive health and rights. Mainly the cases of sexual harassment, sexual violence, bullying, sexual abuse, rape, domestic and gender-based violence, abortion and post-abortion care, and stigma and discrimination require support from a trusted source. However, it is also integral that we obtain the information for support services through reliable media and access affordable, factual, and non-judgmental services that maintain confidentiality and protect our privacy.



Friends, family, teachers, religious leaders and community members can and should help each other



There are different sources of help and support in school and the wider community



Learn ways to seek out and access help in the wider community



Some characteristics of good sources of help and support include maintaining confidentiality and protecting privacy



It is important to practice appropriate help-seeking behaviour







Key Concept 6

# The Human Body and Development

## 6.1 Sexual and Reproductive Anatomy and Physiology

Growing up, IT IS COMPLETELY NORMAL FOR US TO BE CURIOUS ABOUT OUR BODIES ESPECIALLY OUR GENITALS. Genitals are our body organs that are involved in sexual health and reproduction. We must be able to understand the anatomy of male, female and intersex bodies and name the parts of our genitals correctly. It is important to acknowledge that our bodies change over time, including their sexual and reproductive capacities and function. Each of our bodies including our genitals are unique and they come with various shapes, sizes, functioning and characteristics, so we must be respectful towards each other. We must also be kind and respectful to people with disabilities, for their bodies which are equally unique and beautiful as ours.

Our culture and society influence our way of understanding sex, gender, reproduction and the appropriate time to be sexually active; e.g. in Nepalese societies we are expected to engage in sex only after marriage. Furthermore, our society often considers biological sex and gender as one, which is wrong. THE BIOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL ASPECT OF SEX AND GENDER ARE DIFFERENT; a person who is assigned certain sex at birth might grow up identifying into a different gender. Such individuals are referred as 'Transgender person' and we must be kind and respectful to them.

## 6.2 Reproduction

Reproduction is the process where the egg produced by a female is fertilized with sperm produced by a male to form an embryo which develops as a fetus inside a female's uterus over the period of 40 weeks and giving birth to a child. This fertilization of egg and sperm resulting in pregnancy happens during unprotected sexual intercourse i.e. without the use of contraception, when the man ejaculates sperm into the woman's vagina. Pregnancy has many common signs, the most important one is - missed or late menstrual period. In such a case, one can perform simple medical tests to confirm the pregnancy. When we talk of reproduction, we assume that all people are capable of reproduction but in reality, some people are not able to conceive a child naturally and such a condition is known as 'infertility', for which one can always seek necessary medical support. WE, HUMANS, ARE SEXUAL BEINGS; our bodies have sexual desires which are not always there to fulfill reproductive functions. Such experiences of sexual desires including reproductive functions aren't constant throughout our lifespan, but they keep on changing.

>>Pregnancy has many common signs, the most important one is - missed or late menstrual period. In such a case, one can perform simple medical tests to confirm the pregnancy. <<

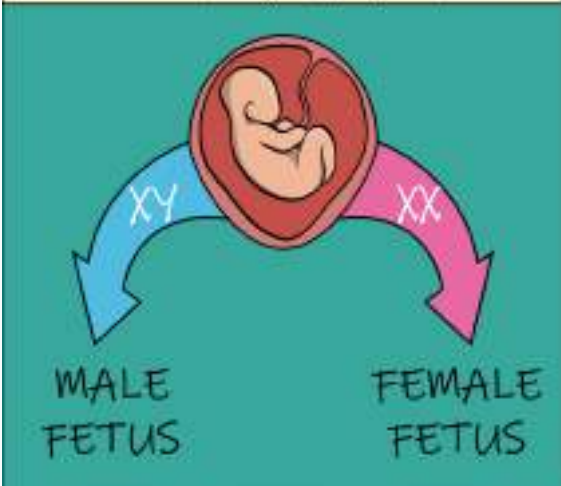
Everyone has a unique body that deserves respect, including people with disabilities



Everyone's body is unique and variations exist in size, shape, functioning and characteristics



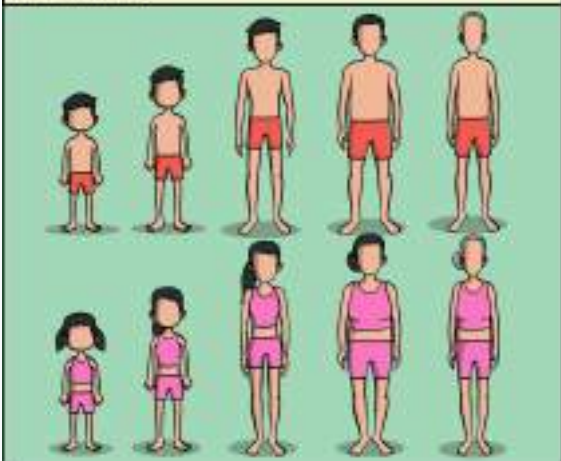
Sex of a fetus is determined by chromosomes, and occurs at the early stages of pregnancy



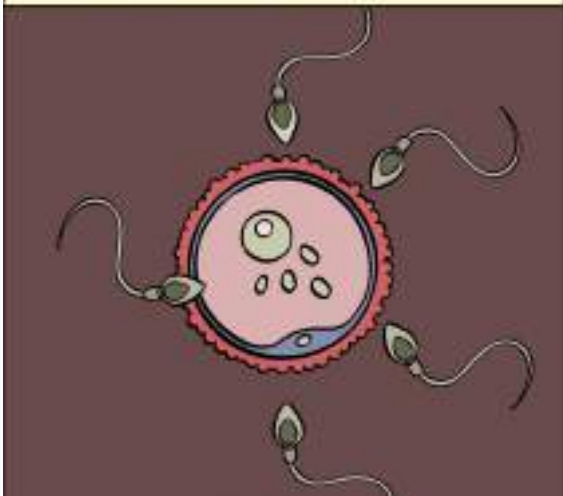
All cultures have different ways of understanding sex, gender and reproduction, and when it is appropriate to become sexually active



Men's and women's bodies change over time, including their reproductive and sexual capacities and functions



A pregnancy begins when an egg and sperm unite and implant in the uterus



Changes in hormones bring out different feelings about menstruation



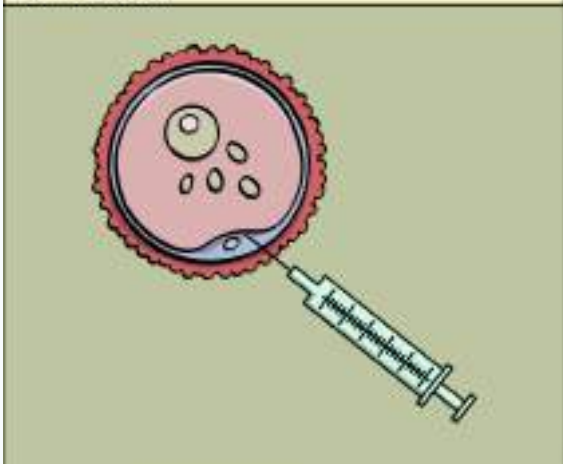
Pregnancies can be planned and can be prevented



It is important to plan for how to prevent unintended pregnancy in the future



Not everyone is fertile and there are ways of trying to address infertility for those who would like to conceive



## 6.3 Puberty

As we grow and mature from childhood to adolescence there comes a time when a series of emotional and physical changes occur in us, which is known as puberty. Puberty signals that our body is maturing for sexual and reproductive functions. This period is quite exciting for adolescents but also very stressful; it can be even more challenging for children who identify within the LGBTQIA+ community. Puberty in girls occurs with the start of menstruation. Because MENSTRUATION IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF DEVELOPMENT of a female body. It should never be a part of stigma or secrecy. Whereas in boys, there can be a variety of physical responses, e.g., wet dreams, a series of emotional and physical changes occur in us,, a series of emotional and physical changes occur in us, and erection of the penis. Wet dreams are often associated with men, but all sexes can have them from puberty until adulthood. Wet dreams are when a person has an orgasmic episode involuntarily while they are asleep, which may or may not be related to an erotic dream. We shouldn't be ashamed of having these dreams, and it is also normal not too experience any of these dreams.

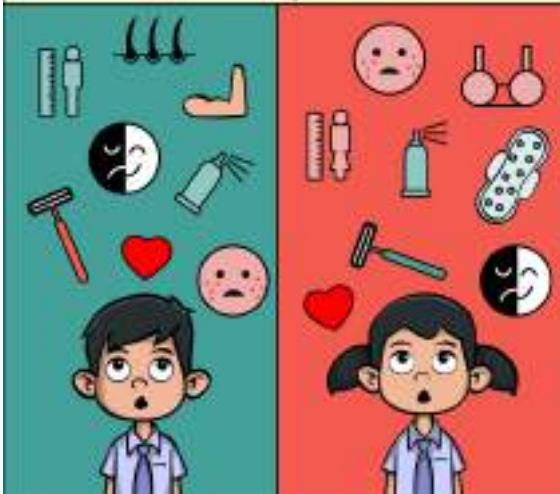
During puberty, it is equally essential for adolescents to take care of their hygiene, especially around their genitals. Girls should be careful of using menstrual hygiene products properly. Schools, parents, and guardians must ensure their access to such products as sanitary pads and private toilet facilities during menstruation. TEASING,

SHAMING, OR STIGMATIZING SOMEONE BASED ON THEIR CHANGES IN PUBERTY IS HURTFUL and it can have long-lasting negative psychological impacts thus we must all be kind and respectful towards each other and our bodies.

## 6.4 Body Image

OUR BODIES ARE UNIQUE AND THAT IS WHAT MAKES US ALL BEAUTIFUL. We should always appreciate our body for its function and we should always be proud to be exactly how we are. The way we look, our skin color, these bodily characteristics aren't under our control, these are determined by heredity and environment, we can only care for our bodies by adopting healthy habits. We all need to understand that the definition and standards of beauty are very diverse among individuals and societies, and the trends won't last forever. Body image can have a huge impact on our health and behavior, as one may face various disorders like anxiety or eating disorders because of poor self-image. Body image can also affect our self-esteem, sexual decision-making, and behavior, e.g. people may feel unworthy of love and may justify the abuses they face with the way they look. Thus, it's important for all of us to feel comfortable in our skin and make others comfortable as well. The unrealistic standards of beauty can be challenged and we all can do it. the way they look. Thus, it's important for all of us to feel comfortable in our skin and make others comfortable as well. The unrealistic standards of beauty can be challenged and we all can do it.

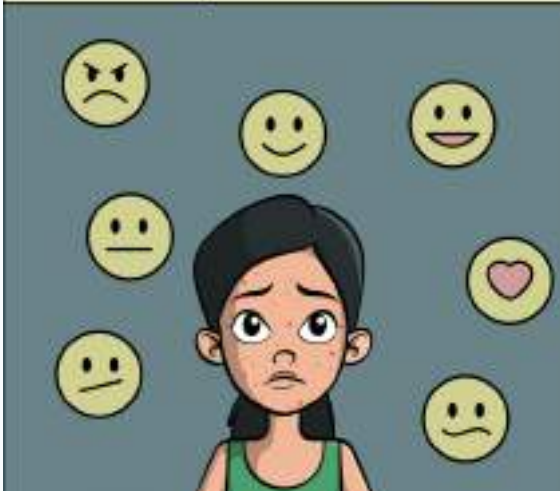
Puberty is a time of physical and emotional change that happens as children grow and mature



During puberty, hygiene is important to keep one's sexual and reproductive anatomy clean and healthy



Hormones play a major role in a person's emotional and physical changes over their lifetime



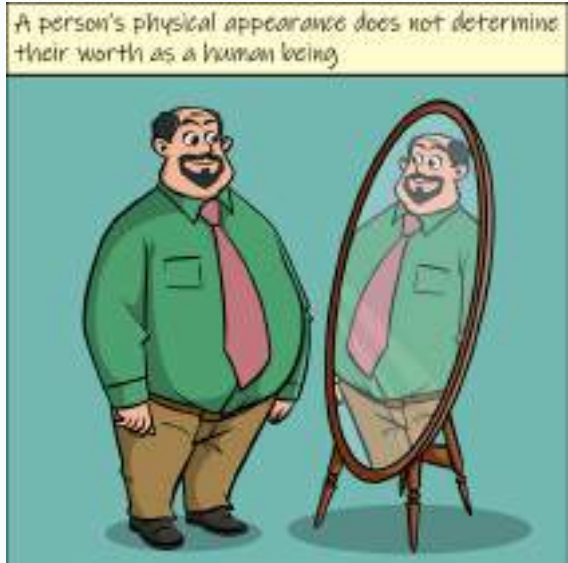
Demonstrate positive and supportive strategies for girls to feel comfortable during their menstruation



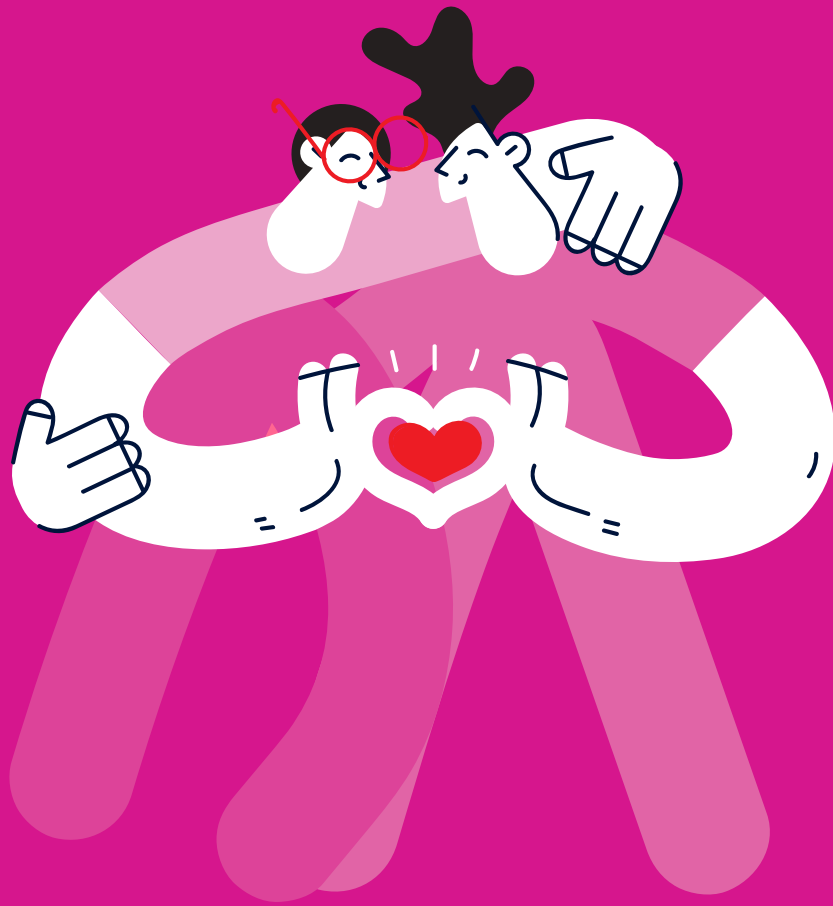
Some adolescents may experience arousal and release of fluids at night, often called a wet dream, and this is normal



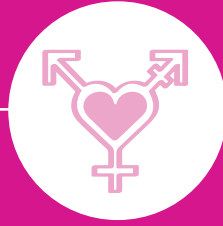




>>Body image can have a huge impact on our health and behavior, as one may face various disorders like anxiety or eating disorders because of poor self-image.<<



**It is always a pleasurable  
experience when sexual  
acts occurrence with  
consent and good  
communication.**



Key Concept 7

# Sexuality and Sexual Behavior

## 7.1 Sex, Sexuality and Sexual Life Cycle

15 years old Dhruv likes boys, and he hasn't been able to figure out if it is right or wrong for the boys to be romantically interested in boys. He likes bright colors and likes to dress up uniquely than other boys. His friends have called him names and bullied him for his sexual orientation and gender expression. He likes to be that way but is he wrong that he likes to be that way? Absolutely not!

Sexuality includes but isn't limited to physical and emotional attraction to any other individual. Sexual attraction and excitement are natural human feelings and people enjoy intimacy with themselves and with others throughout their life. Sexuality can be expressed by different people in different ways. Some express it with physical touch, some like to hug, others to kiss, some with other sexual contacts, etc. It is natural to have sexual feelings, fantasies, and desires and people may or may not act on them. People's interests in sex and the way they express their sexuality varies as they age, and from culture and settings. People can be attracted to a person of

the same sex or of other sex. We should acknowledge that it's their choice and discrimination against people based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression is a violation of their fundamental human rights. Our prejudices, judgments, and discriminatory behaviors can affect the physical, mental, cognitive, and social well-being of the victim. It is also important to understand that sexuality is very complex. Sexuality influences and is influenced by the biological, social, psychological, spiritual, and cultural dimensions of society. Sexuality might be hard to figure out on one's own. So, reaching trusted adults to get the answers and exploring sexuality on our own is advised. The Internet and other media can also come in handy in this regard.

Dhruv has been researching with the help of the internet and talking to other gay people in the circle whom he trusts in an attempt to explore his sexuality. We support him and we are very happy for him, are you too?

**>>Sexuality influences and is influenced by the biological, social, psychological, spiritual, and cultural dimensions of society. Sexuality might be hard to figure out on one's own. So, reaching trusted adults to get the answers and exploring sexuality on our own is advised.<<**

It is natural for humans to enjoy their bodies and being close to others throughout their lives



Human beings are born with the capacity to enjoy their sexuality throughout their life



Human beings are born with the capacity to enjoy their sexuality throughout their life



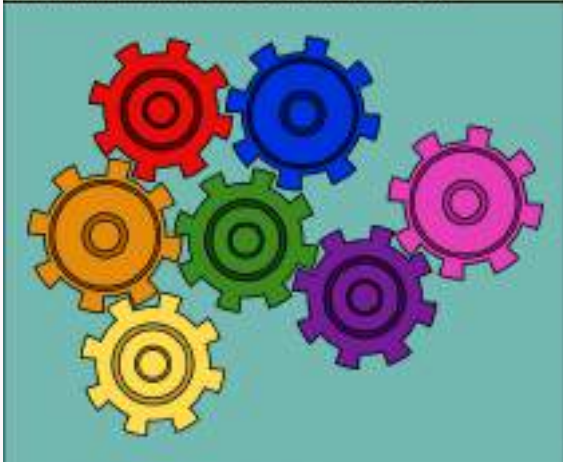
Sexual feelings, fantasies and desires are natural and occur throughout life although people do not always choose to act on those feelings



It's natural to be curious about sexuality and important to ask a trusted adult questions



Sexuality is complex and includes biological, social, psychological, spiritual, ethical and cultural dimensions that evolves over the lifespan



## 7.2 Sexual Behavior and Sexual Response

People show love and care to one another through different ways like touching, kissing, hugging, and other sexual behaviors. These kinds of touch and intimacy can make us feel warm or uncomfortable. Any kind of touch- may or may not be in the private parts, that makes one feel uncomfortable is bad touch. In such an occurrence, we should be assertive about the discomfort and protect ourselves. We should scream “NO” which means we should deny it, inform trusted adults such as our parents, guardians, and teachers about the problem, and find the possible solution and justice. Meanwhile, health professionals can touch our private parts for checkup reasons with the informed consent of the parents of the minor.

People enjoy sexual intimacy with their partners or themselves. Stress, illness, medication, substance abuse, experiences of sexual abuse and trauma impact the sexual response of the individual. One of the right ways to get sexual pleasure is masturbation which is not physically and mentally harmful. People start to explore masturbation during or before puberty. It is important to perform masturbation in private. Our society lingers on a lot of myths regarding sexual behaviors like only MSM can get HIV, marital rape doesn't exist, bigger penis is better, women must be submissive, and they don't have any desire of sexual pleasure, and so on. We must be able to acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes to differentiate these myths from the facts and make informed decisions about our sexuality including whether or not to have sex, when to have sex, with whom to have sex, and so forth. We must explore enough to understand the sexual response of our body towards sexual stimuli for better sexual experiences and early diagnosis of dysfunction. Unintended pregnancy, STIs, and STDs like HIV can be prevented through abstinence and safe non-penetrative sexual behaviors. Contraceptives are effective for the prevention of unintended pregnancy and condoms must be used with any other contraceptives for the prevention of STIs and STDs. Both partners should share an equal responsibility to reduce the risk of unintended pregnancies, STIs, and STDs. Assertive communication and refusal skills can decline transactional sexual activities where money, goods and services are exchanged for sexual favors. Transactional sexual activities increase the risk of unsafe sex and the vulnerability of the person. It is always a pleasurable experience when sexual acts occurrence with consent and good communication.

Children should understand what is and what is not appropriate touching



It is important to be able to make informed decisions about sexual behaviour, including whether to delay sex or become sexually active



Every society, culture and generation has its own myths about sexual behaviours and it's important to know the facts



It is important to be able to make informed decisions about sexual behaviour

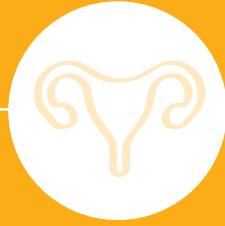


There are ways to avoid or minimize risk of sexual behaviours that can impact negatively on one's health and well-being









Key Concept 8

# Sexual and Reproductive Health

## 8.1 Pregnancy and Pregnancy Prevention

Pregnancy is a natural and essential process of childbearing in our lives. But not all people choose to give birth to a child, while some may adopt a child, some just don't have any children and we must be respectful to each other for their decisions. One must be physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially ready for childbearing, so pregnancy during adolescence can have negative health and social consequences. Every child born needs to be wanted, cared and loved, thus it is important for us to ENGAGE IN SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP RESPONSIBLY and to prevent pregnancy through the appropriate use of modern contraception like condoms. Contraceptive services are essential requirements of all sexually active people as these are essential to plan, prevent, delay, and have adequate gaps between pregnancies. Adolescents, including those belonging to marginalized gender identity and sexual orientations too, need contraception and they should not be denied this service.

Just like mutual consent while engaging in sexual activity, the contraceptive choice should also be a decision of both individuals. Furthermore, the responsibility for the use of contraception should not be guided by gender norms e.g. women solely should not be made responsible for pregnancy prevention. However, it is important to note that modern contraceptives also come with their drawbacks. Also, sometimes due to lack of contraception, contraceptive failure/misuse, or sexual assault unintended pregnancies can occur. In such a case we can legally access emergency contraceptive pills or safe abortion services.

## 8.2 HIV and AIDS Stigma, Care, Treatment and Support

You must have observed that in our society People Living with HIV (PLHIV) are discriminated against and their identities are limited as "people with HIV". There is a dire need to understand that they are more than their disease. They can contribute to society, assume family roles and responsibilities, sign up for long-term commitment, marriage, and parenting, and can live a safe, fulfilling, and productive life despite HIV and AIDS. We need to be mindful that the treatment of HIV is lifelong and it comes with a lot of challenges, but with support, respect, love, tolerance, and inclusion, we can create a safe and supportive environment for PLHIV where they can freely share their problems, challenges, and access quality health information and services. While some people get born with HIV, some acquire it during their life course. HIV doesn't limit people from expressing romantic sexual feelings and love for others. One can always prevent HIV by having safe sexual intercourse and one can always prevent complications with the right treatment, nutrition, care, and support after contracting the disease. If a little kindness and love can help someone live their best lives, why not? There are many support groups and programs that are helpful for PLHIV. We can also contribute to their betterment from an individual level by practicing tolerance and inclusion.

Identify a parent/guardian or a trusted adult to talk to if experiencing signs of pregnancy



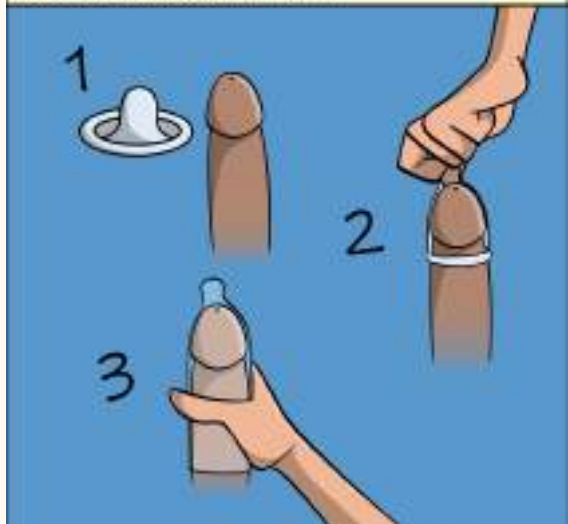
It is important to correct myths about modern contraceptives, condoms and other ways to prevent unintended pregnancy



Deciding to use a condom or other contraceptives is the responsibility of both sex partners



How to use a condom correctly



Adoption is an option when someone is not ready or able to become a parent



People living with HIV have equal rights and live productive lives



There are effective medical treatments that can help people living with HIV



A person living with HIV will have unique needs for care and treatment, some of which may come with possible side effects



Support groups and programmes run by and with people living with HIV can be helpful



With the right care, respect and support, people living with HIV can lead fully productive lives across the lifespan



### 8.3 Understanding, Recognizing and Reducing the Risk of STIs, including HIV

HIV and STIs can be transmitted among individuals in various ways but most people acquire these infections/diseases through sexual contact; e.g. HIV is transmitted when a healthy individual engages in unprotected sex with a person who has the virus in their body. Hence, we must always **BE CAREFUL OF USING CONDOMS CONSISTENTLY AND CORRECTLY** while engaging in sexual activity. As we all can get the disease or pass the disease to somebody else, we should not discriminate among people based on their HIV status. We must love and support those who have HIV and spread awareness that the HIV is not transmitted through social interaction like shaking hands, hugging, or drinking from the same glass. The only way to know if we have the virus or not is by getting tested through the HIV Testing and Counseling sites near us, so that we can break the chain of transmission. Many STIs like chlamydia, gonorrhoea, syphilis, HPV, and HIV today are preventable and treatable or manageable; e.g. one can get vaccinated for HPV and take medications before or after exposure of HIV to reduce health risks. Discrimination of certain groups like sex workers, intravenous drug users only increases their vulnerability to STIs so they must be included in the HIV and STIs prevention programs. Lastly, to stay protected from STIs we must always refuse and counter unwanted sexual advances and pressure to practice unsafe sex.



Construct and practise a personal plan for health and well-being



