

RIGHT FROM THE START

Empowering children from K-10 through sexuality education.

JENNY WALSH

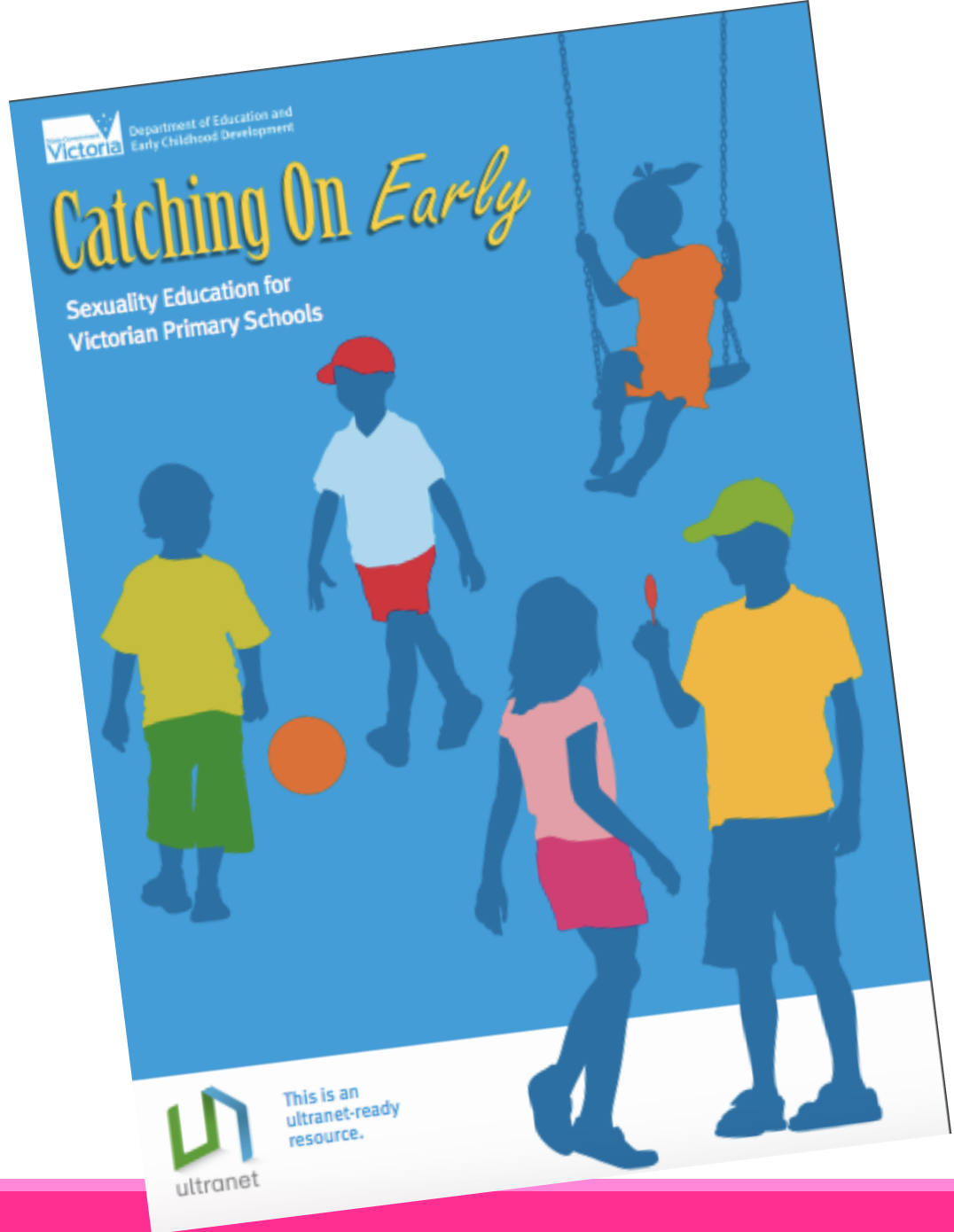
1ST SEPT 2017, GROWING AND DEVELOPING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS,
PERTH.

At 12



Image from www.wnyc.org/series/being-12/

-
- Have our programs have kept up-to-date with children and young people's SRE needs?
 - What are the challenges schools and families are facing and how do we address them?



State of Victoria 2011

Rough guide to Catching On Early, 2011

- 1) Babies
- 2) Bodies
- 3) Rules about touching
- 4) Help seeking skills
- 5) Family and Friends
- 6) Puberty
- 7) Gender stereotypes
- 8) Sexual diversity
- 9) Conception and pregnancy



Puberty

Is puberty starting earlier?

Compelling evidence that breast development is starting at an earlier age.

- 1991 (1000 girls) 10.9 years
- 2006 (1000) 9.9 years

- First period is slightly earlier.
- 1991 13.42 years
- 2006 13.13 years

Aksglaede et al 2009

Adrenarche

The earliest hormonal changes start around 7 years of age with a surge in hormones.

Can cause first pubic hair, underarm hair, and different body odour. Or, body changes may go unnoticed.

Affects emotional wellbeing and relationships. Boys seem particularly affected.



Key messages

- Curiosity is normal and good
- Here are some good places to get information
- Sexual feelings (when they start) and interest are normal
- These are the words you can use to ask questions, so that you are not silenced.

Child sexual abuse

Lessons learned from child sexual abuse research

Self-protective skills and knowledge can be increased by school-based programs (Walsh et al 2015).

Programs are more effective if they:

- Repeat important concepts
- Last for 4 or more sessions
- Are based on concrete concepts (what is forbidden) rather than abstract notions, such as rights or feelings (Collin-Vezina et al 2013)

Gender, body image,
sexualisation

Body image

- In a 2016 study of over 1000 girls, 36% aged 7-10 said 'people make them think that the most important thing about them is how they look' (Ringrose 2017)
- 40% of boys aged 6-11 wanted to be thinner than they currently were (Jongenelis et al 2014)
- Idealised beauty norms centred around being pale-skinned, straight hair, slim but curvy with the right size breasts (Lazar 2008).

-
- Body image problems are strongly related to the sexualisation of girls (valuing sexiness and a sexy appearance strongly).
 - Girls appeared to have assimilated distinct stereotypes about sexualised girls by age 11.

Definition of sexualisation

- A person's value comes only from his or her sexual appeal or behaviour, to the exclusion of other characteristics
- A person is held to a standard that equates physical attractiveness (narrowly defined) with being sexy
- A person is sexually objectified (made into a thing for others' sexual use, rather than seen as a person with the capacity for independent action and decision making) and/or
- Sexuality is inappropriately imposed upon a person.

(American Psychological Association 2010)

LGBTI

Transgender or gender diverse, Sistergirl or Brotherboy

“It was fine until I hit puberty; that’s when things started to go downhill. I started to not be myself and tried to conform to society’s expectations of a female. At 17, at the end of high school I just came out as transgender and things looked up.

“Overall my community reacted pretty well. My friends know me pretty well and I guess they saw it coming to be honest.

For the wider community, especially the Aboriginal community, surprisingly being in an urban setting they’ve been pretty like, accepting of me...,”One of my biggest supports would have to be my Dad. He’s an Aboriginal man and I seriously thought ‘Wow!

Kai Clancy, in *OMG I’m Trans!* (Minus 18)



Adding inclusive language

Most females have a vagina, some do not.

Most of the time when a baby is born with a penis they will be a boy. Sometimes they will not.

Sometimes a doctor might not know how to tell whether someone is a boy or a girl, but doctors can always tell once a person can say whether they are a boy or a girl.'

In schools, where anti-homophobia policies are known to the students, young people are less likely to be abused and less likely to engage in self-harm or suicidal behaviours



(Hillier et al 2010).

Consent

'Unwanted' sex

25% of young people who had had sex, had experienced unwanted sex.

- Young women (28%)
- Young men (20%)

The reasons for unwanted sex were:

- Pressure from a partner (53%)
- Being drunk (49%)
- "I was frightened" (28%)

Understanding 'consent'

Young people understand consent as 'mutuality, approval and permission'.

However when real life contexts are added - alcohol, relationship, sexting, what she was wearing - then they may not identify sexual assault when it happens.

It was a bit her fault for wearing that top. It is a bit her fault.

(young woman, 14 years)

Ethical use of communication technology

~~Sexting~~

Of Year 10 – Year 12 students

- 54% received
- 26% sent

If sexually active:

- 84% received a sexually explicit text (72% sent one).
- 50% sent a nude or explicit photo or video of themselves.
- 70% received one.

Year 8 girls:

If they want it [a blow job] they will ask [by text] every single day until you say yes.

I don't get why boys always send stuff they want to do to you or pictures of what they want to do to you.

He says, 'Oh would you give me blows, that means suck my dick?' and I was like, 'No not really' and then he said, 'Why?' and I said, 'Because I'm not like that', but he became furious ... I ended up deleting him.'

Kamal explains how he has a picture of his girlfriend's cleavage/bra:

I: Would you put it on like BB?

R: Yeah, I have put it on BB. Its my profile picture

Adding ethical use of communication technology

Topic 4 — What to do when you think you like someone



Sexually explicit media

Pornography

There is very little robust research looking at porn use, exposure and harms among children.

Pornography use is associated with some harms (in adolescent and adult populations), esp. violent pornography and when watching frequently. These harms should be taken seriously.

here are correlations but there is little evidence to say that pornography causes harms in adolescents and young adults.

Many adolescents and young adults enjoy porn and have described positive effects of pornography use.

The **Burnet Institute** and the WA Commissioner for Children and Young People.

What things on the internet would bother people your age?

- Conduct-related risks (30%)
- Pornographic content (27%)
- Other contents (19%)
- Violent content (12%)
- The proportion of children identifying risks rose quickly between the ages of 9-13.
- 11% of 9-10 year olds had seen sexual images and 91% (of this 10%) had been bothered as a result.
- 56% of 15-16 year olds who had seen sexual images. 21% of this group were upset by it.

shame



Adding clear guidance

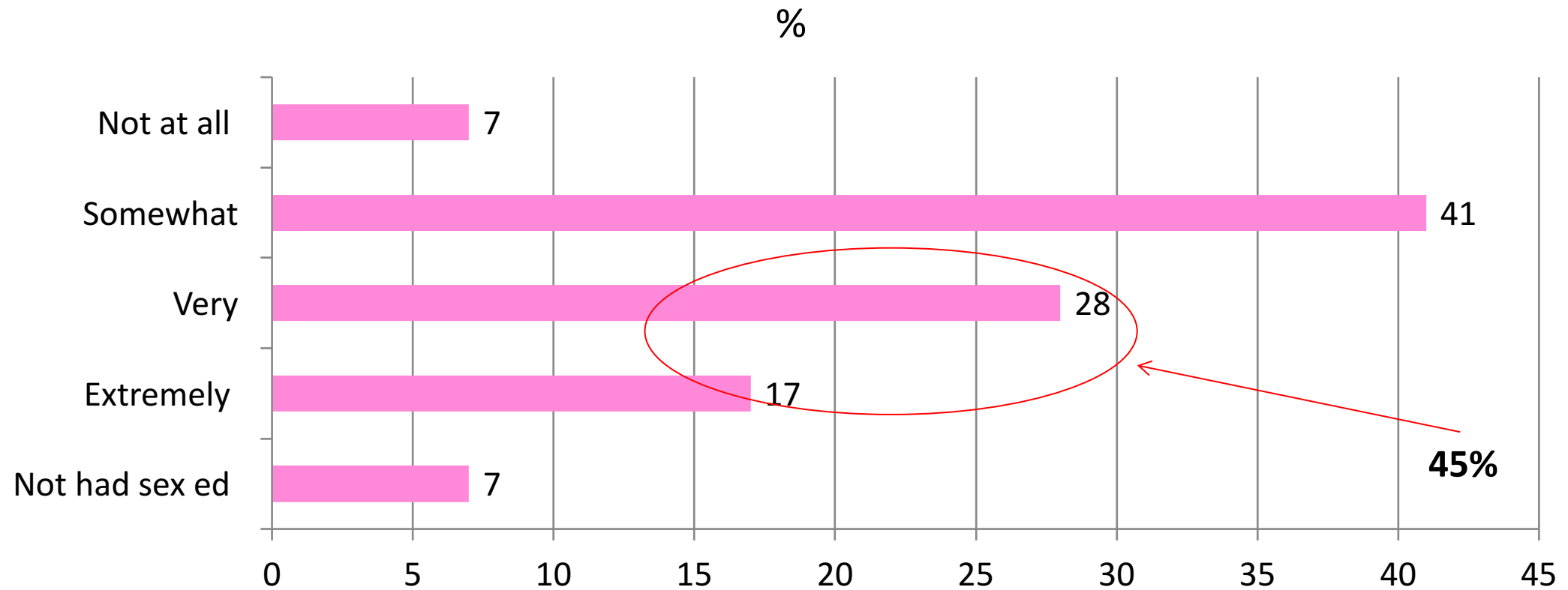
For 7-8 year olds

Sometimes people see pictures or videos that can be surprising or shocking. Even naked people kissing and touching each other. Come and let me know if that ever happens to you. Don't show other kids.

Close the page. Tell the adult. Don't show other kids.

What do young people
want?

How relevant did you find sexuality/relationship classes?



Less biology

- Managing relationships
 - Consent
 - How to say no and stay safe
 - Emotions
 - Sexual pleasure
- Contraception other than condoms
- Body image
- Legal issues around sex
- Information about LGBTI

Catching On Early 2011

- 1) Babies
- 2) Bodies
- 3) Rules about touching
- 4) Help seeking skills
- 5) Family and Friends (healthy/unhealthy r'ships)
- 6) Puberty
- 7) Gender stereotypes
- 8) Sexual diversity
- 9) Conception and pregnancy

Walsh J (in development) *Modern love: new sexuality education for primary school children*

2017

- 1) Babies
- 2) Bodies
- 3) Rules about touching/**boundary setting/consent**
- 4) Help seeking skills
- 5) Family and Friends/**communication skills**
- 6) Puberty (**more on sexual feelings**)
- 7) Gender stereotypes
- 8) Sexual diversity
- 9) Conception and pregnancy
- 10) Gender diversity**
- 11) Media monitor – body image/sexual messages**
- 12) Digital citizenship**

Years 7 and 8

Why Do People Kiss?

When is it 'right' - mutually wanted, reciprocal, with a reasonable expectation of pleasure, and no-one is pressured to do it.

Gender stereotypes

How do they impact on how we judge ourselves and treat one another, and is it fair?

Sexual harassment

What's ok and not ok?

Dealing with pressure to send sexts or do sexual things.

Working Things Out

Assertive communication, negotiating with friends

Setting and communicating boundaries

What do you do when you think you like someone.

Sexuality on the Internet –the effect of images, videos online on young people's understanding of sex and relationships

Sexual and gender diversity

www.lovesexrelationships.edu.au

Years 9 and 10

Love and emotions

Managing BIG feelings; what do we hope for from love and relationships

Sexual ethics

Taking care of me, taking care of you, checking in, and having an equal say.

Starting and ending relationships

How to get to know someone. How to end a relationship kindly. Grieving a broken relationship.

Sluts and studs

Do sexual double standards exist?
What's fair, what's ethical?

Sexual and gender diversity

Understanding, including and making school welcoming.

Sex and non-verbal communication

Test your 'reading' skills and what do you do if you are unsure of their meaning? (A-you gotta check).

School-based RSE improves sexual health.

Those who report lessons at school as main source of information are:

- Less likely to have had unsafe sex in past year than those receiving most information from other (non-parental) sources.
- Tend to be older the first time they have sex.
- Less likely to report having had an STI diagnosis.
- Women more likely to report being 'sexually competent' the first time they have sex (ie, both partners are 'equally willing'; contraception used; not due to peer pressure, drunkenness or drugs; sex occurs at the perceived 'right time')
- Less likely to report non-volitional sex, abortion or distress about sex.

Thank you



Bibliography

Aksglaede L, Sørensen K, Petersen JH, Skakkebaek NE & Juul A. 2009, 'Recent decline in age at breast development: the Copenhagen Puberty Study', *Pediatrics*, vol. 123, no. 5, DOI: 10.1542/peds.2008-2491.

American Psychological Association Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls 2007, *Report of the APA Task Force of the Sexualization of Girls*, Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. Accessed 3 August 2017, <<http://www.apa.org/pi/women/programs/girls/report.aspx>>

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006, *Personal Safety Survey Australia 2005*, Cat. no. 4906.0, Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia. Accessed 10 October 2016, <[http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/4906.02005%20\(Reissue\)?OpenDocument](http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/4906.02005%20(Reissue)?OpenDocument)>

Australian Human Rights Commission 2015, *Resilient Individuals: Sexual Orientation Gender Identity and Intersex Rights 2015*. Canberra: Australian Human Rights Commission.

Bromfield L, Hirte C, Octoman O & Katz I 2017, *Child Sexual Abuse in Australian Institutional Contexts 2008–13: Findings from Administrative Data*. Sydney: Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Commonwealth of Australia 2016, 'Burnet Institute, Submission 61' cited in *Harm being done to Australian children through access to pornography on the Internet*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

Commonwealth of Australia (2016) 'Commissioner for Children and Young People (WA), Submission 14' cited in *Harm being done to Australian children through access to pornography on the Internet*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

Collin-Vézine D, Daigneault I & Hébert M 2013, 'Lessons learned from child sexual abuse research: prevalence, outcomes, and preventive strategies' *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health*, Jul 18;7(1):22.

Coy M, Kelly L, Elvines F, Garner M & Kanyeredzi A 2013, *Sex without consent, I suppose that is rape: how young people in England understand sexual consent*. London: Office of the Children's Commissioner. Accessed 2 August 2017 <https://servicesforeducation.files.wordpress.com/2013/12/sex_without_consent_i_suppose_that_is_rape_newprint.pdf>.

Coy M, Kelly L, Vera-Gray F, Garner, M & Kanyeredzi A 2016, 'From "no means no" to an enthusiastic "yes": Changing the Discourse on Sexual Consent Through Sex and Relationships Education' In book: *Global Perspectives and Key Debates in Sex and Relationships Education: Addressing Issues of Gender, Sexuality, Plurality and Power*, UK: Palgrave Macmillan UK, DOI 10.1057/9781137500229

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2011, *Catching On Early – Sexuality education for Victorian primary schools*, Melbourne: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Green L, Brady D, Holloway D, Staksrud E, & Olafasson K 2013, *What Bothers Australian Kids Online? Children Comment On Bullies, Porn And Violence*. QLD: ARC Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation.

Hillier L, Jones T, Monagle M, Overton N, Gahan L, Blackman J & Mitchell A 2010 [Writing Themselves in 3: The third national study on the sexual health and wellbeing of same sex attracted and gender questioning young people](#) Melbourne: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University. Accessed on 03/09/2015.

Jones T 2016, 'The needs of students with intersex variations', *Sex Education: Sexuality, Society and Learning*. vol 16. no. 6.

Jongenelis M, Byrne S & Pettigrew S 2014, 'Self-objectification, body image disturbance, and eating disorder symptoms in young Australian children' *Body image*, vol 11, no. 3, pp. 290-302

Mahfouda S, Moore JK, Siafarikas A, Zepf FD & Lin A 2017, 'Puberty suppression in transgender children and adolescents', *The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology*, 2017 May 22. pii: S2213-8587(17)30099-2. DOI: 10.1016/S2213-8587(17)30099-2. [Epub ahead of print]

McClelland SI & Tolman DL 2014, 'Adolescent Sexuality'. In Teo T (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Critical Psychology* (pp. 40-47). London: Springer Reference

Minus18 2015, *OMG I'm Trans!* Melbourne: Minus18. Accessed 4 August 2017 < <https://minus18.org.au/index.php/resource-packs/omg-i-m-trans>>

Mitchell A, Patrick K, Heywood W, Blackman P, Pitts M. 2014. *5th National Survey of Australian Secondary Students and Sexual Health 2013*, (ARCSHS Monograph Series No. 97), Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia.

Mundy, L (2017, August 15) Book Review: The New Puberty, *The Conversation*. Accessed 21 August 2017, <<https://theconversation.com/book-review-the-new-puberty-80877>>

Pound P, Denford S, Shucksmith J, Tanton C, Johnson AM, Owen J, Hutten R, Mohan L, Bonell C, Abraham C & Campbell R 2017, 'What is best practice in sex and relationship education? A synthesis of evidence, including stakeholders' views' *BMJ Open* 2017;7:e014791. DOI:10.1136/bmjopen-2016-014791

Riggs, D & Giffney N (n.d) *Schools Working with Gender Variant Children*. Gender Identity Australia. Accessed 2 August 2017 <www.genderidentityaustralia.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/School-Information-Sheet.pdf>

Ringrose J 2017, *Submission of Evidence for Youth Select Committee 2017: Inquiry into Body Image*. London: University College.

Ringrose J, Harvey L, Gill R, & Livingstone S 2013, 'Teen girls, sexual double standards and 'sexting': Gendered value in digital image exchange'. *Feminist Theory*, 14 (3). pp. 305-323.

Ringrose J, Gill R, Livingstone S & Harvey L (2012) *A Qualitative Study of Children, Young People and 'Sexting'*, London: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Walsh J (in development) *Modern love: new sexuality education for primary school children*. Melbourne: Kakapo Press

Walsh J, Mitchell A & Hudson M (2016) *The Practical Guide to Love, Sex and Relationships for Years 7 – 10*, Melbourne: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University. Accessed 1 August 2017
<www.lovesexrelationships.edu.au>

Walsh K, Zwi K, Woolfenden S, Shlonsky A. 2015 'School-based education programmes for the prevention of child sexual abuse' *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2015*, Issue 4. Art. No.: CD004380. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD004380.pub3.