

# NZHEA position statement on quality sexuality education in *The New Zealand Curriculum*



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NZHEA would like to reinforce the importance of quality sexuality education learning experiences as part of health education in *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007). This information may be useful to teachers, SLT and/or Boards of Trustees.

## Key considerations for planning for sexuality education include:

- The Ministry of Education's 2015 revised Sexuality Guide for Principals, Boards of Trustees and Teachers<sup>1</sup> is an excellent document to refer to when planning for curriculum-linked learning experiences in sexuality education. It also provides advice for sexuality education in the wider school, community consultation and best practice in engaging with external providers to support sexuality education. The guide recommends 12-15 hours of sexuality education in each of the years of secondary schooling, based on a report from ERO, 2007.
- Schools are required under the Education Act (Section 60B) to consult with their communities once every two years on the delivery of health education. See the NZHEA website<sup>2</sup> for a guide to developing a health education delivery statement, in line with the requirements. Another resource is a NZ PE Teacher podcast of NZHEA co-chairperson, Rachael Dixon, addressing some of the myths around consulting with your community around health education<sup>3</sup>.
- It is NZHEA's belief that quality learning experiences in sexuality education, as part of a wider health education programme of learning, need to align closely with all aspects of *The New Zealand Curriculum*. This includes effective pedagogy, which reinforces the central role of the teacher. While external providers can be used to support health and sexuality education learning, one-off speakers are not known to be effective. Teachers and schools need to be critical before, during and after engaging with external providers. See the Sexuality Education Guide and the NZHEA website for a document providing guidance in this area.
- *The New Zealand Curriculum* is a framework curriculum, and does not specifically prescribe content to be covered. The Sexuality Education Guide does provide some ideas for teaching and learning for curriculum levels 1-8, however. Teaching about 'consent' or 'pornography' or other topics/issues need to be connected to a broader health education programme of learning, connected to the underlying concepts, strands and achievement objectives of the Health and Physical Education learning area.
- NZHEA has a number of resources available for planning, teaching and learning, and PLD activities in NZ schools, in relation to sexuality education. This includes a curriculum-linked resource for exploring issues relating to pornography. These resources can be downloaded from: <https://healtheducation.org.nz/sexuality-education/>

## Reference:

Ministry of Education (2007). *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media.

<sup>1</sup> <http://health.tki.org.nz/Teaching-in-HPE/Policy-guidelines/Sexuality-education-a-guide-for-principals-boards-of-trustees-and-teachers>

<sup>2</sup> <https://healtheducation.org.nz/sexuality-education/planning/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nzpeteacher.com/2016/10/26/episode-6-health-consultation/>