

**Response to The Sex and Relationship Education Delivery  
Review**



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The Sex and Relationship Education Delivery Review Group is addressing a number of important questions regarding sex and relationship education in schools.

- We believe it is vital that the Government resists the call to add sex and relationship education to the National Curriculum;
- that parents are best placed to provide guidance on sexual relationships and provide role-models for their children; and
- Finally we believe that more should be done to encourage sexual abstinence and promote marriage as the only safe and acceptable place for sexual relationships.

Some experts have expressed concern that young people are being given poor sex and relationship education as a direct result of what schools they attend, and it has been suggested that the government should add Sex and Relationship Education to the National Curriculum. The government has stated that it will not be taking this drastic step, and we wholeheartedly concur with this decision. We believe that nationalising the sex and relationship education curriculum is not the answer to the problem of poor sex and relationship education.

In Article 2 of the Protocol of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the right of parents to ensure education with which they are comfortable for their children is ensured. The government has protected this right by providing and encouraging a number of types of schools which parents can choose for their children. These schools have a variety of ethos, and as a result of parents being allowed to choose, parents are encouraged to have more involvement with their children's education. As a consequence of this parental involvement, each school is in the best position to work with its parents to develop a curriculum reflecting the views of the community and its parents. If the government were to implement Sex and Relationship Education as a part of the National Curriculum, the government would be destroying the efficacy of those parents' choices. Furthermore, it would be completely ignoring the differences of each community it has sought to protect. It does not make sense for the government to encourage the development of schools,

like faith schools, with diverse views, but then to disallow those schools from remaining true to those diverse views when it comes to sex education, one of the most important areas of education.

Furthermore, making sex and relationship education a part of the National Curriculum would undermine the influence of parents in educating their children. Parents are in the best position to teach their children the importance of healthy and lasting relationships and the proper role for sex within a marriage, and it is from parents that children will find role models and the best advice on sex and relationships. If sex education were standardised, parents would be discouraged from playing an active role in their children's education. The government should encourage the interaction of governors, teachers, and parents with regard to sex and relationship education, so that young people can receive the best education when it comes to this crucial topic.

Other people have urged the lowering of the age for the beginning of sex and relationship education, asserting that primary school children should be educated in some manner. They use statistics from the Netherlands to support their assertions that lowering the age at which sexual education begins lowers the pregnancy rate. However, this analysis of the statistics disregards the fact that Netherlands has a much stronger family structure; in fact, the State's sex education policy states "Good sex education is important in preventing unwanted pregnancies. This is the responsibility of parents, but schools can also make a contribution." The Netherlands' statistics demonstrate the vital role parents play in raising confident, sexually responsible children who understand the proper place and role of sex.

The government should attempt to facilitate parental involvement, as well as the involvement of teachers and outside educators. If the sex and relationship education of children becomes a community effort, children will be more able to resist pressure and have a positive and proper outlook on sex and relationships.

In order to continue encouraging high standards of sex and relationship education within each school, the government should provide schools and communities with good resources. These resources should aid governors, educators, and parents, in their quests to provide quality sex and relationship education. These resources should include those which equip young people to resist pressure to become sexually active, those which teach relationship skills in addition to factual information, those that raise awareness of STIs and pregnancy, and those which explain honestly that the only “safe sex” takes place within a marriage.

By providing resources, guidance, and support for parents and educators, the government will create the most direct and positive impact on children with regard to sex and relationship education.

About Christian Concern for our Nation (CCFON)

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