



Information Note

Sexuality education

Research Office
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1. Introduction

1.1 As young people grow up, they face important decisions about relationships and sexuality. The decisions they make can impact on their health and well-being for the rest of their lives. Sexuality education¹ enables young people to acquire the knowledge, skills and values to make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual and social relationships, as well as being better equipped to protect themselves against coercive or abusive sexual activities, unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections ("STIs").

1.2 In 2009, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ("UNESCO") published the International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education ("International Technical Guidance") as a voluntary set of international standards for conducting sexuality education. It aims to serve as a global template that can be adapted for use in places which take a comprehensive, rights-based² and anti-discriminatory approach to sexuality education, under which various aspects of sexuality such as sexual behaviour, sexual and reproductive health, gender equality and gender identity are covered.

1.3 While the International Technical Guidance provides a platform for conducting sexuality education within a structured teaching and learning process, sexuality education is undoubtedly one of the most controversial subjects in the school curriculum. The approach, content and delivery mode adopted for sexuality education vary greatly among different places, which are shaped by the values and views of key stakeholders including parents, school

¹ Many people use the terms "sex education" and "sexuality education" interchangeably. Yet, sex education usually focuses on the physical aspects of human sexuality, whereas sexuality education covers a broader scope of human sexuality to include the psychological and social aspects as well.

² The International Technical Guidance supports a rights-based approach in which values such as respect, acceptance, tolerance, equality, empathy and reciprocity are inextricably linked to universally agreed human rights.

administrators, teachers, non-governmental organizations ("NGOs"), religious leaders and faith-based organizations in individual places.

1.4 Some overseas places such as Taiwan, Sweden and the Netherlands have adopted a liberal, comprehensive approach to provide students with age-appropriate knowledge and skills for making informed choices about their sexuality. In contrast, places like Singapore and the United States have adopted a conservative, abstinence approach which encourages young people to delay their sexual activities until marriage and avoids sensitive topics such as sexual behaviour and contraception.

1.5 In Hong Kong, it has been the policy of the Government to integrate various aspects of sexuality education into relevant school subjects rather than to treat it as a separate subject. This cross-curricular approach is supplemented by topic-related extra-curricular activities such as talks, workshops and exhibitions organized by schools. The Government has also issued guidelines on sexuality education and relevant curriculum guides for schools' reference in implementing sexuality education, but individual schools have the flexibility to adopt the approach, content and delivery mode in accordance with their background, mission, ethos and resources.

1.6 Notwithstanding the above, there are renewed calls from the Family Planning Association of Hong Kong for strengthening comprehensive sexuality education consequential to the release of the findings of its Youth Sexuality Study 2016.³ According to the study, Secondary Three ("S3") – Secondary Six ("S6") students scored an average of eight correct answers out of the 12 key questions about conception, STIs and human immunodeficiency virus ("HIV")/acquired immune deficiency syndrome ("AIDS") in 2016, down from nine in 2011. The average score of Secondary One ("S1") – Secondary Two ("S2") students, already unsatisfactory at six in 2011, further dropped to five in 2016.

1.7 The respective studies conducted by the Department of Health and the University of Hong Kong on the sexual well-being of the Hong Kong people have added to the concern over the effectiveness of sexuality education in Hong Kong. According to the Department of Health,⁴ the number of reported HIV infection cases surged from 181 in 1997 to 692 in 2016. Among the 692 cases, about 28% of the persons diagnosed with HIV were aged

³ The Association conducts the survey every five years since 1981, which monitors changing trends in local youngsters' knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to sexuality. See The Family Planning Association of Hong Kong (2017b).

⁴ See Centre for Health Protection (2017).

between 20 and 29. Similarly, the study conducted by the University of Hong Kong⁵ between 2014 and 2016 showed that the prevalence of *Chlamydia trachomatis*⁶ (沙眼衣原體) was as high as 6% among females aged 18-26 who reported having sexual experience in the past 12 months. The prevalence was also at a high of 5% among males aged 18-26.⁷

1.8 At the request of Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan, the Research Office has prepared this information note aiming to provide background information on (a) the International Technical Guidance developed by UNESCO; (b) the development of sexuality education in Hong Kong; and (c) the salient features of sexuality education in Singapore and Taiwan where different approaches have been adopted for implementing the related programmes. The information note also highlights the measures recently introduced in Ontario of Canada and England of the United Kingdom ("UK") to reform their respective sexuality education curriculum, in a move to cope with the societal changes and corresponding changes in sexuality education needs of their young people.

2. International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education

2.1 UNESCO has developed the International Technical Guidance based on, among others, a review of 87 studies from around the world about the impact of sexuality education programmes on sexual behaviour.⁸ According to the review, sexuality education programmes that encouraged more than abstinence as methods of protection against pregnancy and STIs had not hastened the initiation or increase of sexual activities. Some of the studies reviewed by UNESCO also indicated positive impacts of sexuality education such as (a) lowering the frequency of unprotected sexual activities; (b) reducing the number of sexual partners; and/or (c) increasing the use of protection against unintended pregnancy and STIs during sexual intercourse.

⁵ See The University of Hong Kong (2017).

⁶ Infection with *Chlamydia trachomatis* is the most common notifiable STI globally.

⁷ The overall prevalence of *Chlamydia trachomatis* in Hong Kong was at 1.4%.

⁸ The evaluated programmes had to be STI, HIV, sex or relationship education programmes which were curriculum-based and group-based; and the curricula had to encourage more than abstinence as methods of protection against pregnancy and STIs.

2.2 The sexuality education framework developed under the International Technical Guidance targets at four age levels⁹ ranging from children aged five to young people aged 18 and over. Under the framework, the topics of a sexuality education programme are organized under six key concepts, each of which are divided into learning objectives and key ideas for each of the four age-based levels in order to provide a template for curriculum development. The key concepts and the related topics are shown in **Appendix I**.

2.3 UNESCO has also identified a number of common characteristics of effective sexuality education programmes, including: (a) focusing on clear goals in determining the curriculum content; (b) designing activities that are sensitive to community values and consistent with available resources; (c) giving clear messages about risk and protective behaviours to reduce risk of STIs or pregnancy; and (d) employing participatory teaching methods that actively involve students and help them internalize and integrate information. Based on good practices of educational institutions, UNESCO has further recommended enhancing the effectiveness of sexuality education programme through (a) implementing programmes that include sequential sessions over several years to build knowledge; (b) deploying capable and motivated educators to implement the curriculum; (c) rendering quality training to educators; and (d) providing on-going management and supervision of the programmes by the school administrators.

3. Development of sexuality education in Hong Kong

3.1 In Hong Kong, the implementation of sexuality education in schools dates back to 1971, when the former Education Department ("ED") (now the Education Bureau) issued a memorandum to all schools to include sex education topics in their standard subjects and provide a concise list of suggestions on what could be taught. It was not until 1986 that ED issued the "Guidelines on Sex Education in Secondary Schools" ("the 1986 Guidelines") containing more detailed recommendations on topics, resources and reference for promoting the implementation of sexuality education programmes in secondary schools.¹⁰ In 1997, ED published a revised set of guidelines – the

⁹ The four age levels are (a) five to eight; (b) nine to 12; (c) 12 to 15; and (d) 15 to 18 and above.

¹⁰ See Ho, P. & Tsang, K. T. (2012).

"Guidelines on Sex Education in Schools" ("the 1997 Guidelines") – aiming to further strengthen the implementation of sexuality education in schools.¹¹

Guidelines on Sex Education in Schools

3.2 According to the 1997 Guidelines, the contents of sexuality education should not be confined only to facts, attitudes and skills related to reproductive physiology, marriage and family. Sexuality education should also cover education on the understanding of oneself, the relationship with others and the inculcation of human values. As such, the 1997 Guidelines set out a more comprehensive approach towards implementing sexuality education, covering a broader conceptual framework relating to different aspects of human sexuality and putting greater emphasis on gender education. The guidelines also target at a broader range of students from pre-primary to secondary levels.¹²

3.3 In line with the above, the 1997 Guidelines lay down five key sexuality concepts and the related topics to be covered in different stages of learning (see **Appendix II**). It is expected that a structured learning process could help students (a) acquire accurate and comprehensive knowledge about sexuality and the consequences of sexual behaviour; (b) explore one's attitudes toward sex, marriage and family, and develop better decision-making and communication skills related to relationships and sexuality; and (c) develop positive values and responsible behaviour.

3.4 According to the Education Bureau, the 1997 Guidelines are only for the reference of schools in implementing sexuality education and should not be strictly enforced. As such, key learning elements of sexuality education¹³ are integrated into the Moral and Civic Education curriculum and the curricula of the key learning areas/subjects of primary and secondary schools.

¹¹ ED conducted three surveys among secondary schools in 1987, 1990 and 1994 respectively to inquire into how the 1986 Guidelines were implemented in schools. The surveys indicated that the coverage of the sexuality education programmes implemented in schools was not broad enough and many schools had avoided some sensitive and controversial topics in sexuality education.

¹² See Fok, S. C. (2005).

¹³ These elements include personal development, hygiene, puberty, making friends, dating, marriage, protecting the body and gender equality.

3.5 In Hong Kong, Moral and Civic Education aims at nurturing students' positive values and attitudes, and developing a range of perspectives on personal and social issues. The Moral and Civic Education curriculum framework was last revised in 2008 to include content and expected learning outcomes related to sexuality education for various stages of learning, thereby helping schools implement sexuality education more systematically.¹⁴ In the Moral and Civic Education curriculum framework, contents relating to sexuality education include gender awareness, respecting others, protecting one's body, getting along with the opposite sex, handling the sex impulse, and dealing with social issues relating to sex. The expected learning outcomes, which are listed in **Appendix III**, are to help students develop positive values and attitudes towards their social and sexual relationships.

3.6 In addition to Moral and Civic Education, the Education Bureau has included learning elements/topics related to sexuality education in the curriculum guide of various key learning areas/subjects of primary and secondary schools. The relevant key learning areas include (a) personal, social and humanities education; (b) science education; and (c) technology education. As to the relevant subjects, they include: (a) General Studies for primary students; (b) Life and Society, Science, and Home Economics/Technology and Living for junior secondary students; and (c) Liberal Studies, Biology, Ethics and Religious Studies, Technology and Living, and Health Management and Social Care for senior secondary students.¹⁵ A summary of the key learning elements/topics related to sexuality education covered under the curriculum guide of the above subjects are shown in **Appendix IV**.

Implementation of sexuality education in primary and secondary schools

3.7 While the Education Bureau has provided the 1997 Guidelines on sexuality education and related curriculum guides for schools to follow, the implementation of sexuality education programmes is school-based. Yet, there is scanty information available in the public domain about the approach, content and delivery mode of sexuality education implemented in schools in Hong Kong. For example, the Government has included topics such as gender identity, gender role and equality in gender education, but there are few

¹⁴ See GovHK (2017).

¹⁵ See 教育局 (2012 年).

studies available in the public domain about the coverage and delivery of gender education in primary and secondary schools.¹⁶

3.8 Indeed, the territory-wide survey conducted by the Government between 2012 and 2013 ("the Government Survey") is the latest publicly available comprehensive information about the implementation of sexuality education in schools in Hong Kong.¹⁷ The survey aims to understand the situation of life skills-based education ("LSBE")¹⁸ on HIV/AIDS and sex at junior secondary school level. Major findings of the survey are highlighted in the paragraphs below.

School participation

3.9 According to the Government Survey, 72% of the 134 surveyed schools¹⁹ had provided LSBE on HIV/AIDS or sex in the 2011-2012 academic year. About 67% and 46% of them had invited NGOs and the Department of Health respectively to provide related topical programmes. These schools spent an average of around three hours for each academic level for programmes conducted by external institutions. Apart from LSBE, 86% of the surveyed schools provided AIDS or sex education through the key learning areas/subjects, and 28% of them through life-wide learning activities.²⁰ The average number of school hours spent on HIV/AIDS or sex education through these two means were around four and three hours respectively.

¹⁶ Nonetheless, some academic studies have observed that education programmes for prospective teachers did not have adequate coverage on gender related topics such as gender equality and gender diversity. Hence, there is a need for enhancing teachers' training in these areas so that teachers will become more competent in delivering gender education. See 姚偉梅等(2012年), 蔡寶瓊(2012年) 和 香港教育學院(2015年).

¹⁷ See Red Ribbon Centre of the Department of Health (2014).

¹⁸ LSBE aims at developing students' skills in problem solving, critical thinking and decision making. It also serves to develop students' self-management skills such as self-awareness and self-control, as well as communications skills including refusal, negotiation and conflict management. LSBE on HIV/AIDS includes teaching students on HIV/AIDS, its prevention and how to use condoms.

¹⁹ The Government had invited 443 schools to participate in the survey and 134 schools had participated by completing the full questionnaire. Another 225 schools had completed an abridged version of the questionnaire through telephone interviews. The survey results highlighted in paragraphs 3.9-3.12 are mainly related to the responses of the 134 schools which had completed the full questionnaire.

²⁰ According to the Education Bureau, life-wide learning refers to student learning in real contexts and authentic settings. Such experiential learning activities (e.g. talks, visits and exhibitions) enable student to achieve certain learning goals that are more difficult to attain through classroom learning alone.

Contents

3.10 About the contents, only around 60% of the surveyed schools had mentioned "how to prevent HIV" and about 80% had mentioned "condom use" through the different learning activities or programmes.²¹

Training provided

3.11 Among the 134 schools surveyed, only 66% had their teachers received training on AIDS, sex or LSBE, provided mainly by the Education Bureau such as professional development programmes ("PDPs"), or by other means such as training programmes provided by the Department of Health or NGOs, or online materials. A mean of 4.1 teachers had attended relevant PDPs since they had been working in the schools. Among these trained teachers, an average of 2.1 taught relevant topics in the last school year. However, it was also found that a mean of 4.9 teachers who had never attended any PDPs taught relevant topics in the last school year.

Major barriers in providing sexuality education

3.12 According to the Government Survey, a considerable number of schools said that the major barriers in providing effective HIV/AIDS or sex education were: (a) schools were too busy and had no time (52%);²² (b) regarded this as a low priority (50% and 25% for HIV/AIDS education and sex education respectively); (c) did not treat it as an explicit learning objective (50%); (d) lacked documented policy (75%); and (e) teachers were not well equipped to teach HIV/AIDS or sex education (74%) and lacked learning and teaching resources.

3.13 Similar findings were reported in a survey conducted by the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups in 2015, which involved 582 teachers in 51 primary and secondary schools. A significant number of surveyed teachers

²¹ Likewise, the Department of Health has observed that some schools may avoid covering sensitive topics such as contraception and usage of condom in the sexuality education programmes, while some parents may concern about the negative impact of sexuality education on their children. See Department of Health (2014).

²² Similarly, the Department of Health has stated that the heavily packed academic curriculum leaves relatively little time for schools to spend on sexuality education. See Department of Health (2014).

indicated that they lacked teaching resources or support (64%), time (54%) and/or skills (41%) to implement sexuality education in schools.²³

Implementation of sexuality education in tertiary institutions

3.14 In Hong Kong, the University Grants Committee-funded ("UGC-funded") institutions enjoy a high degree of autonomy in academic development and administration. On sexuality education, some of them have offered elective courses on sexuality or gender related topics under their respective general education or liberal studies programmes for undergraduate students. For example, the Chinese University of Hong Kong offers elective courses related to sexuality and gender education under its general education programme, while the City University of Hong Kong does the same under its gateway education programme. Yet, some of the UGC-funded institutions offer courses related to sexuality or gender education only to students specializing in areas such as gender studies, sociology or education studies.

Effectiveness of sexuality education

3.15 There are also few studies available in the public domain about the effectiveness of implementation of sexuality education in Hong Kong. However, this can be reflected by the territory-wide survey conducted by the Family Planning Association of Hong Kong every five years, which monitors changing trend in local youngsters' knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to sexuality. The latest survey – the Youth Sexuality Study 2016 – reveals youths' stabilized abortion rates, declining sexual knowledge, greater acceptance of diverse sexual orientations, and increased exposure to pornography.²⁴

Abortion rate

3.16 The proportion of females aged 18-27 who had ever had an induced abortion remained unchanged between 2006 and 2016, after being levelled off at 5% in 2006.

²³ See 香港青年協會 (2015 年).

²⁴ The Youth Sexuality Study 2016 successfully polled a total of 5 146 youths: 3 907 S1 to S6 students and 1 239 youths aged between 18 and 27. See The Family Planning Association of Hong Kong (2017b and 2017c).

Sexual knowledge and sexuality education

3.17 In 2016, about 19% to 34% of the surveyed S3-S6 students who had sexual intercourse experiences considered that they did not have sufficient knowledge about contraception. Around 57% of the surveyed S3-S6 students and 40% of S1-S2 students considered that schools should provide more on sexuality education.

3.18 Probably reflecting the above, S3-S6 students scored an average of eight correct answers out of the 12 key questions about conception, STIs and HIV/AIDS in 2016, down from nine in 2011. The average score of S1-S2 students, already unsatisfactory at six in 2011, further dropped to five in 2016.

Sexual attitudes

3.19 Compared with the 2011 survey, the 2016 survey showed youths' lower acceptance of behaviours such as having multiple dating partners, extra-marital affairs, abortion and compensated dating. On the other hand, acceptance of female homosexuality, male homosexuality, bisexuality and transgenderism was generally higher. About 60% of female respondents and 40% of male respondents accepted female and male homosexualities.

Sexual experience

3.20 The 2016 survey indicated that only 1% to 2% of S1-S2 students and 6% to 7% of S3-S6 students had experienced sexual intercourse, lower than the corresponding figures in 2011. Around 45% of the youths aged 18 to 27 had experienced sexual intercourse, more or less the same as in 2011. The mean age of first sex among these youths who had commenced sexual intercourse also remained quite constant at 19. However, around 9% of youths aged 18 to 27 who had sexual intercourse experience had not used any contraceptive measures in the six months before enumeration.

Pornography

3.21 The 2016 survey also revealed that about 33% of secondary school girls and 59% of boys had ever viewed pornography, up about five percentage points from 2011. Worryingly, one out of five boys who had viewed pornography had viewed it more than 15 times in the past month. Among all the respondents, around 15% to 20% females and 30% males had received pornographic messages or images in their mobile phones.

Recent development

3.22 In Hong Kong, there are recent cases of people sharing their experience of sexual harassment under the "#MeToo" movement.²⁵ This, coupled with the sexual abuse figures released by the Social Welfare Department and the End Child Sexual Abuse Foundation, probably reflects the insufficient education on how to protect oneself from coercive or abusive sexual activities. According to the Social Welfare Department, there were 294 reported child sexual abuse cases in 2016, up from 233 in 2006.²⁶ The End Child Sexual Abuse Foundation also reported handling 66 inquiries on suspected child sexual abuse cases in 2016, of which some 54% involved victims that were below 10 years old.²⁷ In this connection, the End Child Sexual Abuse Foundation has called for enhancing sexuality education at home and in schools, as well as starting sexuality education as early as during the kindergarten stage.

4. Sexuality education in overseas places

4.1 Similar to Hong Kong, many overseas places have implemented sexuality education to provide their young people with adequate preparation for their sexual lives, thereby protecting them from sexual coercion and abuse, unintended pregnancy and STIs. The paragraphs below study the experience of Singapore and Taiwan which reflects the adoption of different approaches in

²⁵ The "#MeToo" movement gained momentum in October 2017 on the social media to denounce sexual harassment and assault in the wake of sexual misconduct allegations against a film producer in the United States. Since then, many victims of sexual harassment or assault have shared their experiences on the social media under the movement.

²⁶ See Social Welfare Department (2017).

²⁷ See South China Morning Post (2017).

implementing sexuality education in the Asian societies. Singapore has adopted a conservative approach with emphasis on abstinence of sexual activities before marriage, whereas Taiwan has adopted a liberal, comprehensive approach to sexuality education. In addition to Singapore and Taiwan, Ontario of Canada and England of the UK are also studied as these two places have recently introduced measures to reform their sexuality education framework, in an effort to cope with the societal changes and corresponding changes in sexuality education needs of their young people.

Singapore

4.2 In Singapore, it is compulsory for all schools to provide sexuality education for their students. The Ministry of Education ("MOE") of Singapore has since 2000 implemented the sexuality education curriculum in schools to help students (a) understand the physiological, social and emotional changes they experience as they mature; (b) develop healthy and rewarding relationships; and (c) make wise, informed and responsible decisions on sexuality matters. Apart from building positive relationships and making responsible sexual decisions, MOE also intends to convey the message through the sexuality education curriculum that practising abstinence before marriage is the best protection against STIs, HIV and unwanted pregnancies.²⁸

4.3 MOE has designed a structured curriculum on sexuality education for students from Primary Five ("P5") to pre-university (junior college/centralized institute)²⁹ levels. The curriculum revolves around five main themes, namely: (a) human development; (b) interpersonal relationships; (c) sexual health; (d) sexual behaviour; and (e) culture, society and law. These themes are delivered through the following programmes and subjects: (a) Growing Years programme³⁰ for students of all relevant levels; (b) Empowered Teens

²⁸ According to the Ministry of Education (2016b), "[a]bstinence before marriage is the best course of action for teenagers. Sexuality Education teaches students the possible consequences of sexual activity and that pre-marital sex is not desirable as there are inherent risks."

²⁹ In Singapore, students can either enter a junior college for a two year pre-university course or a centralized institute for a three year pre-university course after completing the GCE "O" level examination. The objective of the junior colleges and centralized institutes is to prepare students for the university course.

³⁰ According to MOE, the Growing Years programme is offered at P5, P6, lower secondary, upper secondary and junior college/centralized institute levels according to the students' developmental needs. The programme addresses the physical, emotional, social and ethical aspects of sexuality. It covers topics such as building rewarding and responsible relationships, dating, going steady and marriage, issues in sexual health and behaviours, consequences of teenage sexual activity and pregnancies, and influence of the media.

("eTeens") programme³¹ for S3 and junior college/centralized institute year one students; (c) Character and Citizenship Education for students of all relevant levels; (d) Science for primary and secondary students; (e) form teacher guidance period for primary students; and (f) programmes by MOE-approved external providers.

4.4 MOE has laid down guidelines on the amount of teaching time spent on the Growing Years programme and the eTeens programme for students of each academic level. For example, P5 and P6 students are required to spend four hours each year on the Growing Years programme. For secondary students, the corresponding curriculum time is five hours each year for each level. While all government schools have to adopt the Growing Years programme, independent and faith-based government-aided schools may conduct their own sexuality education programmes which are required to be aligned to the MOE framework for sexuality education.

4.5 Other salient features of MOE's sexuality education programmes include that: (a) schools are required to deploy specially selected and MOE-trained teachers who possess values that are aligned with MOE values to teach the Growing Years programme and the classroom-based lessons of the eTeens programme; (b) external providers delivering the eTeens programme have to be approved by MOE;³² (c) MOE acknowledges the role of parents in sexuality education and encourages their participation in the process; and (d) parents can opt their children out of the Growing Years and eTeens programmes, and/or supplementary sexuality education programmes delivered by MOE-approved external providers.

4.6 Some stakeholders have raised concerns about MOE's emphasis on abstinence in its sexuality education framework and the inadequate coverage on contraception for preventing STIs and unwanted pregnancies as more

³¹ The eTeens programme is a STIs/HIV prevention programme developed by the Health Promotion Board in collaboration with MOE aiming to empower students to make wise, informed and sensible decisions relating to their sexual lives. The programme provides students with accurate information on STIs, HIV and protection from a health perspective. Besides, it promotes the key message that abstinence before marriage is the best course of action for teenagers. Students are also taught skills such as decision-making, assertiveness and how to say "no" to sexual advances and negative peer pressure. The programme is taught in two segments, namely a one-hour mass talk and classroom-based lesson(s) to S3 students and a 45-minute mass talk to junior college/centralized institute year one students.

³² Before 2008, schools had the autonomy to choose the service providers of sexuality education. At that time, the sexuality education programme delivered by an NGO advocating women's rights and gender equality had been criticized for promoting homosexuality and suggesting approval of pre-marital sex. The controversy had subsequently led MOE to tighten control over the service providers of sexuality education.

young people are having an open attitude towards sex.³³ Besides, some stakeholders have considered that Singapore's sexuality education framework lacks coverage on gender diversity,³⁴ and does not allow enough room for students to discuss about healthy model of consent and safety.³⁵

4.7 In response, MOE has indicated that information on STIs, HIV, teenage pregnancies and how to prevent them has been included in the sexuality education curriculum since the mid-2000s to address the rising incidence of STIs among teenagers. Probably reflecting the change in the curriculum, the incidence of STIs among individuals aged between 10 and 19 decreased from around 800 cases in 2007 to about 400 cases in 2013.³⁶ Besides, babies born to girls aged below 19 decreased from 820 in 2007 to 406 in 2014, and abortions performed on girls aged below 20 decreased from 1 363 in 2007 to 449 in 2014.³⁷

Taiwan

4.8 In Taiwan, it is required by law to conduct sexuality education, including gender equity education, in schools. The relevant legislation includes the Child and Youth Sexual Exploitation Prevention Act 《兒童及少年性剝削防制條例》, the Sexual Assault Crime Prevention Act 《性侵害犯罪防治法》 and the Gender Equity Education Act 《性別平等教育法》. With the legislative framework in place, sexuality education has been integrated into the school curriculum for primary and secondary/vocational schools since the late 1990s. The Gender Equity Education Act, which was enacted in 2004,³⁸ further provides that all primary and secondary schools, and junior colleges have to integrate gender equity education into their curriculum. The Act also requires all primary and junior secondary students to participate in at least four hours of courses or activities on gender equity in each term.

³³ See Asia Sentinel (2012).

³⁴ See Liew, W. M. (2014).

³⁵ See Kwan, J. Y. (2011).

³⁶ See Department of Sexually Transmitted Infections Control (2015).

³⁷ See The Straits Times (2016).

³⁸ The Gender Equity Education Act originated from the feminist movement in Taiwan in the 1980s. The sexual assault and murder of a feminist in 1996 and the death of a transgender student who had been bullied before he died in 2000 had prompted the Taiwanese government to pass the Gender Equity Education Act in 2004. The legislation aims to address gender equity issues including sexual assaults and gender identity, eliminate gender discrimination, and improve the education resources and environment for promoting gender equality.

4.9 For primary and junior secondary students, learning themes/topics of sexuality education have been integrated into the Health and Physical Education curriculum under the themes of growth and development, mental health, and collective health. The core messages to be conveyed include: (a) importance of sex to one's physical and psychological health, and harmony of the family and society; (b) building good interpersonal relationship and its impact on the family and society; and (c) understanding AIDS and its prevention by practising safe sex. For senior secondary/vocational school students, relevant learning topics are integrated into the Health and Nursing curriculum, focusing on developing positive sexual values and attitudes, respect for persons with different sexual orientation, life skills for building healthy relationships, and knowledge, attitudes and behaviours for promoting sexual health (including knowledge about STIs, HIV and contraception).

4.10 Learning themes/topics relating to gender equity education are integrated into the curriculum of relevant learning areas. Key learning topics include: (a) growth and development; (b) gender identity; (c) gender roles and breakthrough of their limits; (d) interaction of different genders; (e) gender equality; and (f) issues relating to gender rights. As stipulated in the Gender Equity Education Act, the Ministry of Education of Taiwan ("MOET") and the local authorities have set up their respective gender equity education committees tasked with, among others, (a) promoting research and development of curricula, pedagogy and assessments on gender equity education; and (b) supervising and evaluating gender equity-related activities carried out by schools and social education institutions under their jurisdiction. Schools are also required to set up a gender equity education committee to plan and implement gender equity education at the school level.

4.11 In addition to the school curriculum, MOET has adopted various measures to strengthen the delivery of sexuality education. These measures include (a) commissioning the Taiwan Association for Sexuality Education³⁹ (台灣性教育學會) and the Mercy Memorial Foundation⁴⁰ (杏陵醫學基金會) to operate a sexuality education website, a resource centre and an enquiry hotline for access by teachers, parents and students; (b) providing training to more teachers who are responsible for planning and conducting sexuality education in schools; (c) supervising the implementation of sexuality

³⁹ The Taiwan Association for Sexuality Education comprises academics and professionals specializing in sexuality education and sex therapy. The Association aims at promoting research and services related to sexuality education and fostering cooperation with overseas counterparts.

⁴⁰ The Mercy Memorial Foundation is a non-profit group promoting family values and sexuality education in Taiwan.

education in selected primary and secondary schools, and sharing of their successful experience with other schools; and (d) supporting tertiary institutions to implement programmes to promote sexuality education on campus and encouraging experience sharing among them.

4.12 Indicative of the positive impact of sexuality education on young people's sexual behaviour, the proportion of youths aged between 15 and 17 who had sexual intercourse experience decreased from a high of 13.5% in 2009 to 11.1% in 2015.⁴¹ Among them, the proportion of youths who used contraception in their most recent sexual intercourse increased from 74.4% in 2011 to 79.8% in 2015 for males, and from 77.5% to 88.5% for females.⁴² In addition, the annual number of HIV infection cases among young people aged 15-24 has maintained at around 700 in recent years, accounting for about 30% of all new cases.⁴³

4.13 Amid the government's liberal, comprehensive approach to sexuality education, some stakeholders, particularly parents, have raised concern about the use of teaching materials that contain explicit sexual content in some primary schools.⁴⁴ Some parents have also opposed the coverage of content on sexual behaviour and gender diversity in some textbooks.⁴⁵ In response, MOET has indicated that the gender equity curriculum has been designed in accordance with the Gender Equity Education Act which stipulates that topics on affective, sexuality and homosexuality education have to be included. MOET has further stated that it will take into consideration the views of the education professionals when developing the teaching materials for gender equity education and ensure that they comply with the requirements of the Gender Equity Education Act.

⁴¹ See 衛生福利部國民健康署(2017年).

⁴² See Health Promotion Administration, Ministry of Health and Welfare (2016) and 衛生福利部國民健康署(2014年).

⁴³ See 衛生福利部疾病管制署(2017年).

⁴⁴ In 2013, some parents in the Taipei City had opposed the use of the video "Shall we swim" 《青春水漾》 as teaching resource in primary schools as the video contained explicit sexual content that was considered to be inappropriate for primary students. The video was produced by the Taiwan Gender Equity Education Association in 2011 as a teaching resource for sexuality education targeting at senior secondary students. The Department of Education of the Taipei City Government had clarified that only the trailer of the video had been shown in two primary schools as an introduction to their sexuality education classes. See 台灣性別平等教育協會(2013年).

⁴⁵ See 基督教今日報(2017年) and 聯合新聞網(2017年).

Ontario and England

4.14 Ontario and England have reformed their sexuality education policy and curriculum in recent years. The reform represents their effort of better equipping their young people to make responsible choices in their lives, particularly in a context where they have greater exposure to sexually explicit material through the Internet and other media.

Ontario

4.15 In Ontario, sexuality education is covered under the Health and Physical Education curriculum. In 2015, the Ministry of Education revised the sexuality education section of the curriculum with a view to educating students with accurate and current information, skills and strategies to help them navigate a digital world and keep themselves safe and healthy.

4.16 In the updated Health and Physical Education curriculum, students in Grade Four (age nine) to Grade Six (age 11) will learn about the risks of posting sexual images or information online and those in Grade Seven (age 12) will discuss sexting⁴⁶ more specifically. Topics related to gender education such as gender identity and sexual orientation are also covered in the curriculum with more extensive coverage in Grade Eight (age 13) to Grade Nine (age 14).

4.17 The updated curriculum had been strongly opposed by some parents complaining about (a) the lack of consultation with them; (b) teaching sexuality topics to young students that are not age-appropriate; and (c) teaching same-sex relationships and different gender identities in the curriculum. Nonetheless, the Ontario government stated that it had consulted key stakeholders such as school administrators, health organizations and parent groups when updating the curriculum, and urged those parents to communicate with the schools of their children to clarify the misunderstanding about the content of the curriculum.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Sexting refers to sending or receiving sexually explicit messages or images over the mobile phones or other digital devices.

⁴⁷ See The Huffington Post (2015) and The Globe and Mail (2017).

England

4.18 In England, it is only mandatory for schools run by the local authorities to provide "sex and relationships education" ("SRE") for students aged 11 and above, under the Personal, Social and Health Education framework and in accordance with the statutory SRE guidance issued in 2000. Parents are allowed to withdraw their children from SRE, except for the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction which are parts of the national curriculum.

4.19 However, the UK government considers that the SRE guidance issued in 2000 is becoming increasingly outdated, failing to address issues such as sexting, online pornography and cyberbullying that pose risks for young people. The relevant legislation to reform sexuality education in England, which came into place in April 2017, provides for implementation of the new sexuality education framework in September 2019.

4.20 Under the new framework, sexuality education will be compulsory in all schools. All primary schools in England will have to teach age-appropriate "relationships education" focusing on building healthy relationships and staying safe. As to secondary schools, they will all have to teach age-appropriate "relationships and sex education" to develop their understanding of healthy adult relationships, sexual health and sexuality. Age-appropriate lessons will also be designed to cover the dangers of sexting, online pornography and sexual harassment.

4.21 According to the UK government, schools will have the flexibility over how they deliver "relationships and sex education" under the new framework. Besides, faith schools will continue to be able to teach in accordance with the tenets of their faith. The parental right to withdraw children from "relationships and sex education" has been retained. While many stakeholders welcome the reform on sexuality education introduced by the government, some are concerned that the flexibility given to faith schools and the parents' right to opt-out may impede some students' access to comprehensive sexuality education.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ See Humanists UK (2017).

5. Conclusion

5.1 In Hong Kong, the guidelines on sexuality education and the relevant curriculum guides developed by the Education Bureau cover a range of sexuality issues that are broadly in line with those proposed in UNESCO's International Technical Guidance. Yet, sexuality education is not treated as a separate subject under the Education Bureau's cross-curricular approach. Key learning elements and topics are integrated into the Moral and Civic Education curriculum and the curricula of the key learning areas/subjects of primary and secondary schools. Added to this, schools have the flexibility to develop their school-based curriculum and adopt the approach and delivery mode of sexuality education according to their ethos and values.

5.2 There have been concerns from some academics and key stakeholders over the effectiveness of implementation of sexuality education programmes in schools. According to them, the major barriers include: (a) low priority attached to sexuality education; (b) lack of time to conduct programmes that facilitate exploration of values and development of life skills; (c) lack of training and support for teachers to deliver sexuality education; and (d) resistance of some schools to cover sensitive topics such as sexual behaviour and contraception in their sexuality education programmes.

5.3 Probably reflecting the above, the Youth Sexuality Study 2016 conducted by the Family Planning Association of Hong Kong reveals youth's declining sexual knowledge and increased exposure to pornography. The studies conducted by the Department of Health and the University of Hong Kong reflect the concerns over sexual well-being of the youth in Hong Kong. Against the above, some NGOs have advocated the provision of comprehensive sexuality education to enable the youth to make informed choices about their sexual lives and enhance their sexual health. This approach has been supported by international organizations such as UNESCO.

5.4 Similar to Hong Kong, overseas places such as Singapore, Taiwan, Ontario and England have integrated sexuality education into their school curriculum with a view to providing their young people with adequate preparation for their sexual lives. While the teaching of sexuality education is mandatory in these places, the approach and content adopted differ among them.

5.5 Unlike the school-based approach in Hong Kong, the Singaporean and Taiwanese governments require schools to devote a specified period of curriculum time on sexuality education. For example, Singapore's P5 and P6 students are required to spend four hours each year on specific sexuality education programme, while Taiwan's primary and junior secondary students are obliged to participate in at least four hours of courses or activities on gender equity in each term. On the teaching of sexuality education, only trained teachers can teach the respective programmes in Singapore. Likewise, Taiwan provides training to more teachers who are responsible for planning and conducting sexuality education in schools.

5.6 Meanwhile, Ontario and England have recently reformed their respective sexuality education framework to cope with the sexuality education needs of today's new generation of technologically driven youth. The new sexuality education curriculum includes age-appropriate topics covering the dangers of sexting, online pornography and sexual harassment, in view of the greater exposure of young people to sexually explicit material through the Internet. In Hong Kong, the various aspects of sexuality education have been integrated into relevant school subjects under the cross-curricular approach. As to the topics of cyber-friendship and cyber-pornography, they are treated as one of the many key learning elements/topics covered under the curriculum guide for the subject of "Life and Society" of junior secondary students.

5.7 Compared with other overseas places studied, Taiwan is distinctive in its implementation of pro-active government measures to promote gender education in the island. It has specifically enacted the Gender Equity Education Act requiring, among other things, MOET and the local authorities to set up their respective gender equity education committee to promote and supervise the implementation of gender equity education. Schools are also required to set up a gender equity education committee to plan and implement gender equity education at the school level.

5.8 As mentioned above, sexuality education is undoubtedly one of the most controversial subjects in the school curriculum. In Taiwan and Ontario, the introduction of sensitive topics such as sexual behaviour, contraception and gender diversity, and/or sexually explicit content in the sexuality education curriculum has aroused opposition of some stakeholders such as parents and religious groups. Singapore and England manage the similar opposition from stakeholders by allowing parents to opt their children out of sexuality education sessions, and allowing faith-based schools the flexibility to run their

own sexuality education programmes provided that they comply with the requirements of the education authority. While the opt-out approach may impede some students' access to comprehensive sexuality education, it allows some sensitive topics to be covered in schools with the endorsement of the parents and the school administrators.

**Key learning concepts and topics specified
in the International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education**

Key concepts	Topics
1. Relationships	(a) families; (b) friendship, love and romantic relationships; (c) tolerance and respect; and (d) long-term commitment, marriage and parenting.
2. Values, attitudes and skills	(a) values, attitudes and sources of sexual learning; (b) norms and peer influence on sexual behaviour; (c) decision-making; (d) communication, refusal and negotiation skills; and (e) finding help and support.
3. Culture, society and human rights	(a) sexuality, culture and human rights; (b) sexuality and the media; (c) social construction of gender; and (d) gender-based violence including sexual abuse, exploitation and harmful practices.
4. Human development	(a) sexual and reproductive anatomy and physiology; (b) reproduction; (c) puberty; (d) body image; and (e) privacy and bodily integrity.
5. Sexual behaviour	(a) sex, sexuality and the sexual life cycle; and (b) sexual behaviour and sexual response.
6. Sexual and reproductive health	(a) pregnancy prevention; (b) understanding, recognizing and reducing the risk of STIs, including HIV; and (c) HIV and AIDS stigma, care, treatment and support.

Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2009).

**Key learning concepts and topics of sexuality education covered
in the 1997 "Guidelines on Sex Education in Schools"**

Key concepts	Topics
1. Human development	(a) human sexuality; (b) reproductive system and physiology; (c) puberty; (d) self-image and self-concept; (e) sex identity and orientation; and (f) emotions.
2. Health and behaviour	(a) handling of sexual drives; (b) bodily privacy; (c) sexual habits and behaviour; (d) sexually transmitted diseases; (e) contraception; (f) unwanted pregnancies; and (g) personal body care.
3. Interpersonal relationships	(a) basic values; (b) personal skills; (c) friendship; (d) dating, love and infatuation; (e) sexual harassment, abuse and violence; and (f) incest.
4. Marriage and family	(a) the meaning of the family; (b) interdependence of family members and relationships between the generations; (c) family conflicts and their resolution; (d) changing patterns within the family; (e) coping with changes in the family; (f) factors to consider in starting a family; (g) marriage and lifetime commitments; and (h) parenting.
5. Society and culture	(a) societal and cultural influences on sex; (b) gender roles; (c) sex and the mass media; (d) sex and the law; and (e) sex, morality and ethics.

Sources: 香港教育署(1997年) and Curriculum Development Institute, Education and Manpower Bureau (2005).

**Expected learning outcomes of sexuality education laid down
in the 2008 Moral and Civic Education curriculum framework
(Chinese version only)⁽¹⁾**

學習階段	主要學習期望
第一學習階段： 小一至小三	(a) 認識自己的身體，並以尊重的態度，理解男女生理結構之異同； (b) 能保護自己身體的私隱，並懂得拒絕別人的冒犯； (c) 注重個人衛生，養成健康的生活習慣；及 (d) 認識人生不同階段之歷程：出生、成長、生育、年老、死亡。
第二學習階段： 小四至小六	(a) 了解青春期的生理和心理之轉變，並能以平和的態度迎接； (b) 懂得以理性和尊重的態度和異性相處； (c) 認識"友情"、"戀愛"、"結婚"、"生育"之間的關係； (d) 認識性行為、懷孕、避孕和墮胎的基本知識和要承擔的責任； (e) 主動拒絕接觸媒體(包括：電視、雜誌和互聯網)帶有色情成份的資訊；及 (f) 慎言律己，不以"性"和色情作為閒談和取笑別人的題材。
第三學習階段： 中一至中三	(a) 以理性的態度，處理和控制自己的性衝動； (b) 以開放和關懷態度，認識不同人有不同性取向(例如：同性戀、異性戀、雙性戀等)和生活方式(例如：獨身、離婚、不生育等)的自由； (c) 以理性和關懷的態度，建立並維繫與異性的交往(例如："拍拖"、戀愛、分手等)； (d) 抱持"生命莊嚴"的價值觀，正確認識性行為、避孕和生命的關係；及 (e) 以"責任感"和"承擔"，認識戀愛、婚姻和家庭的關係。

Note: (1) According to the Education Bureau, only Chinese version of the expected learning outcomes is available.

**Expected learning outcomes of sexuality education laid down
in the 2008 Moral and Civic Education curriculum framework
(Chinese version only)**

學習階段	主要學習期望
第四學習階段： 中四至中六	<p>(a) 以理性批判的態度，辨識社會"性"風氣和傳媒角色的關係；</p> <p>(b) 以負責任的態度看待性行為，能從"後果"、"尊重"和"共同決定"作出判斷；</p> <p>(c) 認識"安全性行為"所涉及的考慮(例如：預防性病與愛滋病、懷孕與避孕的考慮)，並懂得對別人的要求"說不"；</p> <p>(d) 尊重自己的身體，不藉此作為交換物質的工具；</p> <p>(e) 有獨立思考，認識"流行文化"、"同輩壓力"、"大眾傳媒"等對"約會"、"戀愛"和"性關係"的影響；</p> <p>(f) 認識作為父母照顧子女應承擔的責任和抱持的態度；及</p> <p>(g) 能夠以批判思考和謹慎的態度，辨識和判斷與"性"相關的社會議題。</p>

Sources: 教育局(2012年) and Education Bureau (2017).

Key learning elements/topics related to sexuality education covered under the curriculum guide of relevant subjects

Primary school level		
Subject	Learning stages	Key learning elements/topics
General Studies	Primary One to Primary Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) different stages of human growth and development; (b) changes that occur when one grows; (c) similarities and differences between boys and girls; (d) ways of protecting the body, including the private parts of the body; and (e) decision-making in simple dilemma situations. • Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) managing oneself in daily life situations, and to exercise self-discipline in managing personal hygiene, safety and emotions in daily life situations; and (b) discerning relevant information from available sources and choosing appropriate information to meet a specific purpose. • Values and attitudes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) accepting changes that occur as one grows and individual differences in growth and development.
	Primary Four to Primary Six	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) physical, psychological and social changes during puberty; (b) differences between individuals in growth and development during puberty; (c) gender roles and relationships; (d) sexual feelings and reactions, and ways to deal with them; (e) a healthy lifestyle (e.g. regular pattern of work and rest, do not indulge in web surfing, and healthy diet); (f) saying "NO" to gambling, drug abuse, substance abuse, smoking, drinking and sexual requests;

Key learning elements/topics related to sexuality education covered under the curriculum guide of relevant subjects

Primary school level		
Subject	Learning stages	Key learning elements/topics
General Studies	Primary Four to Primary Six	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding (cont'd) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (g) dealing with stress and frustration (e.g. peer pressure, harassment and study); (h) enhancing relationships and assertiveness skills; (i) minimizing risks in daily life situations (e.g. safety, health and relationships); and (j) impact of the information era on individuals and the community (e.g. media, digital divide and cyberbullying). • Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) being able to manage personal health as well as physical and emotional changes at puberty; (b) analysing relevant information and make informed decisions on personal health; (c) practising a healthy lifestyle; (d) mastering the skills of rejecting temptation; (e) identifying situations where expectations differ according to gender and understanding how these expectations may influence one's choices and options; and (f) rejecting indecent and inaccurate information conveyed through the communication network and social media. • Values and attitudes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) accepting that individuals are different in their growth and development during puberty; (b) valuing one's own body; (c) accepting sexual feelings and reactions, and showing positive attitudes in dealing with them; and (d) rejecting unhealthy behaviours.

Key learning elements/topics related to sexuality education covered under the curriculum guide of relevant subjects

Junior secondary school level (Secondary One to Secondary Three)	
Subjects	Key learning elements/topics
Life and Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-understanding, self-esteem and self-confidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the many faces of "Self": perceived self, real self and ideal self. • Building friendships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) establishing and nurturing friendship with members of the same sex and the opposite sex. • Managing cyber-friendship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) ways to deal with and develop cyber-friendship. • Enhancing family life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) role(s) of family members; and (b) responsibilities of an individual towards family. • Learning to love <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) similarities and differences between love and friendship; (b) elements, goals, principles and proper attitudes towards love; (c) ways to nurture and maintain a relationship; and (d) reasons, managing ways and appropriate attitude for ending a relationship. • Handling issues of sexual abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) media pornography and its impact on adolescents; (b) ways to deal with pornographic information; (c) sexual harassment in daily life; (d) ways to prevent and handle sexual harassment; and (e) protecting oneself from the traps of cyber-pornography. • Attitudes towards sex and sexuality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) different notions and attitudes towards love, sex and marriage; (b) aims and principles of setting limits of intimacy; and (c) ways for adolescents to manage sexual fantasy and desires. • Teenage pregnancy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) accidental pregnancy: bearing the consequences.

Key learning elements/topics related to sexuality education covered under the curriculum guide of relevant subjects

Junior secondary school level (Secondary One to Secondary Three)	
Subjects	Key learning elements/topics
Life and Society (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender equality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) meaning and importance of gender equality; (b) major principles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; (c) major phenomena and causes of gender inequality in the international arena; (d) functions of international organizations in promoting gender equality and their limitations; and (e) efforts and contributions to promote gender equality by global citizens.
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human reproduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) sexual maturity and secondary sexual characteristics; (b) reproductive systems; (c) sex cells; (d) fertilization and implantation; (e) pregnancy and parenting; and (f) family planning and birth control.
Home Economics/ Technology and Living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family living <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) different types of family; (b) roles and responsibilities of family members; and (c) ways to maintain harmonious relationships in the family.

Key learning elements/topics related to sexuality education covered under the curriculum guide of relevant subjects

Senior secondary school level (Secondary Four to Secondary Six)	
Subjects	Key learning elements/topics
Liberal Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal development and interpersonal relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) understanding oneself – exploring issues such as factors influencing the self-esteem of adolescents and how self-esteem is related to their behaviours and aspirations, and influence of the messages and values from the media on the adolescents; and (b) interpersonal relationships – exploring issues such as how adolescents' identities are developed and roles embedded within different relationships. • Public health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) understanding of public health – exploring issues such as how people's understanding of health is affected by economic, social and other factors.
Biology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inheritance in humans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) sex determination. • Reproduction in humans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) general plan of the male and female reproductive systems; (b) structure of sperm and ovum; (c) menstrual cycle; (d) fertilization; (e) development of embryo and foetus; (f) birth process; (g) parental care; and (h) birth control. • Infectious diseases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) causes; (b) ways of transmission; and (c) treatment. • Prevention of diseases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) healthy lifestyle.

Key learning elements/topics related to sexuality education covered under the curriculum guide of relevant subjects

Senior secondary school level (Secondary Four to Secondary Six)	
Subjects	Key learning elements/topics
Ethics and Religious Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life and death <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) right to raise a family; (b) birth control; and (c) abortion. • Sex, companionship and family <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) heterosexual and homosexual relationships; (b) single life; (c) premarital and extramarital sex; (d) marriage and divorce; (e) pornography; (f) prostitution; and (g) family. • Media ethics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) code of ethics and professionalism; and (b) media ethics issues.
Technology and Living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family dimension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) what a family is; (b) value of families and role in society; (c) milestones of family life; (d) family structures; and (e) factors affecting family ties and lifestyle in Hong Kong in the past four decades.

**Key learning elements/topics related to sexuality education
covered under the curriculum guide of relevant subjects**

Senior secondary school level (Secondary Four to Secondary Six)	
Subjects	Key learning elements/topics
Health Management and Social Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal development, social care and health across the lifespan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) definition of health and its social, psychological and cultural perspectives; (b) factors influencing personal development such as family, peer groups and community influence; (c) transitions and changes in the course of the lifespan; and (d) factors affecting personal and social well-being, e.g. technological advancement and its impact on health and health care. • Health and social care in the local and global contexts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) structural issues related to health, social care and personal and social well-being e.g. family problems, and inequalities and resources deprivation and its relation with social class and gender; (b) contemporary issues of vulnerability e.g. AIDS, and discrimination based on gender or against patients; and (c) recent increases in vulnerability and exposure due to lifestyle changes, globalization and family changes. • Responding to the needs in the areas of health and social care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) personal role in health maintenance and ill-health prevention. • Promotion and maintenance of health and social care in the community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) personal hygiene practices and prevention of communicable diseases; (b) attitude towards sex and substance abuse for the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases or addiction; (c) health and safety at school e.g. protection against sexual harassment or bullying; (d) healthy relationships including family relationships and intimate relationships; (e) concern for and interest in families, peers, groups, the community and vulnerable groups; and (f) commitment in family, community and groups.

Sources: 教育局 (2012 年) and Education Bureau (2017).

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