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Sustainable  
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Revised edition

# International technical guidance on sexuality education

An evidence-informed approach



Revised edition

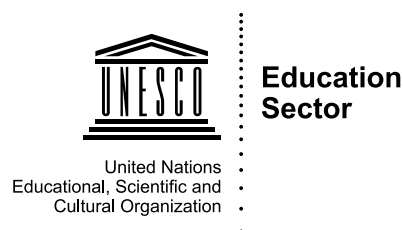
# International technical guidance on sexuality education

An evidence-informed approach

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# Foreword

It has been almost a decade since the *International technical guidance on sexuality education* was first released in 2009. During this period, the global community has come to embrace a bold and transformative development agenda to achieve a just, equitable, tolerant, open and socially inclusive world in which the needs of the most vulnerable are met and where no one is left behind. The 2030 Agenda for sustainable development shows us that quality education, good health and well-being, gender equality and human rights are intrinsically intertwined.

Over this period, more and more young people have joined together to call for their right to sexuality education, and to urge their leaders to deliver on political commitments for current and future generations. At the 2012 Global Youth Forum of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), young people specifically called on governments to 'create enabling environments and policies to ensure that they have access to comprehensive sexuality education in formal and non-formal settings, through reducing barriers and allocating adequate budgets'.

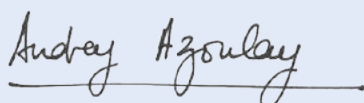
Young people have not stood alone in this effort – they have been joined by communities, parents, faith leaders and stakeholders in the education sector who increasingly champion sexuality education as an essential component of a good quality education that is comprehensive and life skills-based; and which supports young people to develop the knowledge, skills, ethical values and attitudes they need to make conscious, healthy and respectful choices about relationships, sex and reproduction.

Despite these advances, too many young people still make the transition from childhood to adulthood receiving inaccurate, incomplete or judgement-laden information affecting their physical, social and emotional development. This inadequate preparation not only exacerbates the vulnerability of children and youth to exploitation and other harmful outcomes, but it also represents the failure of society's duty bearers to fulfil their obligations to an entire generation.

This revised and fully updated edition of the *International technical guidance on sexuality education* benefits from a new review of the current evidence, and reaffirms the position of sexuality education within a framework of human rights and gender equality. It promotes structured learning about sex and relationships in a manner that is positive, affirming, and centered on the best interest of the young person. By outlining the essential components of effective sexuality education programmes, the Guidance enables national authorities to design comprehensive curricula that will have a positive impact on young people's health and well-being.

Like the original Guidance, this revised version is voluntary, based on the latest scientific evidence, and designed to support countries to implement effective sexuality education programmes adapted to their contexts.

We are convinced that if we do not meet young people's calls for good quality comprehensive sexuality education, we will not achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) we have set for 2030, and the commitment that has been made to leave no one behind. With this in mind, we are committed to supporting countries to apply the Guidance, and hope that teachers, health educators, youth development professionals, sexual and reproductive health advocates and youth leaders – among others – will use this resource to help countries to realize young people's right to education, health and well-being, and to achieve an inclusive and gender equal society.



**Audrey Azoulay**  
**Director-General, UNESCO**



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