



WAS Statement on Comprehensive Sexuality Education

26 July 2023

The WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR SEXUAL HEALTH (WAS)

RECALLS the WAS Declaration of Sexual Rights, which states that everyone has the right to education, including comprehensive sexuality education.¹ CSE must be age-appropriate, scientifically-accurate, culturally-competent, and grounded in human rights, gender equality, and a positive approach to sexuality and pleasure.

FURTHER RECALLS the commitment in target 3.7 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including education.

WELCOMES the efforts by the United Nations to advance the implementation of the International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education, published by UNESCO in collaboration with UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women and the WHO, and experts, including Esther Corona of WAS.²

EXPRESSES CONCERN that so many young people and children do not have access to the education or information they need to make safe and informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health.

STRESSES that age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education should be provided from an early age because it is the foundation for persons to know and control their own lives. According to multiple research projects globally, CSE contributes to delaying first sexual intercourse, reducing risk-taking and increasing the use of condoms and other forms of contraception, reducing the frequency of sexual intercourse and the number of sexual partners among young people, sexual abuse and gender-based violence.³ Without CSE, many facing more significant risks will be left behind, particularly women and girls, youth, LGBTQIA+ people, migrants, refugees, Indigenous Peoples and people living with disabilities.

SUPPORTS the observations by human rights experts of the United Nations that Comprehensive Sexuality Education enables individuals to understand their right to bodily autonomy and integrity, to develop respectful relationships and to dismantle gender stereotypes and negative social norms.⁴ Furthermore, it contributes to them embracing diversity, consent, respect, equality and the capacity for well-being. This contributes to their own individual development, more equal societies, and the fulfilment of human rights. In addition, CSE is an effective means to help

¹ World Association for Sexual Health, [Declaration of Sexual Rights](#), ratified by the WAS General Assembly in 2015.

² UNESCO, [International technical guidance on sexuality education](#), 2018.

³ UNESCO, [International technical guidance on sexuality education](#), 2018.

⁴ United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, [A Compendium on Comprehensive Sexuality Education](#), 1 March 2023.



change systemic forms of domination by changing social and cultural patterns of behaviour that tend to perpetuate discrimination and violence against women and girls and other vulnerable groups.

REAFFIRMS its commitment to providing professional advice to governments, NGOs and individuals, strengthening advocacy and promoting excellence and innovation in sexuality education. Its Sexuality Education Committee works constantly to inform WAS members and others about the benefits of CSE through their work in research, advocacy and implementation in many diverse regions of the world. Every two years, WAS presents a prestigious award in recognition of the special contribution that sexuality educators make to the overall fields of education, health and sexology. The 26th WAS World Congress, to be held in Antalya, Turkey, on 2-4 November, will allow us to recognise professionals and institutions contributing to building better societies through CSE.

The WAS Sexual Justice Initiative highlighted in the coming Congress will also call for the promotion of the right to Comprehensive Sexuality Education and better access for all to education as part of sexual justice.