



Government of Western Australia
WA Country Health Service

Talking to Your Kids About Sexual Health Parent Focus Group

A South West Public Health Unit and WAAC Collaboration



Kelly Mennen, Snr Health Promotion Officer SWPHU
Aimee Rendell, Health Promotion Officer WAAC

28th November 2023





WHY HOST A PARENT EDUCATION SESSION?

- The 7th National Survey of Australian Secondary Students and Sexual Health 2021 by La Trobe University highlighted that:

“Young people mostly sought information about sex or sexual health from friends (76.5%), followed by seeking information from websites (56.7%) and their mothers 49.7%,” Pg. 14),

So...

what, if any education were mothers receiving on the changing landscape of sexual health for their young person and why not fathers as well?

Social media, pornography, smart phones, internet searches, changes in contraception choices, STI prevalence and increasing acceptance in the community of gender diversity are all dramatically different issues conversations in this next generation of young people compared to when their parents were their age.

- There is a lack of education programs specifically catered for parents. It is NOT just the school's job to provide RSE.
- We wanted to assess parents' needs and preferences on skill and capacity building for sexual health education.

Why is it important to talk?

- Children learn about sexual health from many sources- you are one of these
- Improves carer-child communication
- Supports what is being learnt at school
- Better health and wellbeing outcomes for the young person
- Encourages protective behaviours from a young age
- You might learn something new too!





COLLABORATION: SWPHU + WAAC

- Useful to have two agencies working together to combine resources, ideas and experience to bring the project to fruition.
- Concentrate on TSTO resource with this session being a taster session to just start the conversation and start it early.
- Focus group – what do parents want? Will this method work? Do parents want more information? Are they aware of the SH landscape today? Will they peer educate?
- Webinar instead of F2F to get higher attendance and with the future planning of having a recorded webinar in the future for replay.
- Beneficial to have two presenters from different generations for perspective on own personal Sexual Health education growing up. Useful to also at least one parent as a presenter.



DEVELOPMENT OF WEBINAR

- Focussed on a simple overview of sexual health for 0-18 year old's, not a specific session for teenage parent's or on a certain topic, but rather a starting point to open the conversation.
- Ensuring it was short - parents are not willing to invest large amounts of time in a session. The sessions were aimed to run for 20-25 minutes.
- Two sessions were offered at different times of the day – a lunch time session and an evening session to provide more accessibility.
- Ensure there was an online registration process AND a point of contact as well.
- That various topics would be addressed including
 - what is sexual health
 - What sexual health looks like for young people
 - Why it's important to talk about sexual health
 - How to access information
- It covered research results and local statistics.
- We provide a demo walk through of the TSTO website.





Sexual Health for Young People Today

13.6

Average age for first looking at pornography

15

Average age of first sexual experience

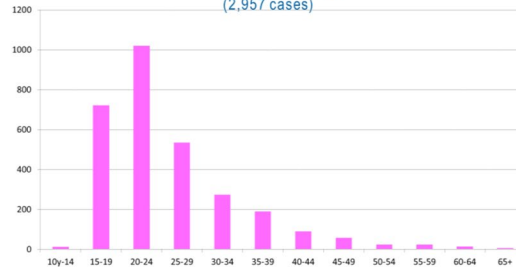
69%

Year 10-12 students that have been in at least 1 romantic relationship

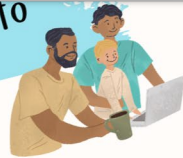
What is Sexual Health?



SW Chlamydia cases by age
1st Jan 2018 – 30th May 2023
(2,957 cases)



How to Access Info



Group Guidelines

- Trigger warning- sexual health topics
- Right to pass
- Treat everyone with respect
- Use correct terms
- No such thing as a silly question
- Peer-review research, clinically reviewed info





PROMOTION

Talking to Your Kids About Sexual Health

Parent Focus Group



Calling South West parents, guardians and carers of children 0-18 years! Join our 30 minute information session designed specifically for parents to build awareness and confidence to have discussions around sexual health. Your feedback in this session will greatly assist in further developing resources for parents across the South West.

THIS WORKSHOP INCLUDES:

- Defining sexual health (it's not just about sex - think body parts, language, puberty and so much more) and what it means to children and young people
- Why it's important to talk about sex and sexual health in age appropriate ways from birth onwards
- Top conversation tips
- How and where to access information and support

REGISTER HERE



DETAILS

Date: Tuesday 25th July 2023
Session: 12 PM [QR](#) 7:30 PM
Location: Online (Microsoft Teams)

For more information, please contact Kelly Mennen
kelly.mennen@health.wa.gov.au



In collaboration with
WA Country Health
Service South West

Wednesday, 19 July 2023 @9:31AM

Talking to your kids about sexual health

Calling South West parents, guardians and carers of children 0-18 years! Join our 30 minute information session designed specifically for parents to build awareness and confidence to have discussions around sexual health. Your feedback in this session will greatly assist in further developing resources for parents across the South West.

The workshop includes:

- Defining sexual health (it's not just about sex - think body parts, language, puberty and so much more) and what it means to children and young people
- Why it's important to talk about sex and sexual health in age appropriate ways from birth onwards
- Top conversation tips
- How and where to access information and support

Session Details

Date: Tuesday 25 July 2023
Session: 12:00pm or 7:30pm
Location: Online (Microsoft Teams)





REGISTRATIONS

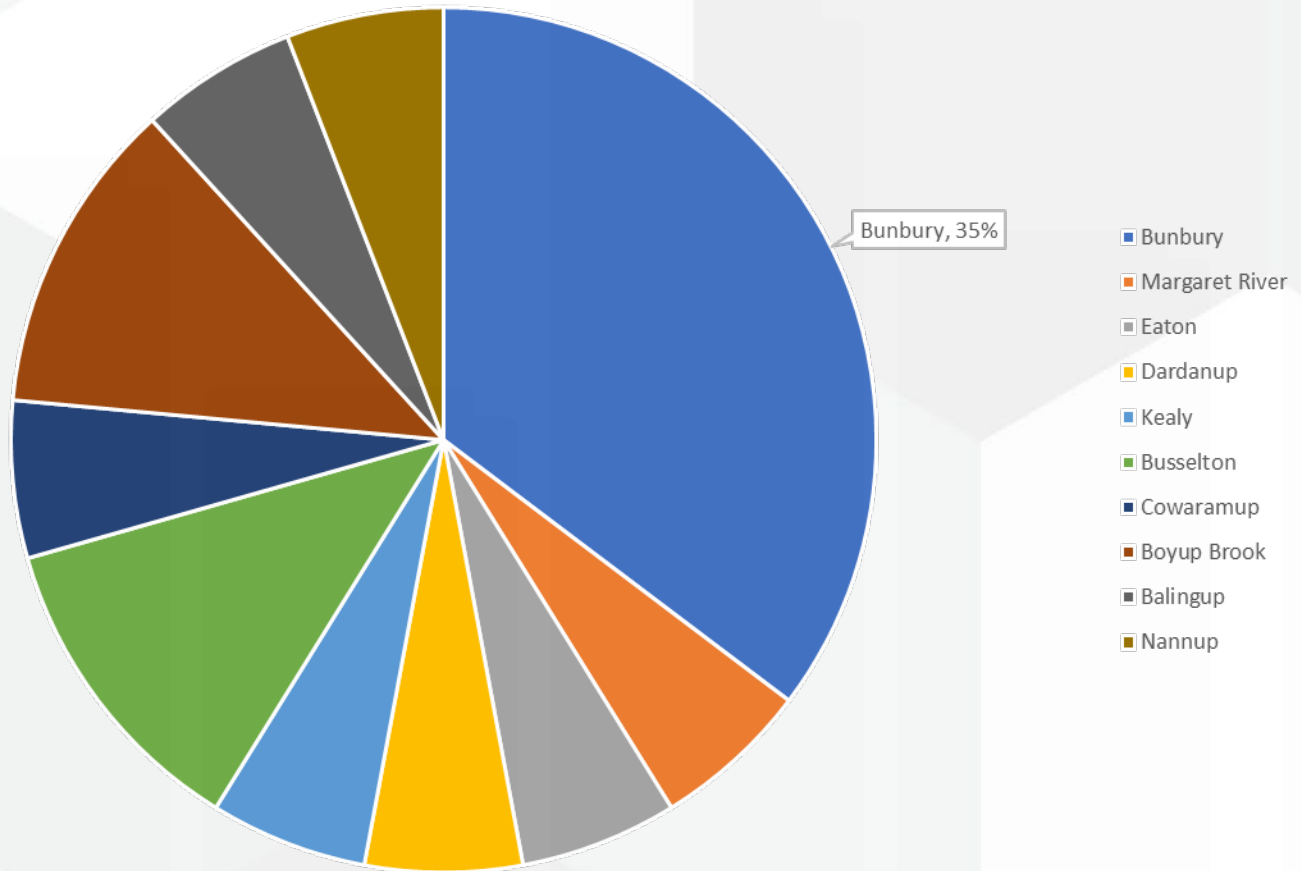
- QR Code for direct registration and contact details for more information and second hand registration available.
- Microsoft forms used as a registration platform
- 2 live sessions. 1 x lunch time and 1x evening on same day as options
- Confirmation email was sent to participants upon registering and a reminder email was sent one week prior and the day before the presentation.

Results:

- **17 total registrations**
 - 12pm session – 7 people
 - 7:30pm session -10 people
 - 15 registered online themselves, 2 registered via contact person



REGISTRATIONS BY TOWN/CITY





EVALUATION

- All participants that attended were sent an online evaluation link immediately after the session to complete. Out of the eleven that attended we received nine evaluation reports back.

- The participants gave an overall rating of the workshop a 4.56 out of 5 which is positive.

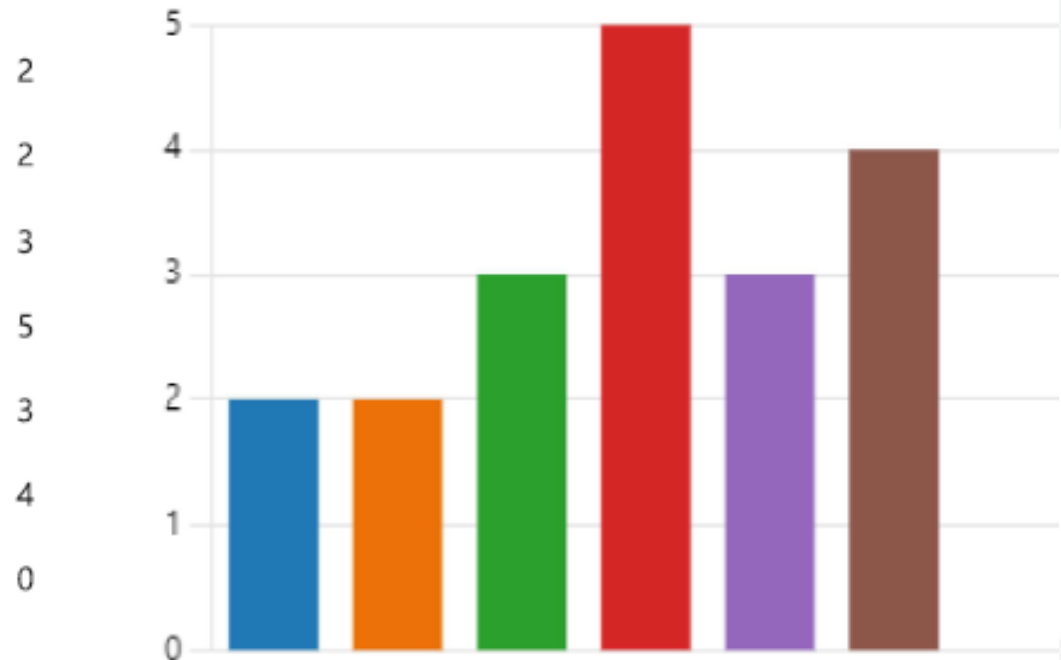


- The majority of participants were mothers, with 8 selecting this choice, 1 selected “**Father**” and 1 more selected “Other”. Grandparent, other family member, guardian/carer options received no selections.
 - Having a father present was a really encouraging sign as the research has shown that there is a real gap in father/child sexual health education. None of the participants noted that they were a teacher or school health nurse.



AGE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN YOUR CARE

- 0-2 years
- 2-5 years
- 5-9 years
- 9-12 years
- 12-14 years
- 14-17 years
- 18+





DID YOU FIND ANYTHING SURPRISING?

“Some of the statistics were a bit surprising – particularly the section on STI with the additional info that this was based only on reported cases and that there is a whole other cohort in each area that is unreported.”

“STI statistics, and the fact that mothers are the primary person that children approach for their sexual health information. Though it is great that children and adolescents are approaching a parent over their peers/the internet etc. it would be wonderful if fathers could promote a safe and comfortable environment also. This would be fantastic in role modelling these healthy conversations, especially for boys for now and when they enter adulthood and if they become fathers themselves.

“The number of cases of STD reported under 16 years.”

“The age of children having their first sexual experience.”



FEEDBACK ON SESSION

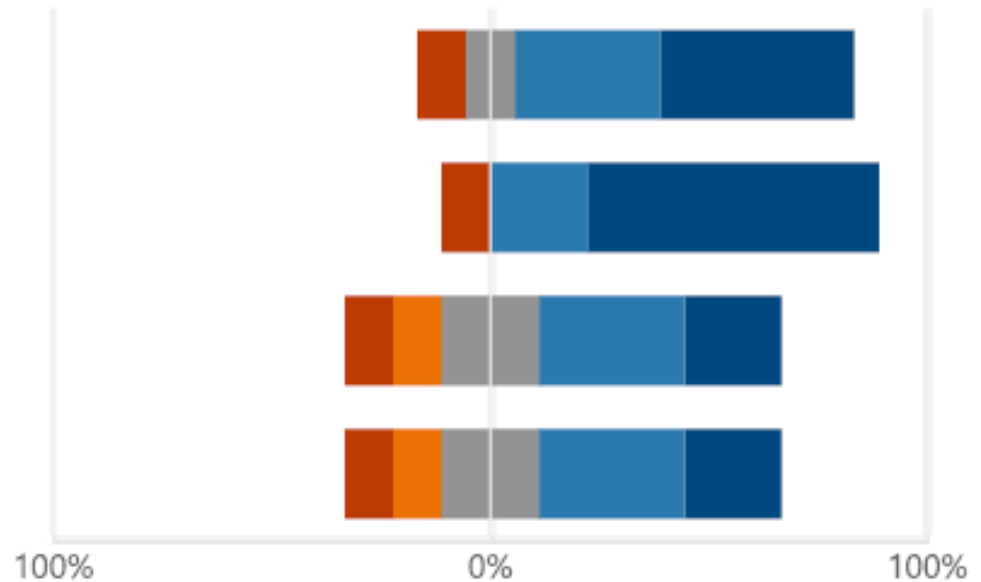
Strongly disagree Disagree Unsure Agree Strongly agree

The time and length of this workshop was suitable

I know where to go for support and information to help talking about sexual...

I feel more confident talking about sexual health with my young person/s

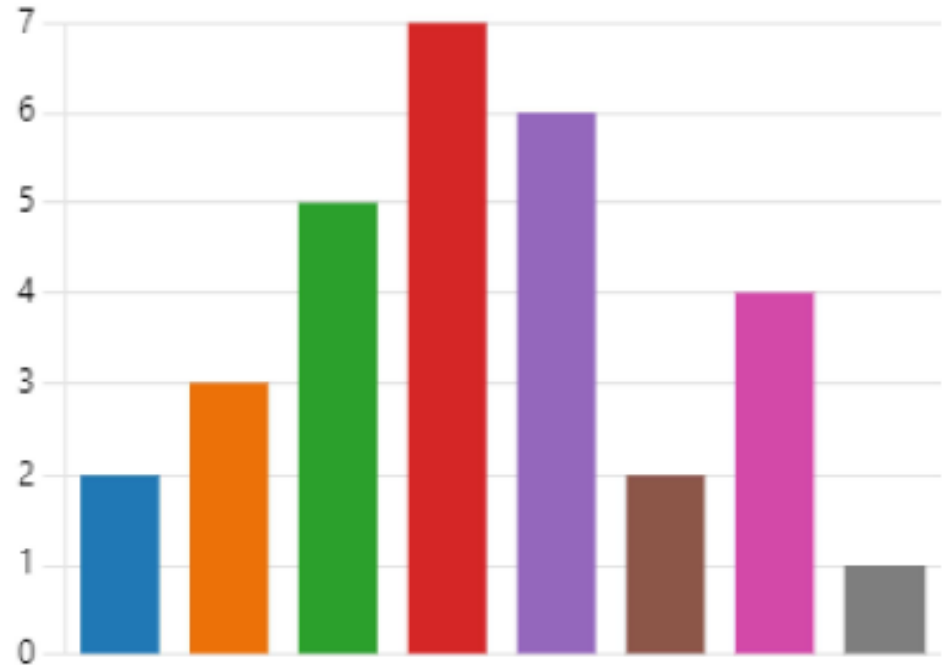
I will have a conversation with my young person/s in the next week about sexual...





OTHER TOPICS OF INTEREST FOR FUTURE SESSIONS

Contraception	2
Sexually Transmissible Infections...	3
Puberty	5
Relationships/Communication	7
Sexting, Pornography & Online ...	6
Being a LGBTIQ+ Ally	2
Tips for starting the conversation	4
Other	1





PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

“It was short and sharp however I did expect a bit more info or engagement, but will be able to find more specific information on my child’s age group on the website and it is a great website!”

“I would have liked more tangible takeaways around talking to my young person, tips on starting conversation, normalising behaviour and conversations. Less statistics and more information.; step through the Talk Soon, Talk Often website more.”

“Many thanks!”

“This was such a great session. I found the topics to be so easily raised and discussed by the presenters and I think that really encouraged the participants to relax and take it all on board. Your provision for additional resources that can be accessed later is also important because I think there would have been a lot to take on for some parents. Thank you also for the reminder that I had missed my initial registration for the 12pm session. I had double booked, but when the 7:30 option was suggested in the reminder I was able to attend. I am so glad I did. Many thanks for the work you do. It is such an important job.”



“Both presenters spoke quite quickly – perhaps as a result of trying to cover lots of information in a limited time. I missed the interactive component of a group presentation but understand with the nature of the topic why the session was presented this way.”

“The information was comprehensive and was delivered in a concise way that was easy to follow. The information presented, and the resources shown, increased my confidence in having conversations with my children.”

“Thank you for creating the workshop. Aimee and Kelly were great presenters.”

“Thank you for taking the time to run the focus group and sharing relevant resources. I feel more confident in starting and having conversations with my children.”



What worked well:

- The session proved useful to participants with positive feedback on all elements of the content, length, and presentation.
- Having two sessions - day and night options is vital to support different parent schedules
- Short sessions of under 30 minutes has worked well to keep participants engaged
- Large promotion of the session through various online channels and distribution lists are important to connect different families from a variety of age group children and targeting a wider geographical spread.
- Having both a QR code and email or phone contact worked well for participants to register.

Consideration for Future Sessions:

- In future sessions provide more interactive content and or specific examples of talking with young people about sexual health is recommended – perhaps going through examples on Talk Soon, Talk Often website.
- A taped webinar available for a replay for those who could not attend.
- Short content specific sessions to be developed based on topics recommended by participants.



For more information:

Kelly Mennen

Snr Health Promotion Officer

SWPHU

9781 2343

Kelly.Mennen@health.wa.gov.au

Aimee Rendell

Health Promotion Officer and Workforce

Development Officer

WAAC

9482 0000

arendell@waac.com.au