

"Sex, relationships... and you?" –Recommendations*



Promote holistic sex education within families, schools and other contexts of institutional socialization by

- Providing knowledge on all aspects of sexuality (physiology, relationships, socialization, health, rights, etc.)
- Adopting a positive approach based on individual abilities (the ability to articulate desires and boundaries, to think critically, etc.), rather than one on risks associated with sexuality
- Promoting the development of interpersonal and generic skills that are not necessarily directly associated with sexuality (emotional intelligence, conflict management, etc.)

Encourage young people to participate in projects that concerns them by

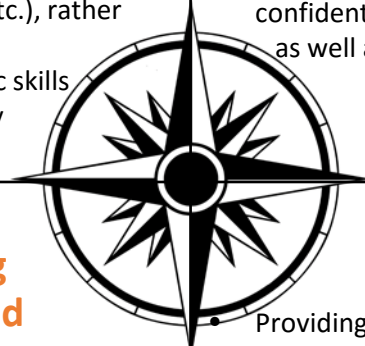
- Engaging both adults and young people in discussions about youth experiences with the aim of co-creating projects of their concern through shared decision-making
- Assuring active participation by creating a context of trust, confidentiality and non-judgmental interactions among young people, as well as between youth and adults

Train, inform and support professionals working in youth-related fields, including those guiding young people on sexual and emotional development by

- Moving beyond the fear of causing harm, of violating privacy, of breaching trust or of not knowing how to respond to young people's questions and needs
- Interpreting and quickly responding to signals (behavioural changes, indirect references, etc.) displayed by young people in various contexts, given the intimate nature of these issues, as well as the shame, guilt and fear of judgment that often prevent young people from talking directly about such problematic situations
- Knowing how to respond and where to refer young people to when an issue extends beyond an individual's scope of practice

Tackle gender discrimination at the institutional and political level by

- Providing adult role models who embody various ways of expressing gender identities and who pursue sexual and emotional fulfilment
- Encouraging nuanced media discourses on youth relationships and sexuality, on gender identity and on sexual orientation
- Finding opportunities to actively engage in egalitarian discourses in the course of daily interactions between young people and adults, such as by calling out sexist jokes or insults, by supporting diverse ways of seeking emotional and sexual fulfilment and by remaining attentive to the needs expressed by young people, regardless of sex or gender
- Highlighting and rejecting any form of "gender policing" that aims to punish behaviour failing to meet expectations based on gender stereotypes (heteronormativity)



* These recommendations are based on the research conducted between 2015 and 2017 by HES-SO – HETS-FR and funded by the OAK Foundation. This research focused on sexual transactions (experiences of a sexual nature entailing financial, material and/or symbolic exchange) and involved youth in Switzerland. Covering three Swiss linguistic areas, the research explored the perspectives of young people aged 14 to 25, as well as those of professionals working in youth-related fields. A summary of results and other documents are available in English, French, German and Italian on www.sexe-et-toi.ch and www.hets-fr.ch