

# POSITION STATEMENT

## RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION

Comprehensive, age-appropriate relationships and sexuality education (RSE) supports children and young people in developing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to enjoy healthy, respectful relationships and maintain their reproductive and sexual health throughout their lives.<sup>1</sup> FPV takes a pleasure-inclusive approach to sexuality that highlights positive outcomes, not just absence of disease<sup>1</sup>. School-based RSE is ranked by young people as one of the most used and trusted sources of relationships and sexuality information.<sup>2</sup> While some young people have reported receiving relevant and useful RSE, others have expressed a need for more information about healthy relationships, diverse sex, sexuality, and gender, pleasure and love.<sup>2-5</sup> FPV supports an evidence-based, whole-school approach to comprehensive RSE by engaging with schools, young people, their families and communities through the provision of high-quality resources, education and training.

### Family Planning Victoria's Position

- All people have a right to accurate, age- and developmentally-appropriate, comprehensive RSE. Comprehensive RSE should inform individuals about sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing, people's rights and responsibilities, and healthy, consensual and pleasurable relationships.
- It is vital that educators are equipped with the knowledge, skills and resources to teach RSE and feel safe and supported to do this work.

### Actions - FPV will pursue a strategic approach to increase access to RSE by:

- Advocating for and supporting comprehensive RSE that is evidence-based and age and developmentally appropriate in all schools including faith-based and specialist schools (disability).
- Advocating for legislative changes that improve training and support for pre-service teachers to develop the required knowledge, skills and confidence to deliver comprehensive RSE
- Advocating around a school's responsibility to provide comprehensive RSE to all students, through clear policy guidelines and a strengthening of achievement standards within the Victorian Curriculum
- Advocating for and supporting RSE that is evidence-based and appropriate to the audience in alternative and community settings.
- Advocating for and providing improved training and support for educators to deliver comprehensive, high quality RSE
- Advocating for the integration of best practice models for RSE, that are embedded within school mission statements, policies and practices
- Advocating for improved training
- Working collaboratively with the Department of Education, school sector organisations, and teaching associations to increase access to, and improve the quality and scope of, RSE delivered by schools.

### References

1. United Nations Educational SaCO. International technical guidance on sexuality education: an evidence-informed approach. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; 2018.
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4. Hillier L, Jones T, Monagle M, Overton N, Gahan L, Blackman J, et al. Writing themselves in 3: the third national study on the sexual health and wellbeing of same sex attracted and gender questioning young people. Melbourne: The Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University; 2010.
5. Robinson K, Bansel P, Denson N, Ovenden G, Davies C. Growing up queer: issues facing young Australians who are gender variant and sexuality diverse. Melbourne.: Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre; 2014.

