



# TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT SEX, RELATIONSHIPS AND DIGITAL IMAGES

**Tetherdown Primary School**

# Why sex and relationships are discussed and in the curriculum?

- In the National curriculum, linked to Science. In 2014 now part of SRE Policy.

## **Good sex and relationships educations can:**

- raise the age young people first try out sexual activity
- cut the rate of teenage pregnancies and abortion
- lower the rate of sexually transmitted infections.

## **Sex and relationship education doesn't simply include passing on information about what sex is. It includes a wide range of issues, including**

- differences in themselves and others (when younger)
- changes in their bodies
- how their feelings are changing as they grow up
- how a pregnancy happens (this may be addressed according to the age and levels of understanding)
- preventing pregnancy (secondary school)
- dangers of STD's (secondary school)

# Why are you at this meeting?

- Provide input at home before the lessons
- Work alongside the school
- Brush up on your own knowledge
- Anticipate any questions that may arise

***Research also shows that young people would like their mum, dad or carer to be the first person to talk to them about body changes, feelings, sex and relationships. Children pick up messages about sex and relationships from their friends and the internet. The increase in mobile technology has resulted in higher numbers of children exposed to inappropriate images and pornography. If you don't talk to them about your values when growing up when they are young, they may find it difficult to ask questions later and may think that you find it too embarrassing to talk about –so won't ask.***

# What we teach in Year 6

- Revise over from Y5 - The main emotional and physical changes which take place at puberty for boys and girls and how to manage the changes at puberty and support others to do the same.
- What is a good relationship, what makes a good friend.
- Conception - How a pregnancy happens.
- How babies are born
- Questioning body images and gender stereotypes.
- As we discuss sex and relationships we can clarify definitions but it is likely that we cannot answer all issues/questions and will direct the children to come and speak to you. It is possible that your child may have more questions or just want to hear and discuss things with you – their parent /carer.

## What we don't teach...more likely to see at Secondary School.

- Contraception in detail, we mention that pregnancy can be prevented but do not explain how. We do however explain that they will learn this at a later date.
- Sexual Transmitted Diseases (STD's). We do not teach children about this, however as you can appreciate it is a very important area for children to gain a knowledge of in order to protect their future health and wellbeing.
- Confusion about sexuality.
- Peer pressure. We do not cover the more emotional side of deciding to have sex as this should obviously not be an issue for children this age. However it is important that when children begin to start thinking about sex and relationships, that they realise the importance of a strong and loving relationship and that they should not pressurise their partner into having sex nor give in to pressure to have sex if they are not ready.
- Issues on Pornography

# Our resources

- Video
- How the lesson organised – conception discussed amongst understanding what makes a good friend using Living and Growing Resources.
- Separate lesson for boys and girls.
- Books



## Critical Thinking

What message is this saying to women and girls?

What message is this saying to men and boys?

Is this sexist advertising?

## How to talk to your child about sex, relationships and digital images.

- **Use everyday situations to start a conversation** Using **TV shows and characters** as a starting point can often help as you will be speaking about something which you have both just watched, and children may feel more at ease asking questions about characters in soaps. It also gives children the idea that sex and relationships are a normal part of everyday life. Try to encourage children to question images such as gender stereo-types and body images as seen in **advertisements**.
- **Talk while you are doing something else.**
- Get some books, leaflets or find a good website. **But also be aware (e-safety) of what they may be researching on-line.**
- **Find out what your child already knows** your child will be taught about puberty and relationships starting in year 5, although it will be briefly mentioned in year 3/ 4 when talking about life cycles and personal health. Therefore you should be ready for any unanswered questions they may have. **Don't give your child a one-off talk about sex and relationships, but build up gradually**, this will mean that as they get older, children will feel more comfortable about asking questions.
- **Find the right words.** Give your child small answers to questions, some children may want to know more, others may be happy with the short answer, if they ask more questions, this is because they are ready for more information, if they ask the same question again, it is often because they haven't understood, if they change the subject its probably because they are happy with your answer!
- **Think ahead.** Think about how you will answer certain questions and if you feel unsure or unhappy about how to answer.