



Sexual Health Month

September 2026

Health promotion
resource toolkit

Centre for
Excellence
in Rural
Sexual Health
(CERSH)



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

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Introduction

Sexual Health Month (September) is a great opportunity to get involved in sexual health promotion initiatives that can have a profound positive impact on both individual and community wellness. By engaging in sexual health promotion, organisations can help reduce stigma and misinformation, empower individuals with essential knowledge and resources, foster healthier communities, improve workplace wellness, and show a strong commitment to social responsibility. Embracing Sexual Health Month demonstrates that we value the comprehensive health of the broader community, and that we're committed to creating a healthier, happier, more inclusive, sex-positive environment.

Sexual health promotion:

- Empowers informed decision-making
- Removes barriers to accessing health care
- Improves access to information
- Promotes healthy, respectful, consensual relationships
- Reduces stigma and shame
- Dispels myths
- Reduces rates abuse and violence
- Reduces rates of STIs, BBVs and unwanted pregnancies
- Enhances communication skills
- Encourages safe-sex and condom use
- Promotes inclusivity
- Celebrates diverse experiences

Inspiration

How to get involved

- Host an event
- Attend an event
- Learn about sexual health
- Promote Sexual Health Month and other events happening in your area
- Display or supply sexual health resources

Event ideas

- Organise training, a workshops or a guest speaker
- Storytime (book ideas below)
- Movie screening (video ideas below)
- Pub nights (Drag Queen Bingo, Sexual Health Trivia, Open Mic, Comedy)
- Paint and Sip (life painting with a nude muse, vulva art)
- Sexual health expo for students and schools
- Competitions, games and crafts (colouring in, pottery, erotic origami, knitting, 'how many oranges can you fit in a condom?')
- LGBTIQ+ Celebration events
- Art Exhibitions
- STI Testing or Cervical Screening Day
- Service Tours after Dark

Campaigns

Talk, Test, Treat

Multicultural Health and Support Services (MHSS)

- It's important to TALK about sexual health to make sure you and your partner/s are healthy
- Get a sexual health TEST for your safety and the safety of your partner/s. Testing is usually quick and always confidential
- There are TREATments for many conditions, including all STIs

[Download campaign materials here.](#)

Everybody's Doing it

Department of Health

The 4 Cs of safer sex

- Communication – Talk openly with your partner/s about sexual health and pleasure.
- Consent – Take steps to check that everyone involved is freely agreeing to each sexual activity.
- Contraception – Take steps to avoid getting pregnant, or getting someone else pregnant, unless you both want to.
- Condoms – Use protection to reduce the risk of STIs and unintended pregnancy.

Make the right decisions for you by talking to someone you trust. Sex should be enjoyable. Safer sex means sexual contact when you and your partner(s) are ready. Any form of sex needs to be consensual, and you should feel respected and protected.

[Download campaign materials here.](#)

Every Body

World Association for Sexual Health

Written as two words, the theme holds two ideas at once: every person, and the body they inhabit. Sexual health is always lived in a body — and what determines whether that body experiences care, dignity, and pleasure is not the body itself. It is the world that body moves through: the policies, the power structures, the stigma, and the assumptions embedded in the systems we all rely on.

Every Body asks us: Whose bodies are sexual health systems built for, and whose are left out?

[Download campaign materials and resource toolkit here.](#)

Do it anyway

Jean Hailes

This year's theme, *do it anyway*, is about taking small steps towards your health. Across the week, we'll be exploring different health topics each day, and providing practical information, expert advice and real stories designed to help women care for their health in ways that feel realistic and achievable.

[Download campaign materials here.](#)

Made in the Loddon Mallee and Goulburn North East

Women's Health Goulburn North East have developed a series of resources (posters, social media, bookmarks) on a range of women's health topics including: consent, menopause, painful periods, cervical screening and navigating health services. You can download these resources by visiting the [WHGNE website](#).

Women's Health Loddon Mallee have developed a series of videos on unplanned pregnancy, menopause, and cervical screening. These are available in easy English, Karen, Tagalog, and Auslan. [Download here](#).

Data and evidence

Writing Themselves In 4

In 2019, the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS) at La Trobe University, with support from Rainbow Health Australia and Rainbow Network, surveyed 6,418 LGBTQA+ people aged 14 to 21 about their experiences with education, homelessness, harassment, assault, mental health, community connections, and more. This landmark study is the largest of its kind ever conducted in Australia, providing an unprecedented insight into the lives of LGBTQA+ young people.

The national report presents these findings alongside key recommendations for action.

Hill AO, Lyons A, Jones J, McGowan I, Carman M, Parsons M, Power J, Bourne A (2021) Writing Themselves In 4: The health and wellbeing of LGBTQA+ young people in Australia. National report, monograph series number 124. Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University: Melbourne. ARCSHS

[Download the report here](#).

Attitudes matter: The 2021 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey

The National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS) is a periodic, representative survey of the Australian population that is conducted every four years. The NCAS measures the Australian community's understanding and attitudes regarding violence against women, their attitudes towards gender inequality and their intentions to intervene when witnessing violence or disrespect against women.

Coumarelos, C., Weeks, N., Bernstein, S., Roberts, N., Honey, N., Minter, K., & Carlisle, E. (2023). Attitudes matter: The 2021 National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey (NCAS), Findings for Australia. (Research report 02/2023). ANROWS.

[Download full report, and summary reports here](#).

8th Australian survey of secondary students and sexual health

The Australian Survey of Secondary Students and Sexual Health (SSASH) survey is a national study exploring the sexual health and well-being of school-age young people in Australia. The study explores young people's experiences of sex, relationships, sexual health and school-based relationships and sexuality education (RSE).

Power, J., Kauer, S., Duffus, B., & Bourne, A. (2026). *The 8th Australian Survey of Secondary Students and Sexual Health*. La Trobe University. DOI: [10.26181/31958556](https://doi.org/10.26181/31958556)

[Download the report here.](#)

Women's Health Atlas

The Victorian Women's Health Atlas has been developed by Women's Health Victoria, in collaboration with other state-wide and regional women's health services, as a tool to assist in the identification of gender impacts on key health areas. The Atlas provides a coordinated State approach to support women's health services and other health planners, to enable comparison between LGAs, regions and the state. The purpose of the Atlas is to increase the availability of reliable data for evidence based decisions about service design, emerging priorities and program planning.

[Visit the Atlas here.](#)

You can watch a walk-through of the Atlas [here](#).

Victorian Department of Health Dashboards

The infectious diseases dashboard presents data on infectious diseases and other conditions notifiable to the department in Victoria under Public Health and Wellbeing legislation. Data are related to notifications received from medical practitioners and laboratories and does not necessarily reflect the true incidence of disease.

[Visit the infectious diseases dashboard here.](#)

The strategy dashboard can be used to evaluate and report on the impact of the Victorian sexual and reproductive health and viral hepatitis strategy 2022–30 and corresponding plans. Data can be filtered by year and demographic characteristics including age group, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity, country of birth and residential local government area. The Strategy dashboard can also be used to inform effective prevention, testing, treatment and care services for BBV and STI programs.

[Visit the strategy dashboard here.](#)

Understanding sex, health, and relationships among bi+ people in Australia

The Bi+ Sexual Health and HIV (BiSHH) study was the first national survey of sex, health, and relationships designed specifically for the bi+ community in Australia. This study collected over 2,000 responses from bi+ people across Australia in 2024–2025 and was developed through meaningful partnership between researchers and bi+ community members. This report outlines an overview of the key findings from the BiSHH study and provides much-needed data on the distinct sexual health and HIV experiences of bi+ people in Australia.

Bushby, B., Newman, C. E., Bjaalid, E. G., Grant, R., Henningham, M., McCormack, H., Power, J., Spencer, S., Dau, D., Elmore, A., Fischer, G., Howell, T., Karpinski, B., McOrrie, N., Murray, J., Shawcross, H., Takeuchi, J., Weiss, J., Wilson, K., Yannoulatos, S., Bavinton, B. R. (2026). *Understanding sex, health, and relationships among bi+ people in Australia: Key findings from the first Bi+ Sexual Health and HIV study (BiSHH) 2024–25*. Kirby Institute, UNSW: Sydney, Australia.

[Download the report here.](#)

Resources

Order physical resources (posters, stickers, pamphlets) or download posters and toolkits by clicking the links below.

- [CERSH](#)
- [1800MyOptions](#)
- [Sexual Health Victoria](#)
- [Zoe Belle Gender Collective](#)
- [Young Deadly Free](#)
- [Department of Health](#)
- [Minus 18](#)
- [Children by Choice](#)

Books

Children's books

- Don't Touch My Hair (Sharee Miller)
- My Own Way (Joanna Estrela)
- How to Say Hello (Sophie Beer)
- Bodies Are Cool (Tyler Feder)
- ABC of Body Safety and Consent (Jayneen Sanders)
- Be Your Own Man (Jessica Sanders)
- The Internet is like a Puddle (Shona Innes)
- What makes a Baby (Cory Silverberg)
- We need to talk about Bottoms (Candy Lawrence)

Young adult books

- Grown – The Black Girls Guide to Growing Up (Melissa Cummings-Quarry & Natalie Carter)
- Girl Stuff (Kaz Cooke)
- Honest (Milly Evans)
- Welcome to Sex (Melissa Kang & Yumi Stynes)
- Welcome to Puberty (Melissa Kang & Yumi Stynes)
- Doing IT! Let's talk about sex (Hannah Witton)
- How to Love (Alex Norris)
- Here and Queer (Rowan Ellis)
- Welcome to Consent (Melissa Kang & Yumi Stynes)

Adult books

Sexual Rights and Reproductive Rights

- You're the Only One I've Told: The Stories Behind Abortion (Dr. Meera Shah)
- The Turnaway Study (Diana Greene Foster, PhD)
- Birth in Eight Cultures (Robbie E. Davis-Floyd and Melissa Cheyney)
- Bodies Under Siege (Sian Norris)
- The Means of Reproduction (Michelle Goldberg)
- Sexuality, Health and Human Rights (Sonia Corrêa, et al)
- Slutdom; Reclaiming shame-free sexuality (Hilary Caldwell)

Access to Information

- On Censorship: A Public Librarian Examines Cancel Culture (James LaRue)
- Too Hot to Handle: A Global History of Sex Education (Jonathan Zimmerman)

Trans and Nonbinary People

- He/She/They How We Talk about Gender and Why It Matters (Schuyler Bailar)
- American Teenager: How Trans Kids Are Surviving Hate and Finding Joy ... (Nico Lang)
- Free to Be (Dr. Jack Turban)
- Before We Were Trans: A New History of Gender (Kit Heyam)
- Bi: The Hidden Culture, History and Science of Bisexuality (Julia Shaw)

Podcasts

- Ladies, We Need To Talk with Yumi Stynes
- Come As You Are
- The Sex Agenda Podcast
- One Foot In
- Doing 'IT'
- Planet Puberty
- Talk Soon Talk Often
- Yarning Quiet Ways
- That's Totally Normal with Doctor T
- Glad you Came by Georgie Grace
- On The Couch | Caddyshack Project
- Sex for Normal People with Ita O'Brien
- Triple J, The Hookup Advice If You're LGBTQI+ And Live In The Country

Films

Sexual Rights and Reproductive Rights

- After Tiller (Documentary by Lana Wilson and Martha Shane)
- The Janes (Directed by Tia Lessin and Emma Pildes)
- Aftershock (Paula Eiselt and Tonya Lewis Lee)
- Break The Silence: Reproductive & Sexual Health Stories (Directed by Willow O'Feral)
- Happening (L'Événement) (Directed by Audrey Diwan)

Trans and Nonbinary People

- Trans in America: A Documentary Series (ACLU Transhood, Directed by Sharon Liese)
- Gender Revolution: A Journey With Katie Couric
- The Pearl of Africa (Jonny von Wallström)
- Always Amber (Directed by Lia Hietala and Hannah Reinikainen)
- How Queer Looks (Ash and Ruth) Filmed in regional Victoria <https://yballarat.org.au/how-queer-looks/>

Access to Information

- The Turning Point: To Be Destroyed (MSNBC)
- Banned Together (Directed by Kate Way and Tom Wiggin)
- A Sexplanation (Directed by Alex Liu)

CERSH's Resources

Youth Comics

Cartoons and comics are established as effective tools for health education due to their engaging and accessible nature. They are particularly effective as a tool for starting conversations and delivering health information on subjects that people might find challenging to discuss openly, like sex, sexuality and relationships. The comics depict situations where the young characters navigate sexual health challenges. They were designed with empty speech and thought bubbles, to be used as conversation starting tools to support youth workers in addressing topics of sex, sexuality, and relationships. This Sexual Health Month try using these comics to facilitate conversations about sexual health! They can be used one-on-one, in group settings or even at an event stall.

[Download the comics and the facilitator guide here.](#)

Sexual Wellness Professional Development Series

The Sexual Wellness Professional Development Series is a free online initiative designed to meet the distinctive needs of rural and regional sexual health professionals. Our primary aim is to enhance knowledge, skills, and confidence in adopting best-practice approaches to address sexual health and wellness concerns. Each month, experts in the field of sexual health delve into topics tailored to a range of health professionals including but not limited to; clinical, health promotion, community services and education.

[Watch CERSH's series here.](#)

Conversation starters

Talking about sexual health is necessary to reduce stigma, promote sex-positivity, enable access to sexual health care, and reduce the burden of STIs/BBVs and reproductive health issues.

How might you start a conversation about sexual health?

- Has our organisation thought about providing free condoms? (purchasing bulk condoms is probably cheaper than you think)
- Has our organisation thought about providing free menstrual products? (check out Share the Dignity)
- Have you seen Sex Education on Netflix? What was your sex education like at school?
- Do we have a menstruation or menopause policy at our organisation?
- How could we support people experiencing reproductive health related symptoms
- I've just read some interesting research, I wonder how we could use this? (check out 'data and evidence')
- Does our organisation display LGBTIQ+ resources in our clinic?
- Have our staff undertaken LGBTIQ+ inclusion training? Maybe we could book some!
- Did you know the clitoris was only first mapped in 2005? (by Australian urologist Helen O'Connell) What do you think that tells us about sex and female pleasure?
- Consent education is part of Australian school curriculum. How has our understanding of consent changed?
- Sometimes it can be scary to get a sexual health checkup. Let's destigmatise the appointment by watching some videos

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