



CREATING SAFE SPACES

Attitudes towards Sexuality

Building a positive, respectful and rights-based perspective



Establish class values



- We will be talking about sexuality, gender, pleasure, abuse and safety in these sessions. What will make this class a safe space for everyone to share, express their views and discuss freely?
- How do we want others to behave?
- How will we behave?

Group activity



Looking at sexuality and sexual relationships

Participants make groups of 4 persons

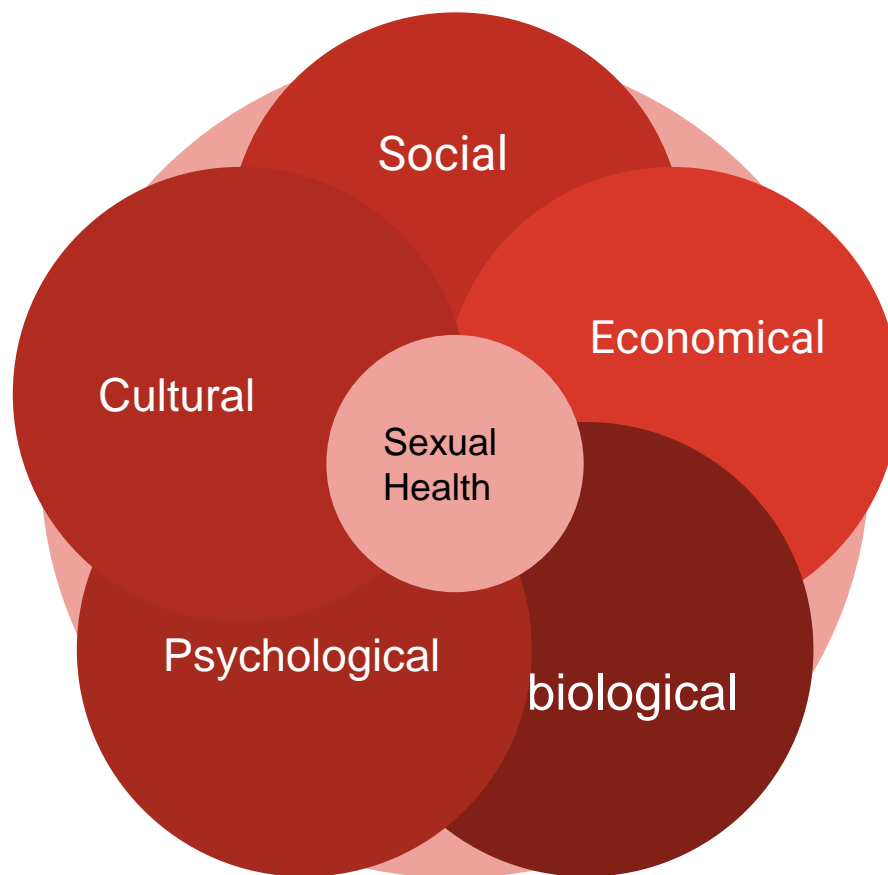
1. Each group defines sexuality.
2. Each group is given one of the following topics. They have to list the beliefs they have / they have heard other people express about it. If there are fewer groups, the topics are distributed among the groups
 - a. Sex
 - b. Romance
 - c. Use of contraception
 - d. Virginity
3. Masturbation
4. Marriage
5. Live-in relationships
6. Polyamory
7. Sex for money
8. Pornography

40 minutes: Each group presents the definition they have written, and the beliefs they have noted and whether they agree with it or not.

Session is held after this is completed

- Refers to multiple aspects of sexual health and well-being (physical, psychological and social). Includes:
 - One's sense of acceptance about their own gender and sexuality
 - Experience of autonomy and control over one's sexual experiences
 - Experience of fulfilment in one's sexual experience and expression
 - To have the choice of engaging with people or practices of one's preference

Determinants of Sexual health are multifactorial



- Idea that all forms of sexual experience and expression are positive as long as they are safe, explicitly consensual and don't violate others' rights
- It is the attitude of valuing sex and sexual pleasure for its own sake and not just from a reproductive lens or morals or religious/ faith-based value systems which are often reflected in our laws as well.
 - Allows us to stop questioning our own normality
 - Lets us relax and experience our natural sexuality without guilt or fear
 - Permits us to explore and access a greater range of choices which may be key to our sexual fulfilment across different times in our lifespan

Attitudes towards sex



- Sexual activity is thought to have the primary purpose of reproduction and sex is only seen as penetrative sex.
- Religious tenets across the globe preached that sex for pleasure was immoral and sexual activities began to be controlled.
- Recent conversations have challenged these norms and promote more open conversations around sex for pleasure.
- Sex is still seen through the lens of morality and people judged for their preferences (ref. charmed circle)

Virginity

- Virginity is a social construct
- Premarital virginity of women is held at a premium and considered a sign of sexual purity of women in many cultures and by most religions.
- Medical (sometimes illegal) interventions to reconstruct the hymen, and clitoridectomy were used to control the sexual urges of unmarried girls, so they remain chaste till marriage
- Virginity as a morality-based concept adds no value to the healthy experience of sexuality and is increasingly being discounted as an anachronistic idea.



[Source](#)

Contraception and safe sex practices



- Traditional values frowned upon non-procreative, recreational sex as being against the will of nature or god.
- The need to space children, ensure health of mother and child made it necessary to use some form of birth control
- Advice around contraception usually focus on instilling fear about sex and controlling expression of sexual desire and promoting abstinence
- Partners also perceive sex that is intimate, loving and monogamous to be incompatible with condom use.
- Such attitudes leave no room for important conversations about sexual health, sexual rights and sexual pleasure.

Sexuality of people with disabilities



- People with disabilities are often thought of to be asexual or hypersexual and out of control of their sexual urges.
- Their desire for pleasure is usually overlooked.
- This is also upheld by social ideas of who is considered attractive and who should feel deserving of love and attraction.
- People with disabilities also sometimes feel themselves unworthy of love or sexual experiences, often resigning to a life devoid of such experiences.

Age and sexuality



- Sexual drive and vigor are considered as appropriate and normal only within the reproductive ages of an individual (18 – 50 years)
- Childhood is seen as an age of sexual innocence, with no sexual urges or needs until they become adults or are ready for marriage.
- People over 50 years of age - are supposed to have 'higher' purpose - be more religious or spiritual and not be 'carnal' in their interests.
- Individuals who deviate from this expectation are ridiculed or labeled derisively (apart from the law which mandates a certain age as ok to start having sex)

Adult sexuality



Encompasses

- Sexual interests
- Behaviours
- Identity and orientation
- Practices and relationships
- Attitudes
- Sexual health

Sexuality, aging and myths



- Sex is for the young, who have vigour and are attractive
- Sexual activity in older adults is shameful and disgraceful
- Elderly adults couldn't, shouldn't and don't have sex
- Individuals lose their ability to perform after a certain age
- Sex is dull and boring in adult life
- Sexual intimacy is only intercourse

Healthy sexuality in older adults



Factors influencing healthy expression of sexuality in older adults

- Biological- menopause and andropause
- Psychological- beliefs and values, performance anxiety, internalised ageism and beauty standards
- Societal expectations and biases
- Marital status, loss of spouse

- Criminalisation of non cis-het behaviours and identities (e.g. LGBTQIA+ populations) has greatly limited the ways in which sexual pleasure has found expression in policy and programmes. Eg. recently revoked sec. 377 that put the fear of legal and social persecution in sexual minorities
- Sexual orientations like bisexual, pan sexual, asexual, gay or lesbian - are considered 'abnormal' in significant sections of our society
- It is also thought that sexual orientations are deliberate choices or preferences that people make, that they can change at will (which is not the case)

[Source](#)



Sex for money



- Stigmatization and discrimination of sex workers continues though sex work is legal (pimping soliciting work is not allowed)
- Sex work is not illegal under the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 ('ITPA'), but running a brothel is.
- Sex workers while protected by the ITPA are often harassed for “public indecency”, or being a “public nuisance”. They experience police violence and abuses of power, including arbitrary arrest, bribery and extortion, physical and sexual violence, lack of access to justice, and forced HIV testing.
- Sex work allows women to effectively cut men out of the possession of wages they have independently earned, freedom from reliance on a male partner, and the ability to reinvent the system of property ownership and inheritance

Sexual curiosity and pornography



- Is sexual curiosity normal?
- Is sexuality education necessary?

Pre-Internet sexuality 'education'

Books, magazines, drawings, frescoes, objects, sculptures – still images



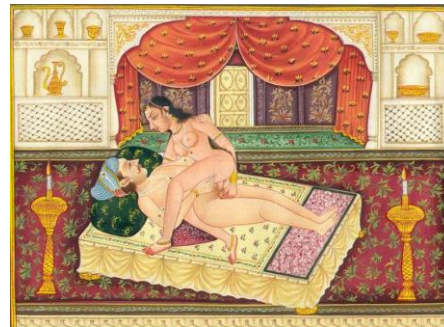
Venus of Willendorf
25000 BCE
[Source](#)



Roman oil lamp
[Source](#)



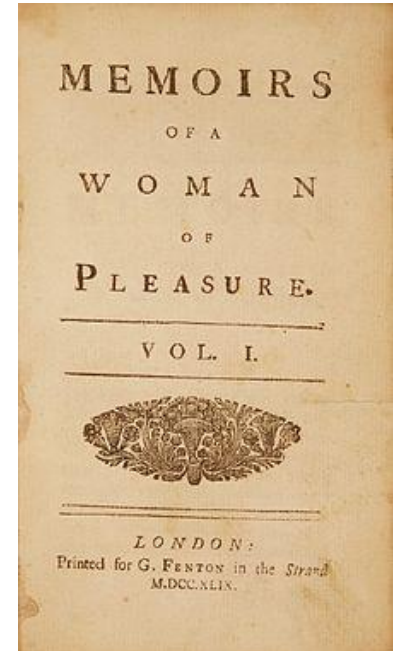
Pompeii Excavations
[Source](#)



Kama Sutra Vatsyayana
2nd CE
[Source](#)



Khajuraho Temples
950 - 1050 CE
[Source](#)



Fanny Hill
by John Cleland
1748

Pornography



- Pornography is illegal in India i.e. the publishing or transmitting of pornographic material is illegal under the IPC, the IT Act and the POCSO Act.
- Most young people begin to watch out of curiosity, to learn about sex or under peer pressure to prove themselves as grown up or adult enough.
- Watching pornography is looked at with derision and contempt - except among those who do, who may then have to be secretive
- What is problematic is when such content is sourced from places that are less than ethical/ cheap/ exploitative (rape videos, csa videos)
- There are viewers who are also particular about the kind of porn they watch – ensuring that it is not exploitative (ethical pornography) and of adult participants indulging in consenting sexual actions.

Porn addiction?



- Pornographers promise healthy pleasure and relief from sexual tension, but what they often deliver is an addiction, sensitization, tolerance, and an eventual decrease in pleasure. Sensitisation leads to increased wanting, though not necessarily liking.
- It's a use-it-or-lose-it brain, even where sexual desire and love are concerned.
- “Because plasticity is competitive, the brain maps for new, exciting images increased at the expense of what had previously attracted them – the reason, I believe, they began to find their girlfriends less of a turn-on”
- This means that decisions people make shape not only the actions they take, at a given time, but the shape and structure of their brains, over the long haul.

(The Brain That Changes Itself, 2007, copyright © Norman Doidge, 2007.)

Attitude towards sexual and reproductive functions

- Menstruation
- Masturbation



[Source](#)

After 3-2 Split Verdict, Temple Dispute To Be Heard Afresh By 7 Judges; Chandrachud & Nariman Stick To Their Earlier Stand Allowing Entry While CJI-Led Majority Says Serious Questions Of Faith Involved

Bigger Bench For Sabari, Open To Women For Now

Court May Also Review Practices, Rights Among Muslims, Parsis, Bohras

Longer dissenting, concrete verdicts

'ISSUE NOT LIMITED TO SABARIMALA, MUST DO COMPLETE JUSTICE'

NO STAY ON EARLIER VERDICT

LDF govt won't give security to women visiting shrine

Times News Network

Thiruvananthapuram: The LDF government on Thursday described the Supreme Court's verdict on Sabarimala as "very complex" and refused to spell out clearly how it will handle the situation if women attempt to enter the hill shrine in the coming days. "There is ambiguity. The verdict has created more confusion and its implications need

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday did not alter its ruling allowing women of all ages to enter the Ayyappa temple at Sabarimala but asked a seven-judge bench to evolve guidelines to decide cases involving conflicts between citizens' right to equality and a believer's faith in religious practices and customs.

CJI Gogoi, in a 100-page judgment also written on behalf of Justices Khairatkar and Mishra, said reference to a seven-judge bench was needed as the possibility of a collision between fundamental rights—between the right to equality on the one hand and the right of individuals to practise their

April 5, 2018 | Kerala HC upholds custom barring entry of menstruating women into Lord Ayyappa's shrine, on plea filed by S Mahendran

Aug 4, 2018 | Indian Young Lawyers Association petitions SC seeking entry of women into the shrine. LDF govt later files affidavit supporting plea

Oct 13, 2017 | SC refers case to Constitution bench

Sept 28, 2018 | In a 4:1 verdict, SC allows women of all ages to enter Sabarimala. Says ban violates rights of Hindu women

Oct 2018 | Kerala govt seeks time to implement verdict as protests prevent women from entering shrine. BJP, Congress join agitation

Thiruvananthapuram: The LDF government on Thursday described the Supreme Court's verdict on Sabarimala as "very complex" and refused to spell out clearly how it will handle the situation if women attempt to enter the hill shrine in the coming days. "There is ambiguity. The verdict has created more confusion and its implications need

Thiruvananthapuram: The LDF government on Thursday described the Supreme Court's verdict on Sabarimala as "very complex" and refused to spell out clearly how it will handle the situation if women attempt to enter the hill shrine in the coming days. "There is ambiguity. The verdict has created more confusion and its implications need

Thiruvananthapuram: The LDF government on Thursday described the Supreme Court's verdict on Sabarimala as "very complex" and refused to spell out clearly how it will handle the situation if women attempt to enter the hill shrine in the coming days. "There is ambiguity. The verdict has created more confusion and its implications need

1. Why I stopped watching porn | Ran Gavrieli | TEDxJaffa - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gRJ_QfP2mhU&t=440s
2. Jessica's Story: My Life As A Porn Star - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bk23mL15qpA>

This PowerPoint is part of a project to prevent gender based violence. This project is supported by Ford Foundation.



CREATING SAFE SPACES

Thank You!

ENFOLD PROACTIVE HEALTH TRUST

+91 802552 0489 | +91 99000 94251 | enfoldindia.org



SURAKSHITH APP

Information, stories on personal safety for children.



BAL SURAKSHA APP

Information on answering children's questions,
managing child sexual abuse.



STRI SURAKSHA APP

On crimes against women, laws, interventions and
healing techniques.

All Apps in 10 languages, free on android Developed with UNICEF and MeitY (CDAC Hyderabad)