

Healthy Relationships and Sexuality



Easy Read



Introduction

Relationships are important for everyone.

This guide will tell you things that are important to know for your relationships.



Important ideas

It is important to have these 4 things in every relationship

- Consent
- Communication
- Respect
- Equality



These things help people feel safe.



Consent is a type of agreement for something to happen.

You should never feel you have to do something you do not want to do.

You have the right to **not give consent** if you do not want something to happen.

If you do not give consent it should not happen.



Communication is the way we get our message across to other people.



We do this by talking.

You can also do it with things like the way you talk and how you move your body.

Like if someone said they were fine but they were crying you would know they were sad.



Respect is a way of treating people. It is also to do with how we think about people or things.

You show respect by being polite and kind.



Equality means people have the same control in a relationship.

If one person in a relationship is more in control that means there is not equality.



Rights

Everyone has the right to choose what they want for their own body.

Everyone has the right to have different kinds of relationships.

Some of these relationships can be friendships and romantic relationships.



Everyone has the right to have respect in their relationships.

Treating people the way they ask to be treated is one way to show respect.



It is important to respect everyone's rights.

You have rights and other people have rights.

You should give respect to the other person.



You might need some extra support when you start a relationship.

This might be

- Education about sexuality and how to stay safe
- Information about what is ok to do in public and what should only be in private
- Talk with someone you trust about what you want in a relationship and what you do not want.



Relationships

A relationship is the way 2 or more people are connected.



A good relationship is when the people respect each other.

The people talk about how they feel and listen to each other.



A bad relationship can be when one person is hurting the other person.

People can be hurt in different ways like

- Hurt the person's body by hitting them.
- Take the person's money. This can be called **taking advantage** of someone.

Bad relationships can be with friends or boyfriends and girlfriends or with other family members.



Hurting or taking advantage of someone is called **abuse**.

Abuse is against the law.



It is important to know your rights and speak up if you are abused.

If you think you are in a bad relationship it is important to tell someone you trust right away.



Why are relationships important?

Relationships are important because they help us be happy and healthy.

When starting or keeping relationships there will be things about people that you look for.

Everyone likes and looks for different things in different people.



The most important things to look for are people who

- Treat each other with respect
- Make each other feel important and loved.



Types of relationships

Family

Family are the people you are related to.

Like your parents or your brothers and sisters or cousins.

Family are people who have known you a long time.



Families can give information and help you in all areas of your life.

Family should help you make big life decisions.

They can help you know your rights.

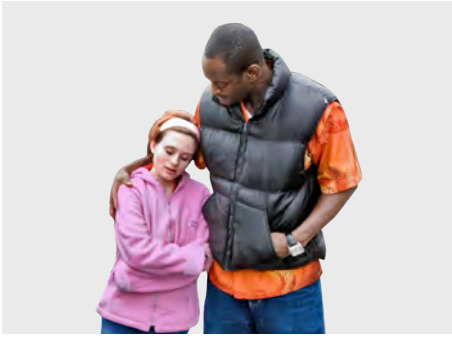


Friends

It is important for everyone to have friends.

Friends can make you feel happy.

It can be nice to spend time with them.



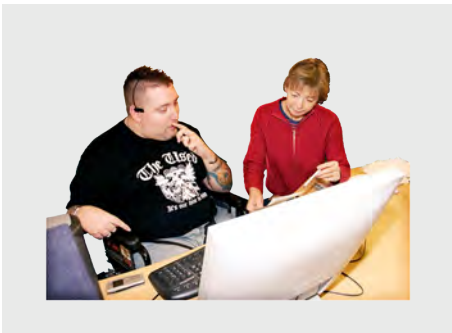
Friends can help when you are feeling sad or need someone to talk to.

Friends help each other in good times and bad times.



You might meet friends at

- School
- Work
- Church
- Sport



You have relationships with people you work with.

These can be called **professional relationships**.



It is important to be polite to people at work.

You might not tell people at work personal things.

Most of the time you will not do things like hug or kiss people at work.

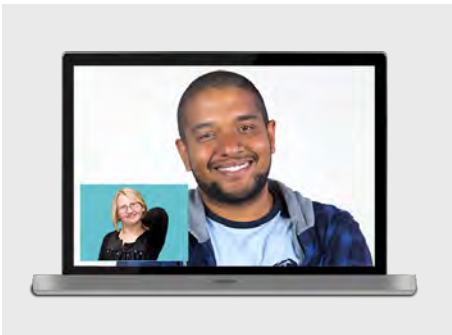


Online Relationships

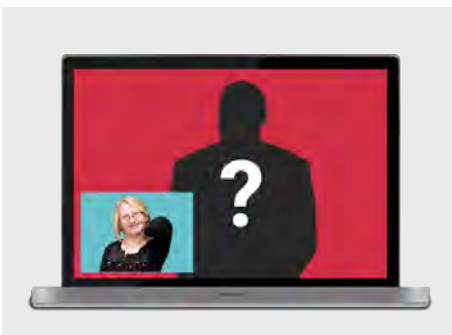
Sometimes you might have a relationship with someone online and not in person.

Online means it is on the internet.

You might meet someone on social media or on a website.



Online relationships can be a great way to meet people but you have to be careful.



Sometimes people pretend to be someone else to try and get your money or take advantage of you.



Some ways to keep safe with online relationships are

- If you want to do online dating talk to someone you trust about how to stay safe
- Never give anyone online information like your address or bank account number. Never give people money.
- Never meet a stranger for a date in your own home or by yourself.

Choose a busy place and tell someone you trust where you are going.



More information about staying safe online is available in our **Social Media and Online Safety guide**.



Romantic Relationships

As you get older you might be attracted to people in new ways.

Attracted means liking or feeling interested in someone.

This might be romantic or sexual.



You might have romantic or sexual thoughts about the person.

This can be exciting and sometimes it can be confusing.



If you have a romantic relationship with someone you might then think about having a sexual relationship.



Not everyone that you like will like you back.

You can not make someone be your boyfriend or girlfriend.

Some relationships break up and that might hurt your feelings.



Looking after romantic relationships

If people choose to be in a relationship with each other that is great!

It is important to check with each other often to see if the relationship is good and it is ok to keep it going.



Some questions you could ask are

- Do both people respect the other person?
- Is consent asked for and given without any pressure or guilt?
- Are both people having a nice time and getting equal pleasure? Pleasure means things that make you feel good.
- Is there good communication?
Can both people say what they think and ask questions?



Checking with each other lets everyone talk about how they are feeling.

It also helps to understand what is not ok.



It is important to know about **warning signs** in a relationship.

Warning signs are things that tell you something might be going bad.

If something does not feel right in a relationship it is important to do something.



You can read more about this in the Protective Behaviours factsheet from Family Planning Victoria.



Some behaviours in a relationship are not ok.

Here are some behaviours that are not ok.

If someone hurts you and is violent.

This could be like hitting you.



If someone treats you badly by saying mean things or yelling.

Or they bully you through social media or text messages.



They do not help you get the care you need.



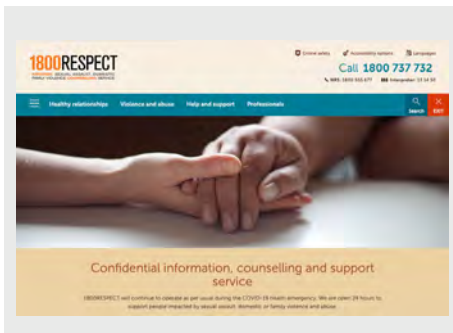
They try to control you or take your money.



They contact you when you do not want them to and have told them not to.



They do sexual things to you when you do not give consent.



If you want to talk to someone about these things you can call or text 1800 Respect on **1800 737 732**.

Website: **1800respect.org.au**



Ending relationships

Sometimes feelings about a relationship change.

You might not want to be in a relationship anymore.

The other person might want to end the relationship.

This is ok.



It is important to try and end the relationship in a safe and healthy way.



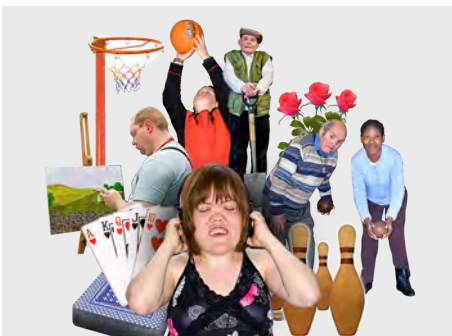
You might feel sad when a relationship ends.

Or you might feel happy when a relationship ends.

It is normal to feel a lot of feelings.



Going through a breakup is easier when you have a strong support team and interests and activities to do.



When you are in a relationship you should keep spending time with family and friends.

You should keep doing things like work and study and hobbies.

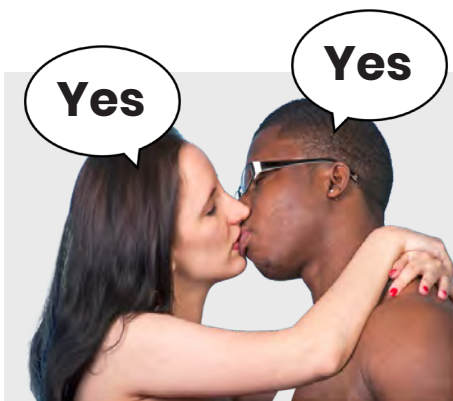


Sexuality and Sexual Relationships

Everyone has the right to be sexual. This can include **masturbation**.

Masturbation means touching your own body by yourself.

Masturbation is a private thing that you do in a private place.



Sex can also be with another person where there is consent.

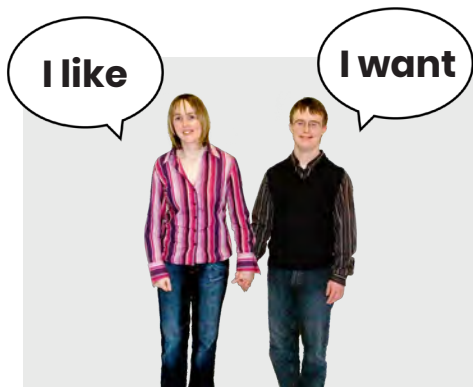


Before you have a sexual relationship with another person you need to think about what you want to do.

You also need to think about how comfortable or ready you are.



The people in the relationship choose what they would like or not like to do together sexually.



Good communication is important so everyone feels comfortable.

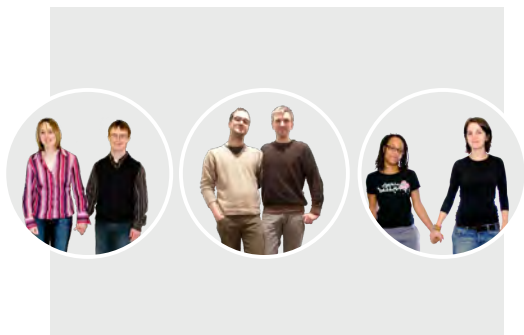
You must be able to talk about what you want or like and also listen to what the other person wants or likes.



You might want to do something the other person does not want to do.

The other person might want to do something you do not want to do.

You both have to choose together and both be happy about it before anything happens.



Many women like men and many men like women.

Some women like women and some men like men.

These are different sexualities.

There are lots of different sexualities.



It can be confusing to understand your sexuality.

You can talk about this with someone you trust or a health professional.



Anytime something sexual happens there must be consent.

There are laws about consent and it is important to know the law where you live.

You can read more about consent in the Consent and The Law factsheet.



Consent means that you have permission. Sometimes people will agree or disagree to sexual activity.

This is ok. It is important that people in the relationship feel safe.

Remember to ask for consent every time and wait for the answer.



Private and Public Places

It is important to know the difference between private and public places.

It is important to know what is ok or not ok in each place.



A private place is somewhere you are alone.
No one can see or hear you.

Sexual activity by yourself or with another person should always be in a private place.



A public place is somewhere you are with other people.

Some public places are shopping centres or parks.

If you are in a romantic relationship holding hands or hugging is ok in a public place.



Staying Safe in a Relationship

Consent

We have talked about consent a few times already in this guide but it is very important.

People have the right to say yes or no to things.

Everyone is in charge of their own body.

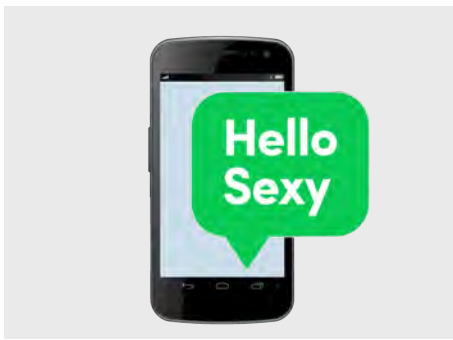


A person must have consent for sex or anything to do with another person's body.

Consent means to agree or give permission.



Read more about consent in the Consent and the Law factsheet.



Sexting

Sexting is when people take naked photos or videos of themselves and send them to other people.



Sexting is a crime when people under 18 are a part of it.

Sexting is also a crime if it happens without consent.



There can be problems from sexting because after you send a photo you have no control over what happens to it.

Some people might do bad things like

- Share someone else's photos or videos when they have not given consent
- Say they will share photos or videos if the relationship breaks up

It is never ok to do this.

This is abuse that can get people into big trouble with the police.



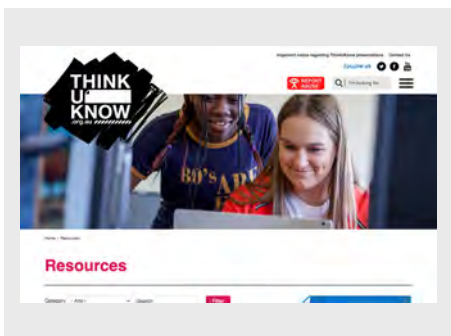
If this happens to you talk to an adult you trust.

You might need to tell the police.



If someone sends you sexual pictures and you do not want the pictures you should tell the person right away.

If the person keeps sending you pictures after you tell them not to you should tell someone you trust and the police.



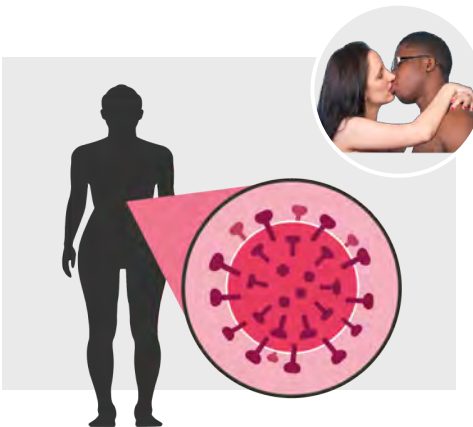
ThinkUKnow has information about staying safe.

www.Thinkuknow.org.au/resources



Contraception

Contraception is something that stops a woman from getting pregnant.



Some types of contraception can also stop people from catching **sexually transmissible infections**.

Sexually transmissible infections are infections that you can catch through sex.



All women and men have the right to make choices for their body and choose what type of contraception they use.

This is the same for women and men with disabilities.



Some types of contraception are

- Condoms
- The pill

It is important to find the one that will work best for you.

Find one that will protect you from both pregnancy and sexually transmissible infections.



You should be involved in making a choice about contraception.

Your doctor can tell you about the choices and say what they think might work best for you.



You can find out more about contraception and sexually transmissible infections in the Contraception, STIs and BBV factsheet.



Can people with Down syndrome get pregnant?

Women with Down syndrome can get pregnant if they have sex with no contraception.

The chances of getting pregnant are lower than other women.



Women with Down syndrome are more likely to have a child with Down syndrome than other mums.

Men with Down syndrome are less likely to make a women pregnant than other men.



Even though it might be hard for you and your partner to get pregnant it is still important to use contraception if you do not want to have a baby.



Having a child is a big thing to take on and it changes lives forever.



If you and your partner are thinking about having a baby it is important to talk to someone you trust.

There are lots of things to talk about like

- What support you would need
- How you would pay for things for the child
- How you would care for the baby

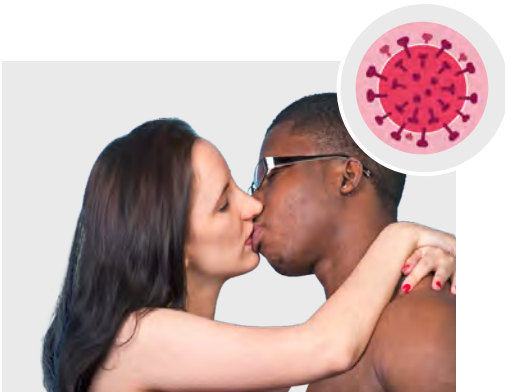


Having a child is a very serious thing and needs a lot of talking about and planning if you want to do it.



Sexual health

Men and women with Down syndrome can get sexually transmissible infections or STIs the same as everyone else.



STIs are infections you can get by having sex with someone who has an infection.

An Infection is a type of sickness.



You might get an STI from someone who does not even know that they have it.

STIs can make people very sick so it is important to be safe.



There are things you can do to stop from getting an STI.

Using condoms during sex is the best way to stay safe from STIs.



It is important to learn about using condoms before you have sex.

You should ask someone you trust about this.



You can learn more about condoms and STIs in the Contraception, STIs and BBV factsheet.



Abuse and speaking up about a problem

What is abuse?

Abuse is when someone hurts your body or hurts you by what they say.

Abuse can also be trying to control you or taking your money without you knowing.



If you feel unsafe you must tell an adult you trust.

If the first person does not listen keep telling people you trust until someone listens.



The law says that people in some jobs have to help someone who is abused or in danger or not being cared for.

Some of these jobs are

- Teachers
- Police
- Ambulance and doctors
- Support staff in group homes



How to speak up about a problem

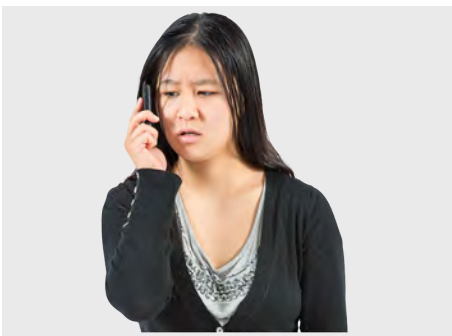
If you have a problem you should talk to someone you trust.

This might be a friend or parent or a support worker.



These people can help you choose what to do.

You might need to talk to the police.



If you feel like you can make a report by yourself call the police on **131 444**.

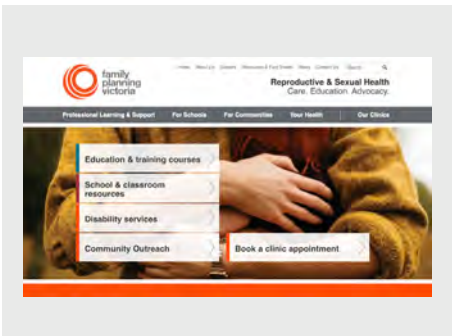
You can also call The National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline.

Ph **1800 880 052**

Email **hotline@workfocus.com**



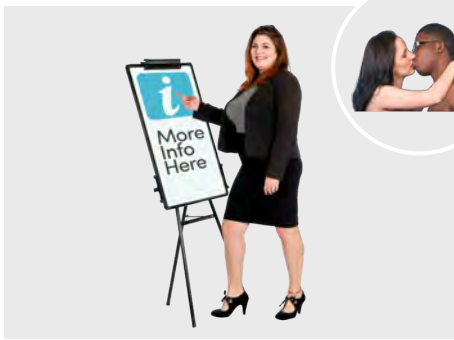
You can learn more in the Getting help factsheet.



Factsheets

The factsheets that have been talked about in this guide can be found at

[Fpv.org.au/resources/community-organisations](https://fpv.org.au/resources/community-organisations)



Family Planning organisations in Australia

A Family Planning organisation is a place that knows about sexual health and making a baby.

Family Planning give people information and support.

Every state and territory has a Family Planning organisation.



All Australia

Family Planning Alliance Australia

Phone **07 3396 6614**

Website

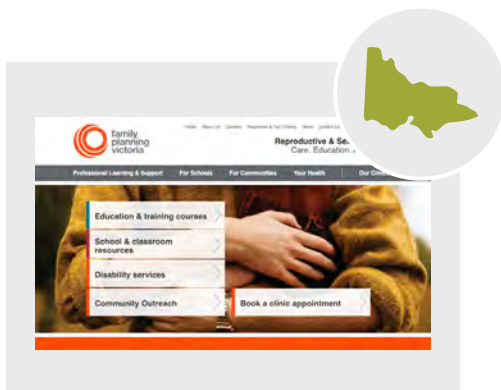
familyplanningallianceaustralia.org.au



ACT

Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT

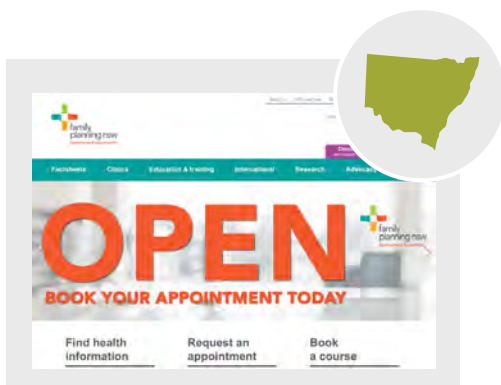
Website **shfpact.org.au**



Victoria

Family Planning Victoria

Website fpv.org.au



NSW

Family Planning NSW

Website fpnsw.org.au



QLD

True Relationships and Reproductive Health

QLD

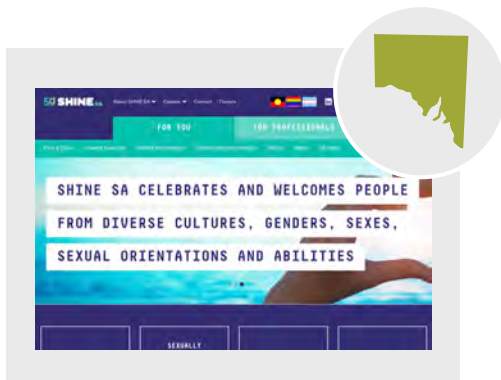
Website familyplanningallianceaustralia.org.au/services



NT

Family Planning NT

Website fpwnt.com.au



SA

Shine SA

Website **shinesa.org.au**



Tasmania

Family Planning Tasmania

Website **fpt.asn.au**



WA

Sexual Health Quarters

Website **shq.org.au**