

Module 2: Evidence based approaches to sexuality education for adolescents - Adolescent health and development with a particular focus on sexual and reproductive health - Assignment

Jorge Lionel Linares
Maternidad Periférica Zona 13, Guatemala City, Guatemala

Barriers to expanding or improving sexuality education in Guatemala

1. Language barriers (49% of Guatemala's population is indigenous people and a lot of them don't speak Spanish but their local language).
2. Cultural aspects (there are many families with traditional values that still consider sex issues as a taboo).
3. Religion matters (some religious people don't accept contraceptive methods).
4. Poor access to the educational system among indigenous people in rural areas.
5. School's lack of promotion for sexual education.
6. Lack of "friendly" health services for adolescents.

Suggestions on overcoming these barriers

Research has showed that high quality, comprehensive, right based, gender-sensitive, citizenship-oriented and sex-positive sexuality education programs among young people can delay initiation of sexual activity and unprotected intercourse with all its consequences including unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.

Sexuality education programs should have a holistic multi-value perspective taking into account biological, psychological, socio-cultural and ethical aspects and be based on current research reflecting the reality of young people's life. Participation of different sectors (ministries of health and education, community members) is expected but principally engagement of young people. These programs should be tailored to different audiences in the youth population but they should reach out to the more vulnerable and marginalized groups of young people (in Guatemala, for example, indigenous illiterate young women). A friendly environment and training of health providers should also be considered for youth health care services.

Assignment documents

1. [IPPF. From evidence to action: Advocating for comprehensive sexuality education. London: IPPF; 2009.](#)
2. [UNESCO. International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education. Volume I. The rationale for sexuality education. Paris: UNESCO; 2009.](#)

3. [UNESCO. International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education. Volume II. Topics and learning objectives. Paris: UNESCO; 2009.](#)
4. [UNESCO. Levers of Success. Case studies of national sexuality education programmes. Paris: UNESCO; 2010.](#)