Comprehensive Sexuality Education

How well is the available evidence being applied? What are challenges & opportunities in doing this?

Dr V Chandra-Mouli MBBS, MSc
@ChandraMouliWHO  chandramouliv@who.int
Comprehensive Sexuality Education
Evidence

Evidence on
(i) Effectiveness
(ii) Cost effectiveness
(iii) Scaling up & sustaining
Comprehensive Sexuality Education – Policy/programme support tools

Tools for

(i) Advocacy
(ii) Programme design & management
(iii) Measurement
Comprehensive Sexuality Education
Weak implementation

- **Weak content:**
  Inadequate information about contraception
  Key aspects of sex, reproduction & sexual health were missing

- **Weak delivery:**
  Some teachers lacked the needed skills
  Most did not want to deal with sensitive matters

Sources:
Comprehensive Sexuality Education
Paralyzed by backlash

THE NEED FOR REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS IN EGYPT

Two Steps Forward, One Step Back

SRH education in schools in Egypt has experienced both progress and setbacks. In 2010, the press reported that the Minister of Education ordered the removal of the contents related to male and female genital systems and sexually transmitted diseases from the school curriculum in the science books for grade 9. The order was not adopted, either because it was never actually given or because the minister retracted it. The only real change has been the inclusion of reproductive systems in the science books of grade 8 instead of grade 9, which child health advocates saw as a move in the right direction. However, in 2011, following the revolution and the subsequent political instability, the newly appointed minister ordered the removal of the same topics, along with family planning methods, from the 12th grade curriculum for the sake of shortening its contents.
We are failing adolescents

“Most adolescents & youth do not yet have access to comprehensive sexuality education (CSE), despite repeated intergovernmental agreements to provide it, support from the UN system, & considerable project-level experience in a wide range of countries and research showing its effectiveness.”


- They reach pupils late
- They do not reach marginalized adolescents
- Their messages do not relate to the realities of many adolescents' lives
- They are poorly delivered
- They are not linked to health services

From Paper to Practice
A series of assessments by the Guttmacher Institute

In all three settings:
- Students want more information on a broader range of issues
- Teachers face challenges (time, resources, comfort)
We are failing our children in our homes, schools & elsewhere in our communities
Why have *so few* countries moved from sound policies and strategies to large scale and sustained programmes on ASRH?

“In spite of the commitments made by States Parties contained in plans, policies, programmes and declarations...negative social, cultural, economic and legal factors continue to threaten the lives and health of a large number of women and girls... The effective realization of these commitments is, however, dependent on...:

- Political will
- Enhanced capacity
- Sustainable resourcing
- Effective monitoring and evaluation


The bottom line ...

Despite evidence of effectiveness, tools, and inclusion in regional/national declarations, most countries are struggling to deliver CSE programmes at scale with quality & equity.
Children & adolescents need & have a right to sexuality education. But we are failing them at home. We need to change this – now!
The updated Interagency Sexuality Education guidance provides practical evidence-based guidance on how to do this.