

BRIEFING

Take Action

Young People's health and wellbeing



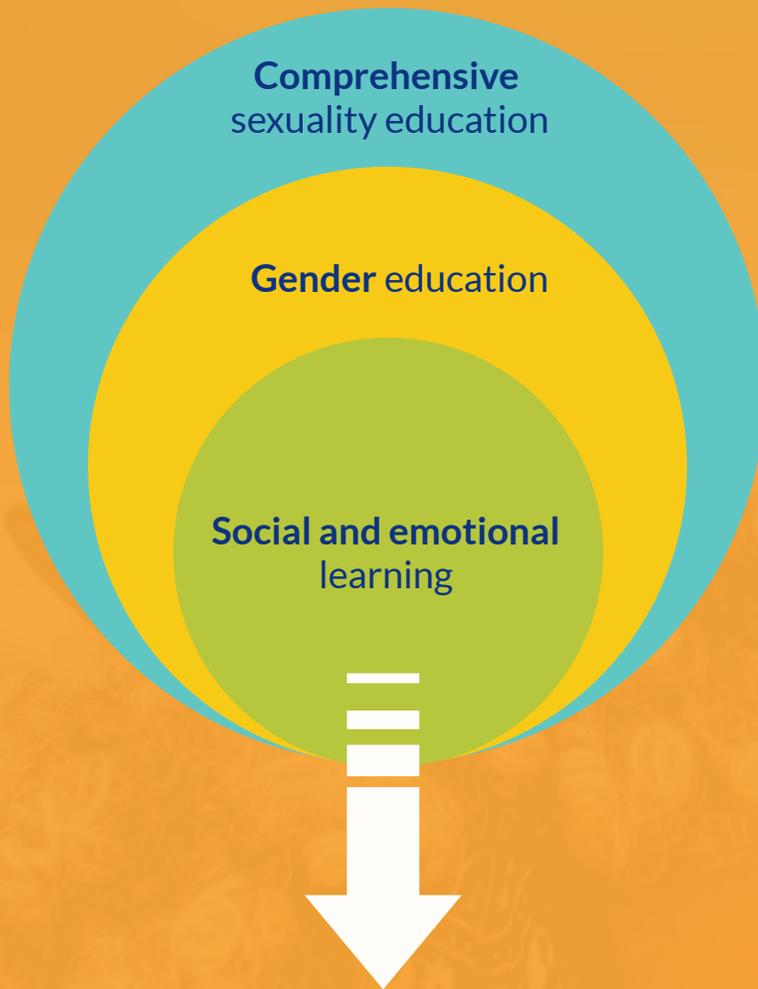


Well-being education builds respect, responsibility and relationship skills

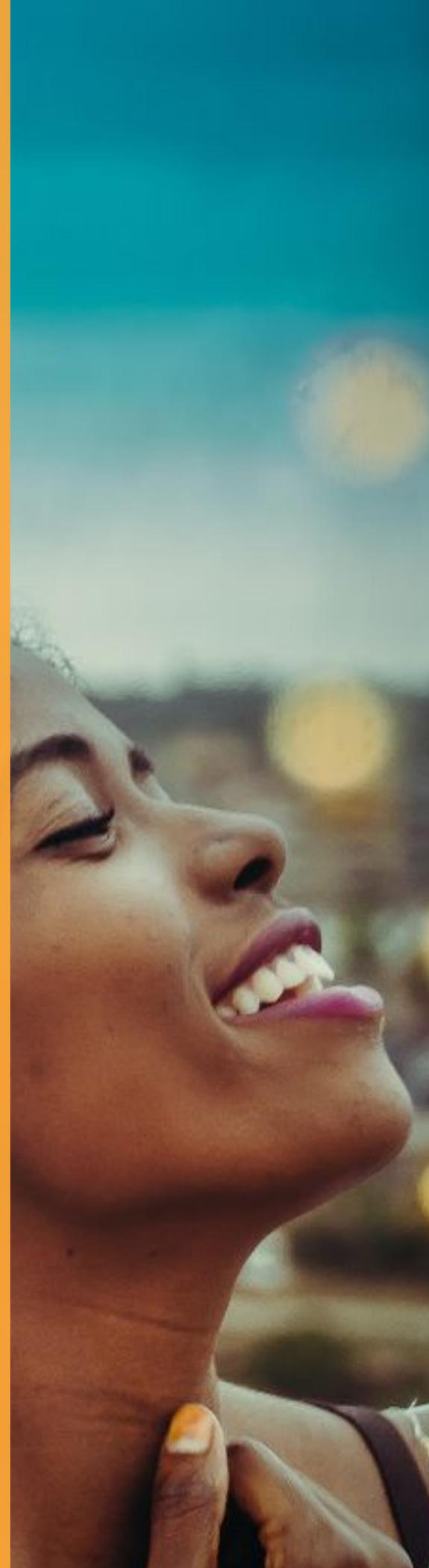
Well-being education programmes build the resilience of children, adolescents and young people, empowering them to relate to others with respect, to make and carry out responsible decisions, and to deal effectively with change and challenge. These programmes are called “life skills” because they are important to learning outcomes, well-being, future employability and healthy adult relationships.

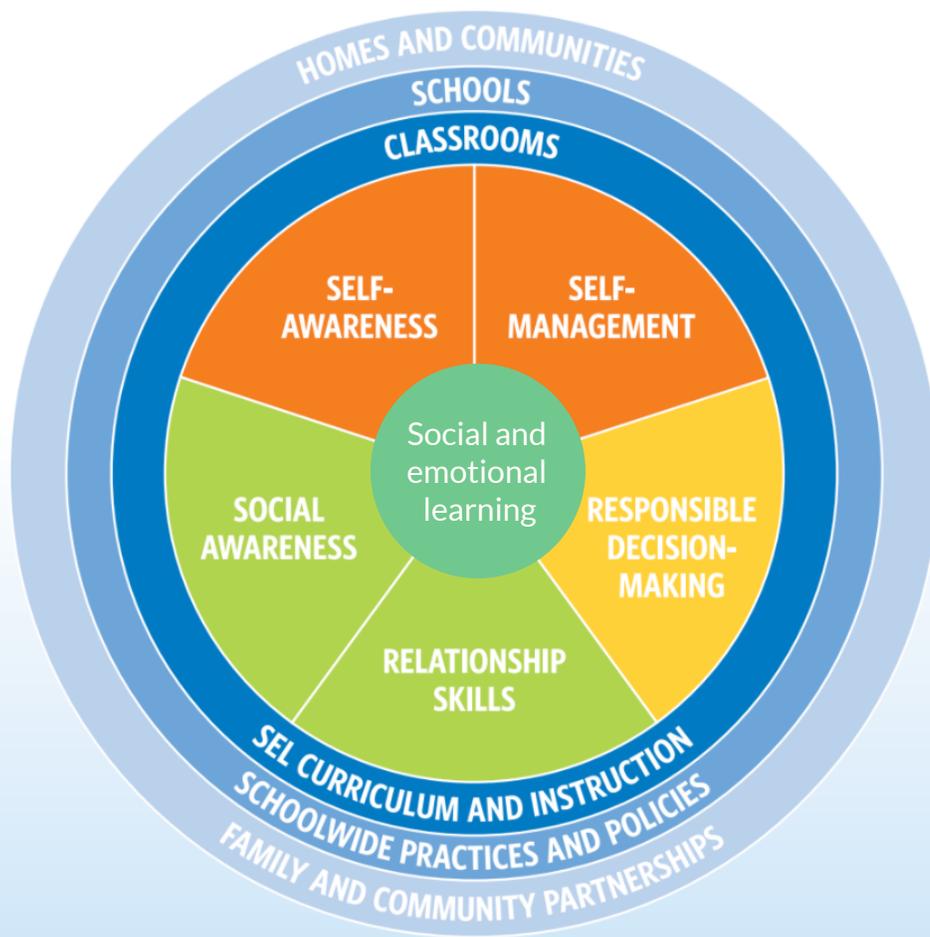


Building respect, responsibility and relationship skills



- At the centre of well-being education is social and emotional learning. These programmes develop skills for positive social and mental health.
- Gender education promotes respectful gender relationships, and helps to reduce gender-based violence.
- Age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education programmes develop the knowledge, skills and values young people need to make informed, responsible and respectful decisions about their sexual lives. All education systems should provide for social and mental health, gender education and comprehensive sexuality education.





A shared approach

Comprehensive sexuality education includes core components of social and emotional learning and gender education. Common elements and approaches include:

- teaching the values of respect and responsibility.
- building relationship skills.
- empowering responsible decision-making.

Social and emotional learning programmes teach the knowledge and skills to understand, manage and communicate about emotions; establish and maintain respectful relationships; use positive coping strategies; and make responsible decisions.

Social and emotional learning programmes have a number of benefits, including:

- mental well-being and reductions in anxiety and depression.
- social behaviour and reductions in bullying and harassment.
- reductions in risk-taking with alcohol and other drugs.
- Connectedness to learning and to school.
- Improved academic attainment and employability.



Gender education improves gender equality and reduces gender-based violence



Gender education helps young people to understand how social norms influence people's attitudes, decisions and life opportunities. It aims to advance gender equality and prevent gender-based violence. Well-designed gender education programmes help:

- reduce rates of gender-based violence;
- advance respect for human rights; and
- reduce gendered risk-taking and harmful practices.

Comprehensive sexuality education prepares learners for healthy adult lives

Effective comprehensive sexuality education programmes provide information about sexual and reproductive health and teach relationship skills. Comprehensive sexuality education programmes that also teach about gender are five times more effective in preventing sexually transmitted infections and unwanted pregnancy among young people than those that do not. Research from around the world shows that well-designed comprehensive sexuality education programmes:

- help reduce sexual risk-taking behaviours;
- delay sexual intercourse;
- reduce the number of partners; and
- increase condom and contraceptive use.



Well-being education advances the Sustainable Development Goals

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When education systems provide comprehensive sexuality education, with core components of social and emotional learning and gender education, they advance progress towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 3: Health, Goal 4: Quality Education, Goal 5: Gender Equality and Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities.

Well-being education also develops youth skills for employment and ensures all learners acquire knowledge and skills for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence and global citizenship.

Comprehensive sexuality education, with a focus on gender education and social and emotional learning, contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.