



Sex – sexuality education
Personal development for
the prevention of discrimination
and violence (SEXED)

**Are you ready to talk about it?
Introduction to Sexuality Education
in Schools**

by

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one in five
un sur cinq



“Are you ready to talk about it?” – Introduction to Sexuality Education in Schools

Brief description

In this unit participants become aware of how our own norms, values and cultural background influence our sexuality. In a teaching context this awareness is inevitable not only because in many situations it is hardly possible to separate our personal sexual identity (as mothers, fathers, singles or lovers, heterosexual or homosexual, etc.) from our professional one, but because we as teachers are role models and convey many un-reflected messages to our students as a whole person. This training unit is based on the result of author’s discussion about the main norms and values both in pedagogy and sexuality. The aim is to help improve participants’ understanding of the holistic approach and democratic values in sexuality and improve their capacity to accommodate, negotiate, and adjust to these differences, and to include those in teaching situations in a way that makes them a resource rather than a source of frustration, insecurity or conflict. Since this training unit is mainly focused on teachers self-reflection skills, their professional and personal identity and self-development, it might be considered as an introductory unit and combined with other training units such as sexual history, detailed school-sex-education curricula, etc.

Expected outcomes

This training unit provides a basic introductory methodology and a set of self-reflection skills for teachers who deal with sensitive, sex-related topics in schools and similar institutional environments. Although participants will also deepen their understanding of the concept(s) of sexuality, this unit focuses on improving teachers’ psychological skills that help them to define their own boundaries and make them personally capable to handle intimate issues.

- ✓ Readiness to examine my behaviour, language use and body language (A_SELF_1)
- ✓ Acceptance of the fact that my actions can reflect my personal values and beliefs more authentically than words (A_SELF_2)
- ✓ Inclination to see things from different perspectives (A_EPI_3)
- ✓ Readiness to learn from challenges (A_self_4)
- ✓ Recognition of the importance of handling controversial issues and acceptance of the associated risks (A_EPI_5)

Activities

	Duration	Methods used
Activity 1 “Warming up” – in an embodied way	60 minutes	pair work
Activity 2 “Touch” – discover our boundaries 1	45minutes	pair work group discussion
Activity 3 “Let’s talk about it” – discover our boundaries 2	30 minutes	Group work, pair work
Activity 4 How we react to sex – values and emotions – Decentration with pictures >	40 minutes	Group work, individual work,
Activity 5 Sex mosaic – what is / where is sex in your life, in your work?	50 minutes	Group work, using images
Activity 6 Evaluation	60 minutes	Individual work, Cooperative learning

Background and context

This training session was piloted in a 30 hour long e-pilot training programme for 20 participants, mainly teachers and a couple of school psychologists. The main goal of the training was to provide a basic introductory methodology and a set of self-reflection skills for teachers who might deal with sensitive, sex-related topics in schools and similar institutional environments. Our goal was to help participants to find ways to integrate these methods and exercises into their daily work in schools. It is hardly possible to evaluate specific activities without considering the whole context of the training. One of the aims of the training was to pilot how non-formal, self-reflective and “learning by doing” methods can be used in training teachers to deal with sex-related topics in regular Hungarian schools. This training unit serves as a great starting point to sex-education and can be implemented in any context.

Activity 1: "Warming up" – in an embodied way

Duration: 60 min

Expected outcome

- ✓ Readiness to examine my behaviour, language use and body language (A_SELF_1)
- ✓ Acceptance of the fact that my actions can reflect my personal values and beliefs more authentically than words (A_SELF_2)
- ✓ Readiness to learn from challenges (A_self_4)

Methods/ techniques used

- ✓ interactive, pair work

Resources

- ✓ List of instructions

Practical arrangements

- ✓ You may want to arrange the room in order to have enough space for participants to move freely

Procedure

Step 1 (4 min)

- ✓ Explain to participants that you will be playing different short games.
- ✓ Distance game:
- ✓ Ask the participants to walk in the room, and choose a person, then another, and then position themselves the same distance from both of them.

Step 2 (4 min) Mirror game:

- ✓ Ask the participants to walk around the room, maintaining eye contact with someone - that person is going to be their partner. Make sure you have enough space. One of the participants is going to be a subject, and the other a mirror. Mirrors reflect everything the subject does. Make it so that outsiders don't see who the mirror is and who the subject is. Allow a few minutes for this, then instruct the participants to switch roles.
- ✓ Find a last movement, thank your partner and walk away.

Step 3 (4min) Opposite mirror game:

- ✓ Same as above, but the mirror now has to make movements that are opposite to the subject's movements.

Step 4 (4 min) Blind car:

- ✓ In pairs, one participant is standing in front of the other. The first one has their eyes closed. The driver (behind) can drive with the following movements.
- ✓ Tapping on the head: move forward.
- ✓ Tapping on right shoulder: move right.
- ✓ Tapping on left shoulder: move left.
- ✓ Than change roles

Step 5 (4 min) Rhythm machine:

- ✓ In pairs, participants count to three in an alternating repeating manner (one says 1, the other 2, the first 3, the second 1 etc..)
- ✓ Once this is practiced, each pair can replace the number 1 with a gesture and a sound. Then number 2. Then 3. Make it faster!
- ✓ Participants present their rhythm machine to the others.

Step 6 (5 min) Touch car:

- ✓ Participants find a new partner. One of the participants is leading, the other is following. Their surface of contact is their forearm.
- ✓ The follower can close her/his eyes if s/he wishes. The guide cannot.

Step 7 (5 min) Seekers and avoiders:

- ✓ The group is divided into two parts: those who seek and those who avoid eye contact. The seekers always want to have eye contact. Especially from the ones who avoid it. After a while: change of roles.

Step 8 (5 min) Moving statue:

- ✓ In pairs, participants start from a handshake: one person remains in the position, the other goes away and comes back with a different position. Then he/she remains still and the other goes away and comes back.
- ✓ Change roles after 2 minutes.

Step 9 (5 min) Speed gestures:

- ✓ One participant stands in the centre, the others line up. The participant in the centre makes a gesture, then the others come one by one and do a response gesture.
- ✓ Once everyone is gone: in the next round, the response to the gesture can include a word/sentence to which the first person can reply with a gesture and sound.

Step 10 (5 min) Chairs:

- ✓ Two participants sit side by side on two chairs. They can only communicate with moving head, arms or legs.

Step 11 (5 min) Poet:

- ✓ One participant is a poet from Kazaria who comes to visit and recite one of her latest poems in a language we do not understand. A translator translates it to English.

Step 12 - Debriefing (10 min)

Ask participants the following questions

- ✓ What aspects of non-verbal communication have we touched?
- ✓ Help participants to cover all of the elements below:
 - ✓ gestures
 - ✓ body positions
 - ✓ distance
 - ✓ facial expressions
 - ✓ expression of emotions
 - ✓ contextual communication: use of objects, furniture
 - ✓ paraverbal communication: intonation, loudness, silences, rhythm...

Activity 2: “Touch” – discover our boundaries 1

Duration: 45 min

<p>Expected outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Readiness to examine my behaviour, language use and body language (A_SELF_1)✓ Inclination to see things from different perspectives (A_EPI_3)✓ Readiness to learn from challenges (A_self_4)
<p>Methods/ techniques used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ interactive,✓ pair work✓ group discussion
<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ List of instructions (appendix 1)
<p>Practical arrangements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ You may want to arrange the room in order to let enough space for participants to move freely
<p>Procedure</p> <p>Step 1 (30 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Ask the participants to walk freely around the room – then make pairs - follow the instructions and switch partners after every instruction. If a participant does not want to do a certain task, they need to tell their partner!✓ Maintain a long period of eye contact✓ shake hands✓ hug✓ stand as close face-to-face as comfortably possible✓ stand close back-to-back, feel each other’s weight✓ kiss each other on the cheek✓ give each other a shoulder massage✓ wink at each other✓ smell each other✓ massage the other person's hand✓ caress each other's face✓ kiss the other person on the ear✓ rub noses✓ tie up your partner's hair✓ sit on each other's lap <p>Step 2: debriefing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Debriefing of this activity to be done after the next one.
<p>Tips for trainers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ It is important to emphasize that participants can always say “no” to a certain instruction. The issue of “saying no” will be discussed later. Make sure that everybody has a pair. If there is more than one facilitator in the room, you might consider joining in and doing the exercises, otherwise the presence of the non-leading facilitator(s) can be disturbing for participants.

Activity 3: Discover your boundaries 2. - Let's talk about sex!

Duration: 30 min

Expected outcome

- ✓ Readiness to examine my behaviour, language use and body language (A_SELF_1)
- ✓ Inclination to see things from different perspectives (A_EPI_3)
- ✓ Recognition of the importance of handling controversial issues and acceptance of the associated risks (A_EPI_5)

Methods/ techniques used

- ✓ Group work,
- ✓ pair work

Resources

- ✓ You will need the set of sex questions (appendix 2)

Practical arrangements

- ✓ You will need the sex questions in a box
- ✓ You might want to prepare the room with pairs of chairs far enough apart so that people can talk to each other without disturbing other couples

Procedure

Step 1 (20 min)

- ✓ Put all the cards with sexuality questions into a big box in the middle of the room. Participants walk freely in the room - meet up with anyone and pair up – take one card from the box!
- ✓ One card per pair!
- ✓ Each participant has 2 minutes answering each question, and then they switch. Now the pair partner answers the same question. Altogether 4 minutes for pair discussion.
- ✓ Switch pairs 4 times.
- ✓ Facilitators keep the time. Make sure there is enough space between the pairs to avoid neighbours overhearing each other.

***Instruction for participants: If you don't want to answer, tell your partner!

Questions on the cards:

- 1) Is sex important to you?
- 2) If you want to know something about sex, whom do you ask?
- 3) What do you do if you find out that you are in love with someone who is already in a relationship?
- 4) Would you be able to understand it if your boy/girlfriend had sex with someone else?
- 5) Tell the other person your most recent fantasy about sex.
- 6) What would you really not like your partner to ask you to do during sex?
- 7) What do you think is different for a man or a woman?
- 8) What sex-related subjects can you talk about with your parents?
- 9) What do you find beautiful about yourself?
- 10) What do you think about masturbation? Do you masturbate?
- 11) Would you like to have sex with someone much older than yourself?
- 12) Would you like to have sex with someone much younger than yourself?
- 13) Do you know how an orgasm feels?
- 14) Would you like to have sex with someone of your own sex?

Step 2 (10 min) – debriefing

Make sure everyone feels comfortable and the discussions are over. Ask the participants the following questions.

How did you like talking about sex in this way?

What made it more difficult and what made it easier?

Was there a difference between the partners you talked with? What was the difference?

What was it like for those who were paired with the facilitator? Is there a difference?

Did you feel during the exercise that it became easier all the time? Why is that?

During the exercise, did you feel that there were a number of questions you didn't want to answer? Was this difficult or easy?

Do you regret having said certain things afterwards? Why?

Which were the most sensitive topics for you? Why?

Tips for trainers

- ✓ “Sexual boundaries 1- 2” exercises should build on each other. If you don't have enough time, you can debrief the two exercises together. As you conclude, it is important to refer to the objectives.

Activity 4: How we react to sex – values and emotions – Decentration¹ with pictures

Duration: 40 min

<p>Expected outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Readiness to examine my behaviour, language use and body language (A_SELF_1)✓ Acceptance of the fact that my actions can reflect my personal values and beliefs more authentically than words (A_SELF_2)✓ Readiness to learn from challenges (A_self_4)✓ Recognition of the importance of handling controversial issues and acceptance of the associated risks (A_EPI_5)
<p>Methods/ techniques used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Group work,✓ pair work
<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Set of special, carefully selected pictures about different sexual cultures
<p>Practical arrangements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Sensitively and carefully selected pictures in the theme of sexuality. The selection should reflect not just a wide variety of sexual cultures, habits, but also it must show very natural, everyday images. They should be printed and put on the wall in a relative distance (as if in an exhibition hall). The number of pictures should be no more than 10.✓ List of emotions (appendix 3)✓ Put the pictures on the wall – volunteers to help the facilitators. Give a list of emotions to each participant
<p>Procedure</p> <p>Step 1 (35 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Give 5-10 minutes for choosing one picture: Choose 1 (only one) picture which makes the strongest emotional reaction in you!✓ Create small groups of 3. If possible, participants who chose the same picture should be in the same group, otherwise participants can merge by free choice. Discuss the following questions (in this order):✓ What are your emotions? What do you feel seeing the picture? What is the emotional conflict which causes the tension in you?✓ Your set of values. What are the values (important to you) that make you feel those emotions? What values cause the conflict/tension in the picture you chose?✓ Possible values of the protagonist in the picture (hypothesis) – What kind of values do you

¹ the ability to consider multiple aspects of a situation

think the protagonist holds? *Groups have 30 minutes altogether to discuss their pictures.

....

Step 2 - Debriefing (10 min)

- ✓ Ask the participants the following questions?
- ✓ Was it difficult to choose a picture?
- ✓ Each group is invited to choose one picture in their group and share the picture with the large group.
- ✓ Was it difficult to differentiate between emotions and values?
- ✓ How do you feel as a professional talking a bit about sexual cultures?
- ✓ What sexuality means: erotica, procreation, intimacy, body issues, sexual identity, sexual habits?
- ✓ Where are our boundaries?
- ✓ How can we deal with them? (20 min)

Step 3 - Conclusion and continuation to the next exercise:

- ✓ We have physical and emotional boundaries, taboos, which vary from person to person but it is important to be able to handle them if we can recognize the cultural component behind our often automatic reactions. The Decentration exercise shows that every time we cross those boundaries, strong and deep emotions can come up and we may face difficulties controlling them. "Touching" our boundaries is a sensitive action as it always influences our core emotions, core values, the basis of our identity (or identities).

Tips for trainers

- ✓ It helps to mediate the discussions if facilitators know that finally they want to discuss what is considered cultural if we talk about sexuality and how dependent everything is on the cultural settings (the body, bodily functions, beauty, concept of womanhood, manhood, motherhood etc., sexual practices)
- ✓ You can help the small group work by suggesting to them to choose roles (as in cooperative learning): for example, one person is responsible for checking the list of emotions continuously, one person checks the instructions, one checks the time.
- ✓ Don't bother the intimacy of the groups by walking by, only if they ask for assistance! "Sexual boundaries 1- 2" exercises should build on each other. If you don't have enough time, you can debrief the two exercises together. As you conclude, it is important to refer to the objectives....

Activity 5: Sex mosaic – what is / where is sex in your life? in your work?

Duration: 50 min

<p>Expected outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ to improve participants' own pedagogical tools in school sexuality education by reflection on these issues ✓ to get feedback from participants
<p>Methods/ techniques used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Group work, ✓ discussion
<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tools for making the montage (newspapers, photos, drawings, colour pens, scissors, etc.) and the poster.....
<p>Practical arrangements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Arrange enough space for each participant and create a cosy working environment, music, etc. It is also helpful to put guiding instructions and questions on the wall
<p>Procedure</p> <p>Step 1 (5 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Bring a deck of playing cards to the class or training session. Let each participant choose a card. Groups can be arranged by the same number (Aces, Kings, Queens, 10's, 4's, etc.) or by the same suit (hearts, clubs, spades, diamonds) or by odd numbers and even numbers – choose and divide the participants in micro groups. ✓ Put markers of 4 colours on the tables. Each group, when constituted, will be at one table. <p>Step 2 (10 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ask the participants to think about what kind of definitions of sex are relevant in their working context? ✓ Participants with different markers have different roles: red: thinks about the definition of sex keeping in mind their ideas about values green: thinks about the definition of sex keeping in mind the role of media blue: thinks about the definition of sex keeping in mind ideas about emotions black: thinks about the definition of sex keeping in mind ideas about sexual cultures ✓ Start with individual tasks: list personal experiences, memories about sex in education. All personal stories are welcome! ✓ Ask the participants to try and remember frequently raised questions from students, typical situations, anything which has not been solved. ✓ Participants present their ideas to each other. <p>Step 3 (15 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Working in small groups, participants are asked to make montages about sex. <i>Where is sex in education?</i> ✓ After individual work make posters in small groups to answer the question: where is sex in education? Aim, roles, responsibilities, etc. <p>Step 2 - Debriefing (20 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Discuss the mosaics and the posters in the large group
<p>Tips for trainers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ It might be useful to make the small groups homogenous (i.e, group together participants working in the same or similar fields)....

Activity 6: Evaluation

Duration: 60 min

Expected outcome

- ✓ To assess the aforementioned exercises: are they applicable? with whom? how? etc.
- ✓ To make teachers think about their own views about sexuality in their own working context
- ✓ To make teachers think about the needs of their own students
- ✓ To make teachers think about their own needs

Methods/ techniques used

- ✓ Individual work,
- ✓ cooperative learning,
- ✓ evaluation

Resources

- ✓ Individual grid (appendix 4)
- ✓ a paper that is big enough for the grid on the wall
- ✓ post-its
- ✓ Smaller copies of the grid..

Practical arrangements

- ✓ A large grid on a wall / blackboard. , with rows listing each activity and columns saying “methods”, “age groups”, “possible difficulties”, “new ideas”.

Procedure

Step 1 (5 min)

- ✓ Introduce the session. This session is organized around filling in a structured overview grid together. The grid is on a wall / blackboard, with rows listing each activity and columns saying “methods”, “age groups”, “possible difficulties” and “new ideas”.
- ✓ Smaller copies of the grid are given to every group, even smaller (A4) copies are given to every participant (appendix 2)
- ✓ Tell Participants that they are going to assess the exercises that they had just done and explain the grid to them.
- ✓ Distribute one image per participant.
- ✓ Ask participants to find the other 2 or 3 colleagues who have the correspondent images in order to reconstitute the ‘puzzle’
- ✓ Participants are divided into groups and assess each activity in the grid.

Step 2 (5 min)

- ✓ Ask participants to fill in individual grids. Participants start individually: fill in every point of the grid (copy every note on a separate post-it)

Step 3 (10 min):

- ✓ Each participant in the micro-group takes it in turn to share his/her conclusion with the rest of the micro-group.

Step 4 (10 min)

- ✓ Continue work in micro groups: fill in a group grid with the individual notes (post it papers), blank where redundant, and add where missing. In micro-groups, participants fill in the bigger grid agreeing about what should be represented as the group response. These responses are recorded in the big grid.

Step 5 (20 min)

- ✓ Plenary presentation and discussion: Now use the big grid.
- ✓ Group 1 presents what they have for methods – other groups add what they have.
- ✓ After that Group 2 presents what they have for age groups – other groups then add. And so on.

Step 6 - Debriefing (10 min)

- ✓ Make a final round, asking each participant to share how they feel now – in one sentence.
- ✓ Conclude the training unit with celebrating the filled in grid and promise to send it around later.

Tips for trainers

- ✓ Make sure participants understand what each column implies. For methods, it would be good to get an overview of the methods and techniques used during the training unit. For age groups, it would be good to go into details about what topic or task they feel is appropriate for what age. For possible difficulties, it would be good to have an overview of how participants see these methods' applicability in real school settings, what competences they think they miss, what steps are needed to make them real etc. For new ideas, it would be good to list any proposed modifications, variants of the activities used, newly inspired activities, any solutions to the worries listed in the previous column etc.

References

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- David Diamond (2007). *Theatre for living: The Art and Science of Community-Based Dialogue*. Victoria. Trafford Publishing.

Appendices

Appendix 1: List of instructions

- ✓ Maintain a long period of eye contact
- ✓ shake hands
- ✓ hug
- ✓ stand as close face-to-face as comfortably possible
- ✓ stand close back-to-back, feel each other's weight
- ✓ kiss each other on the cheek
- ✓ give each other a shoulder massage
- ✓ wink at each other
- ✓ smell each other
- ✓ massage the other person's hand
- ✓ caress each other's face
- ✓ kiss the other person on the ear
- ✓ rub noses
- ✓ tie up your partner's hair
- ✓ sit on each other's lap

Appendix 2: List of emotions

<u>Fear</u> → feeling afraid. Other words are terror (strong fear), shock, phobia
<u>Anger</u> → feeling angry. A stronger word is rage.
<u>Sadness</u> → feeling sad. Other words are sorrow, grief (a stronger feeling, for example when someone has died) or <u>depression</u> (feeling sad for a long time). Some people think depression is a different emotion.
<u>Joy</u> → feeling happy. Other words are happiness, gladness.
<u>Disgust</u> → feeling something is wrong or dirty
<u>Trust</u> → a positive emotion; admiration is stronger; <u>acceptance</u> is weaker
<u>Anticipation</u> → in the sense of looking forward positively to something which is going to happen. <u>Expectation</u> is more neutral.
<u>Surprise</u> → how one feels when something unexpected happens

Appendix 3 Questions about sex

Is sex important to you?
If you want to know something about sex, whom do you ask?
What do you do if you find out that you are in love with someone who is already in a relationship?
Would you be able to understand it if your boy/girlfriend had sex with someone

else?
Tell the other person your most recent fantasy about sex.
What would you really not like your partner to ask you to do during sex?
What do you think is different for a man or a woman?
What sex-related subjects can you talk about with your parents?
What do you find beautiful about yourself?
What do you think about masturbation? Do you masturbate?
Would you like to have sex with someone much older than yourself?
Would you like to have sex with someone much younger than yourself?
Do you know how an orgasm feels?
Would you like to have sex with someone of your own sex?

Appendix 4 Evaluation grid

	methods	age groups	possible difficulties	new ideas
Activity 1 “Warming up” – in an embodied way				
Activity 2 “Touch” – discover our boundaries 1				
Activity 3 “Let’s talk about it” – discover our boundaries 2				
Activity 4 How we react to sex – values and emotions – Decentration with pictures				
Activity 5 Sex mosaic – what is / where is sex in your life, in your work?				