

Why Healthy Societies Need Sexuality Education



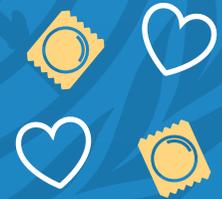
1 Healthy youth



2 Growing up



3 Reliable information



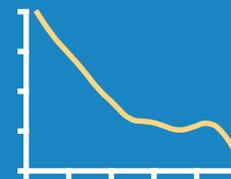
4 Safety + Wellbeing



5 Better societies



6 Is it harmful?



7 Does it work?



8 Make it happen!

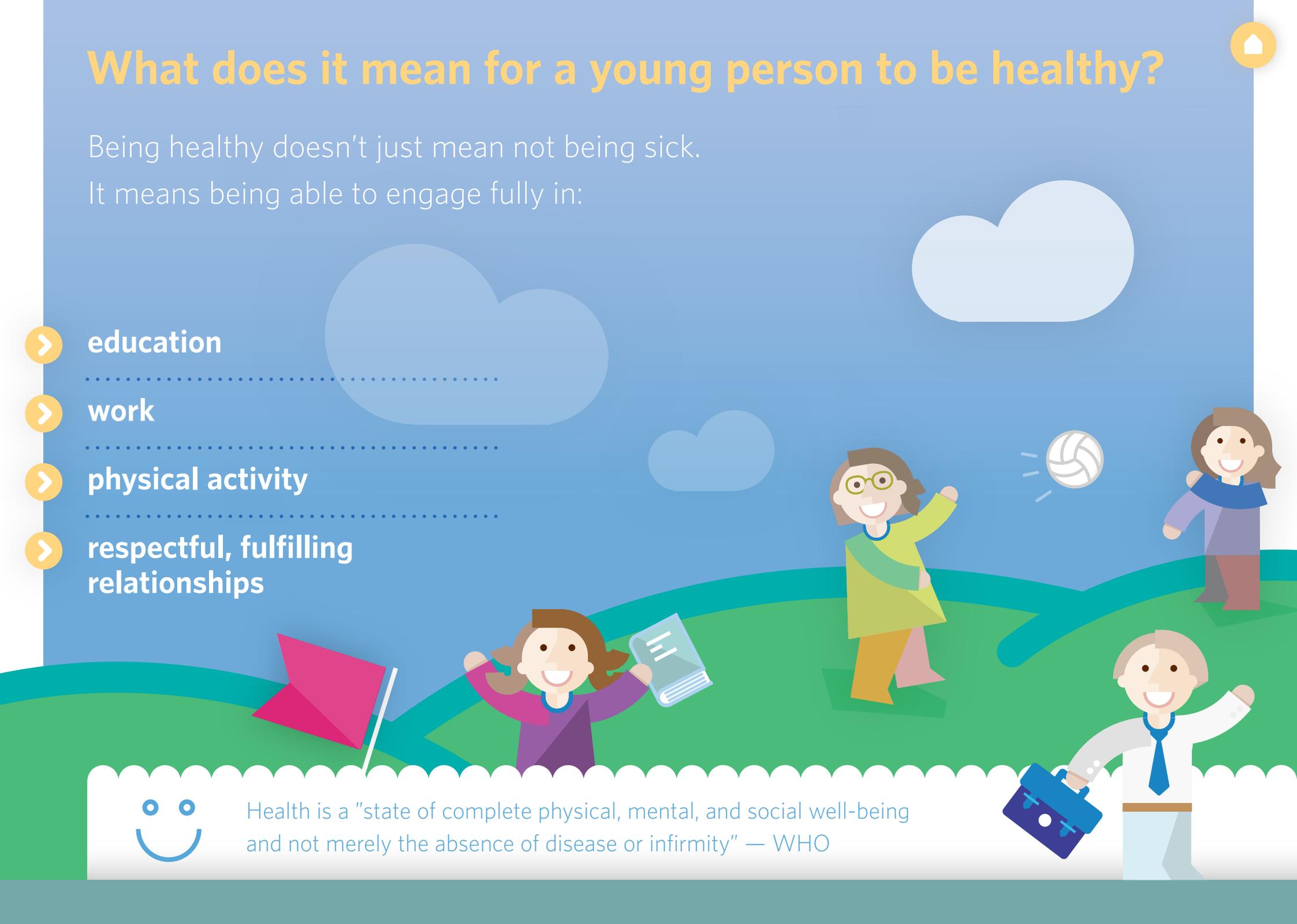
What does it mean for a young person to be healthy?

Being healthy doesn't just mean not being sick.
It means being able to engage fully in:

- > education
- > work
- > physical activity
- > respectful, fulfilling relationships



Health is a "state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" — WHO





Learning about sexuality is an integral part of growing up.

But comprehensive sexuality education is often missing from healthy lifestyle curricula in schools in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.



Comprehensive sexuality education equips children and young people with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will enable them to develop a positive view of their sexuality, in the context of their emotional and social development.

Why do young people need comprehensive sexuality education?

Without reliable information on healthy relationships and sexuality, many young people instead turn to friends, the Internet, and other media sources.

But what they learn there is not always correct, and can even be harmful.



If started from an **early age**, comprehensive sexuality education helps children and young people **understand their changing bodies and feelings**, and **develop safe, healthy, satisfying relationships with others**.

It also helps young people avoid:

- **sexually transmitted infections, including HIV**
- **unwanted pregnancies**
- **potentially abusive situations**



And sexuality education isn't just important for young people themselves.



COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION

CAN HELP CREATE A HEALTHIER SOCIETY THAT IS:

- * BETTER EDUCATED
- * MORE TOLERANT
- * MORE RESPECTFUL OF DIVERSITY
- * MORE GENDER EQUAL



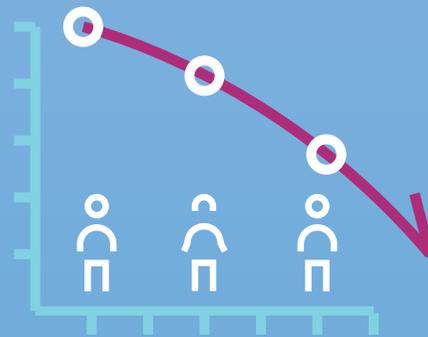
But can't it be harmful to talk to kids about sexuality?

Research shows that age appropriate sexuality education does **NOT** lead to young people having sex earlier.

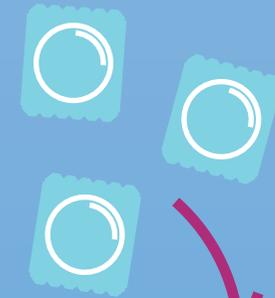
In fact, it can lead to **delayed** sexual debut and more **responsible** sexual behaviour.



Later
sexual debut



Decreased number
of sexual partners



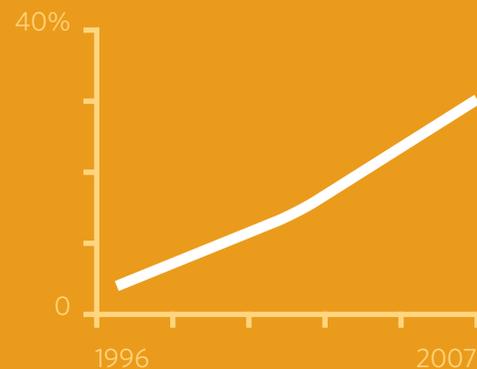
Reduced sexual
risk-taking



How do we know comprehensive sexuality education works?

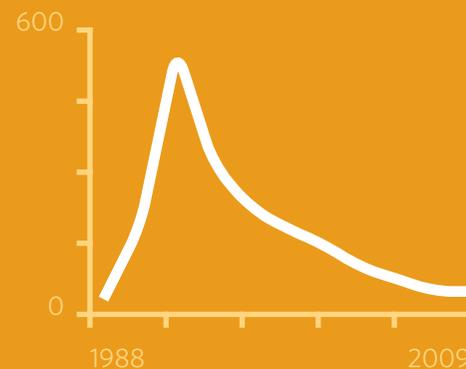
Evidence shows that introducing long-term national sexuality education programmes leads to reductions in unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV.

Example: Estonia



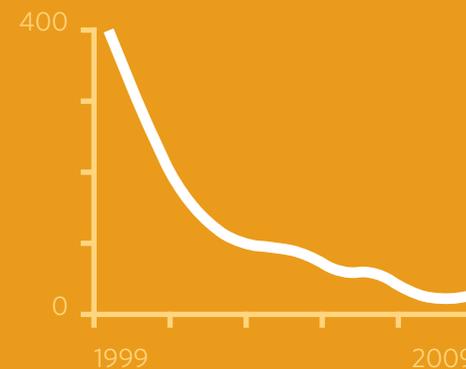
Condom use at first sexual intercourse

(25-29 year olds)



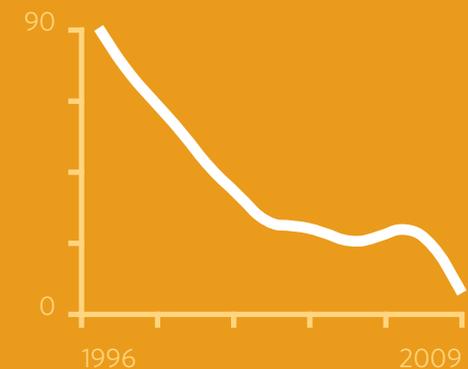
New HIV infections

by year and age
(15-19 year olds)



New STIs cases

by year and age
(15-19 year olds)



Pregnancy rate

per 1000 women
(15-19 year olds)

So how do we make this all happen?

Young people have a **right to comprehensive sexuality education**. To realize this right, sexuality education programmes should be introduced in and out of schools. These programmes should be:

- > in line with international standards
- > developed in partnership with young people
- > provided by well-trained educators
- > integrated with the rest of the curriculum



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UNFPA
Delivering a world where
every pregnancy is wanted,
every childbirth is safe and
every young person's
potential is fulfilled