

Concept

# Sex Education for Youths

**BZgA**

Bundeszentrale  
für  
gesundheitliche  
Aufklärung



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# 1

## Framework conditions

Sex education was confirmed as a public task by the German Act on Assistance for Pregnant Women and Families (SFHG) of 27 July 1992 and has thus increased in significance. The tasks formulated in Art. 1, Para. 1 of the SFHG (version dated 25.08.1995) are as follows:

- (1)** The Federal Centre for Health Education is responsible for health education and elaborates sex education concepts, each geared to the various age and population groups, with the participation of the Länder and in cooperation with representatives of the family counselling institutions of all sponsors for the purpose of preventive health care and the avoidance and resolution of pregnancy conflicts.
- (2)** The Federal Centre for Health Education disseminates the nationally uniform education materials for the purposes stated in Para. 1, in which contraceptive methods and contraceptives are comprehensively presented.
- (3)** The education materials are supplied to individual persons free of charge on request, and as teaching material to scholastic and vocational institutions, counselling offices and all institutions of youth and education work.

Sex education for youths is based on these statutory specifications and is regarded in a comprehensive context covering all aspects of sex education.

The Federal Centre for Health Education is commissioned with the realisation and implementation of the statutory task.

To this end, the FCHE has elaborated a basic text, the „Framework concept for sex education“, in coordination with the Länder.

## Sexuality: definition

The framework concept is based on a comprehensive definition of sexuality and concurs with the WHO definition<sup>1</sup> of 1994 :

*„Human sexuality is a natural part of human development through every phase of life and includes physical, psychological and social components.“*

Pursuant to the statutory specification in Art. 1, Para. 1 of the SFHG, sex education must be designed to be comprehensive, addressing various age groups and target groups. Sex education must thus be more than the mere communication of knowledge about biological processes and the technical aspects of contraception. It must also appeal to the emotions and give consideration to the multi-faceted aspects of relationships, lifestyles, situations in life, values and ethical aspects, in particular the protection of unborn life according to the ruling of the Federal Constitutional Court of 28.05.93.

## Sexuality: a component of health education and promotion

Sex education is an integral element of health education and health promotion. Sex education is oriented to the objectives and principles thereof, as set out in the resolution of the 64th Conference of Health Ministers in 1991, for example.

Furthermore, sex education for youths is oriented to both the joint declaration of the Minister of Education and Science, the Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the Minister of Health of 1992<sup>2</sup> and the UNO World Population Report of 1994<sup>3</sup>.

## Sexuality: embedded in society and its institutions

Sex education for youths is embedded in institutional and social contexts. Parents, the school, non-scholastic youth work and, not least, the media participate in the sex education of youths and influence it in different ways. They all communicate values and standards, thus forming a complex network of influencing and orienting variables.

### Parents

The Parents or guardians play an important role as the mediators of sex education. The right to education which parents and guardians have at their disposal includes the individual sex education of their children. However, there are still difficulties in fulfilling this role and regarding sex education as an element of education as a whole.

### School

Owing to the mandate of the schools to provide education, they are obliged to participate in sex education according to the 1968 resolution of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs on sex education in schools. The education work to be performed in schools is described in the guidelines on sex education of the respective Federal Land. The guidelines display differences as regards the age levels, teaching methods and topics. Despite the efforts of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs, sex education is not intensively dealt with in schools. The implementation of the guidelines in

- 1 WHO's current technical definitions related to reproductive health, in PROGRESS in Human Reproduction Research, No. 30/1994
- 2 Federal Ministry of Health (Ed.) (1993): Youth and AIDS – Documentation on the occasion of the „Youth and AIDS“ Conference in Bonn on 30.11.1992, series of publications by the Federal Ministry of Health; Vol. 24, Bonn, Reha-Verlag
- 3 Deutsche Gesellschaft für die Vereinten Nationen e.V. (Ed.) (1994): World Population Report 1994 – Freedom of Decision and Responsibility, UNFPA, Bonn

the classroom remains an important task. The competent Länder authorities are of particular importance in implementing the guidelines.

### **Non-scholastic youth work**

The non-scholastic youth work institutions constitute a further important field of action in sex education for youths. Non-scholastic youth work offers youths possibilities to learn and experience things, supplementing the opportunities offered in the family and in school. It provides a chance to meet peers and enjoy jointly organised leisure time. In this context, the offers of non-scholastic youth work cater to the needs of youths and are geared to their world.

### **Sex education: influences of society**

However, sex education for youths must also be seen in the context of social influencing variables, such as the leisure and consumer market and the media. The media offer an increasing number of portrayals of forms of sexual life and experience. They communicate concepts and values relating to sexuality, love and partnership, which definitely influence the orientation process which youths undergo.

This offer creates the impression that communication about sexuality has become more open and less taboo in our society. However, it is also a fact that many people – not only youths – find it hard to talk about sexuality. They shy away from addressing questions or problems arising in this context. Communication obstacles, or at least speechlessness, continue to characterise the way people deal with this area of life. More open, less taboo-ridden communication on sexuality includes respecting the need of every single person for a protected private sphere.

Health promotion and preventive health care are not the exclusive province of health policy in the narrower sense. Prevention in the sense of preserving health is the task of numerous fields of policy. As regards the development of youths and young adults, this means creating an environment in which youths can develop into responsible people. There is a

particular need for political action in the field of education and youth policy. Political action is also required in the area of town-planning measures, the social and occupational structuring and division of labour between men and women, and as regards other sociopolitical measures. The necessary freedom to take decisions regarding later individual family planning is only ensured on the basis of living conditions appropriate for families and children, which open up equal opportunities for men and women as regards the reconciliation of bringing up children and occupational activity. In this context, efforts must be made to ensure that men also make increased use of the possibilities offered to them by the law.



# 2

## Starting situation

### Development tasks in youth

Youth is taken to mean the phase of life between childhood and adulthood. Depending on the definition, this phase of life is regarded differently. From a biological point of view, the youth phase starts with the entry into puberty at around 12 years of age. In legal and formal terms, the youth phase lasts from the age of 14 until reaching majority at the age of 18.

According to psychological and sociological criteria, the youth phase does not end upon coming of age. Here, the end of the youth phase is associated with the start of gainful employment. Longer training periods and uncertain job prospects are postponing entry into working life more and more often, resulting in prolongation of the youth phase. This results in a variety of consequences, which are expressed in insecurities as regards life, career and family planning, for example.

The youth phase is characterised by biological, psychological, emotional and social changes. These changes are associated with the mastering of certain development tasks.

■ Acceptance of one's own bodily and mental changes: Accelerated growth, changes in physical proportions, reorganisation of motor coordination, increase in physical strength and physical performance, growth of the external and internal genitals of girls and boys, development of

breasts in girls and pubic hair in both sexes, increase in facial and body hair, breaking of boys' voices, mood swings, dealing with social reactions to one's own changed appearance and behaviour.

- Development of a self-determined identity: Dealing with the development of one's own personality, development of a sexual identity, self-confidence, independence, self-control
- Building up a circle of friends: Redefinition of relationships with peers of both sexes, dealing with one's own role as a girl or boy, entering into sexual relationships, dealing with different forms of sexual life
- Detachment from the parents
- Coping with school demands and a possible slump in grades during puberty
- Development of a personal job and life perspective
- Development of a personal system of values
- Dealing with the social institutions
- Dealing with the offers of the consumer market, particularly with the offers of health-hazardous addictive substances and offers of the commercial leisure market

On top of the development-induced tasks, it may also be necessary to cope with critical events, such as one's own illness, divorce of the parents, death of a parent or lack of trainee position and unemployment. Fundamental social changes, such as those in the new Federal Länder, can also influence the development process.

Searching for and trying out new things is characteristic of this phase of life. Curiosity and experimentation are prerequisites for coping with development tasks. On the basis of positive and negative experiences, it

is possible to grow into the world of adults and develop one's own blueprint for life.

In this phase of development, peers increase in importance for youths. Peers can serve as an example for one's own behaviour and provide orientation. They can act as a role model if they inspire trust, are regarded as attractive or hold a position of social power. The judgements of other youths can be helpful and contribute to solving problems.

## Sexuality in youth

The latest studies on knowledge, attitudes and behaviour as regards sexuality describe the following starting situation for education work: **The level of information about contraceptives and contraceptive methods has tended to increase. Sexuality is assessed as predominantly positive, although there are at the same time fears and insecurities about addressing sex-related topics. This is true of both youths and adults.**

Overall, it is clear that society is more open towards this subject than in the early 80s. This is characterised by more calmness and objectivity than a decade ago. This is not least due to the internationally proven AIDS prevention strategies and thus to the continuous German campaigns which have been running for almost a decade and which integrated sex education as a basis for AIDS prevention from the very beginning.

### Contraceptive behaviour

According to the study results, markedly improved contraceptive behaviour can be observed amongst youths and young adults today in comparison with the past decade. Great importance is attached to love and partnership. However, youths also express a clear wish to know more about contraception, sexuality, love, lust and partnership. Furthermore, they would also like to be able to express their desires, expectations and feelings better.

## **Gender-specific differences**

The studies prove that the knowledge and attitudes of youths as regards love, sexuality, partnership and life planning, as well as their sexual behaviour, display marked gender-specific differences.

Male youths display a greater lack of knowledge on matters of contraception than female youths. Female youths have a great sense of responsibility in their partnerships. It can also be seen that they set aside their own desires and needs more often than boys in order not to jeopardise a friendship. In a partnership, girls wish for open discussions with the partner, sexual faithfulness of the partner and security more than boys.

## **Planning one's life**

As regards life planning, it is found that female and male youths equally strive towards both employment and parenthood in later life. However, the male youths cling to traditional role allocations far more naturally, whereas girls tend to question them more. Above all, girls strive to combine a job and family.

## **Role of parents**

The study results show that parents play an important role when it comes to the sex education of their children. They accept the sexual experiences of their children more readily than a decade ago. It is clear that this increased acceptance by the parents results in a more responsible attitude towards contraception on the part of their children. In particular, the mother is initially the most important discussion partner. Education by the parents is given a different focus, depending on the gender of the youths. Pregnancy, contraception, sexual intercourse and abortion are addressed far more frequently with girls than with boys.

As the children grow older, the importance of their parents comes into perspective and changes. Youths turn increasingly to their peers as discussion partners in their development process. Peers can be an important source of information and offer orientation when it comes to matters of sexuality, love and friendship.

## Role of the school

In addition to the parents, the school and the teachers are of great importance. Above all, the youths attach importance to the communication of information, particularly about subjects which they would rather not discuss with their parents. For youths, teachers are not so much confidantes with whom they can discuss their personal problems or questions, but rather sources of information which is not available in their parental home. The school has an important compensatory function, particularly for boys.

## Summary

The qualification of multipliers in non-scholastic youth work is of particular importance in order to be able to realise sex education in a comprehensive and effective manner. Various expert reports have shown that multipliers who work with youths have hardly any sex-education qualifications. Despite the increasing significance of sex-education work, possibilities for basic and advanced training are still hardly laid down. There is, however, a great need for appropriate qualifications among teachers and multipliers in non-scholastic youth work.

In conclusion, the following can be said: **Sex education for youths requires a scientifically confirmed basis in order to develop concepts and needs-based materials.**

Moreover, youth-specific sex education must take the respective development status and experience of youths into account, such as sexually experienced / inexperienced youths, young mothers / fathers and youths undergoing a sexual orientation process. Sex education for youths must be designed in an age-specific and gender-specific manner. Furthermore, it must integrate the special role-model function of youths for youths in its overall strategy. In order to effectively implement sex education for youths, the multipliers working in this field must also be qualified.



# 3

## Objective

Sex education pursuant to Art. 1, Para. 1 of the SFHG is oriented to the objective of preventive health care and the avoidance/resolution of pregnancy conflicts, as described in the Act, and is aimed at enabling the general population and specific target groups to take a self-responsible, partner-responsible and healthy attitude towards sexuality in a comprehensive sense.

Sex education for youths is aimed at helping youths to cope with their development tasks, and particularly at contributing to the formation of an integral identity. Sexuality is an essential element of personality development and the (developing) lifestyle. It is crucial to enable youths to develop as sexual beings, to learn to express their own feelings and needs, to experience sexuality in a pleasurable manner and to live as a woman or man on their own responsibility.

Sex education must provide information about contraceptives and contraceptive methods for the purpose of preventive health care and the avoidance of unwanted pregnancies. This includes the protection of unborn life.

Sex education is intended to enable youths to constructively deal with limitations and difficulties which arise during their development. Sex education is also intended to make it clear that (experienced) sexuality can afford lust, pleasure and thus also health. Furthermore, it must offer support and promote skills in developing attitudes and modes of behaviour. This also includes the critical scrutiny of existing standards and values.

Sex education is intended to encourage youths to see sexuality in a social context which is changed and marked by social and cultural influences. Therefore, it must particularly critically question existing gender roles and power relationships between men and women and hold them up for discussion.

# 4

## Target groups

### Statistics

In 1992, 13.8 million youths (according to the definition of the Child and Youth Welfare Act) aged between 14 and 27 years were living in the Federal Republic of Germany, 11.3 million in the old Federal Länder and 2.5 million in the new Federal Länder. In relation to the total population (65 million/16 million), this is equivalent to a share of youths of 17.1% in the old Federal Länder and 15.6 % in the new Federal Länder, according to the „Basic and Structural Data“ („Grund- und Strukturdaten“), 1994/1995 edition.

### Differentiation of youths

Youths are not a homogeneous group. They differ as regards age, development phase, gender, social origin, specific situation in life, sexual orientation and cultural background. The variety of youth cultures and worlds is typical, as expressed in different clothing styles, musical tastes, language codes and individual use of the media, for example.

Youths differ due to specific situations in life. Being a girl or a boy has a fundamental influence on the development process of youths. Gender-specific views are formed early on through standards and values. Girls and boys live and develop in separate everyday worlds.

The economic and social situation, such as unemployment, homelessness and the changed general situation in the new Federal Länder, affect the specific situation in life. Other factors, such as membership of a different cultural sphere or a different nationality, are also significant. Chronic diseases, mental and/or physical disabilities are further important elements in recording specific situations in life.

# 5

## Communication approach

The task of education is to create or maintain a positive atmosphere in which sexuality can be openly discussed and in which there is broad-based support for sex education.

The protagonists in sex education comprise the target group of youths and young adults themselves, the field of multipliers or mediators and the field of science. The FCHE engages in a process of exchange with these protagonists on the basis of Art. 1, Para. 1 of the SFHG.

### Target group

The target group „youths and young adults“ is the focus of the communication approach. The communication of education takes place at three levels: the communication of factual information is initially to the fore. This includes the treatment of relationships and ethical components. Sex education is intended to motivate people into action and also to promote and develop the skills (including perceptiveness, ability to act, ability to resolve conflicts, communicative skills) of youths and young adults, so that they can deal with their sexuality in a pleasurable and responsible manner.

The contents and topics of sex education are communicated using different, target group-oriented media. The complementary media are related to one another and coordinated in a media mix, i.e. a package of measures.

## Media

In the field of mass media, the audiovisual media (TV and cinema spots, videos, films, etc.) and the print media (adverts, brochures, etc.) are to be primarily used owing to their wide coverage. They draw attention to subjects, highlight individual aspects, convey the basic information and stimulate people into dealing with the topic.

## Personal-communication measures

Personal-communication measures can intensify the impulses and incentives to get to grips with the subject created by the mass media and deal with special questions. They create personal links to the subjects, thus initiating intensive communication.

Supervised exhibitions or theatre performances, for example, are potential occasions for discussion. Innovative strategies, such as peer-involvement approaches, supplement this sector. In this context, youths assume the position of mediators within their own target group. These youths can be highly credible if they come from a similar world to that of their peers and employ similar language. The new media, such as computer games or CD-ROMs, contain personal-communication elements which permit youths to deal with the subject on their own or with others. In order to practise versatile and multi-faceted personal communication, multipliers strive for appropriate qualifications in the contact fields of the target groups to be addressed. They regard themselves as key persons in the communication and tackling of matters of sex education. They can cater to the target groups particularly well and adapt to the specific worlds of the youths.

## Science

To date, few qualification measures have been offered. The FCHE contributes to widening the offer by way of graduated basic, further and advanced training measures. These measures are intended to communicate information, on the one hand, but also to promote communicative skills and the ability to resolve conflicts. The development of pilot curricula and a continuous exchange of information and experience are intended to promote networking in this sector and make a contribution to quality assurance.

## Process of exchange

Target group-oriented sex education is not only based on the communicative exchange between the target group and the mediator, but must also integrate science, as it requires a scientifically confirmed basis. Representative studies and expert reports create the basis for target group-oriented concept and media developments. Regularly repeated surveys reveal changes early on and serve the continuous further development of the measures. Evaluations of pilot projects and other measures should be carried out for reasons of quality assurance and in order to obtain further scientific insights.

The communication approach assumes that the sponsors of sex education engage in a regular process of exchange. Only this exchange can guarantee that sex education is implemented in a target group-oriented manner. It must be ensured that the scientific results are incorporated into the development of concepts, media and measures. They should also be made available to the multipliers on a broad basis. Conversely, the experiences of the practical experts with the target group are important for scientific questions. An exchange within the individual groups is equally necessary.

Owing to its mandate according to Art. 1, Para. 1 of the SFHG and as a central sponsor of sex education, the FCHE is commissioned with the task of stimulating and expanding this exchange.

# 6

## Subject areas

The main subject areas to be covered in the context of education result from the objectives, the target group and the communication strategy. The subjects are conveyed according to the principles of information, motivation and skill promotion explained in the communication approach. These three components are interrelated and build upon one another. The communication of information is aimed at expanding and maintaining the knowledge of the target group. Motivation to take action is intended to reveal alternative actions, thus expanding action options and enabling different attitudes to the existing ones. The promotion of skills serves to initiate behavioural changes which are geared to the objectives of sex education. The fields of knowledge, attitude and behaviour correspond to the three principles in health promotion: information, motivation and skill promotion.

The following list of subject areas is not exhausting, but must be repeatedly updated.

### Expansion of knowledge by communicating information on:

#### **Sexual development**

- Physical/biological development
- Processes in sexual development and orientation
- Emotional assimilation of the physical and psychological changes in puberty

### **Sexuality and fertility**

- Fertility and reproductive capacity
- Pregnancy and prenatal development
- Sexual behaviour of youths
- Contraceptives and contraceptive methods, their proper use and channels of access
- Information on the free issue of contraceptives
- Information on counselling offices for sexuality, contraception and pregnancy
- Birth control/family planning

### **Sexuality and health**

- Bodily hygiene
- Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs, AIDS), risks, transmission routes and possibilities for protection
- Successful sexuality and sexual relationships, masturbation
- Link between positive sexual experiences and physical and emotional well-being

### **Sexuality and lifestyles**

- Identity and sexual orientation (heterosexual, homosexual), gender roles, the search for a partner and partnership
- Different lifestyles
- Birth control/family planning

### **Social determinants of sexuality**

- Different cultural values and systems of standards as regards sexuality, communicated through the parental home, school and other places of socialisation
- Gender-specific differences as regards standards and moral concepts
- Media and sexuality, communication on sexuality, language and sexuality

## Acquisition of new attitudes by motivation towards action as regards:

### **Sexual development**

- Dealing with the bodily and mental changes in puberty
- Becoming aware of one's own physicality
- Acceptance of one's own physical appearance
- Formation of a sexual identity, personal sensuality

### **Sexuality and lifestyles**

- Entering into non-family relationships, establishment of self-responsible relationships
- The search for a partner and partnership

### **Social determinants of sexuality**

- Becoming aware of the role and influence of the media
- Becoming aware of fertility and reproductive capacity

## Acquisition of new modes of behaviour by the promotion of skills as regards:

### **Sexual development**

- Coping with the reactions of the environment to the bodily, mental and emotional changes
- Formation of a personal identity

### **Sexuality and fertility**

- Dealing with the parental role (maternal, paternal role), also by dealing with the subject of the ambivalences of becoming a parent oneself
- Unwanted childlessness
- Development of communicative skills between partners on the subject of contraception and the wish for children
- Development of help-seeking active behaviour

# 7

## Cooperation partners

The variety of worlds that young people live in necessitates a differentiated cooperation structure in order to reach them.

In addition to the cooperation partners named in the SFHG - the Federal Länder and the sponsors of family counselling institutions - multipliers with direct access to the young people are needed. These multipliers are in direct contact with the various groups of youths and can convey sex education at first hand.

Multipliers in the following sectors can be contacts:

- Family and family education institutions
- Pregnancy and sexual counselling institutions
- Scholastic and vocational institutions
- Youth welfare institutions
- Out-of-school youth work and youth education institutions
- Commercial and non-commercial leisure institutions (e.g. youth centres, sports clubs, discos)
- Health institutions (e.g. public health service, doctors' practices, health insurance companies)
- Commercial and non-commercial youth media
- Institutions in the working world

Furthermore, the FCHE cooperates with specialist institutions on a national and international level.

- Help to strengthen the ego when resolving and dealing with conflicts
- Development of the ability to resolve conflicts and take action, and confront the institutional and social environment

### **Sexuality and lifestyles**

- Development of the ability to communicate and take action in the areas of contraception, partnership, family planning, sexuality, protection against STDs, AIDS, etc.
- Constructive confrontation in a relationship, the ability to resolve conflicts and solve problems
- Redetermination of the relationship with one's circle of friends
- Experience of physicality and the structuring of closeness and tenderness
- Establishment of a personal system of values as regards sexuality, friendship, love
- Development of the ability to resolve conflicts and take action when dealing with the possible consequences of sexual interaction



# 8

## Measures

The measures are based on the principles of health promotion, i.e. they are not directive, but emphasise the strengthening of personal skills. They thus also cater to the fact that education in this sensitive and taboo subject area touches on personal, intimate attitudes and modes of behaviour. In addition to information, the sex education measures also include motivation and skill promotion.

The sex education measures – differentiated in an age-related, target group-specific and gender-specific manner – are related in terms of concept. They are coordinated and are mutually supplementary in order to realise integrally designed sex education.

### Communication of information (Mass-communication elements)

The aim in the field of mass communication is to achieve and maintain a high level of knowledge. The communication of basic knowledge of biological facts (such as physical development, sex organs, pregnancy and reproduction) and of contraceptive methods, particularly their proper use, is to the fore. Mass-communication media in the print and audiovisual sector also address the emotional aspects of sexuality, love and partnership. They arouse attention, convey basic information and create the basis for further intensive measures. To this end, low-threshold offers are particularly necessary, which are adapted the information behaviour of the youths in a subject-specific, gender-specific and age-specific manner,

i.e. which take their information sources, reading and viewing habits into consideration.

## Strengthening of communicative skills (Personal-communication elements)

Personal-communication measures – such as regional, target group-specific discussion offers or supervised exhibitions – intensify the stimuli provided by the mass media and create personal links.

They stimulate emotional confrontation and the strengthening of self-responsibility. The dialogue within the target group and with others is decisive for the development of individual, self-chosen attitudes and modes of behaviour. Innovative strategies, such as peer-education approaches, are of particular significance in this context. This function of personal address is very important, especially when dealing with the specific questions of young people. Personal-communication measures to strengthen communicative skills are important elements in an all-embracing education strategy which is geared to promoting skills.

## Qualification by way of basic and continuing training

The qualification and motivation of multipliers is of crucial importance in order to effectively implement a sex education concept which aims to promote knowledge and skills. Working aids and a broad, differentiated offer of basic, further and advanced training courses are necessary. Multipliers have an important transfer function. In line with the needs of the young people, they can encourage them to engage in self-reflection and think about love, partnership and sexuality by means of suitable measures. All in all, the concept is to be built up in the form of a structure-reinforcing network. The application of current research results and the knowledge gained in pilot projects in curricula and materials is also an important element for the continuous development of the overall concept.

## Quality assurance

Well-founded sex education must be based on scientifically confirmed data. To this end, scientific studies – including repeat surveys – among the young target groups are necessary.

Further central elements of quality assurance are the evaluation of media and measures, the compilation of market overviews on nationally accessible media and measures, the joint development of recommendations regarding indicators and standards, and their communication, particularly in basic, further and advanced training. Those directly involved in education work are of particular importance in the process of quality assurance.

## Cooperation and networking

The establishment and expansion of the structures for cooperation with the Federal Länder and national sponsors of family counselling institutions is to be continued, particularly by means of (pilot) projects. Further expansion of the structures for cooperation with youth and education associations, and with scholastic and vocational institutions is also necessary. Furthermore, nationwide sex education requires networking with institutions and organisations on a regional and local level in order to implement personal-communication measures. The regular exchange of information and experience on a European and international level is the necessary expansion of the national cooperation measures. It is based on the principles adopted in the WHO programme entitled „Health for All in Europe by the Year 2000“ and in the 1st Programme of Action of the EU for Health Promotion (1995–1999).

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The Framework Concept „Sex Education for Youths“ has been worked out and agreed in the Federal/State Co-ordination Circle, in which the states of Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg, Berlin, Brandenburg, Bremen, Hamburg, Hesse, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Lower Saxony, North Rhine Westphalia, Rhineland Palatinate, Saarland, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia and Schleswig-Holstein took part.

Sex education has been a new focus of attention for the Federal Centre for Health Education (FCHE) since 1992. The Centre's statutory remit to develop a sex-education concept places a particular responsibility on it to stimulate and promote an interdisciplinary discourse on sexuality, contraception and family planning. This is also an important element in quality management in this field.

A "list of materials" provides information on all the FCHE's publications; the information letter "Sex Education Forum" puts sex-education themes in a topical light, and in its series of specialist booklets RESEARCH AND PRACTICE IN SEX EDUCATION AND FAMILY PLANNING the FCHE provides a forum for discussion and networking between academics and workers in the field.

The specialist booklet series publishes the opinions of experts along with studies and model projects which reflect the current situation in sex education and family planning. In addition, there are a number of special publications documenting the results of seminars and congresses.

This present brochure sets out the fundamentals in the area of "sex education for youths". It defines the framework conditions, the starting situation, the goals and the target groups. In addition, it provides information on the communicative approach and the various subject areas. Further chapters deal with co-operation partners and measures being taken.

The publications of the Federal Centre for Health Education can be obtained from the following address:  
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