

## Sexually transmissible infections

### Curriculum links

#### WA Curriculum

- [ACPPS092](#): External influences on sexuality and sexual health behaviours, including the impact decisions and actions have on their own and other's wellbeing.
- [ACPPS095](#): Critical health literacy skills and strategies: evaluating health services in the community; examining policies and processes for ensuring safer behaviours.

#### International technical guidelines on sexuality education

- The human body and development
- Skills for health and wellbeing

### Materials

- 1 x piece of paper divided into 4 for each student. Write a small 'g' on the back corner of around 3 or 4 pieces. (Small pieces of paper that have been used on one side works well for this to disguise the 'g' on the back)  
Butcher's paper and markers. 7 pieces made up with the following questions/statements: STIs are passed on by?; How do I know if I have an STI?; How are STIs treated?; What can happen if STIs are left untreated?; How can I reduce my risk of getting an STI?; How/where do I get an STI test?; Other interesting information.
- Electronic or printed copies of [SHQ's STI brochure](#) - 1 per student.
- Access to [Get the Facts](#) website.

### Before you get started

- [Protective interrupting](#) - Teachers need to know and understand how to use this technique to prevent students from potentially disclosing sensitive information or abuse in front of other students.
- [Dealing with disclosures](#) - Teachers must be aware of the school and legal procedures if a student discloses personal issues, particularly disclosures of sexual abuse.
- [Question box](#) - Have a question box available in every lesson to allow students the opportunity to ask questions that may be too embarrassing or unsafe for them to ask openly in class. See [Setting up the question box](#) and [Types of questions](#) for further information. For ways to answer some of the curly questions, see [Student FAQs](#).
- Trauma informed teaching - Be aware of the possibility that student may have experiences of STIs, sexual violence or unintended pregnancy and content of this lesson may be triggering. Consider the timing of this lesson, liaise with school health team in case additional support is required.
- Consider your own thoughts, feelings, attitudes and values on this topic and be aware of how they may influence the way you present this activity. Be aware of your own self-care and support networks.
- Refer to the Background teacher notes: [STIs/BBVs](#), [Respectful relationships](#) and [Safer sex and contraception](#).

### Learning activities

#### Group agreement

##### 5 minutes

**Teaching tip:** A group agreement must be established before any RSE program begins to ensure a safe learning environment. Read: [Essential information: Establishing a group agreement](#) for tips on how to create one and what to include.

1. Revise the class [group agreement](#).

For this lesson, it is important that students remember the agreement around confidentiality and de-identifying information if sharing a story.

## Introduction: 4 squares (STI transmission exercise)

15 minutes

1. Do not explain to students the purpose of this exercise. Present the task as an energiser or 'getting to know you'.
2. Hand out the pre-prepared pieces of paper divided into 4 squares. Don't tell students that some pieces have 'g' written on the back to indicate use of glove.
3. laugh Explain that students are going to be asked some questions. They will need to move around the room and talk to their classmates. At the end of the activity they will have four different names on their piece of paper - one in each section, each related to a different question.  
Ask:
  1. Find someone in the room who plays the same sport as you.
  2. Sign each other's piece of paper in one of the 4 spaces.
4. Continue asking students questions until everyone has 4 people's signatures on their paper. Remind students that they can't have the same person's name signed twice on their paper.
  1. Ideas for questions. Someone who...
    1. likes/hates the same food as you
    2. likes the same Netflix series as you
    3. has a letter in their name the same as you
    4. has the same colour socks on as you.
5. Ask everyone to take their seats.
6. laugh Explain that this activity is actually to show how easily infections can spread. This infection is spread by signing your name. It is a 'Signature Transmissible Infection'. Ask for a volunteer who is OK to pretend that they have an infection.

**Teaching tip:** Use this as positive reinforcement for this young person being responsible for their health and going to get tested for an infection. Getting tested and having check-ups is part of our general wellbeing and important part of keeping us healthy.

8. Say:  
"(Student's name) has been to O-Day at Uni. They signed their name lots that day and they heard an advert from the WA Department of Health that said they only way to know for sure if you have the 'Signature Transmissible Infection' is to have a test."
9. Say:  
"If you have (Student's name) signed on your piece of paper, please stand up. You are all at risk of having the Signature Transmissible Infection."
10. Ask:  
Student standing - how do you feel?  
(*Worried, angry, upset, not bothered, ambivalent*)

**Teaching tip:** Some students may blame the person who 'gave it to them'. Use this as a teaching point to say that it is not possible to know if they GOT it from this person or if they GAVE it to this person. The person who got tested was looking after their health and doing the right thing of notifying their contacts.

11. Ask students to stand if they signed any of the papers of the students standing. And so on. Very quickly, most of the class will be standing.
12. Say:  
"Turn your piece of paper over. If you have a 'g' written in the corner, you wore a glove when you signed your name. You are not at risk of the 'Signature Transmissible Infection'. You can sit down."
13. Ask:  
Students sitting down because they wore a glove - how do you feel?  
(*relieved, proud of myself for being safe, not bothered, etc*)  
What do you think the 'Signature Transmissible Infection' represents?  
(*Sexually transmissible infection, STI, sexually transmissible disease*)

**Teaching tip:** Explain that we don't use the term 'STD' (i.e. disease) anymore as not all infections cause disease, especially if treated early. What does the glove represent?  
(*condom or dam*)

## Thumbs up/thumbs down quiz

10 minutes

Have students respond to the following statements using a **thumbs up, thumbs down** voting strategy and discuss their voting with someone close by. Clarify misconceptions as they appear. Stress that some of the statements are about their opinions while others have a correct and incorrect answer. STIs are only passed on through vaginal and anal sex.

*(False: some STIs can be passed on by oral sex and genital skin-to-skin contact.)*

I would know if I had an STI because it would be painful or I would be able to see something.

*(False: most people don't experience any symptoms from STIs or the symptoms can be so mild they don't notice)*

You only need to wear a condom with someone who has had sex with lots of people.

*(False: Anyone who has ever had vaginal, oral or anal sex can be at risk of an STI.)*

STIs aren't very common, I'm not really at risk of getting one.

*(False: STIs are very common, especially in young people 15-29 years. About 1 in 3 people will get an STI in their lifetime.)*

All STIs can be cured.

*(False. All STIs can be treated and managed. Some STIs can be cured (e.g., chlamydia and gonorrhoea) and some cannot (e.g., HIV). People can be reinfected which means that can get an STIs again after it has been cured.)*

There are vaccines available for some STIs.

*(True. There is a vaccine for HPV - the virus that causes genital warts and cervical cancer, and a vaccine for hepatitis B. There are no vaccines for other STIs like HIV, chlamydia, gonorrhoea or syphilis.)*

## Graffiti walk

15 minutes

Graffiti walk: Students use [SHQ's STI brochure](#) and [Get the facts](#) to add to posters around the room that say:

1. STIs are passed on by?
2. How do I know if I have an STI?
3. How are STIs treated?
4. What can happen if STIs are left untreated?
5. How can I reduce my risk of getting an STI?
6. How/where do I get an STI test?
7. Other interesting information.
8. Discuss answers and address any misconceptions.

## 3-2-1 Reflection

### Question box

10 minutes

- Provide students with time to write questions for the question box.

**Teaching tip:** If the question box is already set up, you may like to choose some questions related to the lesson to answer.

- Remind students of the 'Ask a question feature' on [Get the Facts](#) and the [free STI testing](#).

## Health promoting schools

Background teacher note: [Health promoting schools framework](#)

### Partnerships with parents

- Run a parent workshop prior to delivering RSE lessons so that parents can see the resources used, ask questions and find out how to support the school program by continuing conversations at home.
- Add the [Get the Facts](#), [Talk Soon. Talk Often](#) and [SECCA app](#) links to your website/e-news for parents.

### Partnerships with school staff

- Collaborate with the Science teachers to look at how different infections are transmitted, treated and their impact on the body.
- Collaborate with the Humanities and Social Sciences teachers to look at the history and impact of STIs on different communities at different times.
- Invite the school nurse to a class or an assembly to introduce them to the students and let them know what their roles are and how they can help the students.

