



Student Snapshot Report

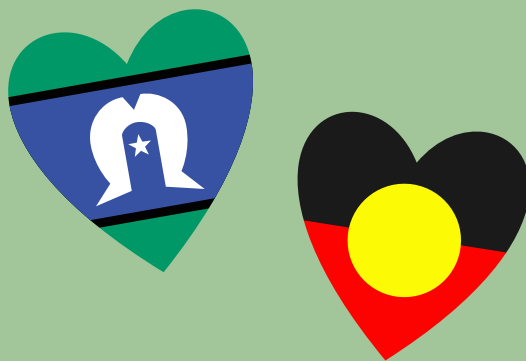
Student feedback on
Comprehensive Relationships and
Sexual Health Education

2023

SHINE_{SA}

We acknowledge and respect the Kurna people as the traditional custodians of the lands on which SHINE SA is located. We acknowledge these ancestral lands and their significance for the traditional owners and respect their spiritual relationship with country.

We pay our respect to the cultural authority of all Aboriginal people, understanding that their cultural and heritage beliefs are still as important today. We listen deeply to Aboriginal knowledges, ways of being, and learning that promote relationship and sexual wellbeing for all young South Australians.



Foreward

In South Australian government high schools, comprehensive relationships and sexual health education (CRSE) is mainly delivered through the SHINE SA Focus Schools Program. This program is mapped to the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education and the South Australian Department for Education's Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum. The following report presents student survey feedback from schools participating in the Focus Schools Program.

The [Focus Schools Program](#) is available to all Department for Education schools in South Australia that have a secondary year component (Years 7 – 10).

In 2022, Year 7 students moved into the secondary system. This year's report (incorporating student feedback from 2022) saw an increased number of Year 7 students responding to this survey. In total 1,341 Year 7 students provided feedback, representing 25% of total respondents (compared to 7% of Year 7 students in 2021).

In 2022 there were 124 individual schools signed on to a formal Focus School Agreement with SHINE SA, which includes a commitment by the school to invite their students to participate in an annual student feedback survey. A majority of schools invite their students to complete a feedback survey online with a few completing them on paper.

During the 2022 school year 5,298 students from 47 Focus Schools responded to the survey. This response rate is higher than average and could reflect the impact of COVID-19 on schooling and the capacity to deliver a CRSE program.

As well as ensuring that SHINE SA's CRSE curricula are aligned to national and state curricula, student voice and feedback are critical to ensure that the teaching and learning activities remain contemporary to the needs of young South Australians both now and into their adult lives.

Annual Student Snapshot Reports such as this summarise the responses collected from South Australian secondary students at government schools participating in the SHINE SA Focus Schools Program. The report highlights the positive impact that this evidence-based program is having on students in equipping them to make informed and healthy choices that support their wellbeing. The report also supports educators to reflect on the opportunities for improving CRSE practice.



Christopher Thorpe (he/him)

**Manager - Schools Education
and Support**



SHINE SA Schools Education and Support Team members

Table of Contents

The Focus Schools Program	6
Curriculum	7
Key findings	8
Respondent demographics	10
- Year level	10
- Gender Identity	10
- LGBTIQ+ identity	10
Lessons offered	11
Students' rating of the course	11
Course usefulness	13
Seeking out information	15
Conversations with carers/family	16
Most useful topics	17
Changes to improve the course	17
Discussion	19

The Focus Schools Program

SHINE SA's Focus Schools Program is a CRSE program for secondary schools. It is a primary prevention initiative that aims to build relationships skills, health literacy, e-safety and achieve long-term health and social outcomes.

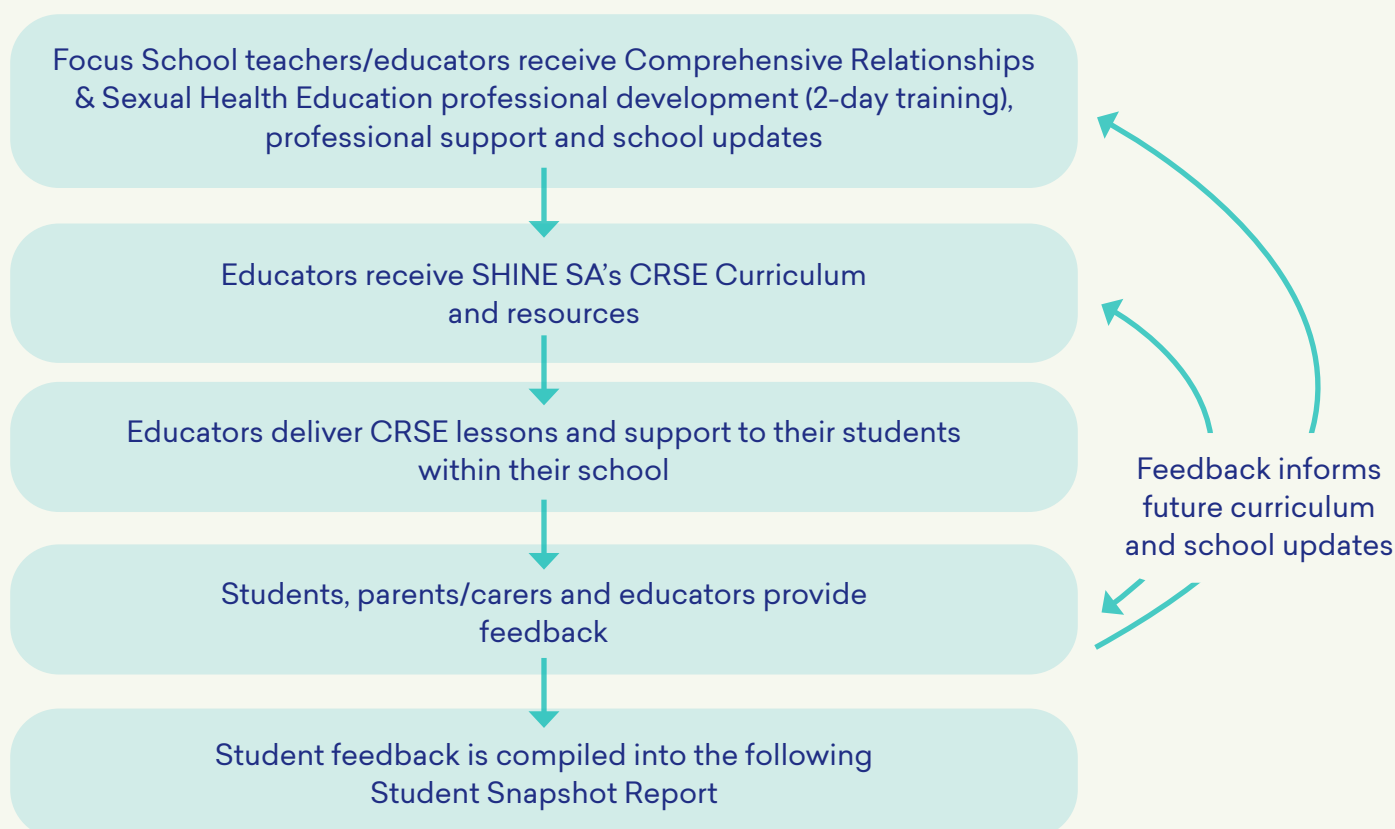
CRSE programs are effective in delivering a range of outcomes for young people including:

- unintended pregnancy prevention
- STI prevention
- dating and intimate partner violence prevention
- development of healthy relationships
- prevention of child sexual abuse
- an appreciation of sexual diversity
- improved social/emotional learning
- increased media and porn literacy.

The Focus Schools Program involves a commitment from Department for Education secondary schools to:

- support educators to attend SHINE SA's professional development/training
- empower their educators to deliver relationships and sexual health lessons across Years 7-10
- deliver the SHINE SA Relationships & Sexual Health Curriculum mapped to the Australian Curriculum
- provide ongoing feedback from students and staff
- communicate with parents/carers
- work towards a whole-school approach to relationships and sexual health education
- follow SHINE SA's Principles of Best Practice.

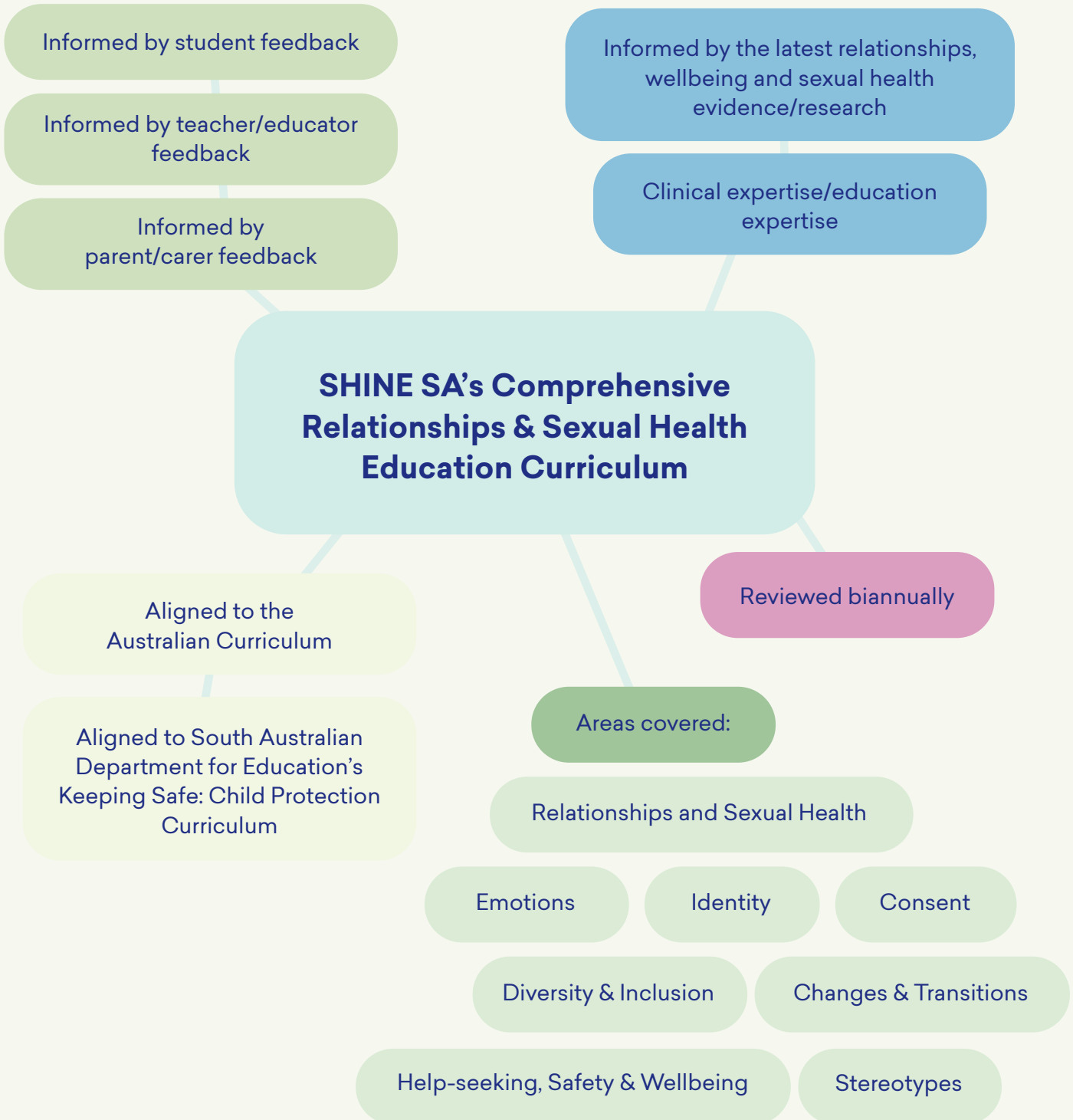
CRSE Curriculum delivery and feedback



Curriculum

SHINE SA's CRSE curriculum is available to all South Australian educators and school staff who complete our professional development. This equips staff with the confidence, knowledge and skills to deliver the curriculum.

SHINE SA's CRSE Curriculum Overview



Key findings

**5,298
students**

from 47 Focus Schools
submitted a survey

Most respondents were Year 9
students (25% Year 7, 26% Year 8;
30% Year 9; 19% Year 10)

Only 5% of students were
offered between 1-5 CRSE
lessons; 16% - 6-10 lessons; 51%
-11-15 lessons; 28% of students
- 16 or more lessons

82%

of students rated the
safety and support of the
class environment as
Good or Excellent

78%

of students rated
the course overall
as Good or
Excellent

92%

of students believed the
course will be useful to
them now or in the future

78%

of students believed the
course was often or always
respectful and inclusive of
LGBTIQA+ identities

Key findings

82%

of students believed the course was often or always respectful and inclusive of different values and beliefs

28%

of students had spoken with their family about a CRSE lesson or topic since starting the program

Parent/carer was the most common choice (61%) for students as a source for seeking further information, followed by Friend (48%), Internet (39%), Health service (38%), Teacher (32%) and School counsellor (19%).

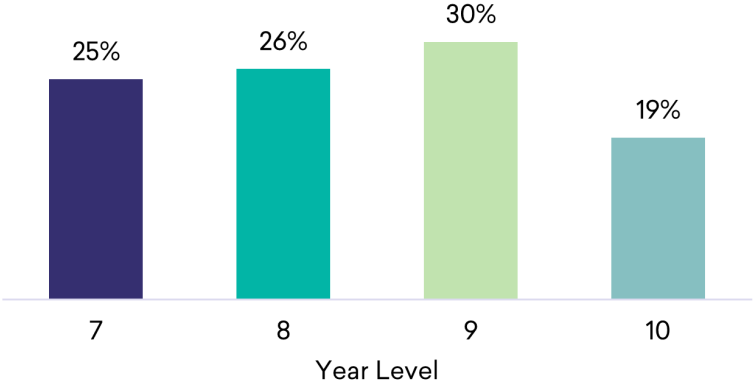
The 5 most useful topics indicated, in descending order, were: **Relationships (47%), Consent (42%), Safer sex (39%), STIs (37%) and Gender/Stereotypes (36%)**

38%

indicated that no change was needed to improve the course, 17% wanted more in-depth information, 14% better class behaviour and 12% more lessons

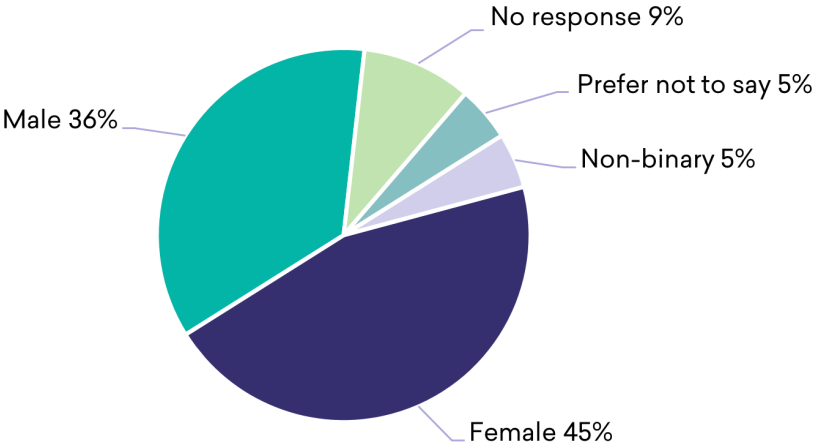
Respondent demographics - Year level

Figure 1: Student respondents (n=5,298) by year level (2022)



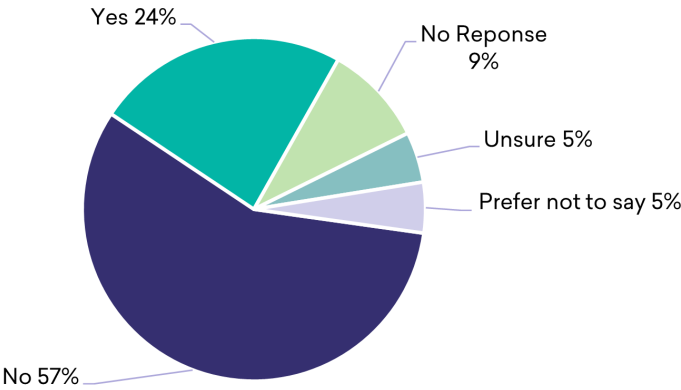
- Gender Identity

Figure 2: Gender of respondents (2022)



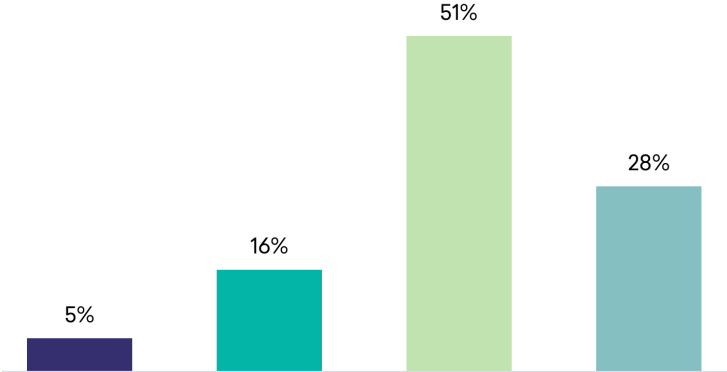
- LGBTIQ+ identity

Figure 3: Respondents identify as LGBTIQ+ (2022)



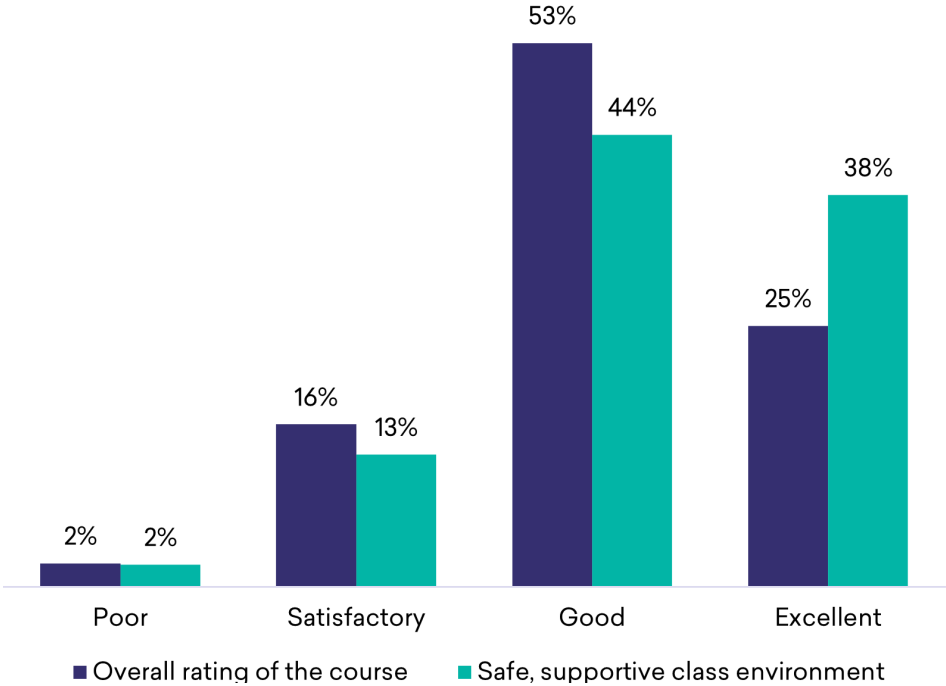
Lessons offered

Figure 4: Number of CRSE lessons offered to respondents (2022)



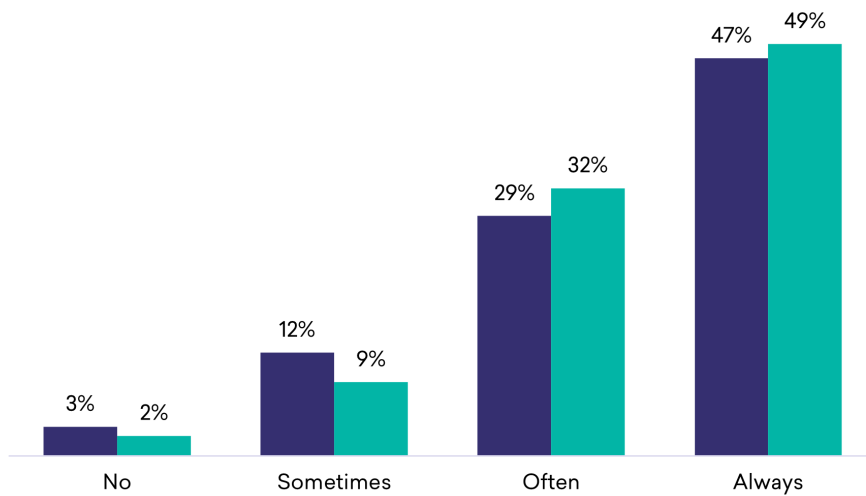
Students' rating of the course

Figure 5: Students rating of the course and the class environment (2022)



Respectful and inclusive

Figure 6: Student views on whether the course was respectful and inclusive of LGBTIQIA+ identities and different values and beliefs (2022)



Student feedback on whether the course was respectful and inclusive of LGBTIQIA+ identities and different values and beliefs

“

My teacher was very inclusive of peoples different beliefs.

”

I felt accepted the teacher checked in that he explained it right and he did.

I'm pretty sure we really only talked LGBTIQIA+ about once.

There was always recognition of the LGBTIQIA+ community in these courses.

The course was almost always inclusive of LGBT identities, however as a trans person in an “all-girls” class I felt a little left out sometimes as the language used wasn't always the most inclusive. Other than I felt included.

Teacher was always inclusive and welcoming.

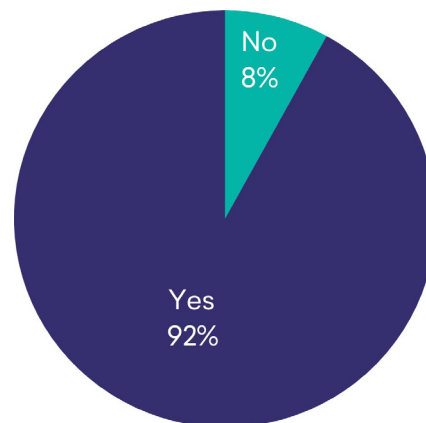
This course was also very supportive of different religions and that everyone can believe in something different and that is okay, and you have to support them for that.

Some kids in the class were a little homophobic but unfortunately, I expected that.

As a queer person I felt comfortable in there.

Course usefulness

Figure 7: Student views on whether the course will be useful to them now or in the future in terms of their relationships and sexual health (2022)



Student feedback on course usefulness

'No' respondent comments

Because I don't really want a sexual relationship.

In terms of a romantic relationship probably not because I don't plan in being in one but in normal relationships it can help me understand another person perspective.

I just re-learnt everything I was taught about two years ago.

'Yes' respondent comments

Now I know what to expect in a relationship and what to do and what not to do to be responsible and safe.

It will help me to understand how important my decisions are, and that people should respect them.

I will now know if there is something wrong with a relationship. I know where to go for help and sexually I know what is safe and what isn't.

Having any sort of understanding or information is better than having none when it comes to relationships, sexual or not.

It would have been a lot different if I had learnt it firsthand.

I now know way more stuff about safe sex and how my body will grow and change in the future and how to help it grow and not get messed up or ruined.

It can help me set boundaries and help me make the right decisions in future relationships.

I now know more about preventing STIs, contraception and relationship health.

Now I know all of the rules and laws around sexual health.

Sex will happen eventually, and I don't want to just go around getting people pregnant.

I think it will be useful to me in the future because I will know how to keep myself safe and where to go for help if I need it.

I will know how to treat people better and know how to react to things.

The course has taught us how to approach certain things about sexual health and relationships. It also gave us a better understanding about how things work.

Knowing about your body and your potential partners body is useful so you can respect boundaries and know what others are going through.



“

I will know how to treat people better and know how to react to things.

”

“

Knowing about your body and your potential partners body is useful so you can respect boundaries and know what others are going through.

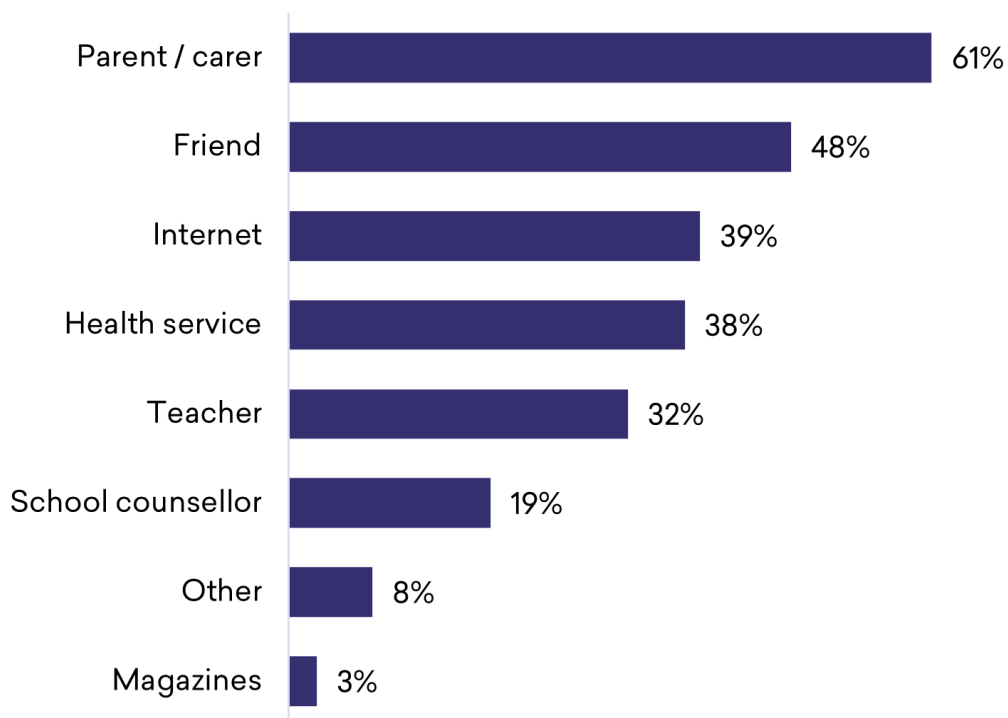
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I now know more about preventing STIs, contraception and relationship health.

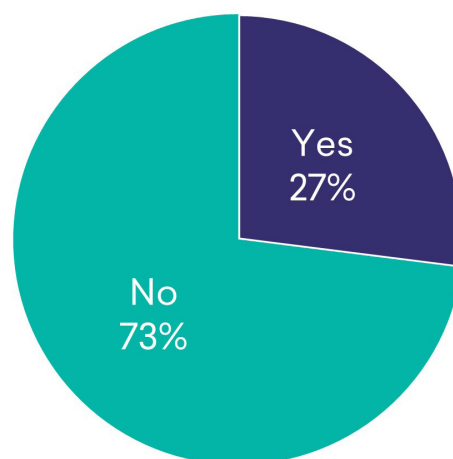
Seeking out information

Figure 8: Student views on who/where they would go to find out more about relationships and sexual health (2022)



Conversations with carers/family

Figure 9: Student views on whether they have talked with their carers/family about any of the topics in their CRSE course (2022)



Student feedback on conversations with carers/family

'No' respondent comments

They were raised differently, and education is different, it then leads to them having different opinions and thoughts.

I don't want to talk to them (parents) about it because they'll add things to it and make the dumbest jokes they could ever make.

That's not what I really speak with my family about.

I don't talk to my family about sexual health.

My parents always make things awkward whenever I've tried to talk to them about this in the past and I'm too scared to try again.

It's not a very comfortable topic to talk about.

I have sometimes said stuff to my mum but not really very much as it is a strange topic to talk to about to your parents at this age.

It's awkward and I much rather talk about it with a health educator.

'Yes' respondent comments

My family and I have always been quite open with the topic of relationships and sex, so we often talk about it, and we feel comfortable to ask questions.

I have talked to my dad about how condoms work.

I talked about puberty with them and how they went through it.

I recently got a partner and now thanks to the lessons I know a lot more and understand more. I was also able to talk to my parents about my relationship.

I talked about safe sex methods and STIs.

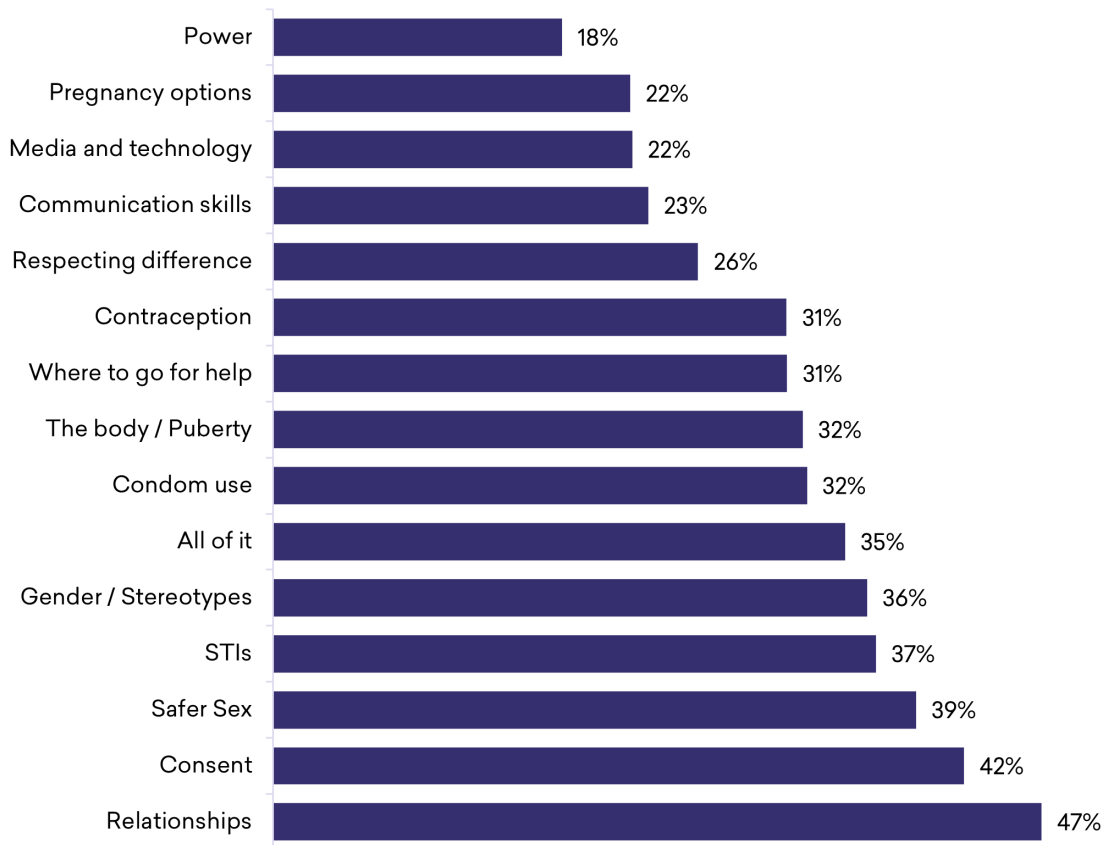
My family and I have been having chats every now and then about things that I have been learning.

We had THE TALK.

Mostly because my family is very open and talks about this stuff with me, along with them joking about it.

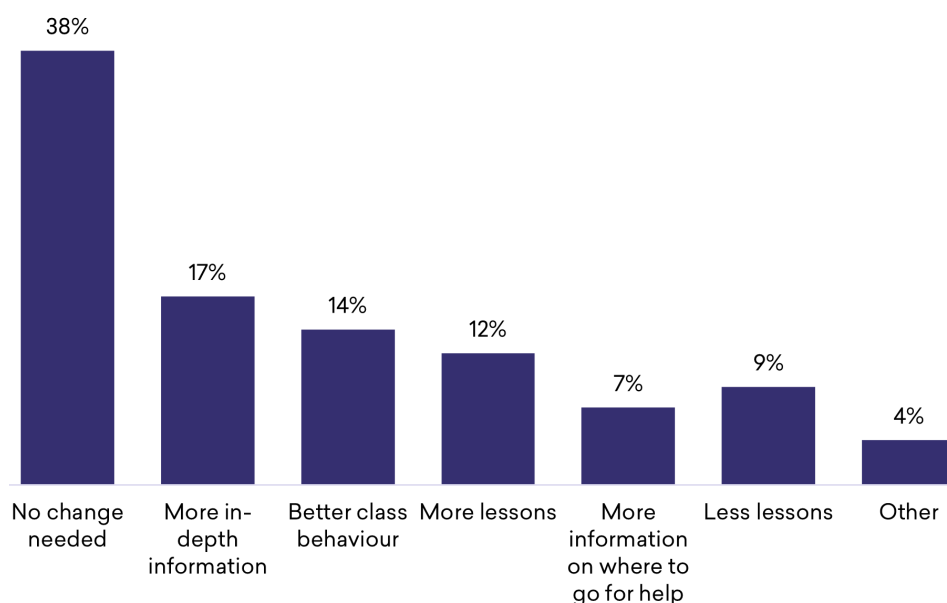
Most useful topics

Figure 10: Student views on what were the most useful topics (2022)



Changes to improve the course

Figure 11: Student suggestions for improvements (2022)



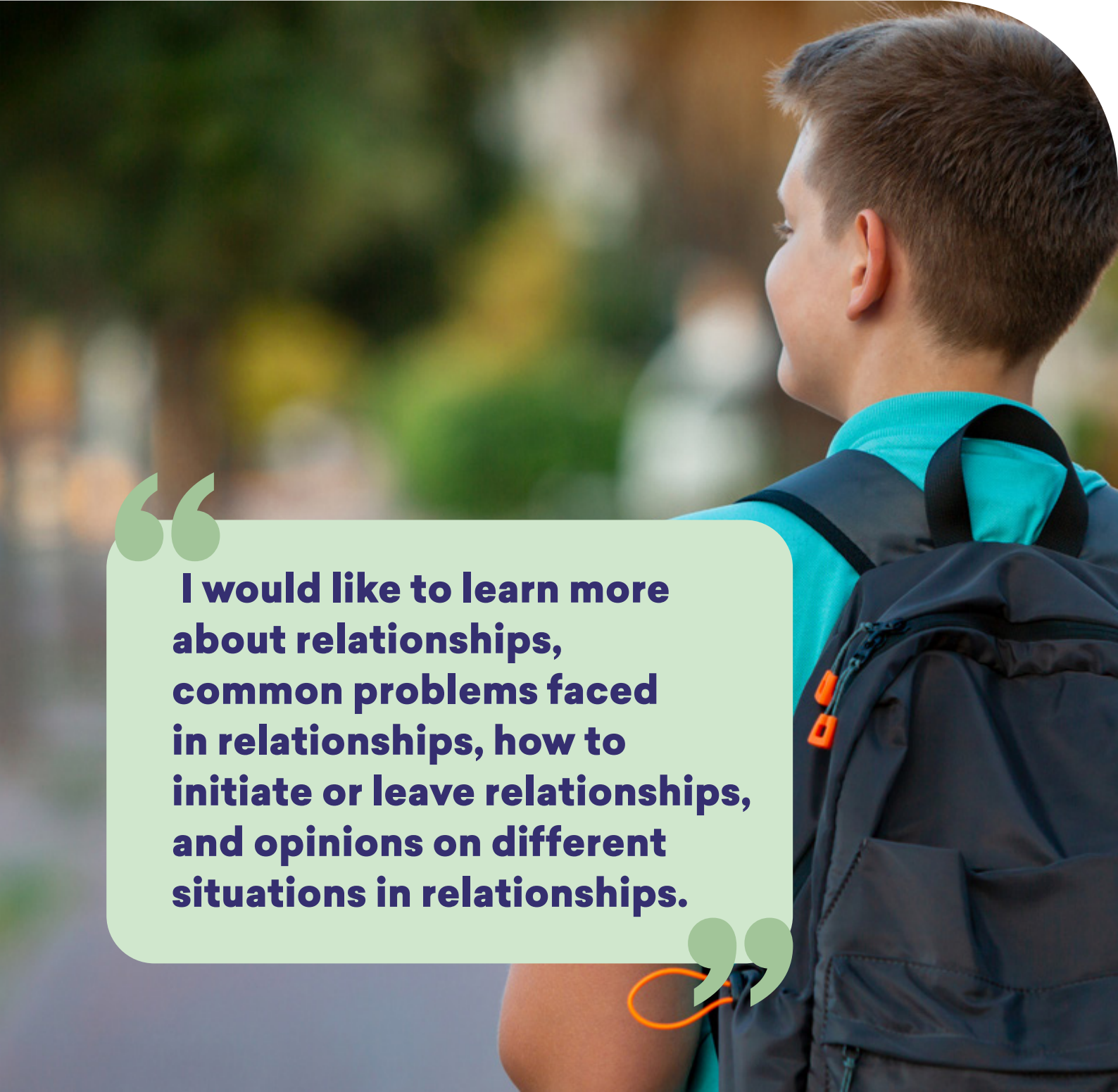
Student feedback on changes to improve the course

I would like to learn more about everything, mainly on safer sex and other topics relating to it.

(More about) menstrual cycles and how people deal with them.

Go more into depth about specific things, different areas were specifically talked about, but can possibly be discussed more.

The hand on activities were really good, maybe add more suitable videos for our age group.

A young man with short brown hair, wearing a teal shirt and a dark grey backpack, is shown in profile from the chest up, looking towards the left. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green foliage and a building.

I would like to learn more about relationships, common problems faced in relationships, how to initiate or leave relationships, and opinions on different situations in relationships.

Discussion

During the 2022 school year, educators at SHINE SA Focus Schools encouraged their students to provide their views on the comprehensive relationships and sexual health education (CRSE) they had been taught. A total of 5,298 responses were received from students at 47 Focus Schools throughout the year (Figures 12 and 13).

This level of response is positive and is influenced by several factors including:

- Schools returning to regular timetabling following COVID-19 disruption in previous years
- The level of relationship the assigned SHINE SA Schools Coordinator has developed with a Focus School Key Contact
- Staffing changes (particularly a change to the Key Contact) at Focus Schools as well as changes in SHINE SA's Schools Education and Support team
- Day to day challenges in schools – e.g. timetabling changes, last minute changes to lessons and the overcrowded curriculum
- Agency of students deciding to participate in the survey
- Incomplete and/or informal survey responses – especially additional comments
- Staff teaching SHINE SA's CRSE program prioritising student responses to the survey.

The SHINE SA Focus Schools that provide student survey responses continue to receive an annual personalised individual school report summarising the results and a sampling of student feedback comments. SHINE SA's Schools Coordinators present and explain this report to staff alongside an annual curriculum update session held at the school.

School staff often comment on the valuable information provided in the report including the greater insights they gain from the voice of their students reflected in their feedback. Many educators take on board the suggestions made regarding how the curriculum is taught, including ideas voiced for improvements to the program at their school.

Biennial reviews and adjustments are made to the secondary (Years 7 – 10) CRSE curricula. As well as the feedback provided by students, explicit feedback is also sought from South Australian school-based educators to ensure that their practice experience and suggestions are included in the reviewed editions of curricula.

It is noteworthy that 79% of students responded that they had engaged with more than 11 CRSE lessons in 2022. This indicates that these students are receiving a comprehensive and fully implemented program that includes most curriculum topics and learning areas. It is beyond the scope of this survey to determine which lessons/topics were omitted.

Discussion continued

Figure 12: SHINE SA Student Survey Respondents (2022)

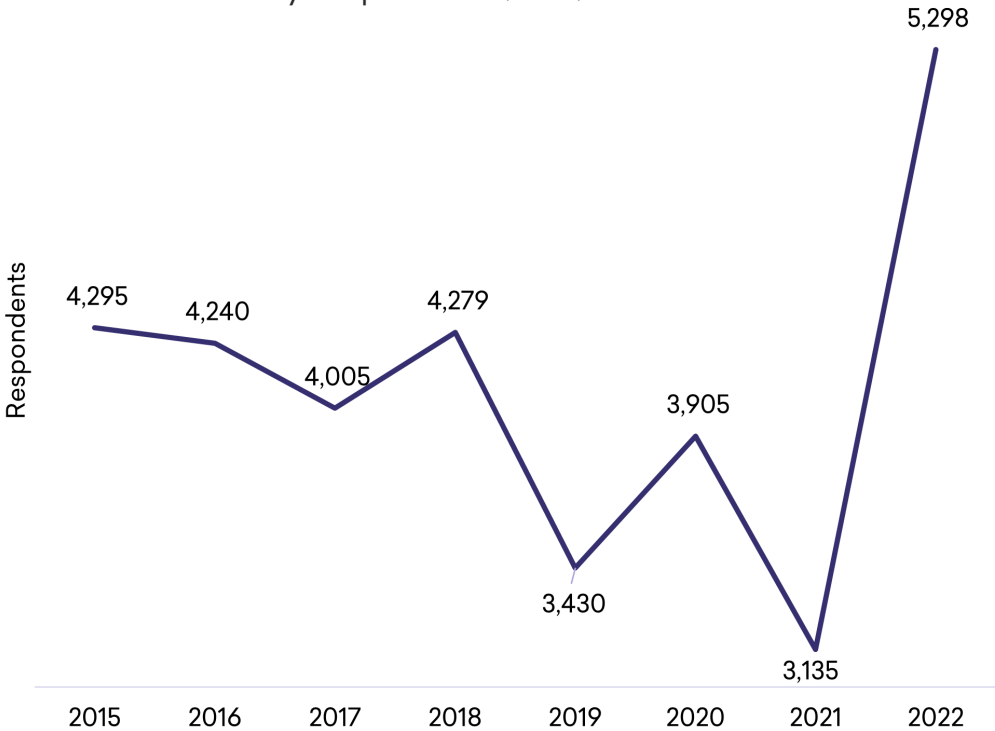
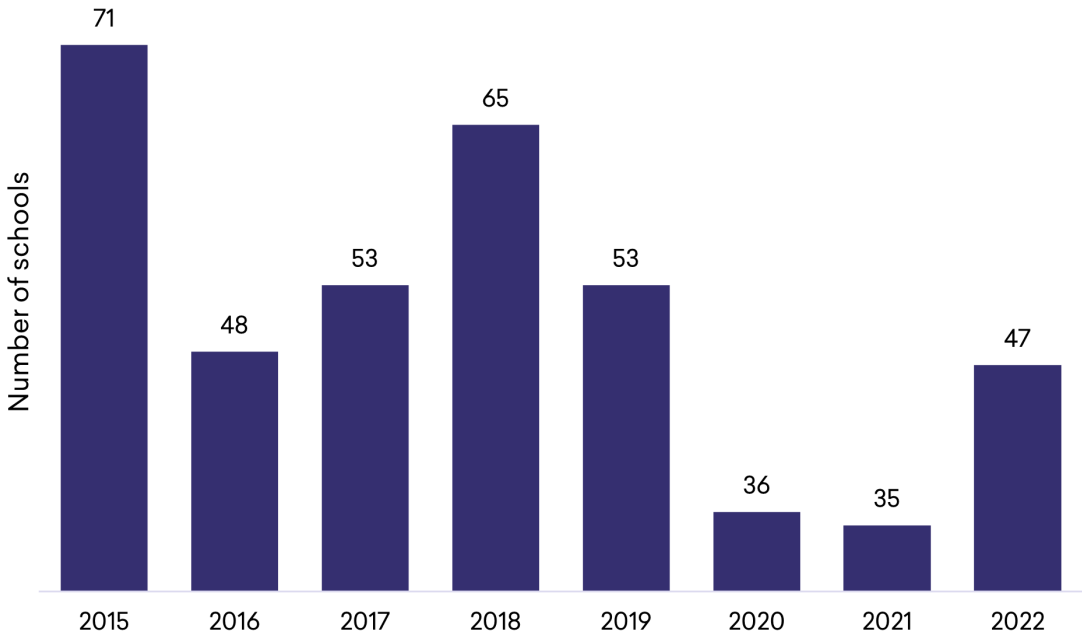


Figure 13: SHINE SA Focus Schools represented in responses (2022)



Discussion continued

It's essential the South Australian educators delivering CRSE have the confidence, skills, and capacity to do so in ways that are inclusive and sensitive to the wellbeing of all students at their school. It is reassuring that the majority of students provided positive feedback, with 82% describing the classroom environment as safe and supportive, 78% recognising it as inclusive of diversity, and 78% rating the overall course as good or excellent. This information is also provided in the individual reports provided to each site to enable leadership to understand the learning experiences occurring for their students.

As in previous years, most students (72%) had not discussed CRSE topics at home. Many comment that this is not something they feel comfortable to do or that there is no necessity for them to do so as they are satisfied with what they are learning in their school lessons. Parents/carers continue to rate as the highest (61%) as a further reliable source for relationships and sexual health information.

An overwhelming majority (92%) of students endorsed the relevance and usefulness of the CRSE curriculum they received to their lives now or in the future. More than one third of respondents (38%) indicated that they would not make any

changes to course content. Students consistently note each year that they would like more in-depth information and more CRSE lessons. Comments regarding classroom behaviour and the gender make-up of their class provides interesting information for individual sites and educators to consider.

Historically, less than half of students indicated in their feedback that their lessons were always respectful of LGBTIQ+ identities. In response to this feedback, SHINE SA produced How to Start a Rainbow Group Schools Guide in 2021. This publication has since been distributed to Focus Schools and is available to download at no cost from the SHINE SA online shop. We are excited to see in 2022 that 78% of students indicate that the course is always respectful and inclusive of LGBTIQ+ identities.

Overall, the responses from the 2023 student surveys were positive and indicated that the SHINE SA Years 7–10 CRSE curriculum was facilitated by teachers in Focus Schools in safe and inclusive ways that continue to meet the needs of many students in South Australia.

