

PRINCIPLE 4 - SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Part of the National Children's Bureau family



Dear <<First Name>>,

Our 4th bulletin of the year focuses on creating a safe learning environment for RSE, rich with the use of varied teaching approaches.

Don't miss the new blog from Eleanor Draeger, top tips on using drama and performatives by David Evans from our partner Apause, a new guide to using theatre in education from our partner Loudmouth and our new resource on creating a safe learning environment, produced exclusively for our members, available to [download](#) when logged in on our website. *Scroll to the foot of the*

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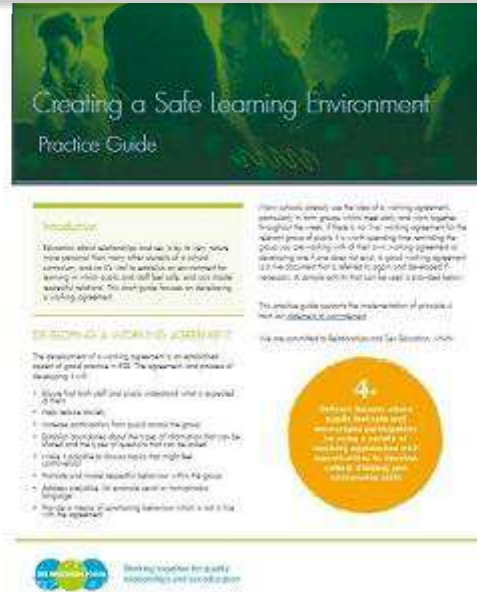
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From Lucy and the Sex Education Forum team

CREATING SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

New practice guide



Our new [practice guide](#) focuses on developing a working agreement and includes full instructions for an activity that you can use with your pupils, together with tried and tested tips and hints for creating a safe learning environment.

With a learning agreement in place there are lots of teaching methods to choose from. The key is to encourage participation and critical thinking while maintaining a safe space.

A [new blog](#) from our Senior Trainer, Eleanor Draeger works through a practical example. If you were using pictures from magazines to stimulate a discussion about body image how would you make learning safe, while promoting critical thinking skills?

RESOURCES FOR SAFE, PARTICIPATORY LEARNING FROM OUR PARTNERS



Loudmouth

Experienced Theatre in Education (TIE) company Loudmouth share their tips on using TIE on safeguarding issues. For example, how do you know if a company is reputable and can they provide a list of learning outcomes?



Sex Education Forum - External visitors

External Visitors and SRE - our guidance on all things to consider when working with an external provider.



Sex Education Forum - Confidentiality

Our trusted factsheet on confidentiality, to support young people's sexual health and wellbeing in secondary schools.



Tender - Acting to end abuse

Tender is an arts and education charity committed to preventing domestic abuse and sexual violence amongst young people, by promoting healthy relationships. They use drama and the arts extensively in their projects. See [their brochure](#) for details.

Somerset Healthy Schools

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'warm ups', 'exercises' or fuller activities.



Coram Life Education

Coram offer memorable life skills sessions, which can be delivered in a mobile classroom driven into school grounds, with the help of Harold the giraffe. Harold is used to help make learning safe on a range of RSE and PSHE topics for primary pupils. A programme overview can be seen [here](#).



Big Talk Education

"Growing up safe" picture cards are available at two age and stage levels and there is a bespoke Traveller and Gypsy pack. Designed to offer proactive discussion around helping to keep children safe in potentially risky situations.



DO...RSE

Lesson guidance from DO...RSE covers making a group agreement, confidentiality, different learning methods, answering questions and more. This is aimed at secondary school level and includes some self-reflection exercises for educators.

FROM DAVID EVANS, APAUSE

drama and performatives

'Drama' as a term can conjure up all sorts of associations. For some it is the most obvious and exciting way to learn about relationships, but for many it is at best misleading and at worst completely off-putting. I take my meaning from the original Greek word *dran* 'do, act'. Drama, in the context of relationships and sex education, is about the doing – it is something that should be active, co-constructed and 'done'.

Tip 1. Keep your classroom safe, build consensus

Identify a set of ground rules which are designed to keep the classroom a safe space for the facilitator and learners. In exercising these rules, it is important to acknowledge the value of a degree of risk taking whilst engendering a consensual ethos. You might want to make the rules explicit from the outset of your RSE sessions, but there is value in finding ways of co-constructing them, building class consensus and self-regulation.

Tip 2 Embrace the 'doing' of communication

Before implementing a lesson plan consider what opportunities it gives to the learners to experience relationships and their learning through non-verbal and non-written means of communication. For example, when developing a notion of consent, is it something that may be experienced through 'doing' some physical or a spatial interaction? Are there daily non-verbal interactions involving elements of consent which could be explored in pairs or groups and shared with the class? Could an idea be introduced through a

Tip 3 Change the learning space

If you are going to engage learners by doing something active, consider how you could change the learning environment to make it clear that this session is different from their day-to-day learning. Clues: orientate tables to suggest small group work without a front of class focal point, arrange chairs in a circle, pull the blinds and use digital technologies to change the visual and auditory environment.

Tip 4 Focus on relationships

Most topics, for example STIs, will have a biological or medical dimension, but try to think about it in terms of relationships and interactions and not purely in terms of symptoms and treatments. We know that, used correctly, condoms give protection against STIs, but how is the use of a condom actually negotiated? Who and when might the negotiation be initiated? Are there other social dynamics which might influence the likelihood of a condom being used, such as friends and alcohol? Can these dynamics be captured in short phrases? E.g. "It's more fun if I put it on for you." By incremental steps, participants deepen their engagement and can enhance their personal agency by constructing short scripts and role plays.

Tip 5 Exploit oppositional tendencies

It is much easier and more meaningful to explore simple scripting and role-play activities when it is acknowledged that within themselves characters experience tensions and conflicts eg public versus private, wants versus worries, personal beliefs versus social norms.

kind of mask. They don't always mean exactly what they show.

Take a theme like identities. A simple oval plain mask can be drawn on each side of a piece of paper, one side could be designed to stand for all the outward signs of a person's gender and the other side could stand for all those aspects which are kept secret or internalised. Often these can be presented and spoken about through the mask itself but can also take the form of freeze-frames which could be accompanied by just one or two phrases.

And finally: both 'facilitator' and 'learner' are roles, masks even, that we agree to construct and maintain. They keep us safe while we undertake the potentially hazardous exploration of ourselves, our understandings and our relationships.

David Evans, is Lead Trainer and Manager of [Apause](#), a partner of the Sex Education Forum.

TRAINING & NETWORKING



SRE Project and the 'Activate RSE' training

This exciting new facilitator training course from Apause is for learners of all abilities. It focuses on the use of drama and

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and performative treatment. Booking is open for regional twilight sessions and a full day course in London. See all dates and further details.



Get Ready for Statutory RSE

One-day training course from the Sex Education Forum providing a foundation for developing high quality RSE in your school. Our expert trainers will help you explore a range of teaching approaches to create engaging, safe and participatory lessons for your pupils. Trainers model the creation of a safe learning environment throughout and will introduce you to resources produced from across our partners. Next course for secondary schools in May, and new dates for September now booking. See calendar. £25 discount for members.



DO...RSE facebook platform

DO...RSE have set up an online platform for discussions about best practice, signposting great resources/organisations, and a space for sharing helpful hints and tips and resources on Facebook.

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