

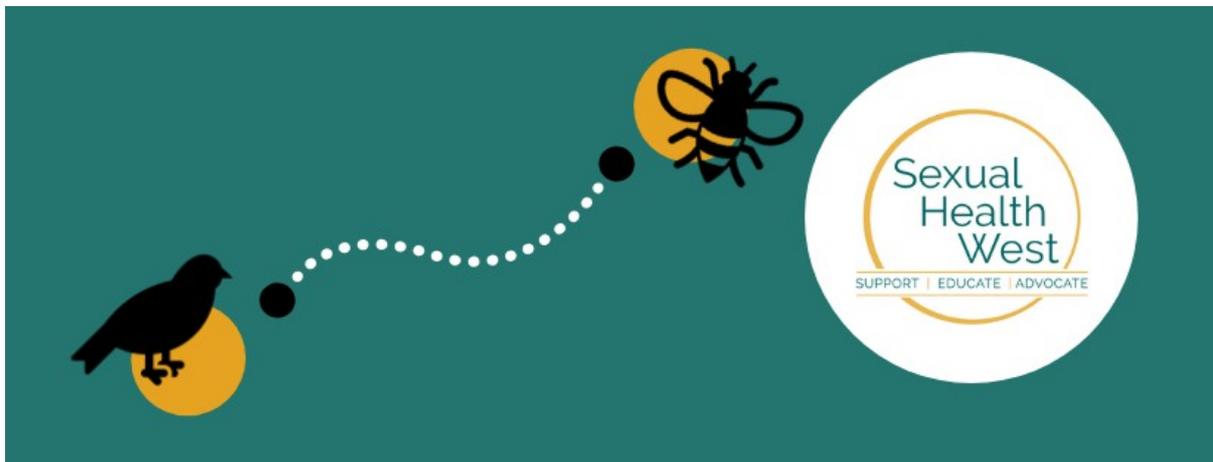


Sexual  
Health  
West

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SUPPORT | EDUCATE | ADVOCATE

A Little WISER Primary School Programme for 6<sup>th</sup> Class Students



The WISER (West of Ireland Sexuality Education Resource) programmes have been designed to promote a positive, respectful approach towards relationships and sexuality that enables and empowers young people to make knowledgeable choices with regard to their sexual health and personal relationships. A Little WISER looks to build responsible and respectful attitudes towards gender and sexuality. In line with the vision of Ireland's Sexual Health Strategy 2015-2020, the WISER programmes support the aims of sexual health promotion, education and prevention initiatives. Additionally, A Little WISER is based on best practice as developed by UNESCO, 2009/18 and data gathered from Irish young people as to their own sexual health education needs (O'Higgins, 2005). A Little WISER has been adapted from numerous sources including, but not limited to, the Australian Resource 'Catching on Early' (2013) and continues to be adapted and updated to ensure that best practice and standards are adhered to.

The workshops are interactive and participatory with discussions and quizzes. This creates varied sessions which hold the interest of the young participants and increase their ability to integrate the learning. The workshops are age appropriate with materials and exercises being adjusted in order to meet the developmental stage, educational ability and needs of the participants.

**We invite parents to an information evening to go through exactly what the workshops entail and discuss any issues/anxieties they may have. If you require any further information, please see [www.bewiser.ie](http://www.bewiser.ie)**

# Outline of WISER Primary School Programme 2020

## Session 1 – Introduction and Relationships

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Building rapport, establishing trust, agreeing on group contract or 'rules', ice-breakers, introduction of facilitators and WISER, important qualities in friendships and relationships. We look at friendships in the virtual world and internet safety. We then discuss the qualities that are important to them in regard to their friendships and, as a group; we discuss *why* these are important to them and the importance of balancing qualities, such as honesty with kindness. We then get the students to come up with a list of qualities that they think *may* be important in a romantic relationship (boyfriend-boyfriend/girlfriend-girlfriend/boyfriend-girlfriend relationship). All language is inclusive and non-judgemental. When talking about romantic relationships we introduce the concept of consent and ask participants to describe what is meant by the term. From the outset we ensure that consent features in all exercises, discussions and activities. Thus, consent runs through all aspects of the WISER programme. It is imperative for us that consent is understood not simply in the abstract but is also applied to 'real-world' scenarios so that participants can learn about consent in an experiential manner. For example, if someone wanted to 'meet'/'shift'/'kiss' someone what would they need to get first? The answer is of course consent but importantly we discuss *how* would someone go about getting consent? How do you know that a person is/is not consenting?

Each session closes by giving each student a piece of paper where they get to write a question and place it in a hat. All questions are answered the following week which gives the facilitators the chance to forward the questions and answers onto the teacher.

### Learning outcomes:

- What makes a good friend, what they value and how we care for one another.
- Be able to identify the qualities that are necessary in a healthy romantic relationship.
- Have an understanding of the importance of consent and be able apply it to real scenarios.

## Session 2 – Puberty

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Questions from the previous week are answered. The most common questions asked during relationships and sexuality education in primary schools are often not about sex but about their changing bodies. Students appreciate knowing the range of ages changes may occur. If they can privately place themselves somewhere on the continuum of growth and development, they feel assured and less anxious about the stage they are currently at. When asked where people learn about bodies and puberty most participants will say that they learn from the internet. In this session it is often the case, although not always, that pornography will enter the discussion in some form or another. From the outset we make it very clear that what people see in 'porn' is not what most people's bodies will look like and it is not reflective of how people treat each other in the real world ('porn sex is not real sex, people's bodies on porn are not what most people look like'). Discussions are all peer-led so it is usually through the participants asking questions that we discuss pornography, it is not a 'stand-alone' topic but is instead addressed in an open, honest and non-judgemental way stressing the importance of having the correct information and understanding that porn is not real. We also discuss peer pressure, media pressure, body image, safety and protection online although not necessarily in session 2 as these may arise in earlier or later sessions. Sexting/nudes generally comes up also and we discuss the legal aspects and also the impact of material being shared non-consensually. Once again, this is group-led so will vary between different groups.

Learning outcomes:

- Have the correct information about their bodies and growth.
- Identify the likely physical, emotional and social changes that occur during puberty.
- Understand that puberty does not happen all at once and will start according to each person's body clock.
- Understand and identify some products that *may* help them through puberty (tampons, pads, shower gel, face wash).

- Understand that self-pleasure (masturbation) is healthy, normal and natural and nothing to be ashamed of but that it is a personal private act.
- Begin to learn about the development of personal identity.
- Be able to think critically about what they may see on the internet or on various social media apps.

## **Session 3 – About Bodies, the Amazing Story of Conception, Sexual Intercourse and Human Anatomy**

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Questions from the previous week are answered. The students learn about body parts and what the correct names are, we also discuss the slang terms to demystify all aspects of the body and equip students with an understanding of appropriate and inappropriate language. How babies are conceived through sexual intercourse, we also discuss the different ways in which families are made and emphasise that there are many different family types (households headed by one parent, step-families, adopted families, foster families, IVF, surrogacy etc). We also discuss how to prevent pregnancy, what STI's are and how to prevent them. Once again, all language is inclusive, and we stress that in Ireland, irrespective of your sexual orientation, people can have families and get married if they choose to do so.

### **Learning outcomes:**

- The students understand how the human body works, in particular the process of menstruation, sperm production, the importance of hygiene and knowing what your body is like when it is healthy.
- The importance of knowing the correct terminology for all body parts internally and externally.
- The process of reproduction, contraception & protection.
- Have an awareness of STI's and how to prevent them.

- Be able to think critically about what they may have heard or seen regarding sex/sexual intercourse/masturbation etc.
- Understand that consent and sexual pleasure are important aspects of sex and intimacy for adults who trust and care about each other.

## **Session 4 – Sexuality, Gender Roles, and Finding Reliable Information**

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Questions from the previous week are answered. Students will also learn about the different aspects of sexuality including; sexual orientation and gender identity. Gender roles are critically discussed making sure to emphasise the importance of 'being yourself' and not having to conform to unrealistic body types or gender stereotypes (especially those portrayed through media and social media). Students participate in a table quiz to recap on all that was discussed and to integrate the learning from the previous sessions.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

- Be aware of gendered roles and be able to critically assess the pressures of masculinity and femininity.
- Understand the difference between sex and gender, the different types of sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Have an awareness of the range of messages they receive on sexuality, relationships and risky behaviour and how this may influence them.
- Identify adults they can trust ask for help and resources they can access.

