

Sexual and Reproductive Health Team

Young African Women's
Project and Affirmative
Consent Module

Manar and Abby

GENWEST
Gender
Justice
and
Change.



Acknowledgement of Country

GenWest recognises that the land on which we work and provide our services always was and always will be Aboriginal land. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.



We proudly acknowledge the First Nations communities across Naarm / Melbourne's west – the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong Boonwurrung people of the Kulin Nation. We acknowledge their rich diversity, cultures, histories and knowledges, and the deep contribution they make to the life of this region.

We acknowledge the ongoing impacts of colonisation, as well as the strength and resilience of First Nations people, and express solidarity with the ongoing struggle for land rights, self-determination, sovereignty, and recognition of past injustices.

A bit about us

Manar

Family and Reproductive Rights Coordinator
manarm@genwest.org.au

Abby

Sexual and Reproductive Health Coordinator
abbyh@genwest.org.au



What we do

- Provide sex positive, sexuality education on topics such as gender, identity, healthy relationships, safer sex and consent to communities
- Partner with local organisations
- Lead strategic work and advocacy on SRH rights
- Develop educational resources
- FARREP coordinators focus on the prevention of female genital cutting



What is FGC?

FGC stands for Female Genital Cutting or Circumcision.

You may have heard it referred to as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), however this is generally not the preferred terminology when engaging communities.

- A cultural practice that violates the human rights of women and girls.
- A procedure that involves partial or total removal of female genital organs, or other injury to female genital organs for non-medical reasons.
- Australia is home to increasing numbers of women from countries that practice FGC.



What is FARREP?

The Family and Reproductive Rights Education Program

- Victorian state-wide health promotion program.
- Works with communities who have experienced cultural practices in their country of origin that have led to poor sexual and reproductive health outcomes.
- Delivers professional development training to health professionals.



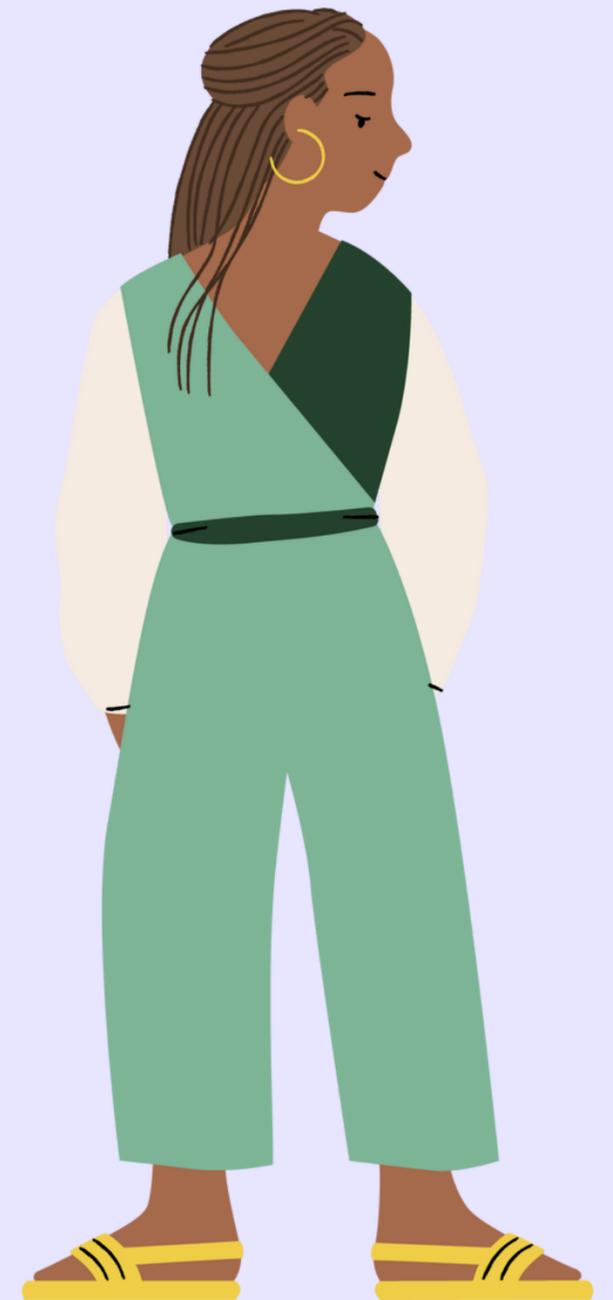
Program Aims



- Increase community knowledge about FGC and support changes to their attitudes about the practice, to prevent its occurrence.
- Increase access to timely and appropriate SRH services services by women and girls from communities that have migrated from countries with high prevalence of FGC.
- To build the capacity, confidence, and expertise of health professionals to understand the social, cultural, and clinical needs of women and girls who have undergone FGC.
- Use evidence-based health education to target communities and increase their knowledge.

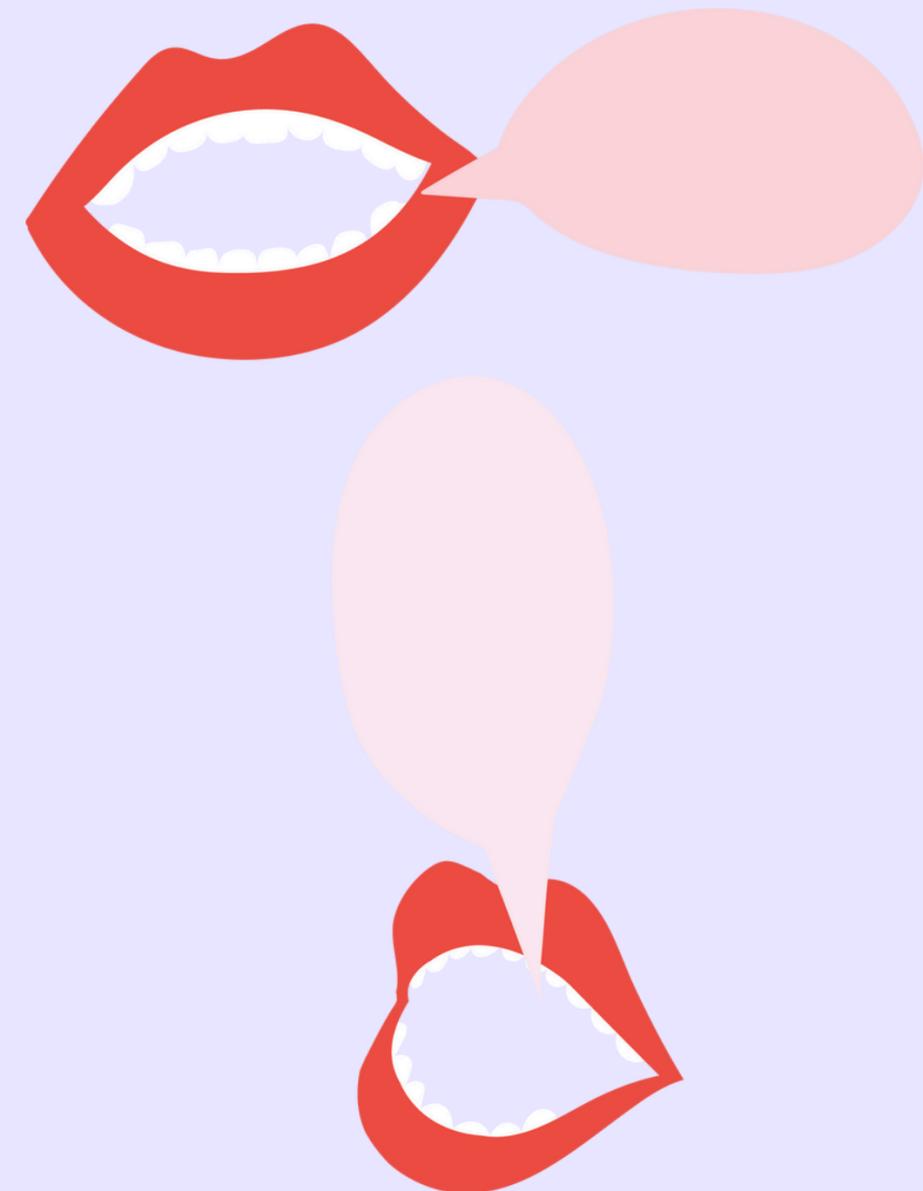
Young African Women's Program

- Provides culturally safe SRH education to young African Australian women.
- Co-designed by GenWest and young African women in Melbourne's west.
- Empowers young African women to make informed decisions about their SRH and rights.
- Sessions are currently delivered over four weeks. Providing education on healthy relationships, Mental health, employment and leadership, and SRH.



Affirmative Consent Module

- Supported by Victorian Law Foundation, GenWest and Moonee Valley Legal Service are developing a capacity building module for community legal educators.
- The module includes evidence-based information and aligns with state-wide mandatory respectful relationship and consent education.
- At conclusion of the module, educators are provided with a session plan that has been co-designed by young people, legal educators, gender equity and SRH experts.



Module Aims

- Develop an understanding of personal attitudes, values and beliefs towards sexual health information and how this can impact on interactions with young people.
- Build confidence and capacity to engage with young people and deliver sexuality education on the topic of sex, pleasure and the law.
- Advocate for the improved standard of sex and the law education to ensure it is comprehensive, safe and meets the needs of young people.



The Laws

Affirmative consent fact sheet



What is consent?

Consent is important for all people and is particularly important when it comes to sexual activity with another person. It means that time and thought has been taken to make sure that everyone involved is well informed, enthusiastic and agreeable to the sexual activity that is happening.

This includes ongoing communication about boundaries, contraception and protection and the types of sex you will be having.

Your boundaries and what you consent to is entirely up to you. It's okay to feel unsure and change our mind.

What are affirmative consent laws?

These new laws state that everyone is responsible for seeking sexual consent. You can't just assume that something is consensual. Each person must actively make sure the other person agrees. This information can only be given if clear words or actions are used to show that everyone understands and agrees to what is happening.

If you aren't sure, wait for another time. Remember, you don't have to wait until you're about to have sex to ask for consent. Talking about what you like, how you feel and what you want can happen in everyday conversations!

Affirmative consent



Not consent

- Silence
- "Maybe", "I'm not sure" or "ummm"
- Being below the age of consent
- Being with someone who is in a position of power over you (such as a teacher)
- Being asleep
- Someone letting you take their clothes off, or going along with something but their body language is closed off (pulling away, not actively participating, crossing their arms)
- Stealthing - the removal or tampering of contraception during sex without permission.
- Being heavily affected by drugs or alcohol

How old do you have to be to consent to sex?

- 11 and younger** You cannot legally consent to sex if you are under the age of 12.
- 12-15** You can legally consent to sex but your sexual partner must be within two years (24 months exactly) of your age.
- 16+** You can consent to sex, but not with anyone who is in a position of power over you.
- 18** You can consent to sex with anyone.

What about sexting?

Sexting

Sexual messages including text, photos, videos or sound can be a healthy way to express yourself and be intimate with others – however there are lots of factors involved such as your age, boundaries, trust and communication.

Image Based Abuse

This includes taking, sharing or threatening to share intimate images of someone without their consent. Intimate images are nude or sexual images, photos or videos, including images that have been digitally altered. All of this behaviour is illegal without active consent.

Taking and sharing sexual images or videos of someone without their consent is illegal.

Consensual sexting is legal if you are 18 and over. If you are under 18 the following applies in Victoria:

- Send** Can I send a consensual sext of myself to someone? Yes, if you are both under 18 and no more than two years younger than each other.
- Keep** Can I keep a consensual sext of someone that they sent me? Yes, if you are both under 18 and no more than two years younger than each other.
- Share** Can I share an image of someone with others? No! If the person in the image is under 18 it is considered distributing child pornography, if the person is over 18 (and doesn't consent) it is considered image based abuse. If you're under 18 it's illegal for someone to share a sexual image of you, even if you agree to it.

How can knowing these laws help me?

The law can help you to make informed choices that are right for you. There are laws around consent and sex, and there can be serious consequences if you break these laws. Visit Youth Law to learn more.

Where can I go for more support and information?

- **1800RESPECT:** 1800respect.org.au
- **GenWest:** genwest.org.au
- **Victoria Legal aid or your local community legal centre.** You can talk to them if you are worried you might have broken the law, or if someone has harmed you.

Why Pleasure?

Pleasure is a primary reason that young people have sex, but it is often missing from sexuality education.

- Underpins the discussion of consent
- Challenge harmful gender stereotypes
- Reduce the normalisation of gender-based violence
- Encourage respectful and healthy relationships
- Increase safer sex through higher use of contraception and more communication with partners
- Increase communication, consent and inclusivity
- Increase confidence, empowerment and ability to make decisions good for health
- Help people who have experienced trauma
- Increase understanding of sexual rights

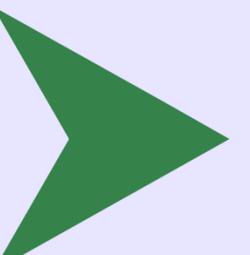
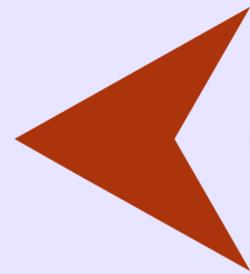


Consent and Pleasure Scale

Non-consensual

Consensual

Pleasurable



Being drunk

Feeling unsafe or unsure

Respect

Ask for consent BEFORE

Comfortable to tell your partner what you like

Excitement

Pressure

Stealthing

Body language showing they want to

Permission

H Team

Enjoyment

Sexual assault

Being forced

SRH Team

Communication

Having clear boundaries

SRH Team

Laughter

SRH Team

Foreplay

Human connection

SRH Team



Thank you



srh@genwest.org.au