

# Cultural safety in sexual and reproductive health

An overview GenWest's Human Relations program and FARREP

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**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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Melbourne's west, their rich cultures, diversity, 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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and express solidarity with the ongoing struggle for land rights, self-determination, sovereignty, and recognition of past injustices.

# Overview: Human Relations Program

Delivering culturally safe,  
comprehensive sexuality  
education to young, recently  
arrived migrants and refugees



**10 Facilitators**

As of June 2023

# Program Information

**4 Organisations**

GenWest, cohealth, Maribyrnong  
Youth Services (MYS) and Centre for  
Culture, Ethnicity and Health (CEH)

**20+**

Years

# Term 3 demographic information

**13-17**

Age range of students

**5 weeks**

Length of program

**2 classes**

Separated by gender for cultural safety reasons

**One**

Language

# Student feedback

Using emojis to assess student  
attitudes towards program



# How do you feel about the class?



Embarrassed



Bored



Upset



Happy



Interested

*eee*



# Key learnings

## Facilitator reflections on the Term 3, 2023 cohort

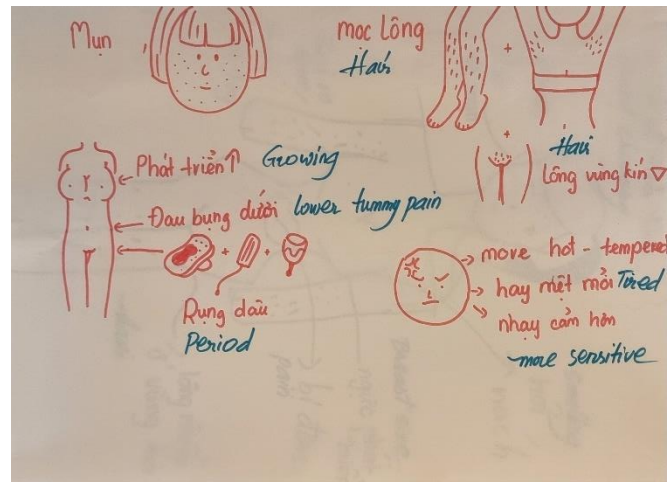
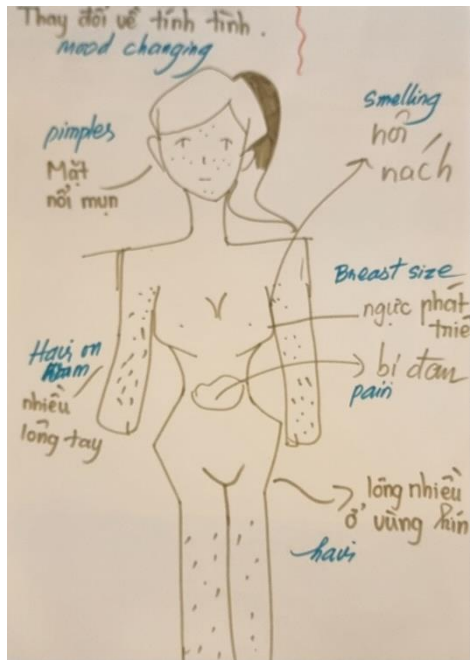


- Students noticeably grew in confidence over the course of the program
- Allowing students to reply in language and in written form increased engagement, particularly from quieter students
- Students were very interested in learning about the LGBTIQ+ community and Australian attitudes/legislation regarding the community
- The girls' group showed significant concern about appearance and body image that had not been a focus of previous cohorts
- Boys' group seemed less aware of gender norms than the girls' group
- Members of the girls' group expressed frustration with gender norms



Quan niệm : Sau 18 tuổi mới quan hệ hoặc sau khi cưới .

Nhưng ở nhiều người họ quan niệm trọng về trình tiết khi tình dục .



Ở địa phương, có nhiều người đang còn lứa tuổi đi học mà qhđ dẫn đến mang thai. Và khi gặp tr. hợp vậy họ thường phá thai vì muốn tốt cho tương lai của mình hoặc vì người đàn ông không chịu trách nhiệm, sợ nói với bố mẹ. Cũng sẽ có người sợ chịu sinh con n hững vì còn nhỏ và vùng âm đạo chưa phát triển hoàn toàn. My life : Earn Money by do nail, free time drink coffee and watch movie of Disney. Life in the Dreamhouse

chính cho nên có thể dẫn nguy hiểm tình mang hoặc đứa con sinh ra không khỏe mạnh.

In the past, we were not allowed to have sex before we get married.

LGBT could not have sex together and love each others. We can't have sex before 18.

***"I'm very happy that I got information. I was a bit embarrassed but I'm happy now."***

**Student participant from girls' group**

***"I think that all students desperately need to get this learning because of how potentially life-affecting it can be... to ensure that these students not just get the message but get it in a format that is comprehensible to their level of English."***

**WELS teacher supervising boys' group**

# Overview: FARREP

Engaging communities and professionals to educate, inform and change attitudes towards Female Genital Cutting (FGC)



# GenWest FARREP coordinators



**Shukria Alewi**

**FARREP Coordinator**

**Shukria has been a FARREP coordinator at GenWest for 12 years. Her current focus is developing and delivering capacity building training for healthcare professionals.**

**e: [shukria@genwest.org.au](mailto:shukria@genwest.org.au)**



**Manar Mussa**

**FARREP Coordinator**

**Manar has been a FARREP coordinator at GenWest since March this year. Her role focuses on community education and running the Young African Women's program.**

**e: [manarm@genwest.org.au](mailto:manarm@genwest.org.au)**

# 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
- Defined as a procedure 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?

- **Stands for The Family and Reproductive Rights Education Program**
- **Victorian state-wide health promotion program**
- **Works with communities who have been exposed to 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

- To strengthen the knowledge in these communities about FGC and support changes to their attitudes about the practice to prevent its occurrence
- To ensure increased access to timely and appropriate sexual and reproductive health services by women and girls from communities that have migrated from countries that have prevalence of FGC through provision of appropriate health information, advocating for women with health and other services, and improving services through professional development across the western region of Victoria.
- 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 to improve access to culturally appropriate services in the region
- Use evidence-based health education to target communities and increase their knowledge

# Young African Women Project



- The Young African Women's project provides sexual and reproductive health education to young African Australian women and girls
- Considers the health and safety and wellbeing and deliver in a culturally sensitive manner
- Focuses on women's health and wellbeing and include the use of culturally appropriate resources
- Facilitated by experienced FARREP health promotion coordinators



***"The work within this space [FARREP] is incredibly valuable and so much needed"***

**FARREP training participant**



# Questions

