

Helping Parents With

Relationships and Sex Education





Let Us Pray...

Let us make this journey as families, let us keep walking together.

What we have been promised is greater than we can imagine.

May we never lose heart because of our limitations, or ever stop seeking that fullness of love and communion which God holds out before us.

Pope Francis, Amoris Laetitia (On Love in the Family), 325.

Aims

- To explore potential barriers to parents when engaging in RSE with their children.
- To provide practical ideas and advice on helping/supporting parents when engaging with RSE with their children.
- To signpost resources to support parents when engaging with RSE with their children.

Vision for Relationship and Sex Education in Westminster Catholic Schools

It is our vision for Relationship and Sex Education in Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Westminster that pupils would learn how to foster healthy relationships and friendships in light of the wisdom of the Church.

Pupils will flourish when they truly understand their innate human dignity, love and appreciation of themselves, including respect for their bodies, and the way they were made by God.

Pupils will learn to make sensible and informed decisions in a changing cultural climate, focussing on the virtues, such as patience and chastity, that ultimately lead to true happiness.

Sacred Scripture is key to this vision and the message Jesus gave us to love God, self, neighbour and our common home.

RSE in our schools must always remain faithful to the teaching of the Church, recognising the diversity of pupils' situations. We aim to be sensitive to each individual, ensuring that their physical and emotional well-being and their safety are of paramount importance.



Primary Educators

- The Church calls parents the first educators.
- Parents want to be first educators
- Parents want to be better at it!



Aren't you doing all that at school?

- “Why comprehensive sexuality education is important?” Unesco
- Unified approach most effective
- ‘Sexuality education has the most impact when school-based programmes are complemented with the involvement of parents and teachers, training institutes and youth-friendly services.’

Partnership With Parents

- We aim to help parents to discuss RSE with their children because:
 - Primary educators of children
 - Unique knowledge of your children
 - Ability to have regular conversations
 - Impart our shared values.
 - Teach alongside the school.
 - RSE most effective when reinforced at home and elsewhere.

- The school will provide an RSE curriculum helping to address that:
 - Some parents find it difficult or lack confidence.
 - Some homes are unable to provide this.
 - Some children prefer these conversations outside the home



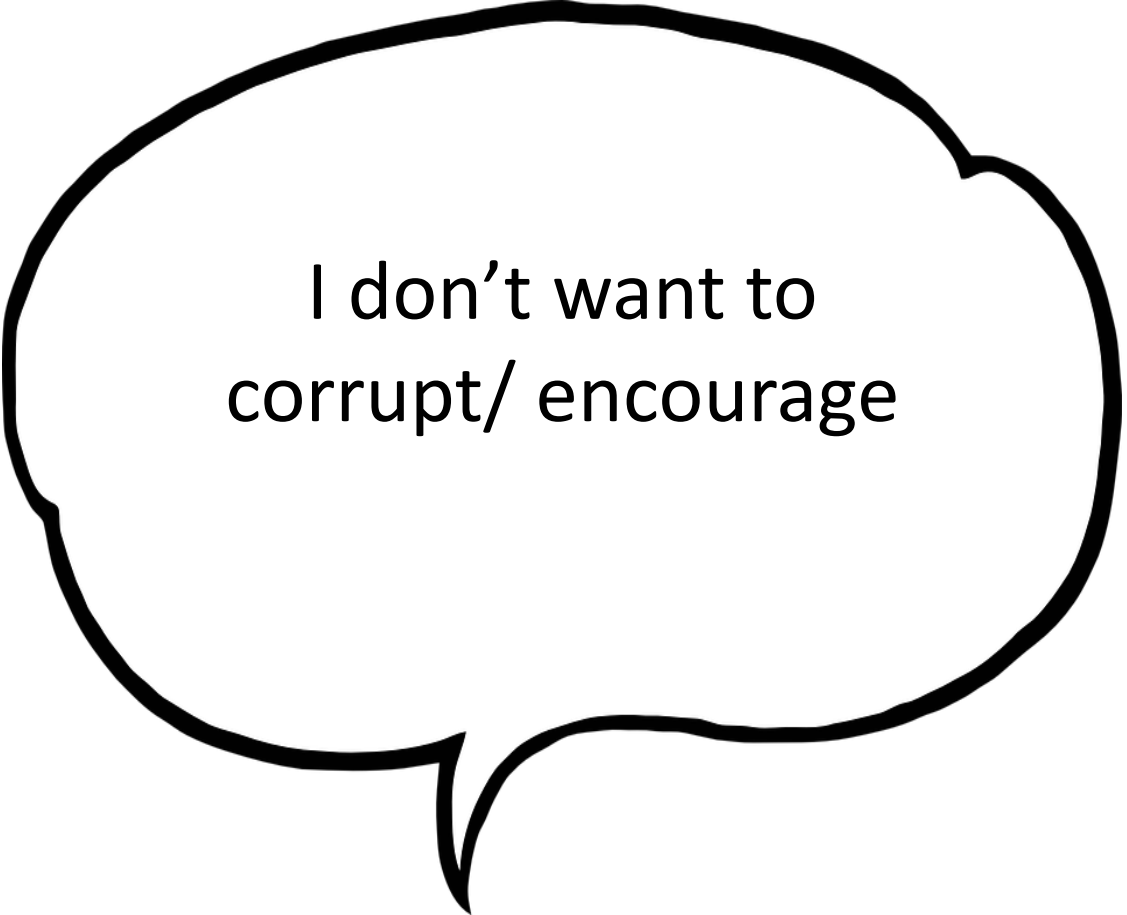
What did your parents tell
you about RSE ?



What do you find
difficult about talking
about RSE?

Too soon?

- Sex education has positive effects, including increasing young people's knowledge and improving their attitudes related to sexual and reproductive health and behaviours.
- Sex education – in or out of schools – does not increase sexual activity, sexual risk-taking behaviour or STI/HIV infection rates.
- Programmes that promote abstinence as the only option have been found to be ineffective in delaying sexual initiation, reducing the frequency of sex or reducing the number of sexual partners. Programmes that combine a focus on delaying sexual activity with other content are effective.



I don't want to
corrupt/ encourage

“Why comprehensive sexuality education is important?” Unesco

Preparation

- Be prepared to answer questions and have conversations.
- Read for yourself to increase your confidence in answering questions.
- Books aimed at teenagers and children are a good place to start.



I'm embarrassed

I don't know what
to say

Answering Questions

- Don't be surprised or shocked (or don't show it!).
- Every questions deserves a response, not necessarily an answer.
- Give honest, accurate answers appropriate to age and stage.
- Use correct language.
- 'Let's look it up' use the books you read to prepare.
- Show them that people continue to learn in this area.
- Try to be open (with your new knowledge and confidence!) to questions.
- Encourage them to speak to you and not find answers elsewhere. – 'I'm glad you asked me' 'that's a great question' .

Communication

Talking

- Regular- little and often. Not 'the big talk'.
- Take opportunities as they arise – refer to family and friends, television, adverts
- Start early – knowledge in advance is important.
- Car journeys, shoulder to shoulder

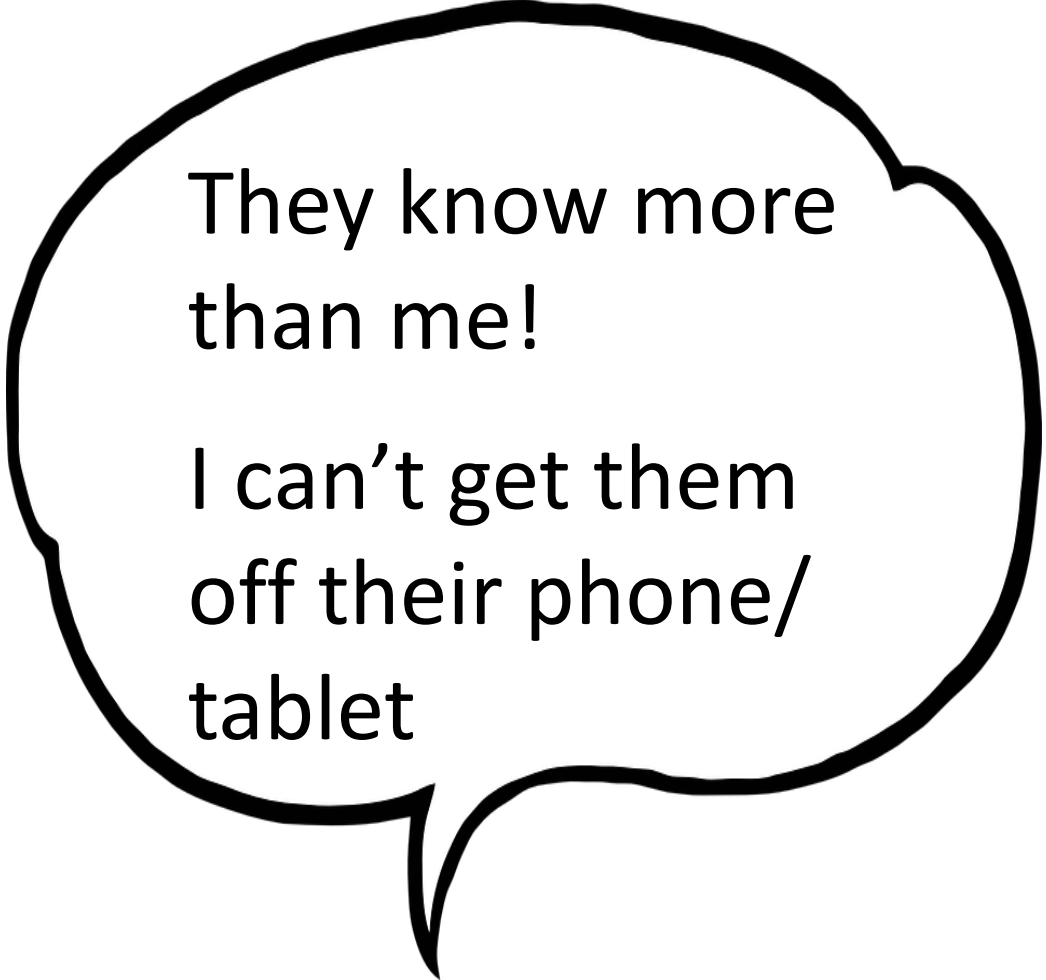


When do I do it?

What do I say?

Technology

- Possible to install controls to restrict content and time.
- Parents should make these part of the conditions of having the technology.
- Possible to overcome security – don't be too dependent.
- Discussions relating to boundaries and other concerns about use e.g inappropriate content.
- Encourage 'critical consumers'. Regular discussions develop critical thinking.



They know more
than me!

I can't get them
off their phone/
tablet



Sending nudes/Sexting

- Talk about this in advance. There are social and legal implications you want to avoid.
- Don't be shocked/ judgemental about mistakes. You want your child to come to you for help and avoid coercion or blackmail.
- Being approachable doesn't mean you can't show it is not ok.
- Act quickly if you child receives or shares an explicit image.

[Childline sending nudes advice](#)

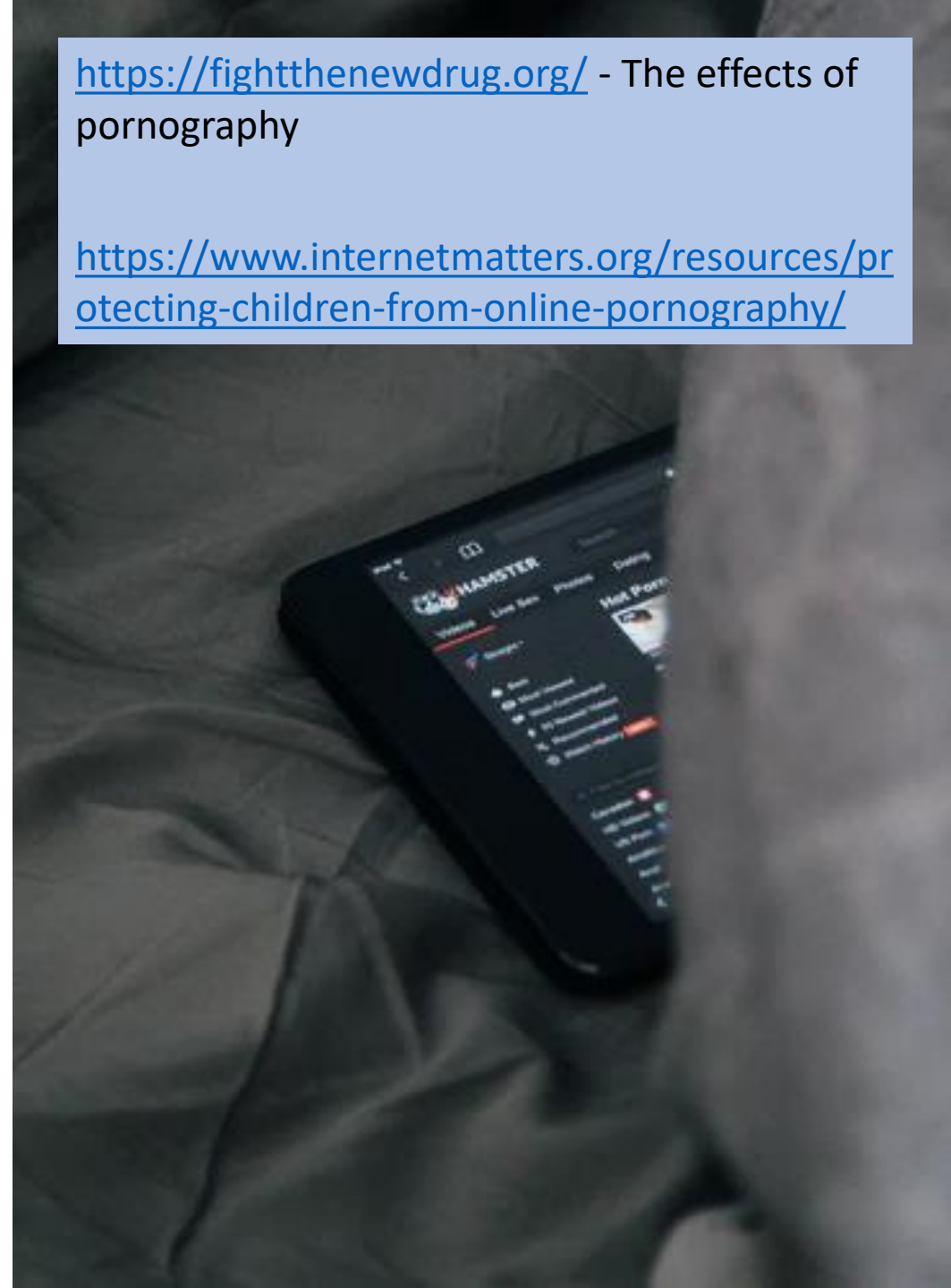
Pornography

Recent Ofsted report of sexual harassment in schools identifies some negative impact of pupils accessing pornography:

- Pupils are using pornography for sex education - school and home must be better resources!
- Young people become desensitised to its content over time and it can shape unhealthy attitude such as sexual aggression towards women.
- More frequent consumption of pornography can lead to victim blaming.

<https://fightthenewdrug.org/> - The effects of pornography

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/protecting-children-from-online-pornography/>

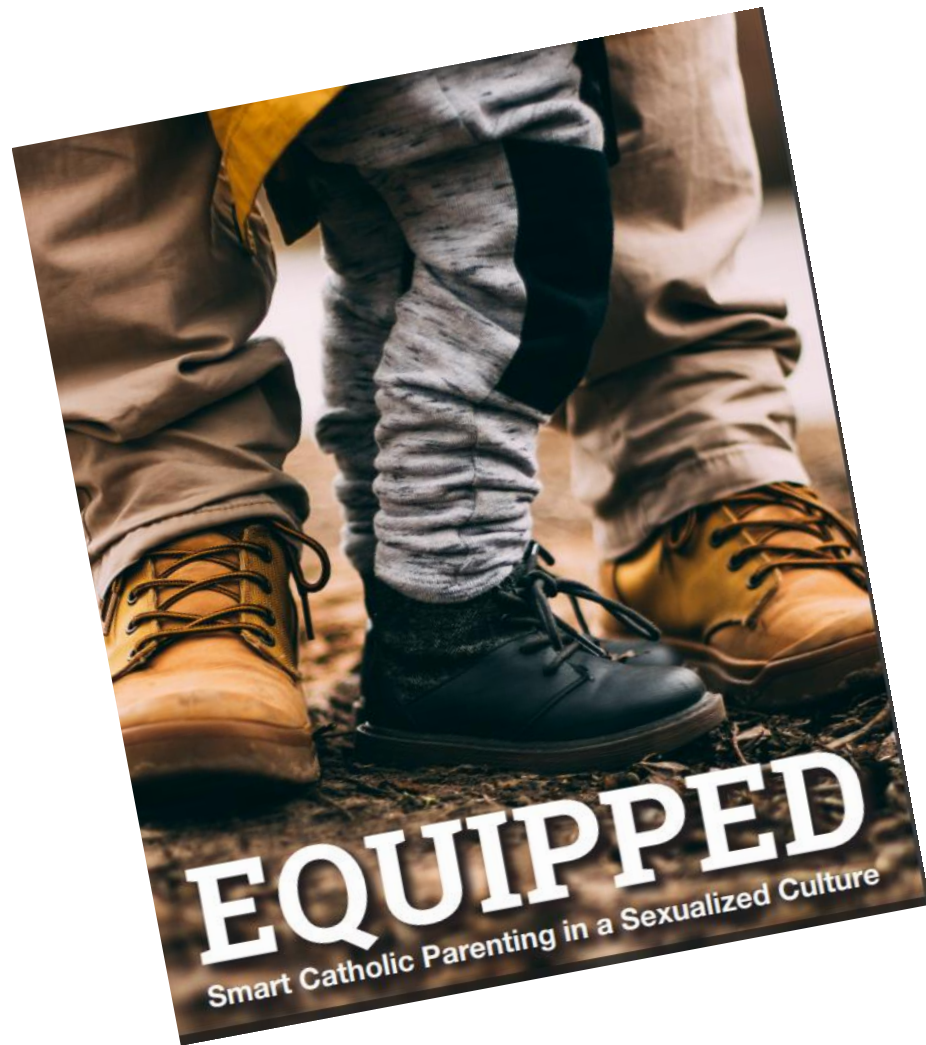




What if my child sees unsuitable content...

For young children try to answer any questions that they have simply and explain that there are some videos online that we shouldn't be watching, all along reassuring the child they didn't do anything wrong.

For older tweens and teens, use it as a moment to start or continue to have conversations about sex and relationships explaining that what they see online doesn't reflect its true nature. In doing so, you'll create an environment where they can be open about asking questions to you or a trusted adult



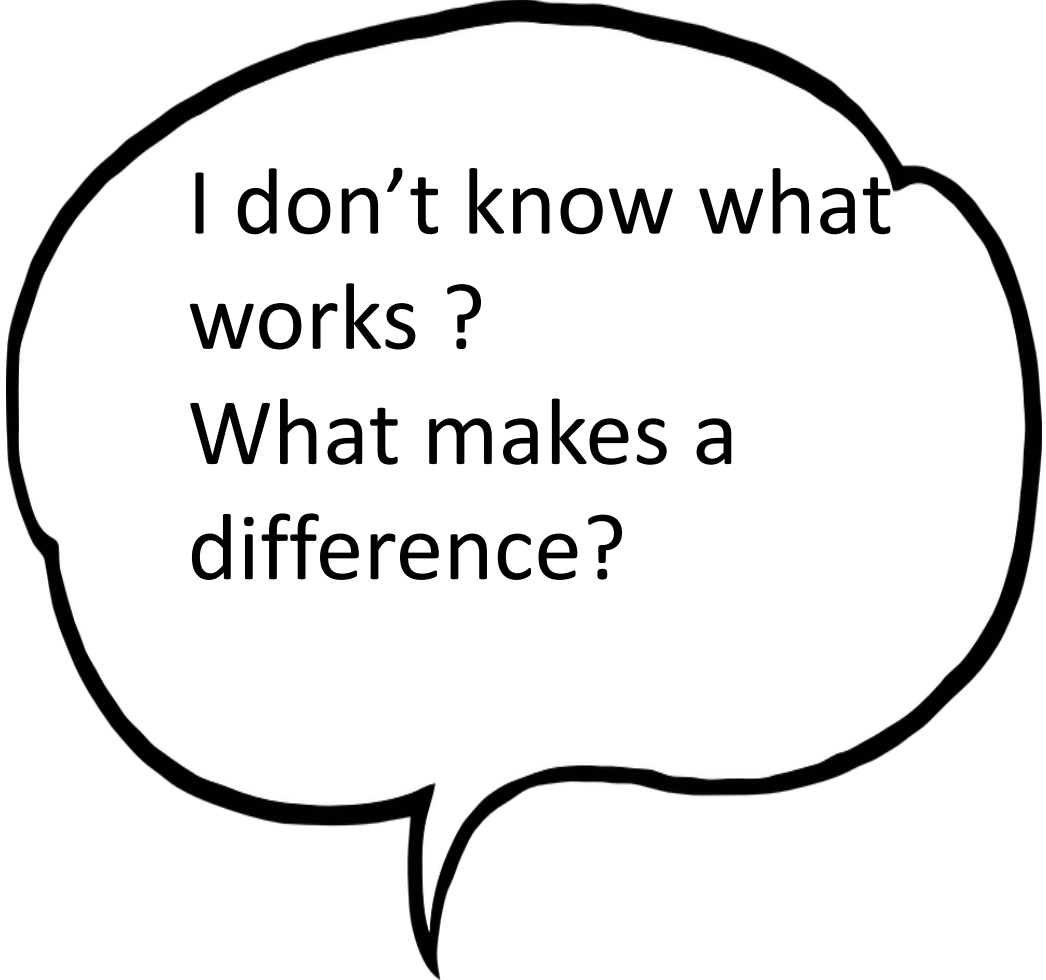
[Equipped. - Register here to download a free copy.](#)

What works?

- What doesn't work!
 - Silence
 - Shock tactics.
 - Abstinence only programmes.
 - Only being reactive

What does?

- Accurate information
- Cohesive approach
- **A focus on self esteem.**
- **Remember who, you are and whose you are!**



I don't know what works ?
What makes a difference?



Self-Esteem

- Children who are **and feel** loved, trusted, affirmed and respected have higher self-esteem.
- Tell them and show them they are loved.
- Recognise and celebrate unique character and talents.
- Allow independence and responsibility balanced with clear and safe boundaries.

Self-Esteem

Shown love

Recognised character and talents
Allowed increased independence
and responsibility
With balance and clear and loving
boundaries.

Feel good

Loved
Valued
Affirmed
Respected

Confident

Secure
Responsible
Capable



Please speak to us!

- Please get in touch if you are struggling with any elements of today's presentation.

E.g.

- Restricting technology
 - Accessing inappropriate content/pornography
 - Self-esteem – yours and others.
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- Contact pshe@clitherow.herts.sch.uk



Closing Prayer

Almighty God, You have blessed us with the joy and care of children. Give us calm strength and patient wisdom that,

as they grow in years,

we may enable them to love whatever is just and true and good.

May our children experience security, peace and purpose in You.