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Media release

NEW TEACHING RESOURCE SHAKES UP SEX ED IN VICTORIA

Victorian sexual and reproductive health education is undergoing a transformation with the launch tomorrow of new teaching resources for schools at the annual conference of the Science Teachers' Association of Victoria Inc in Melbourne.

The new resources, designed for use in levels three to ten at Victorian schools, give teachers a full package of support to teach students about fertility and assisted reproductive treatment. The package, developed by [Family Planning Victoria](#), [Your Fertility](#), and the [Victorian Assisted Reproductive Treatment Authority \(VARTA\)](#), includes an online learning portal for teachers with videos, fact sheets and other resources as well as a revised teaching module on the subject. The resources are designed for teaching support and for professional development.

Currently, there are no other teaching resources of this kind in Australia with few comparable ones in place overseas. These resources have been designed in line with the Victorian educational curriculum.

“When we think of sexual and reproductive health education in schools, we typically imagine students learning about sexually transmitted infections and how not to get pregnant. And while these are still really important subjects, students also need to understand about their fertility and the factors that may affect it in the future – in particular, when they are ready to start a family,” said Bonnie Lee, Manager – Schools Team at Family Planning Victoria (FPV).

“Around five per cent of children born in Australia in 2016 were conceived as a result of assisted reproductive treatment. These resources will help children understand that there can be many ways to make a baby and that there are many different ways that families are created,” Ms Lee said.

Research has shown that while most young people would like to have a family in the future, many do not understand the factors that can affect their chance of having children – particularly factors like age and being a healthy weight.

“The resource helps teachers educate young people so that they can understand more about their fertility. More information from a younger age helps people make informed life choices and gives them a better chance of having the family they would like in the future,” said Ms Lee.

The information on assisted reproductive treatment is designed to help normalise assisted reproductive treatment and donor conception so that children can understand that there are many ways to make a baby – and that one way is not better than another.

“Providing this level of information should help reduce possible confusion that students may have on this subject and will hopefully help to limit shame or stigma associated with being conceived through assisted reproductive treatment,” she said.

“Teachers can sometimes struggle with answering complex or sensitive questions associated with assisted reproductive treatment. The teaching resources are designed to help teachers answer questions about fertility and various other ways to create a family that they may otherwise find challenging,” said Ms Lee.

The new resources can be found on the Family Planning Victoria’s Relationships and Sexuality Education website at <http://rse.fpv.org.au/fertility-resource/>

[Your Fertility is a national public education program](#) funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and the Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services.

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