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Program

Featuring

Senator Kerry Nettle

Tanya Plibersek

Virginia Haussegger

Karen Brooks

BRACODE

A black silhouette of a young woman in a dynamic, dancing pose, with her hair blowing in the wind. She is wearing a dark top and pants. The background is a soft-focus pink and white bokeh.

LET'S TALK ABOUT SEX

Young Women's Gathering on Sexual & Reproductive Health

13 – 14 July 2007

The Centre, Randwick, Sydney

A two day gathering
by young women
for young women
to explore current
sexual & reproductive
health and rights issues

Gather Debate Inform Learn Inspire TALK!

Day 1

- 8.30am • Registration
- 9.30am • Welcome
 - Official opening – Tanya Plibersek
 - Keynote Speaker – Senator Kerry Nettle
- 10.30am • Morning tea
- 11.00am • Parallel sessions
- 12.30pm • Lunch
- 1.30pm • Parallel sessions
- 3.00pm • Afternoon tea
- 3.30pm • Open Forum on Sex Education
 - “What’s taught, what’s not and what should be?”
- 5.00pm • Evening wind-down
 - Refreshments
 - Band – BRACODE

Day 2

- 9.00am • Keynote Speaker – Karen Brooks
- 9.45am • Parallel sessions
- 10.45am • Morning tea
- 11.15am • Session 5 - Open Forum on media
 - “Representations of young women and sexuality”
- 12.45am • Lunch
- 1.30am • Open Forum on policy and reforms
 - “What could policy makers do to deliver better sexual reproductive health outcomes for young people?”
- Parallel sessions
- 2.30am • Afternoon tea
- 3.00am • Final discussion and recommendations to Parliamentary Group on Population and Development.
- 4.30 pm • Close

Day 1

Opening Plenary Session (9.30am – 10.30am)

Opening

Tanya Plibersek

Federal Member for Sydney
Shadow Minister for Women and Youth

Tanya Plibersek held office as the Woman’s Officer at the University of Technology, Sydney. She has worked for the NSW Ministry for the Status and Advancement of Women – Domestic Violence Unit. She is a member of the Women’s Electoral Lobby, and is on the Women’s Caucus Committee. She is currently the Shadow Minister for Women and Youth, and labels among her priorities balancing work and family.



Keynote address

Senator Kerry Nettle

Australian Greens Senator for NSW,
Green’s Spokesperson for Women and Youth

Senator Kerry Nettle is the youngest female Senator and has been a vocal voice in support of women’s reproductive rights, and for real action on climate change, compassionate treatment of asylum seekers and more support for public education.



Female parliamentarians working for women’s rights

Women in the Senate have worked together to improve women’s reproductive rights and access to the drug RU486. But there is much more to be done. From lifting the ban that prevents Australian aid money to be used to provide information on abortion to improving access to affordable childcare. With women in the Parliament and the community working together we will be able to achieve so much more.

Parallel Sessions (11.00am – 12.30am)

1 – Upper Hall

The Entanglement of Sexuality for Adolescent Females

Michelle Emery

Registered Nurse, Parramatta Sexual Health Clinic

The sexuality of adolescent females is a complex and often controversial issue. The current rates of sexually transmissible infections, unplanned pregnancy and negative psychosocial outcomes for sexually active adolescent females compound the issue for health care workers, policy makers, teachers and the community at large. Young women need encouragement, education and support to be able to make healthy and safe choices about their sexuality.

Negotiating Consent Workshop

Sass Hunt

Women’s Officer, University of Sydney

2 – Lower Hall

Fertility Futures: effect of national, pronatalist policies on adolescent women

Marilyn J Anderson

PhD research candidate, James Cook University

As a consequence of the Australian Government’s federal budget of 2004, pregnancy has become à la mode, with the lump sum baby bonus adding endorsement – more so than incentive to fulfil personal destiny and national duty. Australia is on the threshold of witnessing a cohort of much younger mothers in response to the national push to improve the total fertility rate.

Think fertility - choice or compromise

Gillian Lewis Coles

State President of BPW South Australia,
government policy adviser and experienced social worker

Sheila Evans

Past BPW Australia Secretary and Vice President
Internal Policy, experienced counsellor and educator

1 in 6 couples have fertility problems. Surveys of young women and men tell us that most would choose to have two or three children, but the sad reality is they will more likely have one or none. Many people experience sadness, trauma and disappointment when they decide to have children later and find that it is not necessarily possible.

When you've had two, that will do!

Jenny Goldie

Policy Manager, Australian Reproductive Health Alliance

We have sex for both recreation and procreation. The average young woman indulges in the recreational side for about 14 years before moving onto procreation. She and her partner must then consider: how many children should they have? In the process, they will address a range of issues to help them decide how many. Federal Treasurer Peter Costello tells them to have one for the mother, one for the father and one for the country. Unfortunately, he ignores all environmental considerations in his pursuit of higher population growth.

3 – Room 1 – Main Building

Healthy young women?: Sexual and reproductive health policy in Australia

Presenter – Dr. Renee Kyle

Interdisciplinary research assistant, University of Wollongong

Team members – Prof. Susan Dodds, Dr. David Neil, Dr. Lindsey Harrison

In this presentation we examine reproductive health policy as it relates to young people. Young people disproportionately experience reduced reproductive and sexual health, including unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (including HIV). We outline how current state reproductive health policies understand and address those issues that contribute to young people's vulnerability to reproductive health risks, issues which include experiencing homelessness; identifying as indigenous; living in rural or remote areas; lack of age appropriate resources and support; family relationships; socio-economic circumstances. We draw some tentative conclusions concerning how future reproductive health policies might begin to address these issues.

Sex Education and access to information

Sophie Harvey

Project Coordinator, Safe Summer Survival - WAYS

This presentation will demonstrate how young women from Safe Summer Survival Sexual Health and Drug peer education project have gained information and experience educating young people. The safe summer survival team aims to increase the knowledge about sexually transferable infections (STIs) and increase the skills required for safe sex practices among young people aged 12 to 24 years old in Eastern Suburbs and Inner City areas of Sydney by 20%.

4 – Library – Main Building

Safer sex: when condoms don't cover it

Siri May

ACON

Peta Cox

Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT

What defines sex? What does that definition mean for people whose sexual practice falls outside the realms of 'real sex'? The session will begin with an adaptation of material from the ACON, Ins and Out peer education program. Peta Cox and Siri May will brief participants on the STI risks involved in non-reproductive sexual practices. Focusing upon sexual health promotion, this session will articulate the safer sex practices available for women who have sex with women. Evidence will be provided regarding the importance of being inclusive in definitions of sex in order to ensure effective health promotion. Participants will have the opportunity to respond to scenarios regarding the impact of invisibility on sexual identity and consequently, sexual health outcomes. The sexual practices examined in this session are not limited to sex between women.

Parallel Sessions (1.30pm – 3.00pm)

1 – Upper Hall

Multiculturalism, diversity and sexuality in Australia

Bernie Sarpong

Health Promotion Officer, Family Planning NSW

In Fairfield, the most ethnically diverse local government in Australia, issues identified by young people include the barriers and communication difficulties that come with growing up in a culture different to that of your parents. This is especially difficult when it comes to talking about issues surrounded by taboos such as reproductive and sexual health.

Female Genital Mutilation in Migrant Communities

Martha Teshome

Community Education Officer, Child and Community Health Directorate

Over 100 million women around the world are affected by female genital mutilation (FGM). Although the extent to which FGM is practiced in Australia remains unknown, it is an issue for many of the migrants who migrated to Australia from Africa, and some Asian and Middle Eastern countries.

2 – Lower Hall

Pro Sex Model of Consent

Peta Cox

Project Officer, Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT

What would happen if, as a society, we stopped assuming that sex was either completely consensual or rape? What would happen if we started to acknowledge that sometimes people get things wrong – that people can have differing interpretations of the emotional significance of a sexual encounter, or miss signs of discomfort or are unable to meaningfully hear both 'yes' and 'no' due to an emotional investment in sex? What would happen if we said that getting things wrong was not only OK, but part of sex itself and that the important thing was what you did with that mistake? How might our world change if we were able to condemn sexual assault while still providing a safe space for individuals to learn from their mistakes?

Rape: it's time for Change

Karen Willis

Manager, NSW Rape Crisis Centre

Sexual assault is a highly under reported crime and convictions rates are appalling low. Services to victims are sparse and where they do exist many have unacceptable waiting lists. The criminal justice response is riddled with myths and misconceptions about sexual assault and the laws and courts are misogynist in their treatment of female complainants.

Educating About Consent

Courtney Nalder

Community Educator, Canberra Rape Crisis Centre

Tanya Weisner

Young Persons Counsellor, Canberra Rape Crisis Centre

This presentation will facilitate a discussion of young women's attitudes and understanding about consent, and of how consent should be taught to young women. It will include research that has been conducted in regards to both young women's and men's attitudes towards consent and obtaining consent, in addition to anecdotal accounts from young women of various ages that we have engaged in our line of work.

3 – Room 1 – Main Building

Sex Education in schools – workshop

Di Todaro

Interrelate Family Centres

This workshop will present sex education curricula produced by Interrelate for different age levels. It will be a fun interactive session that will allow participants to get involved in simulations of actual sex education programs in order to understand how these programs are being used to educate in schools and to simulate discussion about what else needs to be done in the sex education sphere.

Plenary Session (3.30pm – 5.00pm)

Upper Hall

Open Forum on Sex Education

“What’s taught, what’s not, and what should be?”

Chair

Angela Martinez

Researcher - Teen Pregnancy

Panellists

Di Todaro

Co-ordinator School Services, Interrelate Family Centres

Sass Hunt

Women’s Officer, University of Sydney

Liz Barber

Youth Project Officer, Family Planning Queensland

Associate Professor Moira Carmody

University of Western Sydney

Evening Wind-Down

Refreshments (5.00pm)

Performance – BRACODE (5.30pm – 6.30pm)

If Kate Bush had married a chainsaw instead of a piano, the result would be BRACODE. The band is renowned for their effortless genre blending and theatrical live performances. BRACODE’s sound is best described as operatic, piss taking punk rock, with equal measures of cabaret and schlock horror completing the mix. Originally from Wollongong, BRACODE set up camp in the Inner West of Sydney five years ago, becoming one of the pioneering bands of ‘Scooter’ (part of an international movement to get more female representation in rock).



Day 2

Keynote address Plenary Session

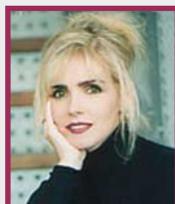
(9.00am – 9.45am)

Upper Hall

Come Up and See My Collection: The Commercial Theft of Childhood

Karen Brooks

In this session, Karen examines the changing nature of advertising and how it deliberately targets kids. Using the toy world, in particular Barbie and Bratz dolls as an example, she discusses the sexualisation of kinderculture and the collector/materialist mentality that has been cultivated by corporations. She also points out strategies for avoiding, whether young or old, ‘buying into’ this consumer culture and the shallow promise that sex sells... everything, including the self.



Parallel Sessions (9.45am – 10.45am)

1 – Upper Hall

It’s Never Ok

Agata Furniss

Youth Worker, Burwood Council

It’s Never Ok is a 22-minute documentary produced with a team of young women which explores domestic violence from a young women’s perspective.

Drink Spiking Awareness Project

Alisha Kooy

Health Promotion Officer, Family Planning NSW

The topical and somewhat contentious issue of drink spiking is located within the wider context of young people’s vulnerability and risky sexual behaviors, and accompanying negative sexual health outcomes. The most dangerous of these is sexual assault, but consensual unprotected sex when under the influence of drugs and or alcohol also falls within this category.

2 – Lower Hall

Flirting with My Ability

– the picture for young women with disabilities

Vicki Alipasinopoulos

Women With Disabilities Australia

Adolescence is hard enough for everyone. When you add a disability to the mix; when every date is a threesome, even if the extra is your Guide Dog, it just makes the whole process more challenging. The dating game is fraught with difficulties. For starters you are regarded as asexual. Sex education is denied. At puberty you are threatened with sterilization. Eugenics rule out your right to motherhood. Sexuality, sexual health and reproductive issues facing young women with disabilities will be discussed from both a personal and a human rights perspective.

Why we can’t/don’t/won’t talk about sex: sexual discourses and multiculturalism in Australia

Kyungja Jung

Domestic Violence Policy Officer

Mariam James

Domestic Violence Project Officer

Janet Verceles

Nedah Nazifi

Ketty Guerra

Immigrant Women’s Speakout Association NSW

Sex is not an easy topic to talk about in public for young migrant and refugee women. It is believed that there is strong taboo about this topic in most migrant communities. Although some CALD young women have grown up in Australia, they have been under strong influence from their own cultural, religious and traditional values. This workshop will invite five young women from CALD backgrounds (Filipino, Iranian, Sierra Leone and Korean) to explore some factors affecting their perception and attitude about sex. For this, three questions will be investigated: how do you perceive sexual freedom in Australia? / do you think your sexual standards are different from other youth? / If there is any difference, what has caused the difference? This workshop will also attempt to explore better ways of sex education for young women from CALD backgrounds.

3 – Room 1 – Main building

Let's look at what young women want when faced with an unplanned pregnancy

Samantha Smith

PR and Communications Manager

Findings indicate that at any given time amongst a sample of women of reproductive age, just over half (51%) have experienced an unplanned pregnancy. The discussion will explore these findings, a woman's options and will also look at recent government initiatives in light of these.

One decade on: teenage mothers talk about parenting, education and work

Ann Evans

*College of Arts and Social Sciences,
Australian National University*

This presentation examines the experiences of young mothers, as they describe their first decade of parenting, and the community and government initiatives they say would support their transition to meaningful social and economic participation.

4 – Library – Main building

Whole school approach to relationship and sexual health education

Helen Rawnsley

Schools Coordinator, Sexual Health, information, networking and education, SA (SHine SA)

This presentation will outline a model for sexual health and relationships education that was initially introduced as a 3 year pilot in 15 secondary South Australian government schools at the beginning of 2003. The share (sexual health and relationships education) project was implemented by SHine SA in partnership with the Department of Education and Children's Services and Department of Health.

Youth Participation that Shines!

Skye Yates

Youth Advisory Team member and peer educator at SHine SA

This presentation will outline SHine SA's approach to youth participation and provide examples of the strategies that have been used to maximise the outcomes for all those involved. Youth participation affords many benefits to the young people involved, the workers, the organisation and the community. All aspects of these benefits will be explored.

Plenary Session (11.15am – 12.45pm)

Upper Hall

Open Forum on Media

– "Representations of young women and sexuality"

Chair

Maria Koleth

Women's Officer, Australian National University

Panellists

Josie Shanahan

*Health Education Officer,
First Step Program, Port Kembla Hospital*

Karen Brooks

Columnist, The Courier Mail

Virginia Haussegger

Journalist and News presenter, The ABC



Parallel Sessions (1.30pm – 2.30pm)

1 – Upper Hall

Session 6 – Open Forum on Policy and reforms

– "What could policy makers do to deliver better sexual reproductive health outcomes for young people?"

Chair

Sophie Harvey

Project Coordinator, Safe Summer Survival - WAYS

Panellists

Kerryn O'Rourke

Public Health Fellow, Women's Health SIG, PHAA

Cait Calcutt

Coordinator, Children By Choice

Elena Rosenman

*Sexual and Reproductive Rights Project Coordinator,
Amnesty International*

2 – Lower Hall

Keeping 'Deadly Sex' Safe

– "Snake Condoms" The Importance of Condom Social Marketing for Indigenous Australian Youth

Liz Gill

Indigenous Health Project Coordinator, Marie Stopes Australia

Launched in Mildura in 2004, SNAKE CONDOMS have over the last three years been adopted by Indigenous communities in Victoria, QLD and WA. The purpose of this presentation is to:

- paint a picture of sexual and reproductive health amongst Indigenous youth
- provide an overview of the cheeky SNAKE CONDOM social marketing initiative
- How, Why and Where SNAKE CONDOMS have been successful
- What is the future of SNAKE CONDOMS?
- MSA's goal in improving the sexual and reproductive health of Australia's Indigenous youth.

Healthy Girls = Healthy Women

Dawn Wilcock

Director, Positive Women (VIC) Inc.

The "Healthy Girls = Healthy Women" presentation will present the epidemiology figures of young women in Victoria highlighting the difference between metropolitan and regional young women. It aims to increase the knowledge about risk taking behaviours of young women leading to increased Chlamydia infection.

Plenary Session (3.00pm – 4.30pm)

Upper Hall

Final discussion and recommendations to Parliamentary Group on Population and Development