

# KWDI Issue Paper

**Research Title:** Analysis on the Characteristics of the Youth's Digital Sexual Culture and Tasks of Sexuality Education  
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## Implementation Measures for Comprehensive Sexuality Education Reflecting the Digital Sexual Culture Characteristics of Adolescents

### Abstract

◆ In the context of the widespread use of digital media among adolescents and the resulting changes in socio-cultural environments, there is an increasing need for a shift in the direction and improvement of the effectiveness of sexuality education for adolescents. This study analyzes the characteristics of adolescents' digital sexual culture and their experiences with sexuality. Based on this analysis, the study aims to develop comprehensive sexuality education considering adolescents' rights. To achieve this goal, the research conducted online participant observation, interviews with adolescents and professionals in sexuality education, and a case study of domestic and international guidelines related to adolescent sexuality education. The comprehensive analysis resulted in identifying four key challenges in sexuality education: 1) Considering the digital environment in adolescent sexuality education, 2) Expanding adolescent participation in sexuality education overall, 3) Incorporating comprehensive sexuality content into adolescent sexuality education, and 4) Providing support for the implementation of comprehensive sexuality education.

<Table> Policy recommendations for adolescent sexuality education

Policy recommendations	Summary
Consideration of the digital environment in adolescent sexuality education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing the capability to understand the media from a critical perspective</li> <li>• Providing evidence-based sexual and reproductive health content</li> <li>• Increasing access to information by guaranteeing anonymity</li> </ul>
Expanding adolescent participation in comprehensive sexuality education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and implementing strategies for adolescent participation</li> <li>• Promoting participatory sexuality education</li> </ul>
Incorporating comprehensive sexuality education content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empowering adolescents as sexual beings and subjects in sexuality education</li> <li>• Positive approach to sexuality</li> <li>• Sexuality education based on equality and diversity</li> <li>• Sexuality education that develops independent problem-solving capabilities</li> </ul>
Support for implementation of comprehensive sexuality education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support from educational authorities and schools</li> <li>• Supporting teachers in implementing comprehensive sexuality education</li> <li>• Supporting for specialized instructors and establishing a network for sexuality education</li> <li>• Support for enhancing the sexuality education competence of parents/caregivers</li> <li>• Restructuring the educational curriculum for more effective comprehensive sexuality education</li> </ul>

## Background and Research Objectives

- Online spaces serve as arenas for self-expression, seeking recognition, obtaining information, and interacting with others. In untact and online environments, adolescents may engage in or be complicit in acts of violence that are not easily attempted offline, and they may also be easily exposed to violence during routine digital media use. The experience of using digital media shows distinct gender differences. Everyday media use can easily harm one's own and others' relationships and sometimes bring significant negative impacts, but predicting and preparing for such outcomes is even more challenging for adolescents.
- In a reality where online and digital media usage has become prevalent, it is unrealistic to focus solely on the negative aspects of online and digital media use and treating them as subjects of restriction and reflects an attitude that overlooks the complexity of online spaces. Online spaces serve as arenas where power operates, spaces where adolescents learn gender norms, spaces of discrimination and hatred, and simultaneously spaces with the potential for feminist solidarity, liberation, and empowerment. Above all, as adolescents' online experiences bring changes to communication culture and ways of forming relationships, they accumulate sexual experiences and encounter information in spaces where a coexistence of discrimination, hatred, and aspirations for equality exists. This suggests that adolescents are forming new types of relationships in such spaces.
- The widespread use of digital media among adolescents and the resulting socio-cultural changes emphasize the increasing need for a shift in the direction of sexuality education and the enhancement of its effectiveness. In line with this, the study aims to analyze the characteristics of adolescents' digital sexual culture and sexuality experiences. Based on these findings, the study seeks to formulate comprehensive sexuality education that recognize their human rights.

## Analysis Results

- **Digital sexual culture and the cultural position of adolescents through online participation observation**
- **Characteristics of online spaces and adolescent sexuality**
  - ▶ Due to the fundamental premise of ensuring accessibility, it is challenging to restrict age-based access to information in online spaces. While age verification is nominally in place, the vast amount of information is available online that surpass these regulations. This information is accessible to anyone, rendering the age identity of adolescents less restrictive, especially in social networking service(SNS), where adolescents utilize hashtags as a means to access sexual information.

- ▶ Platforms such as YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and others are devising sophisticated digital technologies to provide users with more accurately tailored information to maintain and expand their influence in the market. ‘Tailored information’ refers to algorithmically processed ‘selected information’ based on users’ past interests and preferences, within which the user’s ‘limited choices’ are repeatedly made. Digital media recommendations do not consider the user’s ‘actual’ age when providing information, and the unobservable nature of algorithmically woven youth daily lives makes it difficult to understand how adolescents acquire sexual information by following certain recommendations.

### ● Adolescents actively expressing themselves as sexual subjects

- ▶ Adolescents actively establish and operate ‘main accounts’ and ‘sub-accounts,’ presenting different selves for each account. The values of ‘likes’ and ‘followers’ are inseparable from the construction of the ‘self-brand,’ and in this process, the market strategies of SNS companies and marketing come into play. This trend combined with commercial purposes serves as a driving force for adolescents to actively expose and present themselves through SNS.
- ▶ To enhance their reputation, adolescents can exhibit not only images of their faces and bodies but also their identities and, furthermore, sexual acts that take place within intimate relationships. Such display has become an inherent pattern, and female adolescents are more active in expressing their bodies compared to male adolescents. This is because, for female adolescents, the face and body serve as resources that can be utilized to express themselves and enhance their reputation.

### ● Adolescents sexualized in online spaces

- ▶ The media characteristic of SNS is producing new forms of ‘harm’ by reinforcing real-world issues, such as male-centric sexual culture and hierarchical gender orders. Simultaneously, it is gendering the process, positioning female and male adolescents differently. Instances of objectifying female adolescents as sexualized targets on SNS are easily found. The more significant problem arises when the narrative connects the process of commodifying female adolescents to the creation of a ‘successful’ reputation. The so-called ‘daelgu,’ who purchases alcohol, tobacco, and other items on behalf of adults and charges a commission, has become a kind of play culture that showcases of being able to buy alcohol and tobacco for adolescents. In this process, female adolescents are not merely labeled as ‘minors’ who cannot purchase alcohol and tobacco but are also identified as potential sellers of ‘sex’ in exchange for proxy purchases.

### ● Implications

- ▶ This study explores the principle of freedom that creates the environmental characteristics of online spaces and how it shapes the position of adolescents. Based on this, it revealed the coexistence of adolescents who are actively engaged in sexual practices and, at the same time, become objects of sexualization.

- ▶ While regulatory policies are being implemented at the media industry or national level to 'protect' adolescents, adolescents are acquiring alternative information online that nullifies such regulations and constraints. However, the issue lies in whether adolescents have sufficient skills to selectively choose, interpret, and apply the vast amount of sexual information provided to them.
- ▶ Adolescents are in an environment where they observe the choices within the limits and structure allowed by the digital environment as a free choice. Therefore, it is essential to understand what algorithms the adolescents' 'choices' are based on. Accumulating such observations is crucial for developing a nuanced and logical approach.
- ▶ It is necessary to examine the tendency for the act of female adolescents actively exhibiting their body image as an act of sexual objectification in the online space mediated by digital technology. The discussion also calls for an exploration of strategies needed for adolescent sexual practices between the realms of 'play' and 'exploitation.'

## ● Adolescent digital sexual culture and sexuality education experience examined through In-depth interviews and focus group interviews(FGI)

### ● Adolescents and the digital media space

- ▶ The digital media space for adolescents is seen as a place to create and showcase 'self' while communicating with others. The internet serves as a space for learning by searching for information when one wants to know something, but the analysis indicates that there is insufficient media literacy competency for critically accepting numerous pieces of information.

### ● Learning sexual knowledge and enjoying sexually explicit materials in the digital space

- ▶ Examining the patterns of adolescents learning about sexuality and enjoying sexually explicit material in the digital space reveals that adolescents are curious about things that cannot be learned from superficial knowledge covered in school sexuality education. Due to the difficulty of asking questions about sex to parents or teachers, adolescents tend to learn about sexuality through private and fragmented internet searches.
- ▶ There are differences in the sexual knowledge sought in the online space based on gender. Female adolescents primarily seek specific and comprehensive knowledge about events happening in their bodies, such as pregnancy, contraception, and menstruation. In contrast, male adolescents seek knowledge about techniques and methods related to heterosexual relationships.
- ▶ Adolescents seem to encounter and consistently consume sexual content in the online world, often stumbling upon it accidentally. They access sexual content through various means, such as dating narratives and sexual videos, mainly on mobile devices and through friends or seniors, without requiring separate adult verification.

- ▶ Attitudes toward online sexual content also vary by gender. Female adolescents tend to maintain a critical distance from such content due to concerns about its illegal production, distribution, and the often violent or coercive nature of the material targeting women. In contrast, male adolescents exhibit a sense of freedom and rights when it comes to viewing sexual content, and there is a cultural presumption that consuming sexual content is a natural part of addressing sexual desires.

### ● Adolescents' sexual practices and experiences through digital spaces

- ▶ Adolescents perceived sexual practices within romantic relationships as natural and positive. However, female adolescents, due to concerns about pregnancy and sexual violence, also expressed fear and anxiety about engaging in sexual activities.
- ▶ In particular, the challenges and concerns related to sexuality experienced by adolescents in digital spaces predominantly revolved around narratives of digital sexual violence victimization and online-mediated prostitution, especially for female adolescents. However, male adolescents appeared relatively indifferent to such instances of digital sexual violence.

### ● Adolescents' experiences with school sexuality education and their suggestions for improvement

- ▶ The approach and culture of school sexuality education can be characterized by 1) the taboo surrounding sex and 2) the peripheralization of sexuality. Adolescents criticize the content of school sexuality education as superficial, prevention-oriented, and lacking reflection of societal changes.
- ▶ On the other hand, adolescents believe that sexuality education should include practical knowledge related to actual sexual practices, as well as knowledge about structural societal issues and media literacy. Positive examples of sexuality education include focusing intensively on specific topics or implementing comprehensive plans for sexuality education at the school or education authority level.

### ● Implications

- ▶ School sexuality education needs to be restructured by taking into account adolescents' digital sexual culture. For adolescents, their identity, relationships, and interactions in online spaces are not just a reflection or a supplementary aspect of offline life; rather, they constitute an integral part of their lives. Therefore, discussions about adolescents' sexual practices and perceptions related to sex cannot be separated from the digital realm.

- ▶ There is a need to consider how the dual nature of digital spaces can be reflected in school sexuality education. Despite the social taboo surrounding adolescents' sexuality, they, as sexual subjects, perceive digital spaces as areas where they can naturally and positively engage in sexual practices. However, for female adolescents, digital spaces were shown to be unsafe due to experiences of digital sexual violence and solicitations for sex trafficking. Therefore, school sexuality education must address the necessary skills and requirements for achieving a sexually equitable transformation in the digital realm. By doing so, it will ensure that adolescents can safely enjoy their sexual rights and navigate digital spaces.
- ▶ When considering how school sexuality education should be conducted and who the target audience should be, it is crucial to take into account the gendered nature of adolescents' digital sexual culture. Male adolescents who participated in the study considered it natural and commonplace to fulfill their sexual desires through digital spaces. However, they were indifferent to female adolescents possibly being targeted as objects of violence and crime in the context of male-centric sexual desires. On the other hand, female adolescents perceived digital spaces as places where they are exposed to everyday dangers. It is essential to recognize that digital space can be places where both male and female adolescents shared similar experience but at the same time experienced completely different worlds.

### ● **Guidance on comprehensive sexuality education & analysis of sexuality education case in other countries**

- ▶ At the international level, discussions on adolescent sexuality education advocate for aims to facilitate 'Comprehensive Sexuality Education(CSE),' which is progressively structured to reflect the sexual experiences of adolescents in the digital environment.
- ▶ 'International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education' first published by UNESCO in 2009 and revised in 2018 based on various sources of evidence, provides guidelines for comprehensive sexuality education (UNESCO, 2018). The revision appears to have been influenced significantly by changes in human rights sensitivity and changes in the context of digital technology cultures. Particularly, as digital technology becomes an integral part of adolescents' lives, experiences of sexuality and relationships mediated by technology, the pursuit of knowledge, and emerging opportunities and risks have increased. Therefore, there is a growing need for sexuality education to encompass such technological environment.
- ▶ In this perspective, UNESCO suggests comprehensive sexuality education. Comprehensive sexuality education recognizes that human sexuality is influenced by power dynamics and emphasizes not only biological or disease-related issues such as sexual and reproductive health and sexually transmitted infections but also various social 'relationships,' rights regarding the body, and their relevance to human rights. It also includes promoting equal relationships, increasing awareness of human rights sensitivity, and raising awareness about gender norms and discrimination.

<Figure 1> Overview of key concepts, topics and learning objectives of Comprehensive Sexuality Education

<p><b>Key concept 1: Relationships</b></p> <p>Topics:</p> <p><b>1.1</b> Families <b>1.2</b> Friendship, Love and Romantic Relationships <b>1.3</b> Tolerance, Inclusion and Respect <b>1.4</b> Long-term Commitments and Parenting</p>	<p><b>Key concept 2: Values, Rights, Culture and Sexuality</b></p> <p>Topics:</p> <p><b>2.1</b> Values and Sexuality <b>2.2</b> Human Rights and Sexuality <b>2.3</b> Culture, Society and Sexuality</p>	<p><b>Key concept 3: Understanding Gender</b></p> <p>Topics:</p> <p><b>3.1</b> The Social Construction of Gender and Gender Norms <b>3.2</b> Gender Equality, Stereotypes and Bias <b>3.3</b> Gender-based Violence</p>
<p><b>Key concept 4: Violence and Staying Safe</b></p> <p>Topics:</p> <p><b>4.1</b> Violence <b>4.2</b> Consent, Privacy and Bodily Integrity <b>4.3</b> Safe use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)</p>	<p><b>Key concept 5: Skills for Health and Well-being</b></p> <p>Topics:</p> <p><b>5.1</b> Norms and Peer Influence on Sexual Behaviour <b>5.2</b> Decision-making <b>5.3</b> Communication, Refusal and Negotiation Skills <b>5.4</b> Media Literacy and Sexuality <b>5.5</b> Finding Help and Support</p>	<p><b>Key concept 6: The Human Body and Development</b></p> <p>Topics:</p> <p><b>6.1</b> Sexual and Reproductive Anatomy and Physiology <b>6.2</b> Reproduction <b>6.3</b> Puberty <b>6.4</b> Body Image</p>
<p><b>Key concept 7: Sexuality and Sexual Behaviour</b></p> <p>Topics:</p> <p><b>7.1</b> Sex, Sexuality and the Sexual Life Cycle <b>7.2</b> Sexual Behaviour and Sexual Response</p>	<p><b>Key concept 8: Sexual and Reproductive Health</b></p> <p>Topics:</p> <p><b>8.1</b> Pregnancy and Pregnancy Prevention <b>8.2</b> HIV and AIDS Stigma, Care, Treatment and Support <b>8.3</b> Understanding, Recognizing and Reducing the Risk of STIs, including HIV</p>	

Source: UNESCO(2018), p.36.

- Comprehensive sexuality education is being utilized as a reference for constructing sexuality education curricula in various countries, following UNESCO guidelines. Particularly, countries like Australia and the United Kingdom adopted a ‘whole-school approach’ to their sexuality education. This approach involves sexuality education encompassing all age groups while integrating diverse educational processes across the entire school curriculum. It emphasizes that sexuality education should not only span all age groups but also involve students, teachers, parents, and the broader community, including out-of-school youth and sexual minority youth who may not be covered by mainstream curricula. Furthermore, an essential aspect of this approach is the recognition that policy support, including legal and institutional frameworks, is crucial. In practice, efforts are being made to institutionalize sexuality education within the mandatory school curriculum, incorporating related content into school assessments and other evaluative measures, ensuring a comprehensive and policy-backed approach. The cases and guidelines of sexuality education in Australia and the United Kingdom are structured based on the comprehensive approach discussed in CSE, incorporating “comprehensive” content and delivery methods. The curricula in these countries address sexuality as not only health-related issues such as sexual and reproductive health and sexually transmitted infections but also as a matter of power relationships and civic rights. They significantly reflect issues of non-discrimination, equality, and human rights related to sexuality. Moreover, they actively address new issues arising from the advancement of digital technology, emphasizing enhancing life skills in responding to risks and navigating relationships in the digital age.

- ▶ These cases indicate, first, the need for mandatory sexuality education centered around schools to encompass the diverse identities of adolescents. They highlight the necessity for improving sexuality education by adopting a principle of equality, non-discrimination, and a human rights-centered approach. Moreover, these cases show the importance of inclusivity in sexuality education by addressing issues of discrimination and human rights concerning sexual minority adolescents. Second, adolescents demonstrate how digital technology can be effectively utilized to alleviate the challenges of exploring sexuality information during adolescence, given the unique nature of adolescence and the societal and cultural pressures involved.
- ▶ In this way, sexuality education for adolescents in the digital age goes beyond merely emphasizing the biological aspects of sexuality or focusing on abstinence. It strives to approach positive sexuality and various relationship skills from the perspective of human rights and equality. The discussions are evolving to encompass a diverse range of minority adolescents, including those outside the school environment and sexual minority adolescents. Furthermore, there is a trend in utilizing digital technology to supplement information and cases that may be challenging to convey within the school setting, along with the introduction of anonymous counseling channels.

## Policy Recommendations

### ● Consideration of the digital environment in adolescent sexuality education

#### ● Limitations and possibilities of sexuality education using digital media

- ▶ The risks arising from online spaces can easily lead to demands for restrictions on adolescents' use of digital media. However, it is also challenging to prevent the risk only by banning digital media for teens and putting it in control. Policies that seek to taboo adolescent sexuality and restrict access to sexually related content can easily intertwine with gender norms, resulting in the practice of discrimination in online spaces.
- ▶ It is essential to focus more on considering the ubiquity of digital media usage in adolescents' lives and the characteristics of adolescent sexual culture resulting from it. A greater emphasis should be placed on exploring ways to enhance adolescents' capabilities through improved sexuality education, information, and resource accessibility.
- ▶ Adolescents can access high-quality information and support services safely online, without the fear of exposure to hate or stigma. In the current situation where comprehensive sexuality education faces constraints in school settings, online spaces provide opportunities for comprehensive sexuality education.

- ▶ There is a need to explore ways to leverage the potential of digital media in sexuality education. Firstly, actively utilizing online platforms as spaces for sexuality education can complement school-based sexuality education and include groups that may not be covered in school curricula. Additionally, incorporating digital media as one of the methods in sexuality education allows for the provision of richer and evidence-based resources in and outside of the school environment.

### ● Increasing the capability to understand the media from a critical perspective

- ▶ In a society where the use of digital media has become commonplace, media literacy education in sexuality education needs to be restructured beyond analyzing the content of specific materials. It should focus on acquiring reliable information and learning how to critically interpret media by understanding what aspects need to be examined.

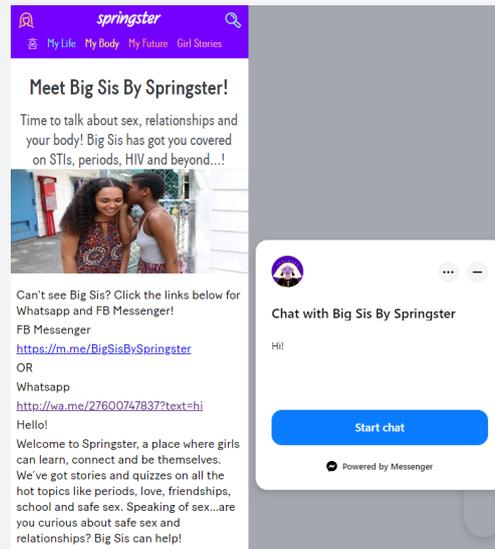
### ● Providing evidence-based sexual and reproductive health content

- ▶ There is a request for the provision of evidence-based, non-discriminatory information on sexual and reproductive health and rights through a dedicated digital portal and counseling services. Such digital contents provided nationally can offer reliable information and educational tools applicable in and outside school-based sexuality education. It can be presented to learners as trustworthy post-class resources. Additionally, it can help educators to respond to conservative ones who are opposed to comprehensive sexuality education.
- ▶ Designing content and user interfaces with a user-centric approach, and incorporating elements such as videos and responsive 3D images to enhance knowledge transfer, should be considered. Sexuality education through digital media should actively include minority groups that may not be sufficiently covered in school-based sexuality education. It needs to encompass content promoting respect for sexual diversity, fostering a positive attitude toward sexuality, and designing with accessibility for different types of disabilities in mind. Continuous updating and management of information are crucial aspects of the process.

### ● Increasing access to information by guaranteeing anonymity

- ▶ In a culture that is conservative about sexuality, online content that ensures anonymity and does not share access records with others can contribute to improving accessibility to sexual information. The introduction of AI-based chatbot services, providing enhanced anonymous counseling services, is an example of how digital technology can be used as a tool to enhance accessibility. Designed based on human rights and equality, chatbots that exclude value judgments can provide non-judgmental information around the clock. Users can access the necessary information more easily in situations where anonymity is guaranteed, without concerns about discrimination or stigma, and the constraints of societal and cultural taboos.

<Figure 2> The chatbot providing sexual health information, 'Big Sis.'



Source: Springster, Meet Big Sis By Springster!, <https://za.heyspringster.com/ko/sections/my-body/meet-big-sis-springster-v2> (Retrieved on January 31, 2023)

## ● Expanding adolescent participation in comprehensive sexuality education

### ● Planning and implementing strategies for adolescent participation

- ▶ It is crucial to devise strategies to involve and encourage adolescents in the planning, promotion, and evaluation processes of sexuality education programs, policies, and information portals. Facilitating adolescent participation ensures that they can acquire necessary information and skills in ways familiar to them, creating a safe educational environment and aligning with their cultural characteristics. This, in turn, enhances the effectiveness of sexuality education.

### ● Promoting participatory sexuality education

- ▶ Comprehensive sexuality education advocates not only for knowledge related to sexuality but also for the development of skills, attitudes, and values. Participatory sexuality education enables adolescents to reflect on their values and cultivate appropriate attitudes and skills. It contributes to enhancing their communication skills, critical judgment abilities, and self-confidence.

## ● Incorporating comprehensive sexuality education content

- Recognizing the digital environment of adolescents and the necessity of comprehensive sexuality education

- ▶ As the digital environment, with its complex implications of possibilities and risks related to sexuality, becomes an integral part of adolescents' daily lives, knowledge, autonomous problem-solving skills, and critical understanding about sexuality have become increasingly crucial. The necessity for comprehensive sexuality education is heightened, focusing on empowering adolescents to respect others, engage in meaningful interactions, build equitable relationships, and develop the capacity for autonomous decision-making within the digital landscape they encounter.

### ● **Empowering adolescents as sexual beings and subjects in sexuality education**

- ▶ Sexuality education needs to recognize adolescents as sexual beings and subjects. Attitudes that fail to acknowledge adolescents as sexual beings hinder the effective transmission of even basic biological knowledge in sexuality education and do not contribute to building competencies for addressing various sexual risks online and offline. The initiation of comprehensive sexuality education should begin by acknowledging that every individual is a sexual being from the moment they are born.

### ● **Positive approach to sexuality**

- ▶ Sexuality education should be conducted with the dimension of ensuring the sexual rights of all individuals, including adolescents, recognizing the right to enjoy sexual pleasure. Learning from sexuality education based on negative attitudes towards sex does not naturally enable adults raised in such an environment to acquire the right to enjoy sexual pleasure, and negative attitudes towards sex hinder active sexual communication in heterosexual relationships, weaken women's agency, and increase the potential for sexual harm. Recognition of adolescents' sexual rights and a positive approach to adolescents' sexuality are essential prerequisites for fostering respectful relationship and communication.

### ● **Sexuality education based on equality and diversity**

- ▶ To enhance adolescents' capacity to recognize and protect their health, well-being, dignity, and rights, and to foster the ability to form relationships that consider the impact on their own and others' well-being in making choices, sexuality education must integrate perspectives of equality and respect for diversity. Respectful relationship education should encompass understanding power dynamics and gender norms in everyday life. By basing educational content on diversity, such as sexual diversity, bodily diversity, and variations in family structures and lifestyles, the focus on respect and equality can be clearly emphasized. In order to ensure that diversity education does not just shift explicit discrimination to benign discrimination, both educators and learners should incorporate diversity into their experiences and surroundings.

## ● Sexuality education that develops independent problem-solving capabilities

- ▶ In order to enhance adolescents' capacity for independent problem-solving, sexuality education should extend towards providing effective education on how to deal with difficulties. It should equip adolescents with knowledge and skills on how to handle various situations they may encounter—what to do, whom to discuss with, where to seek help, and how to find reliable information. Such education can significantly contribute to the practical capacity development of adolescents.

## ● Support for implementation of comprehensive sexuality education

### ● Support from educational authorities and schools

- ▶ It is crucial to acknowledge the practical impact of attitudes opposing comprehensive sexuality education based on gender discrimination or conservative views on adolescent sexuality education. Furthermore, it is essential to formulate responsive policies by starting from the recognition by international human rights organizations and norms that comprehensive sexuality education is both a right of adolescents and an obligation of the state. Initiatives should be undertaken by developing responsive policies, starting with the establishment of an independent department within the Ministry of Education and local education offices responsible for sexuality education with a gender equality perspective. Furthermore, efforts should focus on enhancing understanding of comprehensive sexuality education, devising strategies to increase awareness within the Ministry of Education and local education offices, and developing new guidelines that reflect international standards for comprehensive sexuality education as a right and obligation for adolescents, as recognized by international human rights organizations and norms.
- ▶ Private institutions or individuals should select excellent sexuality education content, making it available for use in sexuality education settings. Additionally, accurate information about comprehensive sexuality education should be disseminated beyond educational settings. It is crucial to create and distribute a manual for handling complaints related to comprehensive sexuality education implementation, and schools and education authorities should actively support the safe implementation of comprehensive sexuality education in school settings.

### ● Supporting teachers in implementing comprehensive sexuality education

- ▶ To enhance the effectiveness of school sexuality education, it is essential to incorporate comprehensive sexuality education content and methods into pre-service teacher training. In-service teaching training also incorporate and expand sexuality education, considering the digital media environment of adolescents. Strengthening the content of education and ensuring the diversity of teaching methods are crucial, requiring a reassessment of teacher training materials and educational content.

### Supporting specialized instructors and establishing a network for sexuality education

- ▶ It is necessary to establish legal provisions for the training and continuing training of sexuality education specialists, including staff at the Korea Youth Sexuality Culture Center. Explicitly outlining the principles of comprehensive sexuality education in instructor training and securing budgets are essential steps to ensure a stable foundation for the implementation of comprehensive sexuality education based on equality and human rights perspectives.
- ▶ The Korea Youth Sexuality Culture Center needs to build a network and strengthen collaboration with school, youth related organizations, and support agencies for sexual assault victims and other community. It will help to improve the quality of sexuality education by enhancing close cooperation in planning, implementing and evaluating school-based sexuality education, which is for teachers, students and parents/caregivers and so on.

### Support for enhancing the sexuality education competence of parents/caregivers

- ▶ It is essential to encompass caregivers, who play a key role in conducting sexuality education outside of school for adolescents, within the scope of sexuality education. The education authorities should devise plans to enhance caregivers' sexuality education competencies, develop trustworthy educational programs for caregivers, and broaden accessibility by considering factors such as education time, location, and methods. Additionally, guidelines should be provided for education authorities to implement comprehensive sexuality education in schools, disseminate newsletters containing information that caregivers should be aware of, and conduct training sessions for caregivers related to sexuality education. By doing so, schools can actively involve caregivers in the sexuality education plans and support them by providing information on student sexuality education, which will empower caregivers to become collaborative participants in sexuality education.
- ▶ Caregiver education should not only focus on knowledge about the physical and mental changes in adolescents but also emphasize caregivers' own awareness and attitudes. It should incorporate a fundamental perspective of gender equality and an accepting attitude toward diversity within sexuality education. The core content should involve fostering attitudes that recognize adolescents' agency, promoting a positive approach to sexuality, and reflecting on their own level of sexual knowledge and attitudes toward sexuality.

### Restructuring the educational curriculum for more effective comprehensive sexuality education

- ▶ To enhance the substance of sexuality education, incorporating regional models such as the intensive completion system into the national curriculum would contribute to the stable implementation and increased effectiveness of sexuality education. In order to ensure a clear implementation of sexuality education from a gender equality perspective, it is crucial to specify the principles of comprehensive sexuality education in the revised curriculum. It is also critical to include items that address gender equality, prohibition of discrimination, protection of the rights of sexual minorities, and recognition of sexual diversity into the achievement standards.

## References

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Springster, Meet Big Sis By Springster!, <https://za.heyspringster.com/ko/sections/my-body/meet-big-sis-springster-v2> (Retrieved on January 31, 2023).

Responsible Ministries : Ministry of Education (Student Health Policy Division)  
Ministry of Gender Equality and Family (Child and Adolescent Sexual Protection Division)  
Provincial or Metropolitan Office of Education (relevant divisions)

Relevant Ministries : Same as the above.