

# Barriers and facilitators to implementing sexual health education in schools

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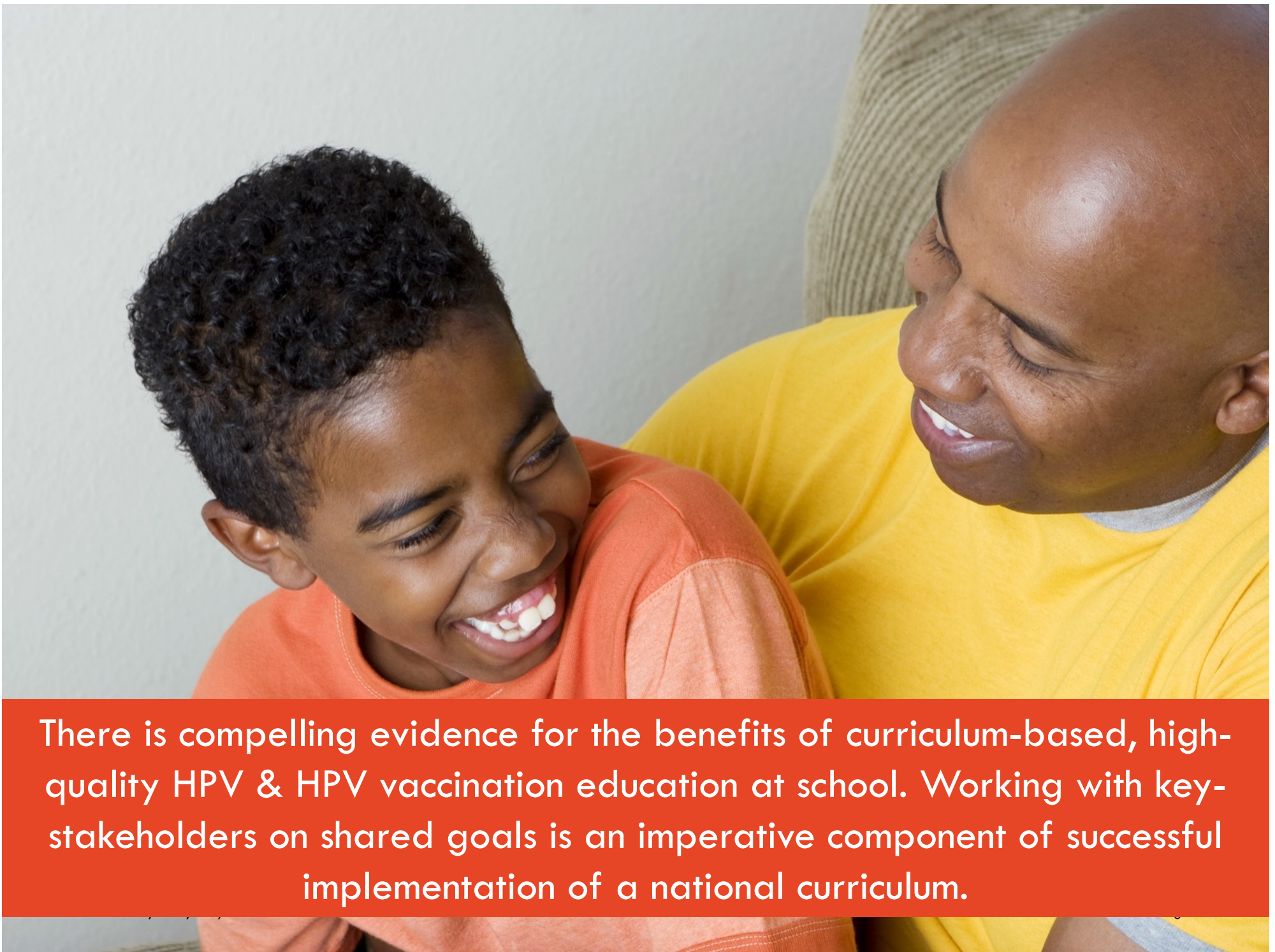
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There is compelling evidence for the benefits of curriculum-based, high-quality HPV & HPV vaccination education at school. Working with key-stakeholders on shared goals is an imperative component of successful implementation of a national curriculum.



# Sex, sexuality and relationships education in schools: Can a national curriculum ever be achieved?

- Australia has a national curriculum, which is currently under review. In addition, many jurisdictions in Australia have their own curriculum.
- Relationships & Sexuality education is part of Health and Physical Education in the current national curriculum.
- Today, I'll share some examples of how key stakeholders can work together effectively to develop shared goals that underpin global & national approaches to the education of young people.
- These examples can inform the process of an effective and successful approach to developing an inclusive, comprehensive & relevant national sexuality, relationships & sexual health curriculum.

## Example 1

- 41<sup>st</sup> session of the United Nations Human Rights Council.
- Informal negotiations for a resolution: *Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls* was up for debate.
- The Australian Government & other like-minded States argued to retain Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE).
- Like-minded States argued about the importance of teaching consent, respect for boundaries & unacceptable behaviour (sexual harassment and gender-based violence).
- States presented arguments as to why language for the resolution should be included or that language proposed by other States should be eliminated/modified.

## Example 2

- World Health Organization (WHO) course development about HPV & HPV vaccination aimed at teachers.
- International, interdisciplinary team invited to assist in development of curricula, syllabus, pedagogy & platform delivery options.
- School-based delivery is a commonly used strategy to reach young people eligible for HPV vaccination.
- Regardless of strategy applied, teachers and school staff are an important stakeholder in every health programme.
- **Common goals:** World Health Assembly adopted global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem.

# Case Study: HPV.edu

## HPV.edu STUDY<sup>2</sup>

- cluster randomised controlled trial & process evaluation
  - 2012 – 2014
  - 40 schools
  - 6,967 students
  - 2 states: WA and SA
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## Intervention

- 1) an intervention for young people;
  - 2) an HPV vaccine parent/ adolescent decision support tool; and
  - 3) logistical strategies.
- Lack of understanding about HPV & HPV vaccination
  - Desire for involvement in decision-making about HPV vaccination
  - Needle related fear/anxiety on vaccination day

1. Skinner, S.R., **Davies, C.**, Cooper et. al (2015) HPV.edu study protocol: a cluster randomized controlled evaluation of education, decisional support and logistical strategies in school-based human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination of adolescents, BMC Public Health, 15 (896).

## **CONTROL**

**(6 schools)**

- ✓ standard program information
- ✓ government consent forms

## **INTERVENTION**

**(5 schools)**

- ✓ standard program information
- ✓ government consent forms
- ✓ purpose designed information about HPV vaccination mapped to goals of national and state curricula
- ✓ in-school HPV vaccine education



## KEY FINDINGS

- Students in intervention schools demonstrated greater knowledge & understanding of HPV & HPV vaccination.
- Greater knowledge & understanding promoted positive attitudes towards vaccination.
- The intervention improved adolescent psycho-social outcomes & the HPV vaccine experience in the school setting.
- Student participation in vaccine decision-making and discussion with parents increased after education at school about HPV vaccination.
- Intervention improved adolescent self-efficacy & reduced needle-related fear & anxiety on vaccination day.

# Conclusions

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- Education at school promotes knowledge & understanding about HPV vaccination, sexual health, shared decision-making, self-efficacy & reduces vaccination related anxiety.
- Health & Education can work effectively towards the shared goal to eliminate cervical cancer as global public health problem by 2030.
- There is compelling evidence for the benefits of curriculum-based, high-quality HPV & HPV vaccination education at school. Working with key-stakeholders on shared goals is an imperative component of successful implementation of a national curriculum.



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