



Taking ACtion: Affirmative Consent in the North

A youth-led consent education and community engagement project

EVALUATION REPORT



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Women's Health In the North acknowledges Victorian Aboriginal people as the Traditional Owners of the land on which we provide our services – the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin nation – and pay our respect to their Elders past and present. WHIN acknowledges that Aboriginal sovereignty was never given up and that we stand on stolen land. We are committed to Aboriginal self-determination and to supporting Treaty and truth-telling processes.

We recognise the ongoing leadership role of the Aboriginal community on gender equality and the health, safety and wellbeing of women and gender-diverse people. As First Peoples, Aboriginal Victorians are best placed to determine a culturally appropriate path to these in their communities.

**Always was,
always will be
Aboriginal land**



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Deep gratitude to all the Youth Action Group members for generously sharing their time, skills and experiences. Your passion and dedication were a driving force behind this project, shaping it and creating resources and opportunities for others to join them in the conversation about affirmative consent. Taking ACtion would not have been the same without each of you.

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This report includes graphics and creative pieces from the Taking ACtion zine, **ConSensual**.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 'Taking ACtion: Affirmative Consent in the North' project (Taking ACtion), developed by Women's Health In the North (WHIN) and Banksia Gardens Community Services (BGCS), aimed to educate young people about affirmative consent, respectful relationships, and sexual violence prevention. Supported by the Victorian Government, this pilot project engaged young people outside mainstream educational settings through co-designed and co-delivered workshops, multimedia resource development, and a youth forum.

Taking ACtion focused on increasing young people's knowledge of Victoria's new affirmative consent legislative reforms, enhancing their understanding and attitudes towards consent, pleasure, and sexual violence, and equipping them with resources and support options. The project also aimed to build young people's leadership capacity in preventing sexual violence and model innovative partnerships between WHIN and BGCS.

Overall, the Taking ACtion project has made significant strides in promoting affirmative consent and respectful relationships among young people, providing valuable insights for future initiatives in this area. The project successfully delivered multiple outputs, and the evaluation of the project revealed several key findings:

- 1. Implementation Success:** The project's co-design, peer-led, and holistic approach were critical enablers for effective implementation. Established relationships, tailored recruitment and engagement strategies, and flexibility supported the project's success.
- 2. Increased Knowledge and Understanding:** Young people demonstrated increased knowledge and understanding of affirmative consent legislation and strengthened attitudes supportive of affirmative consent. The project also enhanced their confidence and capacity to engage in conversations about consent, sex, and pleasure.
- 3. Challenges and Barriers:** Social stigma surrounding sexual pleasure, competing demands in young people's lives, project timelines, and partnership coordination were identified as challenges affecting implementation.
- 4. Positive Outcomes:** The project resulted in positive outcomes at individual, practice, and community levels. The project also had unanticipated benefits, including community building and professional development for Youth Action Group members.
- 5. Implications and Recommendations:** The report provides recommendations for future initiatives, summarised in the table on the following page.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS IMPLEMENTING CONSENT, SEXUALITY AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION INITIATIVES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Relationships are the foundation

- Develop and implement stakeholder engagement strategies that reflect the time and resourcing required to support relationship development and build trust. Include plans for proactively addressing concerns around risk and resistance and backlash.

Utilise comprehensive, sex-positive, pleasure inclusive approaches

- Utilise comprehensive rights-based, sex-positive, pleasure inclusive approaches to consent, sexuality and relationships education initiatives and in line with evidence informed best practice.
- Embed consent education in comprehensive sexuality and relationships education initiatives rather than isolating consent from the broader context.
- Contextualise legislation in ethical sex approaches that focus on respecting sexual partners, mutual pleasure, the absence of coercion and pressure, and interrogating power dynamics.

Prioritise inclusion and accessibility

- Incorporate intersectionality to address the needs of young people, including those from marginalised communities.
- Prioritise accessibility and inclusion in planning, design and implementation of initiatives, including allocation of budget and flexibility to be responsive to needs as they are identified.

Peer-led approaches and co-design require time, skill and resourcing

- Invest in peer-led approaches and co-design in all youth consent, sexuality and relationships education initiatives to strengthen accessibility, inclusion, relevance and impact.
- Appropriately remunerate young people for their time, expertise and contributions to co-design and peer-led initiatives and consider the most appropriate model for engagement and remuneration that is equitable and reflects the level of engagement.
- Plan initiatives to allow for sufficient time and resourcing for peer-led approaches and co-design and ensure that project staff have the skillset required.
- Tailor messages for recruiting young people for peer-led and co-design opportunities for specific audiences to reflect their motivations, priorities and preferences, and ideally craft messages in consultation with young people.

Engage adult influencers

- Explore opportunities to engage parents, carers and other key adult influencers in the lives of young people to reinforce education messages and normalise conversations about consent.
- Explore opportunities to implement whole-of-setting approaches to sexual violence prevention and youth consent, sexuality and relationships education in youth and community settings.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS DELIVERING INITIATIVES IN FORMALISED PARTNERSHIP

Partnerships are valuable and require active management

- Have a rationale for partner selection that considers complementary skills, expertise and networks that have been identified as key enablers for successful project implementation and outcomes.
- Explore organisational risk appetite, policies, procedures and ways of working during the establishment of the partnership to identify alignment and gaps, and develop a shared plan for partnership implementation.
- Create opportunities for project staff from partner organisations to co-locate if working in an in-person environment, with consideration of relevant policies and procedures for staff wellbeing, support and management.
- Formalise the partnership, for example via a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and include detail of roles, responsibilities, partnership review schedule (including MOU), and intellectual property.
- Actively manage the partnership at operational and strategic levels with a shared plan that includes involvement of senior leadership for management of human resources, organisational alignment, strategic planning and sustainability.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDERS

Relationships are the foundation

- Fund longer term projects to account for the additional barriers to engagement created by the stigma associated with young people, sex and consent, and the relationship development required.

Utilise comprehensive, sex-positive, pleasure inclusive approaches

- Fund longitudinal studies of program participants to understand how outcomes are sustained over time and to identify long-term impacts.

Peer-led approaches and co-design require time, skill and resourcing

- Prioritise funding for initiatives that utilise co-design and peer-led approaches and ensure the funding reflects the time and resourcing required to implement these approaches.

INTRODUCTION

'Taking Action: Affirmative Consent in the North' (Taking Action) is an affirmative consent community education pilot project developed and delivered in partnership by Women's Health In the North (WHIN) and Banksia Gardens Community Services (BGCS). Taking Action is supported by the Victorian Government as part of the 'Supporting Young People To Understand Affirmative Consent Program' (the Program). As part of the Program, Taking Action is one of 12 projects across the state supporting the Victorian affirmative consent legislative reform by engaging and educating young people and their key influencers (e.g., parents, carers, professionals who work with young people) to develop their understanding of affirmative consent. Taking Action, and the other projects supported as part of the Program, are pilot projects testing and trialling different ways to engage young people in consent, respectful relationships and sexuality education outside of mainstream educational settings.

This report summarises the evaluation processes and findings of the Taking Action project.

VICTORIAN AFFIRMATIVE CONSENT REFORMS

The Victorian government has brought in reforms that provide key changes to consent laws under the Justice Legislation Amendment (Sexual Offences and Other Matters) Act 2022. The reforms shift to an affirmative consent model and came into effect on 30 July 2023. The changes include:

- Updated definition of consent.
- Introduction of affirmative sexual consent model.
- Changes to circumstances where there is no consent.
- Inclusion of non-consensual condom tampering or removal, sometimes referred to as 'stealthing', as a sexual offence.
- Changes to image-based sexual abuse laws.
- Improvements to the justice system to better protect victim survivors, including increased education and direction for members of a jury to understand sexual violence.

Learn more: www.sasvic.org.au/consent

WHAT IS AFFIRMATIVE CONSENT?

Affirmative consent is a way of thinking about and understanding consent that moves away from no means no and towards an understanding that everyone is responsible for seeking sexual consent. Affirmative consent means that each individual person participating in the sexual activity needs to actively take steps to say or do something to check that the other person(s) involved is consenting. Consent can only be given if clear words or actions are used to show that everyone understands and agrees to what is happening. Consent can never be assumed. It means sexual partners need to check in with each other, and have ongoing, mutual communication and decision-making.

Every person has the right to change their mind and withdraw consent at any time before or during sexual activity.

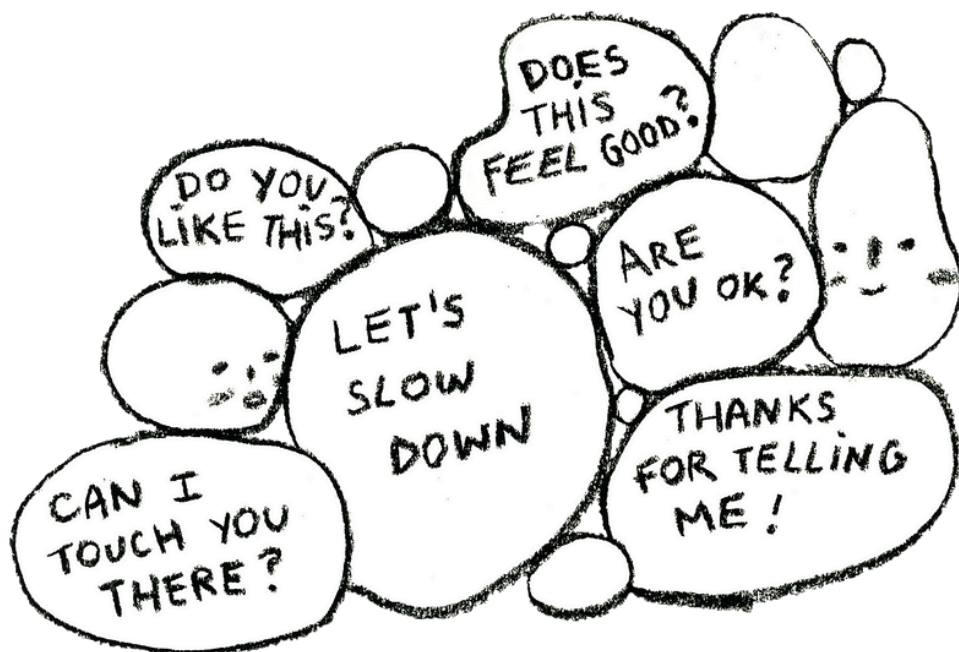


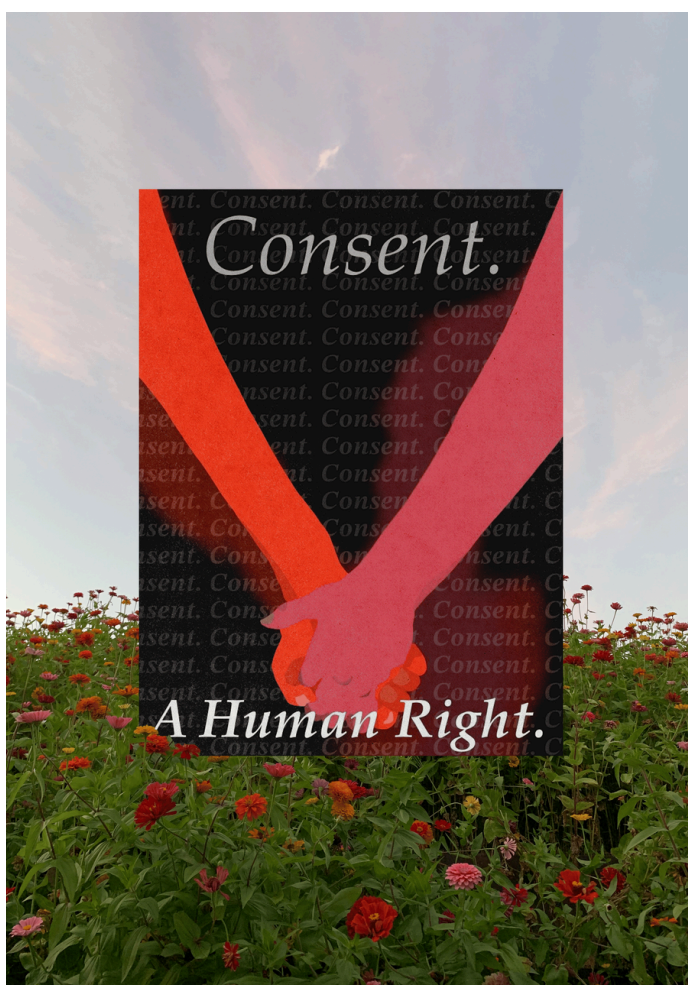
Illustration by Ximena Jimenez

PROJECT CONTEXT

Sexual violence describes sexual activity that happens where consent is not freely given or obtained, is withdrawn or the person is unable to consent due to their age or other factors. It continues to be widespread in our community and there is a lack of community understanding about consent and sexual violence generally. It can be difficult to quantify the full extent of sexual violence in Australia due to factors including under-reporting, shame and stigma, and the broad spectrum of sexual violence that occurs. Data indicates, however, that 2.8 million Australians aged 18 years and over (14%) have experienced sexual violence (attempt or threat of sexual assault) since the age of 15 (ABS, 2023).

Sexual violence is gendered. One in five women (22%) and one in 16 men (6.1%) report experiencing sexual violence since the age of 15, with men more likely to be the perpetrators of violence regardless of the gender of the victim-survivor (ABS, 2023). While sexual violence occurs across all ages and demographics, intersecting systems of oppression and discrimination result in sexual violence disproportionately affecting certain groups of women, including young women. Young women aged 18 to 24 years are more likely to experience sexual violence than women over 25 years (ABS, 2023) and males aged 15–19 years have the highest sexual assault offender rates of any age group (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2020).

There is a clear need for initiatives that aim to prevent and respond to young people's experiences of sexual violence. Research has consistently shown that educating young people about sexuality, relationships and consent can contribute to the prevention of sexual and intimate partner violence, the development of healthy relationships, the prevention of child sex abuse, improved social and emotional learning, and delayed onset of sexual behaviour (Goldfarb & Lieberman, 2021; UNESCO et al, 2018).



Consent
Artwork by Mackenzie (she/her)

The evidence base for what makes sexuality and relationships education initiatives effective continues to grow. However, research consistently recommends key features that are important to efficacy including comprehensive approaches, inclusive, interactive and participatory programs, utilising human rights and gender equality frameworks, and learner-centred approaches (including cultural relevancy and context appropriateness) (Lameiras-Fernández, Martínez-Román, Carrera-Fernández & Rodríguez-Castro, 2021; European Expert Group on Sexuality Education, 2015; Burton, Rawstorne, Watchirs-Smith, Nathan & Carter, 2021; UNESCO et al, 2018). Additionally, placing pleasure at the centre of safe-sex messaging and affirmative consent education is best practice health promotion, building people's sexual agency and confidence to talk openly about sex (Burton, Rawstorne, Watchirs-Smith, Nathan & Carter, 2021; Zaneva, Philpott, Singh, Larsson & Gonsalves, 2022). Framing consent from a sex positive approach incorporating pleasure can improve sexual health outcomes and make initiatives more holistic, engaging and relevant.

Addressing the sexual violence experienced by young people requires a multi-strategy, intersectional approach across the spectrum of primary prevention, early intervention, response, and recovery and healing, with activities at all socio-ecological levels. While not a panacea, education initiatives for young people that promote gender equality, affirmative consent, and respectful and safe relationships (sexual and non-sexual) are an important prevention strategy (Hooker et al, 2021).



PROJECT OVERVIEW

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

Taking ACtion was a peer-led education program focusing on affirmative consent, respectful relationships and sexual violence prevention using a rights-based and sex-positive approach. Taking ACtion addressed the intersection between gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health, taking a strengths-based approach to promoting equal, safe, respectful, and pleasurable sexual experiences, intimacy and relationships.

Taking ACtion aimed to increase the capacity of young people to educate their peers on affirmative consent and sexual violence through a series of co-designed and co-delivered workshops, a multimedia campaign and youth forum.

Taking ACtion's key objectives were to:

- Increase young people's (aged 15–25) knowledge on Victoria's new affirmative consent legislative reforms in community-based settings.
- Increase the knowledge and attitudes of young people (aged 15–25) about consent, pleasure, and sexual violence.
- Equip young people with knowledge of support options, resources and facilitate help seeking behaviour.
- Build the leadership capacity of young people to be leaders in preventing sexual violence.
- Model innovative partnerships through strengthening the partnership between Women's Health in the North (WHIN) and Banksia Gardens Community Services (BGCS) and further increase their capacity to deliver programs on consent education and sexual violence.
- Contribute to the evidence-base of best practice in preventing sexual violence among young people in community settings.

The project was intended to engage young people outside of mainstream educational settings who live, work, study, play, volunteer or have another connection to the northern metropolitan region (NMR) of Melbourne. By focusing on working with young people in youth and community settings the project aimed to address the gap in consent and relationships education for young people who are not engaged with or in regular attendance in mainstream education. The project activities complemented and reinforced what many young people are learning in school through the Respectful Relationships Initiative (State Government of Victoria, 2024), which supports the mandatory teaching of respectful relationships and consent education in an age-appropriate way from Foundation to Year 12 in all Victorian government schools as part of a whole-of-school approach.

PROJECT APPROACH

The Taking ACtion project was grounded in evidence-informed approaches which influenced the design and implementation of project activities. Below is an overview of the key principles that underpinned the project and how they were implemented in Taking ACtion (see [Appendix 1](#) for more information).

DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Taking ACtion centred accessibility and inclusion throughout project planning and implementation. We did this through multiple planned strategies, including planning for hybrid and online delivery of activities, ensuring language used in project activities reflected diverse experiences and identities, selecting accessible venues when planning events, including accessibility considerations in resource development (e.g. text size, font, colour contrast, minimisation of jargon, closed captions, audio described video), and offering multiple opportunities and formats for engagement (e.g., surveys, group discussions, one to one conversation in person or via WhatsApp). Throughout the project we also remained flexible and responsive to the needs of individuals and areas for improvement as they arose.

ETHICAL SEX

Taking Action utilised an ethical sex (Fileborn, 2016) approach to discussing sexual consent and relationships. An ethical approach to sex means a focus on respecting sexual partners, mutual pleasure, and absence of coercion and pressure. For Taking ACtion, an ethical sex approach meant content and implementation focused on developing skills to communicate, negotiate and articulate desires and boundaries including safer sex practices, centred caring for self and partners, developed an awareness and understanding of power dynamics, and challenged shame, stigma and social norms.

This approach also meant developing an understanding of sexual consent, respectful relationships and intimacy that goes beyond a legal understanding alone. Ensuring young people understand the laws related to sex and consent is important, however framing education only as what is legal or illegal (criminal) does not inherently centre ethical decision making, equity, and the interrogation of power dynamics.

PEER-LED APPROACHES AND CO-DESIGN

Taking ACtion utilised peer-led and co-design approaches which centre the voices, experiences and decision-making of young people. For Taking ACtion, young people led decision making and were supported to implement project activities. Being peer-led meant working to build the confidence and capacity of young people to educate their peers on consent, sexuality and relationships, both within their existing networks and in more structured environments as part of project implementation.

Co-design meant that young people become active partners and leaders in designing and developing Taking ACtion resources and other project activities. Decision making was shared, power dynamics acknowledged, and efforts were ongoing to work towards equitable power sharing between young people and project staff.

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Taking ACtion takes a primary prevention of sexual violence approach by aiming to address the underlying drivers of violence identified in *Change the Story*¹ (Our Watch, 2021) by, for example, building understanding of consent, agency, and power alongside mutual pleasure to challenge norms of sexual entitlement, dominance and hypersexuality. While gaps remain in the evidence for the primary prevention of sexual violence (Hooker et al, 2021), Taking ACtion aligns with existing frameworks and emerging evidence.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH RIGHTS (SRHR)

Taking ACtion is grounded in an understanding of Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) which meant that the project involved raising awareness and understanding of one's own rights, and the responsibility to uphold the rights of others. It is knowledge that can empower individuals and communities to advocate for themselves and for those whose rights are violated.

¹ *Change the Story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia*, is a robust synthesis of evidence on what drives violence against women and what works to prevent it. Change the Story details the strong and consistent association between gender inequality and violence against women and identifies the factors that most consistently predict men's violence against women at a population level and explain its gendered patterns. These factors are called the gendered drivers of violence against women, they are:

1. Condoning of violence against women.
2. Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life.
3. Rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity.
4. Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control.

STRENGTHS-BASED

In Taking ACtion, a strengths-based approach meant practicing curiosity, asking young people what they know and think, being supportive and non-judgemental and creating hope, motivation and sustainable change. This approach means that there is a focus on empowerment and skill development which recognises that communication, setting and responding to boundaries, articulating one's own desires, negotiation, and empathy, are skills that that can be practiced and supported in sexual and non-sexual situations.

TRAUMA-INFORMED

Taking ACtion was designed and delivered in ways that anticipate that young people (and project staff) may have experienced trauma and recognising that trauma can affect people in many different ways. The core trauma-informed principles of safety, trust, choice, collaboration, empowerment and respect for diversity (blueknot, 2019) were embedded in Taking ACtion design and delivery.

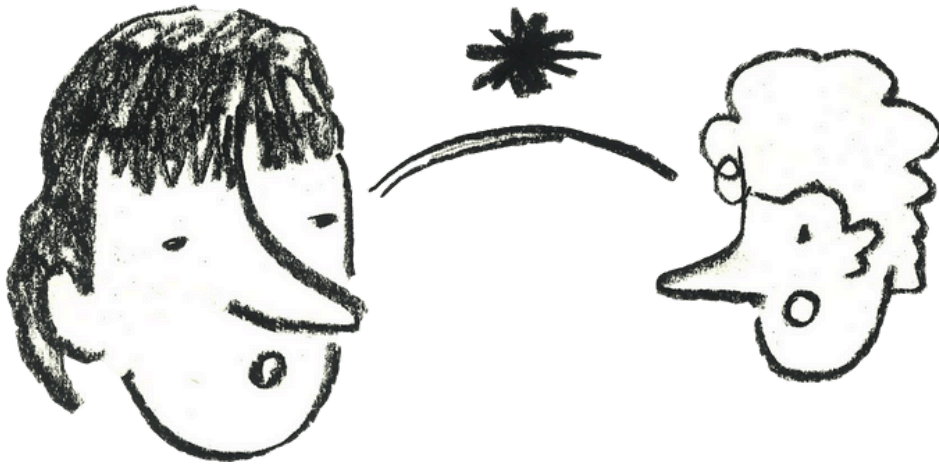


Illustration by Ximena Jimenez

PROJECT STRATEGIES

Project strategies included facilitating partnerships for governance and co-design, developing resources and building capacity and capability. Significant project activities and outputs were co-designed with young people. An overview of the core strategies and their development and implementation is available in Table 1.

The Taking Action pilot project commenced in November 2022 with activity implementation ending in October 2024. A Project Working Group with representatives from partner organisations, WHIN and BGCS, was established to develop the Theory of Change ([Appendix 2](#)), design initial project activities, and oversee implementation throughout the life of the project. An external evaluation consultant, Trezona Consulting Group, was engaged to support the development and implementation of the evaluation framework.

Table 1 Taking Action core project strategies (adapted from the Theory of Change)

Strategy	Description
Develop a partnership agreement and facilitate ongoing partnership	The partnership between WHIN and BGCS was formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). A Project Working Group was established and met regularly to oversee project development and implementation and project staff co-located weekly.
Build relationships with youth and community services	Taking Action developed new, and strengthened existing, relationships with stakeholders to promote project activities, support implementation, increase reach and plan for sustainability.
Recruitment and capacity and capability building of Youth Action Group (YAG)	Two rounds of recruitment were conducted to establish the Youth Action Group (YAG), a group of young people who played a key role in designing and delivering project activities. Taking Action provided YAG members with training on topics including sexual violence and prevention, sexual health, sex and the law, bystander action, responding to disclosures and peer education to build their understanding of affirmative consent and confidence to have conversations about sex and consent.
Co-design and peer-led delivery of affirmative consent workshops	YAG members co-designed and co-delivered affirmative consent workshops to build the capability and confidence of young people to practice affirmative consent and have conversations with their peers about sex and consent. Workshops were delivered to young people in youth and community services.

Strategy	Description
Co-design and development of multimedia project	YAG members co-designed and co-produced multimedia resources to promote affirmative consent messages to their peers and key influencers. YAG members chose to develop a zine resource aimed at young people and a suite of video resources including an extended video aimed at adult key influencers in the lives of young people and social media short cuts aimed at young people themselves.
Co-design and peer-led delivery of a youth event	YAG members co-designed and led the delivery of a youth event, launching the zine resource they co-produced. The event was aimed at young people who were already interested in or involved with activism, sexual violence prevention and social justice and aimed to build community, connection and support, and confidence to have conversations with peers about sex, pleasure and consent.



EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

EVALUATION PURPOSE

The purpose of this evaluation was guided by the project's goals to determine the impact on young people's capacity to educate peers on affirmative consent and sexual violence, assess implementation effectiveness, and explore experiences with peer-led education approaches. The aims of the Taking ACtion Project evaluation were to:

1. Determine the impact of the project on the capacity of young people to educate their peers on affirmative consent and sexual violence, including on their knowledge, understanding, confidence, skills and attitudes relating to affirmative consent
2. Determine the effectiveness of project implementation, including the partnership between Women's Health In the North and Banksia Gardens Community Services
3. Explore the experiences and perceptions of young people about peer-led approaches to educating their peers in relation to affirmative consent and sexual violence.

EVALUATION METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

An independent evaluation consultant, Trezona Consulting Group, was engaged to support the evaluation, including development of the evaluation framework, survey design, facilitation of focus groups, thematic analysis of focus group transcriptions and provision of expert advice.

Project evaluation activities commenced in May 2023. They included the collaborative development of a Theory of Change, establishing monitoring and evaluation systems, developing data collection tools, administering surveys, facilitating focus groups, reviewing project documentation and analysing quantitative and qualitative data.

During the project development phase, a workshop was held to collaboratively develop a Theory of Change ([Appendix 2](#)) to identify and describe the project's overarching goals, the key strategies through which to achieve this, and the anticipated short, medium, and long-term outcomes anticipated. This provided the overarching evaluation framework for Taking ACtion, and informed the development of relevant methods, data collection and indicators for addressing the evaluation aims. The evaluation consisted of both process and impact evaluation components to ensure a comprehensive assessment of the initiative.

DATA COLLECTION

A mixed methods approach was used for data collection to enable a qualitative and quantitative assessment of the initiative. Several data collection tools were developed to support this process, including a monitoring system for process data; baseline ([Appendix 3](#)), endline ([Appendix 4](#)), participant ([Appendix 5](#)) and feedback ([Appendix 6](#)) surveys, a debrief form for peer-led workshops ([Appendix 7](#)), and interim and final focus group guides for YAG members ([Appendices 8 and 9](#)) and project staff ([Appendices 10 and 11](#)).

Data collection tools were informed by the program objectives and evaluation purpose. Data collection took place between June 2023 and October 2024 and included:

Surveys

- **Youth Advisory Group (YAG) Baseline and Endline Surveys:** Administered at the start and end of the project to YAG members to measure changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours related to affirmative consent, sexual rights, sexual violence prevention, and peer education.
- **Workshop Participant Surveys:** Conducted after each workshop delivered by peer educators to assess participants' learning experiences, changes in understanding, and confidence regarding affirmative consent and sexual violence topics.
- **Feedback Surveys:** Conducted with service providers after peer educator delivered workshops to obtain feedback on the workshop content, activities and facilitation.

Focus Groups

- **YAG Members:** Conducted at multiple points during the project to capture YAG members' experiences and perceptions of the training, co-design process, and overall project impact. To supplement the focus groups, the content of the multimedia videos featuring YAG Members were also reviewed where relevant as the YAG members were responding (unscripted) to questions about their experience participating in the project and its impact.
- **Project Team:** Facilitated with project staff to gather insights on the partnership's effectiveness, project implementation, and perceived impacts on practice in working with young people.

Debrief Sessions

- **Post-Workshop Debriefs:** Held with YAG members and project staff to document reflections and learning from each workshop, providing ongoing feedback on the facilitation and content.

Document Review and Record Keeping

- Ongoing documentation of activities, including meeting minutes, training materials, participant demographics, and multimedia campaign development records.

RECRUITMENT

Recruitment for evaluation activities was purposeful and targeted to those with direct involvement in Taking ACtion. Baseline and endline surveys were administered to YAG members via Google Forms upon the project's commencement and completion. Surveys for workshop participants were administered via Google Forms and printed hard copies at the completion of events, and feedback surveys were sent to service providers that supported the coordination of peer-led workshops. Informed consent was obtained from participants when completing the surveys.

Focus groups were facilitated by an external consultant and held with available YAG members upon the completion of the initial training, and again upon the project's completion, as were focus groups with the project team. Informed consent was obtained from participants prior to recording focus groups.

PARTICIPATION

Participants across all evaluation activities were directly involved with the Taking ACtion project either as project staff, YAG members, or workshop participants. A total of seven YAG members completed the baseline survey, and five completed the endline survey.

39 young people completed the peer-led workshop participant survey. Of these, when asked to indicate their gender, 24 (62%) responded girl/woman; 10 (26%) responded boy/man; four (10%) responded trans, non-binary, gender-diverse, and one (2%) preferred not to disclose.

For the workshop feedback survey, five staff members from services where workshops were delivered completed a feedback survey.

For focus groups, there were four participants present at both the progress and final YAG focus groups, and four participants at the progress and final project staff focus groups.

DATA ANALYSIS

Quantitative Analysis: Quantitative data from surveys and project documentation were assessed using basic descriptive analysis to determine changes over time in participants' knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Baseline and endline comparisons were used for YAG survey results to measure the project's impact.

Qualitative Analysis: Focus groups were recorded and transcribed using Rev transcription software. The transcripts generated by Rev were then validated against the audio-recording to ensure their accuracy. An iterative coding process and thematic analysis of focus group transcripts, workshop debriefs, and other qualitative data sources identified key themes, experiences, and areas for improvement. This analysis helped capture the depth and diversity of perspectives on project implementation and outcomes.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical practices were adhered to throughout the evaluation, including informed consent, confidentiality of participant information, and the voluntary nature of participation. All data were de-identified during analysis and reporting.

LIMITATIONS

Potential limitations of the evaluation include small sample sizes, response bias in self-reported surveys and variations in participant's engagement levels. The small sample size makes it difficult to generalise the findings of this evaluation. Efforts were made to mitigate evaluation limitations through triangulation of data sources and iterative data collection.



Bound

Photography by Riley Mills (he/him)

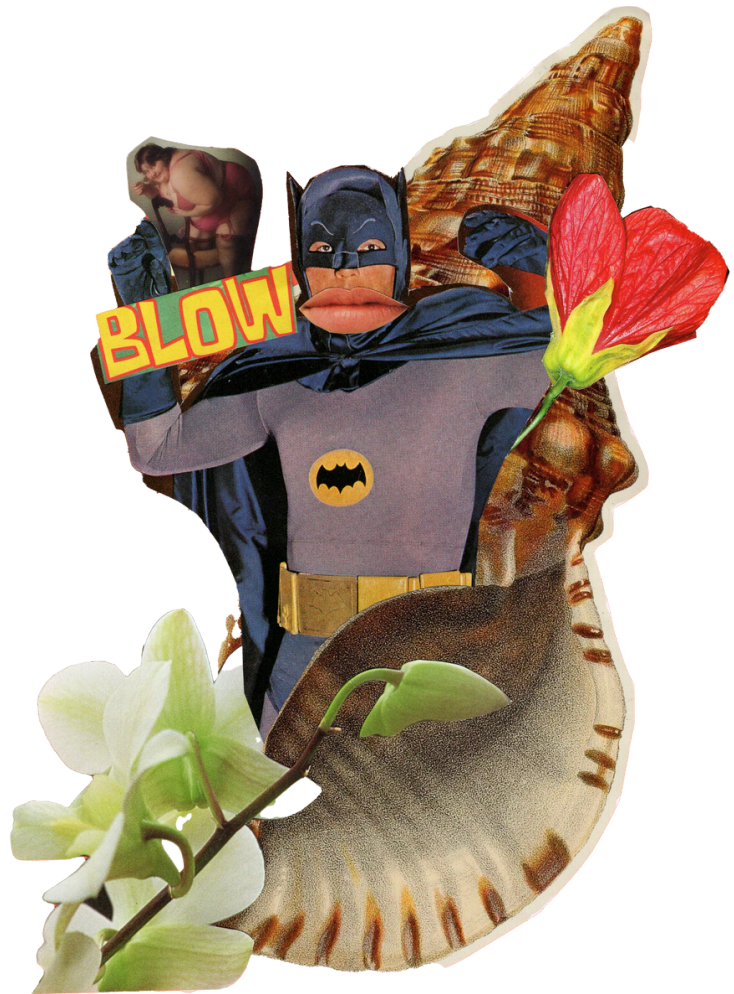
Makeup and concept by Breeanna Dodd (she/her)

EVALUATION FINDINGS

The evaluation findings have been organised into implementation and outcomes with data from different collection methods collated to support the findings.

IMPLEMENTATION

Findings from the evaluation focus groups, multimedia interviews, debrief sessions and surveys suggest that all project activities were successfully delivered and that while the overall reach and participation numbers were lower than intended, the project quality was of a high standard. The project's co-design, peer-led, and holistic approach to affirmative consent education were key enablers for the project's effective implementation and ultimate achievement of project outcomes. The partnership, established relationships, tailored recruitment and engagement strategies, and pre-existing knowledge and supportive attitudes among YAG members of the project's content areas were also identified as enablers that supported Taking ACtion's implementation. The social stigma surrounding sex and pleasure, the project design and intensive resourcing required for co-design, and the competing demands in young people's lives emerged in focus groups as challenges and barriers to implementation.



Artwork by Tash (they/them)

Activities and outputs

Finding: The project has successfully delivered on multiple activities and outputs

Process data from the Taking Action project indicates that the project has successfully delivered multiple activities and outputs, a significant number of which were co-designed with young people. Table 2 provides an overview of the project activities and outputs, achievements and an assessment against the initial planned activities and outputs.

Table 2 Project activities and outputs overview

Activities and outputs	Summary of achievements	Assessment
Project governance and partnership working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOU signed by WHIN and BGCS • Mid project MOU review and update • 23 Project Working Group meetings • Weekly co-location of project officers from WHIN and BGCS • Implementation of shared project management tools housed on a shared Google Drive. 	Achieved
Youth Action Group (YAG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two rounds of YAG recruitment • 10 YAG members aged 14–27 years were engaged at different stages throughout the project • YAG included diverse representation including LGBTIQA+ young people, young people with disabilities, young people who speak a language other than English at home and Aboriginal young people • YAG training materials developed (seven x two-hour sessions) and adapted for second online delivery • Two YAG training series delivered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ One in person seven session series ◦ One online two session series • 29 fortnightly YAG meetings • YAG members were remunerated with a \$150 stipend in the form of a gift voucher at the end of each three-month period of engagement to recognise appreciation for their time, skills and contributions. 	Mostly achieved

Activities and outputs	Summary of achievements	Assessment
Co-design and delivery of peer educator workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three co-design sessions with YAG members • Three co-designed affirmative consent workshops developed including facilitator guides and workshop materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Series of two sequential 90-minute workshops ◦ One stand-alone two-hour workshop <p>See Appendix 12 for more information about workshop content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 workshops delivered • 71 individual workshop participants • Facilitator debrief sessions following each workshop delivered which informed continuous improvements to workshop content and delivery 	Mostly achieved
Co-design and co-production of multimedia resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YAG selection of contractors (graphic designer and video production team) • Ten creative pieces on the theme of consent received from young people for inclusion in the ConSensual zine • Working bee day held to finalise zine content and co-create the cover and other design elements • ConSensual zine published (hard copy and digital) • One extended (hero) video and five social media short cut videos featuring unscripted interviews with YAG members produced • One audio described version of the hero video produced 	Achieved
Co-design and peer-led delivery of ConSensual zine launch event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half day co-designed and peer-led launch event featuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ One keynote presentation ◦ Seven young people speaking (YAG members and youth panellists) ◦ Three creative workshops on the theme of consent ◦ DJ performance ◦ Resources and staff from relevant services ◦ Sensory room ◦ Shared lunch • Approximately 70 attendees including young people and adult key influencers (e.g., parents, family members, professionals) 	Achieved

Youth Action Group (YAG)

As a co-design, peer-led project, establishing the Youth Action Group (YAG) was a core activity and output of Taking ACTION and while the overall group numbers were lower than anticipated, findings indicate that it was successfully implemented. The initial recruitment in mid-2023 intended to establish a YAG composed of 10–15 young people aged 15–25 years old from the Hume Local Government Area. YAG recruitment focused on existing BGCS programs, BGCS and WHIN's networks, local youth services, sports clubs, community groups and online recruitment campaigns across BGCS and WHIN social media platforms. The initial recruitment resulted in seven young people joining the YAG. The YAG members were all young women and gender diverse people aged 20–27 years old. Young people who were outside of the target age range were invited to join the YAG to establish a group with as many members as possible.

As fewer than anticipated YAG members were initially recruited and to account for some attrition due to changes in personal circumstances, a second round of YAG recruitment was facilitated in late 2023. The second round of recruitment expanded to invite young people from across the NMR of Melbourne to join the YAG, and specifically targeted young people aged 15–20 years old as they were underrepresented in the initial cohort. The second round of recruitment included development and distribution of updated recruitment communications including social media tiles, flyer, parent and carer FAQs, and a stakeholder recruitment toolkit disseminated through networks and social media. The updated recruitment materials included tailored messages based on feedback from YAG members. Three additional YAG members were recruited in the second round, one young man and two young women aged 14–21 years old. Again, an interested young person who was outside of the target age range was invited to join the YAG to increase numbers.

Co-design and delivery of peer-led workshops

After the first round of YAG training, the initial YAG members successfully co-designed age-appropriate affirmative consent workshops to be delivered to other young people aged 15–25 years in community settings (e.g., youth and community services, sporting clubs). YAG members also had the opportunity to co-deliver these workshops as peer educators, supported and supervised by project staff.



Initial plans were to deliver a total of 25 workshops across the project. However, this target was reduced due to revised project timelines, accommodation of other project activities and to reflect challenges in securing bookings. Although the peer educator designed and delivered workshops were promoted heavily through emails, meetings, events, networks, presentations and social media, securing workshop bookings proved challenging. To facilitate bookings, multiple, additional tailored strategies were utilised, including providing resources and information to services (e.g., the Taking Action parent and carer FAQs or other existing resources), providing copy to services to include in their communications to young people, families and the community, offering to attend drop-in style sessions at services to meet with young people before delivery, and facilitating multiple meetings with services before and after delivery. Even with the implementation of the additional strategies, the original target for workshop delivery was not achieved.

Furthermore, due to scheduling and YAG member capacity, not all workshops were able to be delivered by YAG peer educators. In the event peer educators were unavailable for delivery, project staff delivered the co-designed workshop. While not included in the initial planning, this responsive adaptation was necessary to support the reach of the co-designed workshops.

Strengths and enablers for implementation

Finding: The project approach, and established relationships through the partnership, supported project implementation and the successful delivery of project activities

Overarching project approach

Taking Action used a co-design, peer-led and pleasure-lens approach that was identified in focus groups as being critical to the project's implementation and overall success and achievement of outcomes. In both the interim and final evaluation project staff focus groups, staff discussed how young people had been centred at every stage of the project's implementation, emphasising that negotiations were constant and ongoing to ensure that the ideas and decisions of Youth Advisory Group (YAG) members were upheld and implemented as was possible within the project's parameters.

The vibe is genuine and they know that we are genuine in letting them make the decisions and holding the power. And you've both said that it's fair and it's even and we might do some guiding, but at the end of the day, unless it's really out there and wrong, it's going in the way they want it to go. And I think that's made it a really engaging process and I think it's given a lot of ownership of the workshops that they feel excited to now be delivering them for the first time.

Project staff interim focus group participant

Importantly, these efforts were felt by YAG members who shared in evaluation focus groups that they felt that staff and the YAG members were part of a collaborative team. YAG evaluation participants emphasised that the project staff had effectively given them power to make decisions and inform content to guide implementation but were also available for support and guidance when needed.

I feel like for me it's been obvious that they are kind of leading us, but it hasn't felt like they're separated from us at all. It feels like they are a part of everything that we, they're a part of the group and they're a part of the discussions and they're a part of the disagreements as in they're there with us as you're saying, facilitating that, talking us through it, but it's not separated and it's not like they're leaving us by ourselves and it's not like they're standing on top of us being like, this is what we're doing. It's been they're part of the group.

YAG interim focus group participant

Participants in the interim YAG and final project staff evaluation focus groups discussed how this approach made the project accessible for young people and supported their participation. As focus group participants noted:

It's peer learning, so making sure that the information and delivery is really youth friendly and youth focused rather than kind of just like a, no, no, no, this is what you have to do and this is the law. And so shifting the focus from just like this is the law, you have to follow it to here's how it can affect you as a young person and us as young people and a bit more accessible.

YAG interim focus group participant

It doesn't feel like school, it doesn't feel like uni, it's not a classroom. We're working together and no one assumes to be the expert in the room. We have been learning from each other through the whole process. So yeah, I think that's a huge strength.

Project staff interim focus group participant



Project staff were intentionally flexible to support young people's participation. For example, hybrid and online YAG meetings were facilitated in response to YAG member's needs and the meeting schedule reworked in response to a change in a YAG member's work schedule. The reworked schedule was highlighted in the focus group as an action they greatly appreciated to ensure they were able to continue their participation. Flexibility and responsiveness were important elements of the project approach, as one focus group participant highlighted:

Ensuring that we're centring, accommodating people however they need to show up. And then meeting them there is like at the core of like everything that we do.

Project staff final focus group participant

Several key themes emerged across all focus groups regarding practical strategies that were used to create a collaborative environment and ensure the project adhered to co-design principles. This included intentionally creating welcoming spaces, taking the time to build genuine relationships with young people and between project participants, valuing young people as equals and sharing power, and having an authentic commitment to and being transparent with young people around the project and its parameters. As one focus group participant shared:

The space when you come in, it's like this, so we're kind of all looking at each other and then obviously they might be at the front there, but it's not like a row situation. You can pivot and talk to anybody; that's inviting.

YAG interim focus group participant

YAG members in evaluation focus groups also spoke to the importance of discussion-based learning and being able to talk broadly and go off topic. Project staff emphasised that this was a deliberate strategy they used to help develop relationships, which in turn ensured that Taking ACtion was a safe, fun environment for YAG project participants. As noted by a focus group participant:

I think having discussion-based things, especially I like at the start when we can come in and talk about whether it's that day, and that somehow comes into the topics we are going on about, holding that space and allowing it. But if there is obviously content to go through smoothly leading that into, instead of, you don't want to go in and sit down and then it's just ch-ch-ch. Maybe if it's your first time going in there and about the content, it might be a bit more like that, but having actual connections to the people in the group is the key.

YAG interim focus group participant

Interim and final focus groups with project staff highlighted that working with young people takes an enormous amount of skill and time, which is often undervalued and inadequately resourced. Participants also reflected that beyond practical strategies, working with young people requires a particular personality and approach, which cannot be simulated. As a focus group participant reflected:

There's a significant amount of work involved before you get in front of those young people that you do, knowing that it might not all work the way it's meant to, but you've actually planned for 85% of all of those different outcomes before you step foot in that room and you know that it doesn't matter which way it goes, you're going to be able to manage the safety of the people in the room, their participation ... And I think that's where some of the undervaluing of working with young people comes from because it looks easy and a bit of fun. And you're just hanging out with young people. Well, no, you've actually done all of a whole heap of stuff after, and you'll do a whole heap of stuff like before and after.

Project staff interim focus group participant

Finally, the project approach to content, which was holistic, and used a strengths-based approach and pleasure lens, was considered crucial to the project's success. Young people in the interim evaluation focus group reported that this made the content accessible and fun and contributed to their learning and desire to share the information they had learned with other people. As focus group participants shared:

One of the big focuses is making sure it's not just like this is the law, but this is the law changes and then this is how it affects actual people and, also, sexual pleasure and sexual health as well. Making sure that it's not just, it's been said a lot, but it's not just following the rules for rule's sake, but it's following the rules because that's the right way to do it and a more pleasurable and fun and nice thing to do and learning about it holistically.

YAG interim focus group participant

When you think about sexual violence prevention, we have to think about what sex is and what it means to people. And the positives and why people are having sex in the first place, not just this is the law. 'No, no, no, don't do it'. Then that's bare minimum. What are we talking about? Fulfilling, pleasurable, consensual, respectful relationships and not assuming then that there is any existing knowledge because we know there's so many gaps in the school system, in the youth services system, in sexual health education, comprehensive RSE, that you have to start at the foundations and build it collectively and not just come in at the top and be like, 'oh, consent, let's do that'. And I think that's been tested. I think that's contributed to the success and that's the advice I'd give to other projects.

Project staff interim focus group participant

Co-design and peer-led approach to development and delivery of workshops

The peer-led, co-designed resources developed by the YAG as part of the Taking ACtion project were grounded in the same project approach, including holistic, strength-based content with a pleasure-lens. Survey findings indicate that the YAG peer educator designed and delivered workshops were acceptable to both the young people who participated in the workshops and the staff at services where the workshops were delivered.

The majority of workshop participant survey respondents agreed that they prefer learning about consent from peer educators (30 or 77%) and in an interactive workshop (16 or 94%²), that the workshop was interesting to them (15 or 68%³), made sense (15 or 68%³), and that they would recommend the workshops to a friend (16 or 73%³). In the free text survey responses, participants provided positive feedback about:

- the interactivity of the workshops and the engaging material.
- making the workshops fun (and funny) but maintaining informative delivery.
- free and open discussions.
- the collaborative learning environment, peer-to-peer learning and hearing other people's experiences and ideas.
- creating a safe space where asking questions was comfortable (non-judgemental).

Of the staff members who completed the workshop feedback survey, all five rated the workshop content, activities, facilitation and overall, as excellent or good. Four out of five indicated that they would recommend the workshops to other youth and community services, and strongly agreed that the workshops were relevant to young people and had a positive impact on the young people who participated.

Respondents noted that the most impactful and valuable aspects of the workshops were discussion, activities to help breakdown and solidify content, the gentle approach to challenging topics and relatable peer facilitators. As one staff member noted in their survey response, 'All the information provided was so easy to digest and loved how it was presented!'.

²The survey questions were changed in response to reporting requirements. 17 respondents were asked this question.

³The survey questions were changed in response to reporting requirements. 22 respondents were asked this question.

Survey feedback from staff also highlighted the benefit of the strategies project staff used to support workshop delivery:

The workshops were incredibly engaging for both staff and students. A huge kudos to all involved. We appreciate the time taken to make these workshops meaningful for our cohort and the comprehensive preparation. The resources shared with us staff before, during and after also helped us feel better equipped to continue the conversations in the classroom, one-on-one with students, and also as a team on the subject. We would happily have you visit again and have already been telling our networks about the project. Thank you, team!

Staff Feedback Survey

The feedback from workshop participants and service staff is consistent with the focus group findings and reflects the successful elements of the project approach.

Perspectives of the peer educators on the delivery of their workshops were collected through the post workshop facilitator debriefs. Their perspectives reflect similar themes of what worked well, including co-facilitation approaches, creating safe environments, skills for responding to complex questions, and debriefing for continuous improvement.

The peer educators valued the collaborative delivery approach and co-facilitation which enabled them to support each other, complement each other's comments, and maintain good energy throughout the workshops. They found that the collaborative approach added depth to the facilitation, seeming to enrich workshop participants learning experiences. However, the peer educators also noted that the legislative aspects of the workshop content were sometimes difficult to deliver, especially when workshop participants had limited background knowledge.

Peer educators also reflected on the importance of establishing strong connections with workshop participants to create a safe, supportive, and open learning environment where participants were engaged and able to actively contribute. They noted how this was easier when there were recurring workshops with the same group of participants. Maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment throughout sessions required high-level facilitation skills and a careful approach to ensure that challenging topics were discussed in a supportive manner and clarity was retained. Incorporating regular debriefing sessions helped peer educators to reflect and continuously improve their facilitation skills and confidence.

Prior knowledge and experience of YAG members

Findings suggest that given the project's approach, having some prior knowledge, interest or experience with gender equality, sexual health and/or prevention of gender-based violence were enablers for recruitment, and that developing tailored recruitment materials was necessary. Indeed, while there were initial challenges in YAG recruitment, project staff reflected that they adapted recruitment materials for the second round of recruitment based on feedback to shift the focus from 'developing peer leaders in affirmative consent' (interim staff evaluation focus group) to 'developing those skills to have conversations' (interim staff evaluation focus group). As was highlighted by focus group participants:

I've come into this job because I have a really big passion for human rights and social justice and gender equality is a big thing that I'm passionate about within that, but I haven't worked directly in that area, but it's something that I really want to continue working in. So hearing about this program, I also really like facilitating and I like working with young people, so it just felt like a really good fit. Also, [I'm] very passionate about sexual health and wellbeing as well.

YAG interim focus group participant

I think the initial round of recruitment really leaned into the idea of a young leader wanting to be a really outspoken in this space and really visible. And I think that may have also leaned into why the younger age group weren't as willing to maybe put themselves out there.

Project staff interim focus group participant



Partnership

In addition to the project approach, findings from the evaluation focus groups indicate that WHIN and BGCS's respective areas of expertise and established community networks were a key strength of the partnership that supported Taking ACTION's implementation and overall success. Focus group participants reflected that the partnership between WHIN and BGCS had ensured that they were able to reach their intended audience, as BGCS had the necessary relationships with young people to engender trust in a new project. As a focus group participant emphasised:

The partnership with WHIN, coming in with being the leader of the project and coming in with all of the knowhow behind starting up a project and leading a project... but then when, if you bring Banksia into it, I don't think there would've been a YAG without Banksia and building that and having access, existing access to those young people and the infrastructure and, and child safety stuff. So I think it was really complimentary, for this particular project.

Project staff interim focus group participant

This illustrates the importance of intentionally creating partnerships in which skillsets, capacity, and networks are mutually beneficial and complementary.

Findings from evaluation focus groups also indicated that organisational partnerships require a dedicated focus of effort and management within a project like this. Much like co-design work with young people, working in partnership requires a relationship to be nurtured in addition to working together to implement a project. As one focus group participant emphasised:

That's the stuff that I think is really important in partnerships and like the learning is partnerships are work, like take work to maintain the partnership by people at all levels of the partner organisations who need to have vested interest in the partnership, not just in the outputs from the project.

Project staff final focus group participant

Challenges and barriers for implementation

Finding: The social stigma surrounding sexual pleasure, the competing demands in young people's lives and project timelines and project design all affected project implementation

Social stigma

Findings from evaluation focus groups indicate that the persistent social stigma surrounding sexual pleasure was a key challenge that impacted Taking ACTION's overall reach. Project staff reflected that this, combined with the need for young people under 18 to obtain parental consent to participate in the project, may have been a significant barrier that affected recruitment to the YAG and delayed the project's initial implementation. As a focus group participant shared:

I don't necessarily think it's a lack of appeal of the topic; it's higher risk to the individuals participating, and particularly for the younger cohort, which is 'I have to disclose to people in my household that I want to go and participate in something that talks about sex'. That's a huge barrier... that's a huge ask. That's a huge ask for adults, let alone young people. So I don't think it's an unexpected outcome, but I think we potentially underestimated the impact and the difference between a [gender equality] project and one that's then specific to not only sexual violence prevention, but sexual pleasure and sexual health more broadly.

Project staff interim focus group participant

Project staff also reflected that this, in addition to not having an ethno-specific or multicultural youth organisation organisational partner within the project, meant that the initial plan to recruit culturally and linguistically diverse youth was not realised to the extent intended. As one focus group participant stated:

You think about who your partners are gonna be and who you're gonna work with if you are targeting specific communities like that. Like I don't think it [low levels of engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse youth people] was unanticipated.

Project staff interim focus group participant

This highlights the importance of ensuring that partnerships are developed with organisations that have the appropriate skills, capacity, and networks for intended audiences, as well as the need for recruitment materials and strategies that are targeted and tailored to suit project needs and audiences. It also affirms the importance of strong relationships as an enabler for project participation and implementation.

Furthermore, the project's subject matter presented implementation challenges when the project staff were trying to organise the delivery of peer-led workshops to other young people in community settings. Recognising this, project staff used a tailored engagement strategy to ensure that stakeholder engagement was planned, structured and coordinated. This did not, however, translate into higher delivery, with service providers flagging concerns about conversations around sexual pleasure, working with young people and child safety legislation requirements. As a focus group participant shared:

Youth services, like, rightly, sorry, in my experience, they're protective of their young people and they're protective of what they do because it doesn't take much for things to be really disrupted by a complaint or by like a bigger pushback. Um, and I do know they've vocalised some concerns. There is these like edges of like, ugh, talking about sex with young people. Like, 'is that a conversation that I need to declare that I've had? Like in terms of child safety, how does this fit?'

Project staff final focus group participant

As a result, it was challenging for organisations to commit to have peer-led workshops delivered to young people within the project timeframe given the perception of high-risk content, as well as staff being unsure about the implications of such workshops within the context of their workplace obligations and regulations.

The potential impact of social stigma was also identified as a possible barrier to active participation for some young people in the peer-led workshops themselves. Facilitators (peer educators and project staff) perceived some young female participants to be shy, especially when in mixed gender groups, perhaps indicating that they did not feel entirely safe to participate actively, possibly due to social stigma and gendered norms. This highlights the need for specific strategies to support inclusivity and safety to ensure that all voices are heard, and all workshop participants can actively participate.

The workshop facilitator debriefs highlighted that the challenges for peer educators to develop competence and confidence in the content and facilitation skills was compounded by infrequent delivery. This affected their familiarity with and confidence in presenting the material and reinforced the need for ongoing facilitation skill development. This includes learning how to respond to resistance, address controversial topics, and manage group dynamics to maintain a safe and engaging environment. This skill development requires more frequent opportunities to deliver the workshops.

Young people's lives

Another barrier to project participation identified through the evaluation focus groups were the demands on young people's lives which make it difficult for them to participate in and prioritise projects like Taking ACtion. This was reflected in comments by YAG members and project staff in the interim evaluation focus groups, who spoke about their competing demands and uncertainty of whether they would be able to continue their involvement for the duration of the project. As a focus group participant shared:

I feel like most of the things that I found challenging were kind of what you guys were saying, just being able to fit it in and I don't know, I'm tired at the end of the day and then it's just coming here and making sure that I'm engaged because I don't want to be here and be zoned out the whole time. I want to be able to make sure that I'm engaged and learning and giving input.

YAG interim focus group participant

Project timelines

The project's time constraints, the resource-intensive approach required for successful co-design, and the high volume of deliverables emerged as another key theme that affected Taking ACtion's implementation and overall reach. Substantial delays in the initial phases of the project's implementation due to staff turnover and participant recruitment combined with these factors resulted in large workloads that were a challenge for YAG members and project staff alike. As a focus group participant noted:

We all put in so much work and everything went really well and rushed kind of negates from that where it's like, no, we did a really good job. It was just we had to work fast and it would've been a lot less stressful if we didn't have to do that. And it's a shame that it has gone by so fast cause it's like you can't help but think, well, what could we have done if we did have more time?

YAG final focus group participant

Participants in the final evaluation focus groups highlighted how the project's tight timeframes resulted in lower reach. With strict timeframes and numerous deliverables, they did not have the flexibility to reschedule events or provide additional engagement opportunities for young people who were unable to attend the scheduled activities. They also did not have as much time to strengthen relationships and build the reputation and trust in Taking ACtion that was perceived to have impacted other services willingness to host peer-led workshops. As two focus group participants shared:

It meant that if people weren't available for one specific time, it couldn't be, there wasn't time to reorganise it or reschedule stuff so that more people could be involved or participate in certain times because it just had to happen.

YAG final focus group participant

There's a hesitancy from the services for risk. There's a bit of like unsurety about like the project is still new. So you've gotta build relationships and trust, yeah. That the content is appropriate. That you're appropriate, that you're gonna do it in a way, like we're often an unknown entity to the places we're approaching.

That I think influences their willingness.

Project staff final focus group participant

Project design

While Taking ACtion's overall approach was a key strength, project staff questioned aspects of its design, particularly the volunteer-based, stipend model. Given the requirements the project placed on young people, it was felt that the model used was inadequate to recognise the YAG's work and contributions. Participants discussed how an alternative approach to remuneration may not only have been fairer but would have also allowed YAG members to prioritise the project in their lives over other commitments. As one focus group participant reflected:

Really clearly one of the challenges is, it was great that we could offer a stipend, like an honorarium to the young people. But if we're asking them to commit this level of time and effort, it should be like accurately remunerated 'cause it allows them to prioritise what you're asking them to do.

Project staff final focus group participant

OUTCOMES

Taking ACtion has achieved its outcomes at an individual level among YAG members, at a practice level among project staff, and at a community level among the networks and through the influence of YAG members. Outcomes at an organisational level have been limited within the implementation timeframe of the project.

Taking ACtion has also successfully achieved the following project objectives:

- Increase young people's (aged 15–25) knowledge on Victoria's new affirmative consent legislative reforms through community-based settings.
- Increase the knowledge and attitudes of young people (aged 15–25) about consent, pleasure, and sexual violence.
- Equip young people with knowledge of support options, resources and facilitate help seeking behaviour.
- Build the leadership capacity of young people to be leaders in preventing sexual violence.
- Model innovative partnerships through strengthening the partnership between Women's Health In the North (WHIN) and Banksia Gardens Community Services (BGCS) and further increase their capacity to deliver programs on consent education and sexual violence.
- Contribute to the evidence-base of best practice in preventing sexual violence among young people in community setting.



Improved knowledge and attitudes

Finding: Young people have increased knowledge and understanding about affirmative consent legislation, and strengthened attitudes and knowledge that are supportive of affirmative consent

Affirmative consent legislation

The small number of YAG baseline and endline survey respondents limit the survey analysis. However the surveys show that while YAG members had high baseline levels of knowledge of and positive attitudes towards affirmative consent, there was an increase in understanding of rights and responsibilities under affirmative consent legislation at endline.

In multimedia interviews (filmed for the video resources), YAG members reported that prior to participating in Taking ACtion, they were unaware of Victoria's new affirmative consent legislation. They also shared that even among friends that they consider politically engaged, knowledge about the legislation appeared limited prior to this project. As one YAG member noted:

I think the biggest thing that I've learned through Taking ACtion has been how little this knowledge is spread. So like, my friends, they're all feminists. And like, myself, I'm definitely a feminist and like, I feel like I'm quite active in this space. I try and keep up to date and all of those sorts of things. But before being part of this project, I had no idea about the legislation that came through in July last year.

YAG member, Multimedia Interview

The positive impact of Taking ACtion on young people's awareness and knowledge about Victoria's affirmative consent legislation was further reaffirmed at the final YAG evaluation focus group. Participants shared that their increased legal knowledge was one of the most significant changes to come from the project and had supported them to develop their understanding of affirmative consent. As a focus group participant highlighted:

If you have to read something about the law, you're just like, oh God, I can't read this. But I feel like when we did our trainings and stuff, it got explained so well that it has stuck.

YAG final evaluation focus group participant

Young people (n=39) who completed the peer-led workshop survey also reported increased knowledge and understanding about affirmative consent legislation. As a result of the workshop, participants reported understanding their rights and responsibilities under affirmative consent legislation (Figure 1) and having a better understanding of what affirmative consent is (Figure 2). Promisingly, the positive outcomes were across all genders, as shown in the graphs below.

Additionally, in the open text question asking workshop participants what the most important thing they learnt was, the theme of consent and the law (affirmative consent, age of consent) featured frequently.

Figure 1 Peer-led workshop participant survey responses to the multiple-choice questions 'As a result of the workshops, I know my rights under Victoria's affirmative consent legislation' and 'As a result of the workshops, I know my responsibilities under Victoria's affirmative consent legislation', by gender.

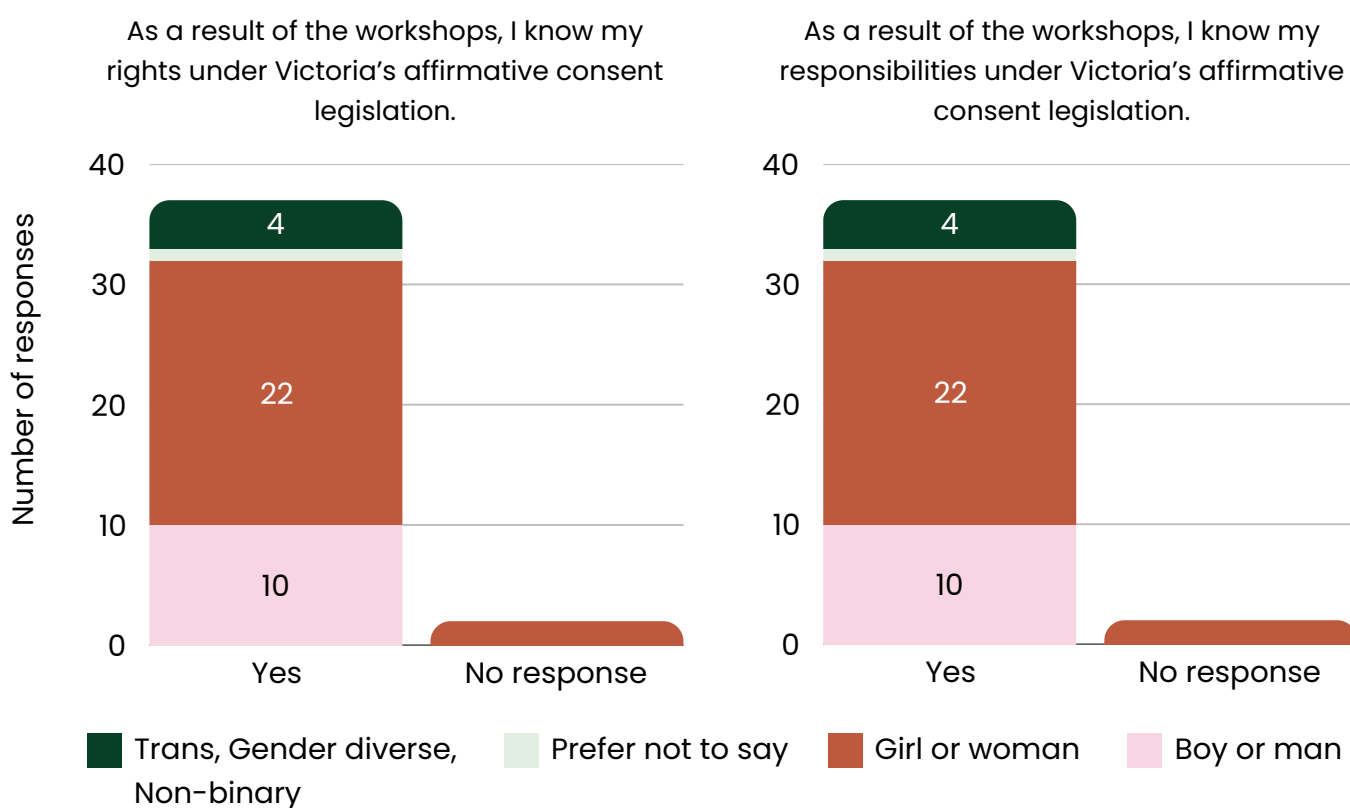
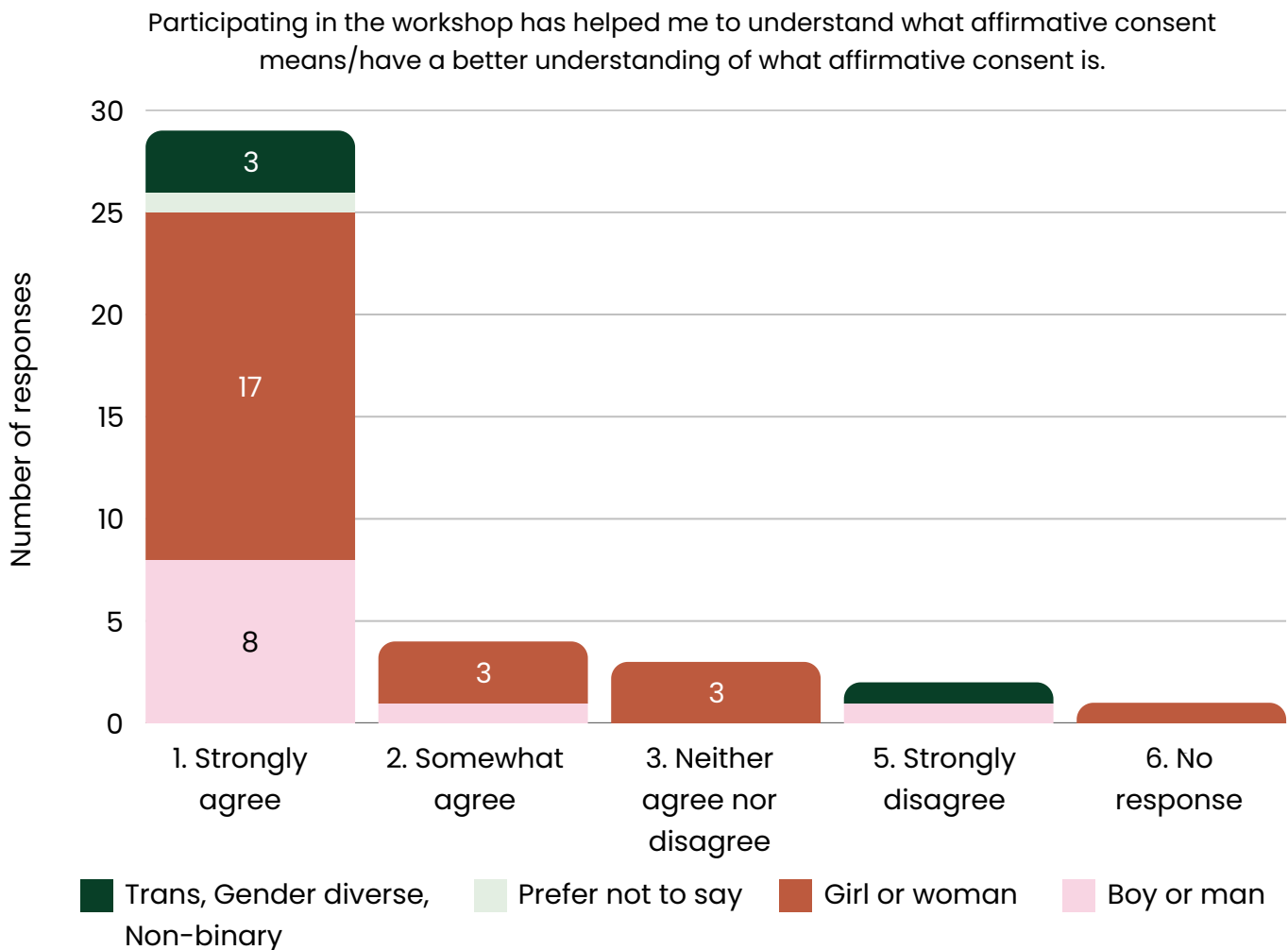


Figure 2 Peer-led workshop participant survey combined* responses to the scale questions 'Participating in the workshop has helped me to understand what affirmative consent means' and 'Participating in the workshop has helped me to have a better understanding of what affirmative consent is', by gender.

*Responses combined as survey question wording was changed in response to reporting requirements.



Attitudes and knowledge supportive of affirmative consent

As described previously, YAG members had high baseline levels of knowledge and positive attitudes towards affirmative consent, pleasure, and forms of sexual violence when they engaged in the project. Analysis of the YAG baseline and endline surveys found that while there wasn't a significant increase in affirmative consent supportive attitudes and knowledge from the initial high levels, there was an increase in awareness and understanding about resources, supports and referrals available for sexual and reproductive health, rights, pleasure and sexual violence. Based on increased detail and complexity of responses to open-ended questions in the endline survey, analysis also indicates that it is likely YAG members deepened and broadened their understanding of consent.

Findings from focus groups with the YAG are consistent with the YAG survey findings and indicate that Taking Action increased young people's knowledge and understanding about sex and pleasure and strengthened supportive attitudes towards affirmative consent. YAG focus group participants discussed the importance of the project in giving them the language to articulate their feelings when consent was not sought, indicating that not only did the project increase their knowledge and understanding but it also helped to validate and strengthen pre-existing attitudes, and was having a significant impact on their personal lives. As a focus group participant reflected:

Having it [existing knowledge and attitudes] reinforced and being like, 'yeah, no, you're right in saying that. You're right in thinking that', yeah, it's just been really helpful confirming what I already knew, but then also informing me on things that I had no idea. You don't know what you don't know

YAG final focus group participant

Even during the early phases of project implementation, discussion at the interim YAG focus group illustrated that the training that YAG members had undertaken had already had a positive impact on their knowledge and understanding regarding sex, pleasure and affirmative consent. YAG focus group participants reported that through Taking Action, they had gained more knowledge of different ways to communicate, seek and recognise consent, and discussed how they would use this information to ensure consent in a range of situations, not just sexual. This indicates a shift in attitudes that recognises consent as being present in a variety of social interactions and contexts. As one YAG member articulated in a multimedia interview:

I feel like something that it will really impact in my personal relationships is like asking people how they're feeling in certain situations. Like not necessarily if they're sexual or not, but like being able to pick up on those cues because I've learned about it in a different context. Being able to pick up on cues of when people are uncomfortable and asking the right questions and making sure that people can say no in all sorts of situations.

YAG multimedia interview participant

Increased understanding of ways to communicate, seek and recognise consent were also identified as themes from the peer-led workshop participant survey responses. When asked about their most significant learning from the workshop content, common responses included themes related to sexual rights and responsibilities; the importance of, and ways to communicate consent, including understanding that the absence of no does not mean yes; and the law and consent (as previously mentioned). Most young people of all genders who completed the peer-led workshop participant survey reported that they strongly or somewhat agreed that the workshops helped them understand the different ways of communicating both agreement (35 or 90%, Figure 3) and disagreement (34 or 87%, Figure 4) when it comes to consent. 33 respondents (39%) strongly or somewhat agreed that the workshop helped them to have a better understanding of ways to respectfully and safely respond if someone communicates a sexual boundary to them (Figure 5).

Figure 3 Peer-led workshop participant survey responses to the scale question ‘Participating in the workshop has helped me to have a better understanding of ways people can communicate that they are consenting to sex’, by gender.

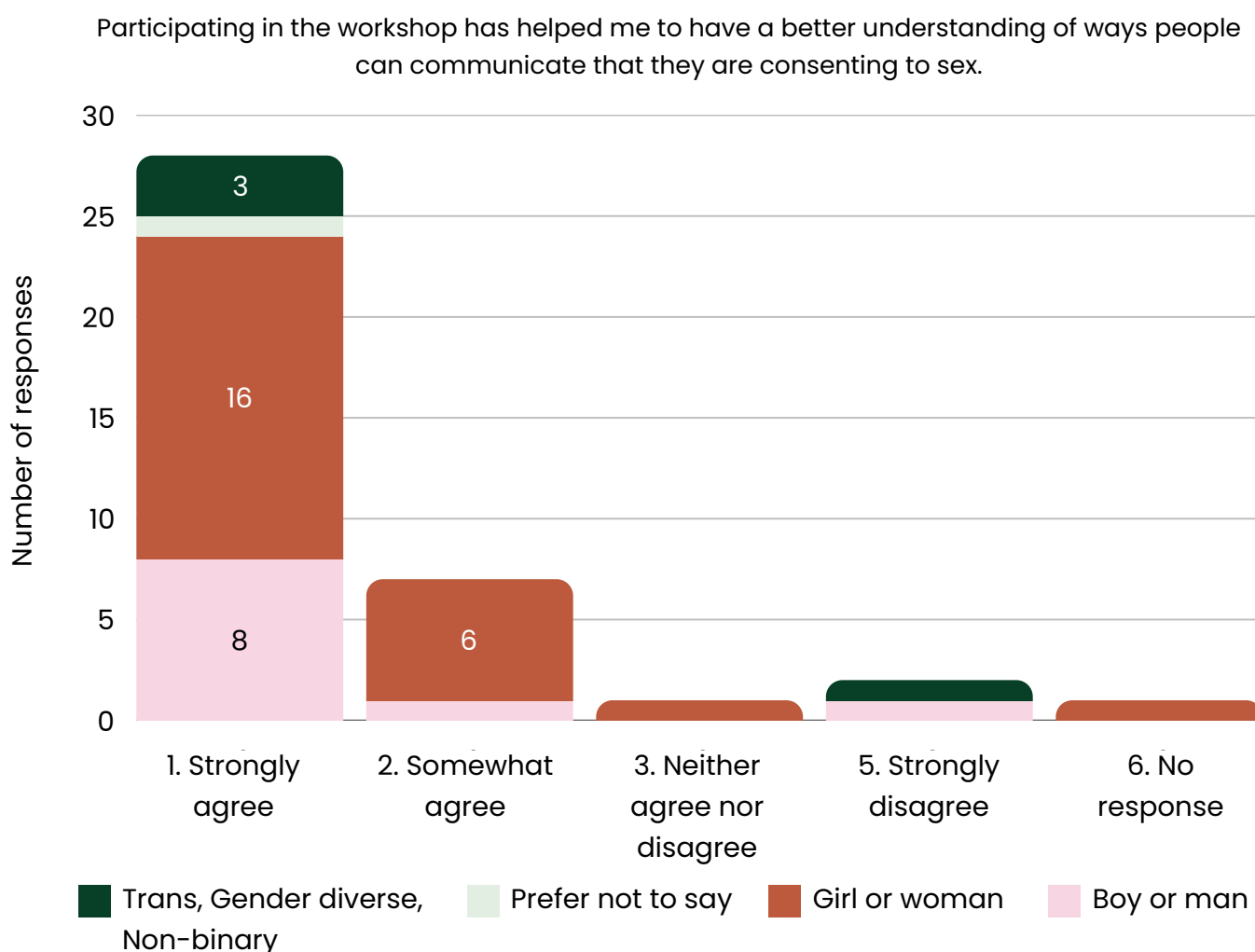


Figure 4 Peer-led workshop participant survey responses to the scale question 'Participating in the workshop has helped me to have a better understanding of ways people can communicate that they are NOT consenting to sex', by gender.

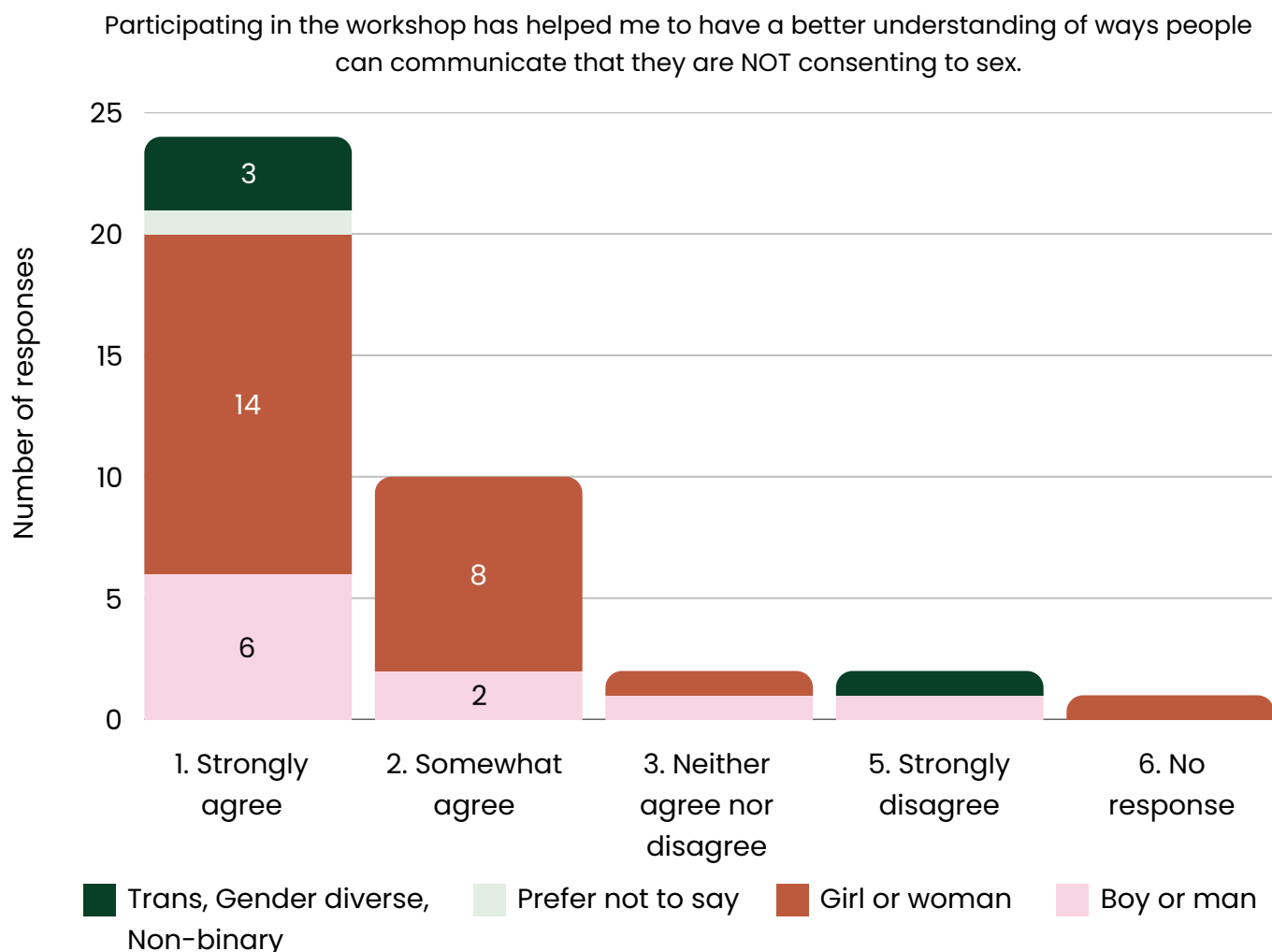
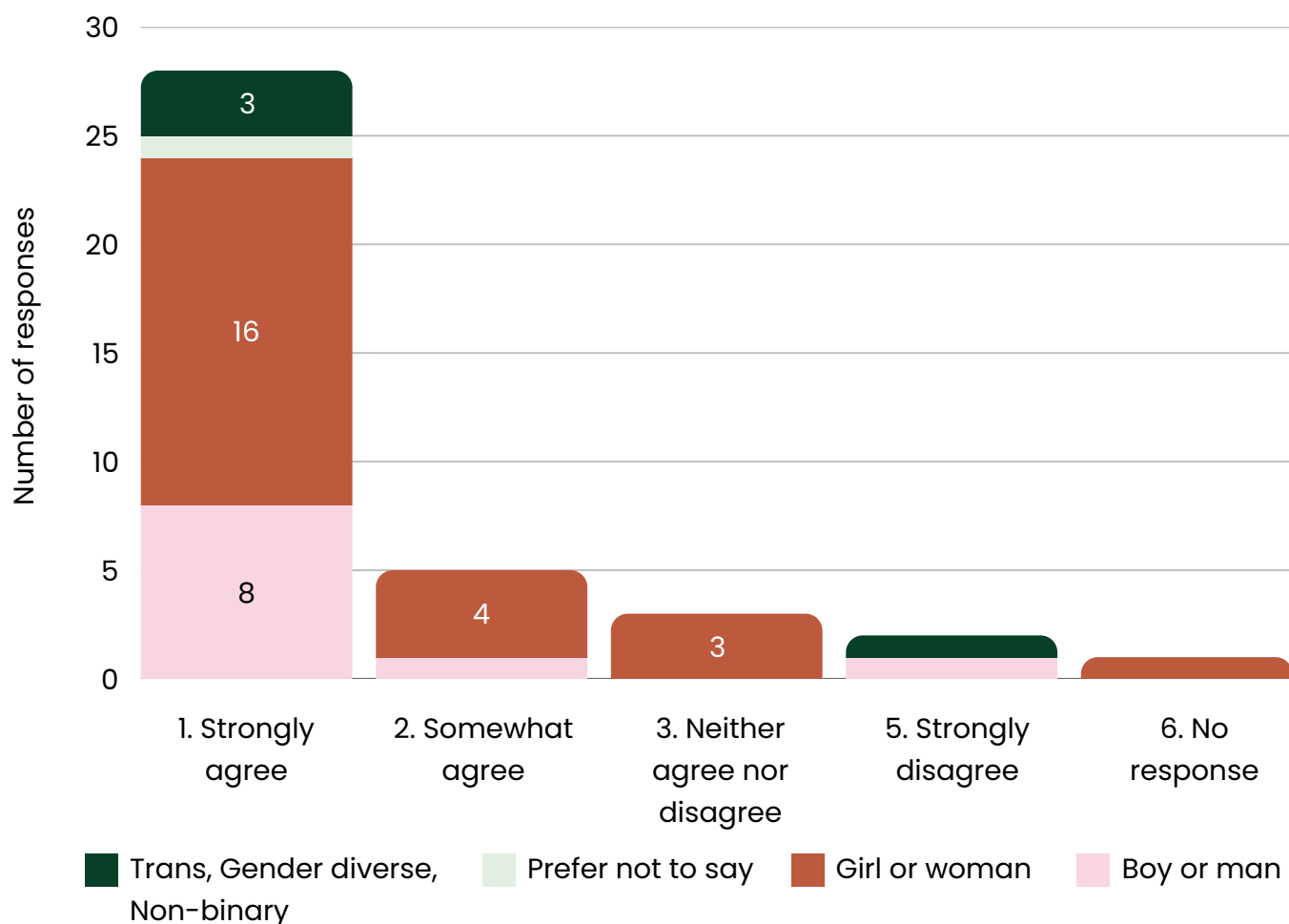


Figure 5 Peer-led workshop participant survey responses to the scale question 'Participating in the workshop has helped me to have a better understanding of ways to respectfully and safely respond if someone communicates a sexual boundary with me', by gender.

Participating in the workshop has helped me to have a better understanding of ways to respectfully and safely respond if someone communicates a sexual boundary with me.



Increased confidence

Finding: Young people have increased confidence and capacity to have conversations about affirmative consent, sex and pleasure

Analysis of the YAG baseline and endline surveys show an increase in YAG members' confidence to have conversations with peers about affirmative consent, pleasure and intimacy, and to identify and challenge peers' concerning attitudes, myths and misconceptions about consent. The endline survey results also showed that the timing of YAG members' most recent conversations about consent, pleasure and sexual violence were typically in the last week, more recent than in the baseline survey. Overall, the YAG surveys show that the confidence of YAG members to engage peers in conversations about the topics covered, including sharing resources, supports and referrals available, and the frequency of these conversations, increased across the project. These findings were consistent with the interim and final focus groups.

Key themes that emerged from the interim evaluation focus groups show that from the early stages of project implementation, Taking ACtion increased the YAG members' confidence to discuss pleasure, consent and sex. Both staff and YAG interim focus group participants highlighted how YAG members were feeling excited and empowered about what they had learned through the project, and sharing the information with a broad range of people in their communities including friends, family and co-workers. As shared by focus group participants:

We've heard throughout both the training and the co-design from each of the YAG members, 'Oh, since the last time we met, that was so interesting. I've talked to my partner, my mom, my best friend'—whoever it is about that—'and we chatted about it'. And to me that speaks to comfortability, confidence, exactly what we are hoping to get out of this.

Staff interim focus group participant

One of the big things for me is that we've had our discussions that have, I really feel like I'm going to say it a lot, but, excited and inspired by it that [I] have gone home and been calling people and talking about it, continuing the conversation which then further solidifies what I think and the things that I want to learn. It really highlights what we're passionate about and what we want to learn more about.

YAG interim focus group participant

This finding was reaffirmed in the final YAG evaluation focus group. Participants discussed how one of the most significant changes to come from the project was their increased confidence to start conversations with people in their lives. They reflected that they had gained crucial communication skills that allowed them not only to share information, but also to navigate, lead, facilitate and hold conversations on affirmative consent and correct misinformation. As noted by focus group participants:

I think confidence and communication style as well. Learning more ways to communicate. I feel like having a base to work off to start those conversations and that kind of thing, and then being able to do it without that script is the part that's worked for me really well. Starting with it being a bit more structured and a bit more like, this is what we're going to teach or this is what we want the outcomes to be today, kind of stuff. And then I can have those conversations outside of that context more easily now.

YAG final focus group participant

The other part of it is fully learning how to teach people or how to talk to people about stuff rather than just knowing it yourself. But having that ability to talk to other people about it is so helpful in all areas really. And not just with the knowledge that I've gained here, but knowledge in other areas too.

YAG final focus group participant

YAG members also reflected on how the knowledge and understanding they gained increased their confidence and capacity to have conversations with their peers. As one focus group participant shared:

I feel like I look back to when I first showed up here, I thought that I knew a lot, but I did not. And I think feeling empowered in the knowledge that you learn here gave the ability for me to actually give a small bit of education to people that I knew.

YAG final focus group participant

Additionally, participants in the final YAG evaluation focus group reported that people in their social and professional networks were seeking them out for advice relating to gender-based violence, affirmative consent, and the affirmative consent legislation. This includes people working in other settings with young people, such as education and youth work settings. As one focus group participant shared:

My boss at work was talking to a young person who's going through a lot and she asked me about how she'd handled some disclosures and things like that from her, and I was like, 'Wow, that's great that she knows that I do this'. And then she was like, 'You have some knowledge on this, let me ask you'. And feeling like, yeah, I do know. I do have some knowledge there and understanding as well, which was really great. I feel like it's just led to so many good conversations with lots of people, whether they've brought it up or I've brought it up.

YAG final focus group participant

These findings indicate that Taking ACtion is having an impact and reach beyond its direct influence through the networks of YAG members. Not only has Taking ACtion supported young people to develop the confidence and capacity to have conversations, but these conversations are already happening. This is both because YAG members are leading them, and because they are being sought out for the expertise.

Moreover, participants in the final YAG focus group spoke about the profound positive impact that this increased confidence and capacity to have conversations about affirmative consent, pleasure and sex was having on their personal lives and relationships. As focus group participants shared:

It just happened that the project lined up with when I got into the relationship. So it was just really helpful to have that, of feeling secure in those conversations of no, I do know what I'm talking about, even though I haven't really had to do that before, like knowing what I'm talking about.

YAG final focus group participant

I think I'm trying to put it into words, but I feel like for my personal life with my friends, my sister's younger than me, all of her friends and everything, I and family, just having that extra bit of protection for them, you think an extra safeguard to have for your peers has been pretty cool. That's probably my biggest change.

YAG final focus group participant

Findings from the final YAG focus group indicate that the community-building aspect of Taking ACtion (discussed further below) has supported the confidence of YAG members to have these conversations. YAG focus group participants reported that they wanted to provide extra support to the young people in their lives, and that knowing other members of the group would speak up in unsafe situations supported them to speak up and call out behaviour when they were feeling unsafe.

Young people who participated in the peer-led workshops also reported increases in confidence and capacity to have conversations about affirmative consent, sex and pleasure. Most young people who completed the peer-led workshop participant survey reported that they strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that they had increased confidence to have conversations about consent with peers (32% or 82%, Figure 6) and to challenge peers when they repeat myths or misconceptions about consent (31% or 79%, Figure 7) after participating in workshops. Like previous outcomes findings, the positive increases are for young people of all genders.

The peer-led workshop participant survey also showed that workshop participants felt more comfortable and confident having conversations with their partners about consent. Due to changes in reporting requirements, the survey questions regarding capacity to have conversations with partners were changed during the project. The following responses were reported for each question:

- 94% (16; n=17) strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that as a result of the workshop, they would feel more comfortable having conversations about consent with their sexual partners.
- 68% (15; n=22) strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that participating in the workshop increased their confidence to ask questions about sexuality and relationships with someone they trust.
- 73% (16; n=22) strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that participating in the workshop increased their confidence to explain preferences about relationships and sexuality with current or future partners.

While promising, this self-reported confidence at the end of the workshops should be interpreted with caution as there was no behaviour focused data collected. This means that the impact on behaviour after participating in the workshop (i.e., having conversations) was not measured.



Figure 6 Peer-led workshop participant survey responses to the scale question 'Participating in the workshop has increased my confidence to have conversations about affirmative consent with my peers', by gender.

Participating in the workshop has increased my confidence to have conversations about affirmative consent with my peers.

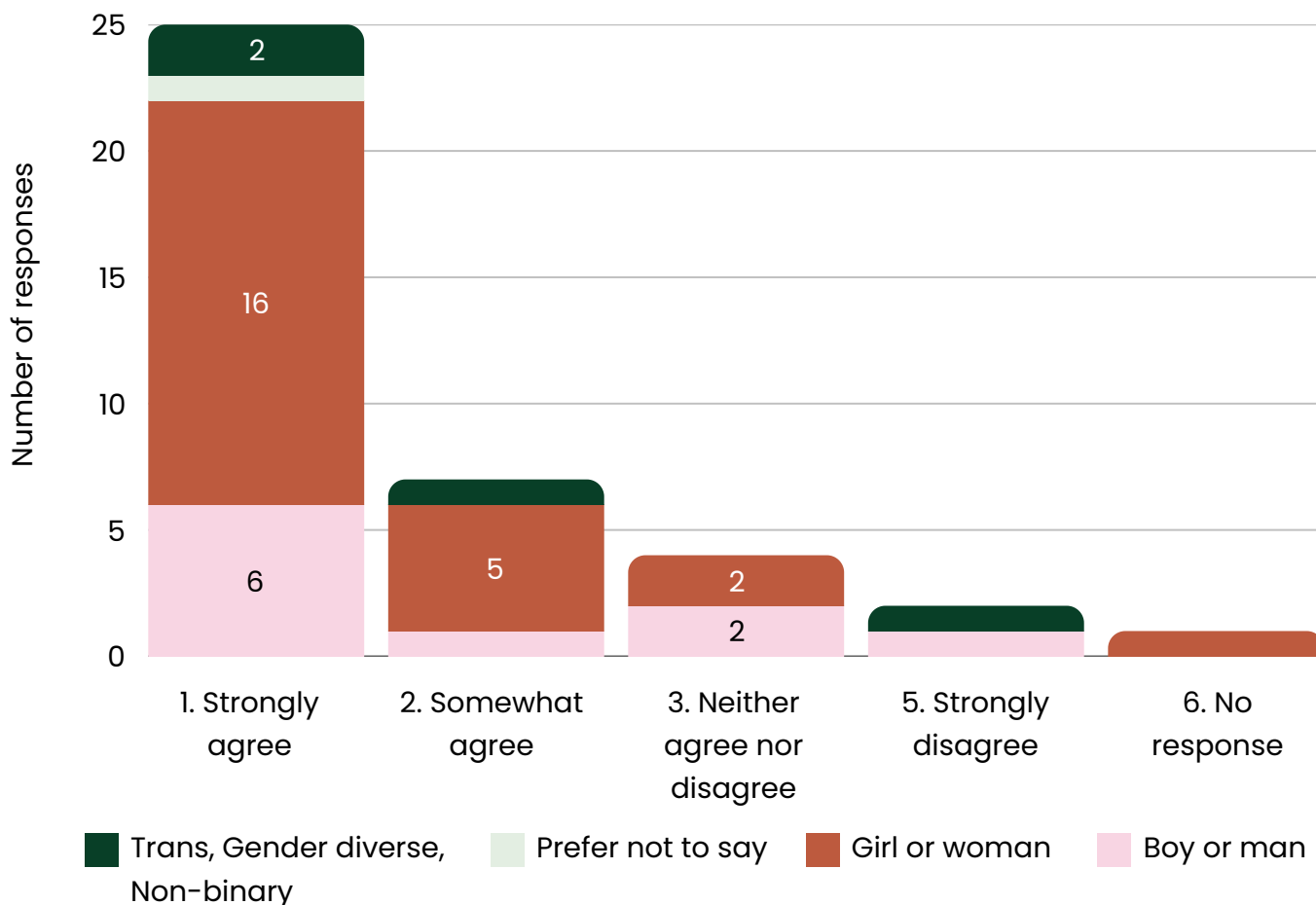
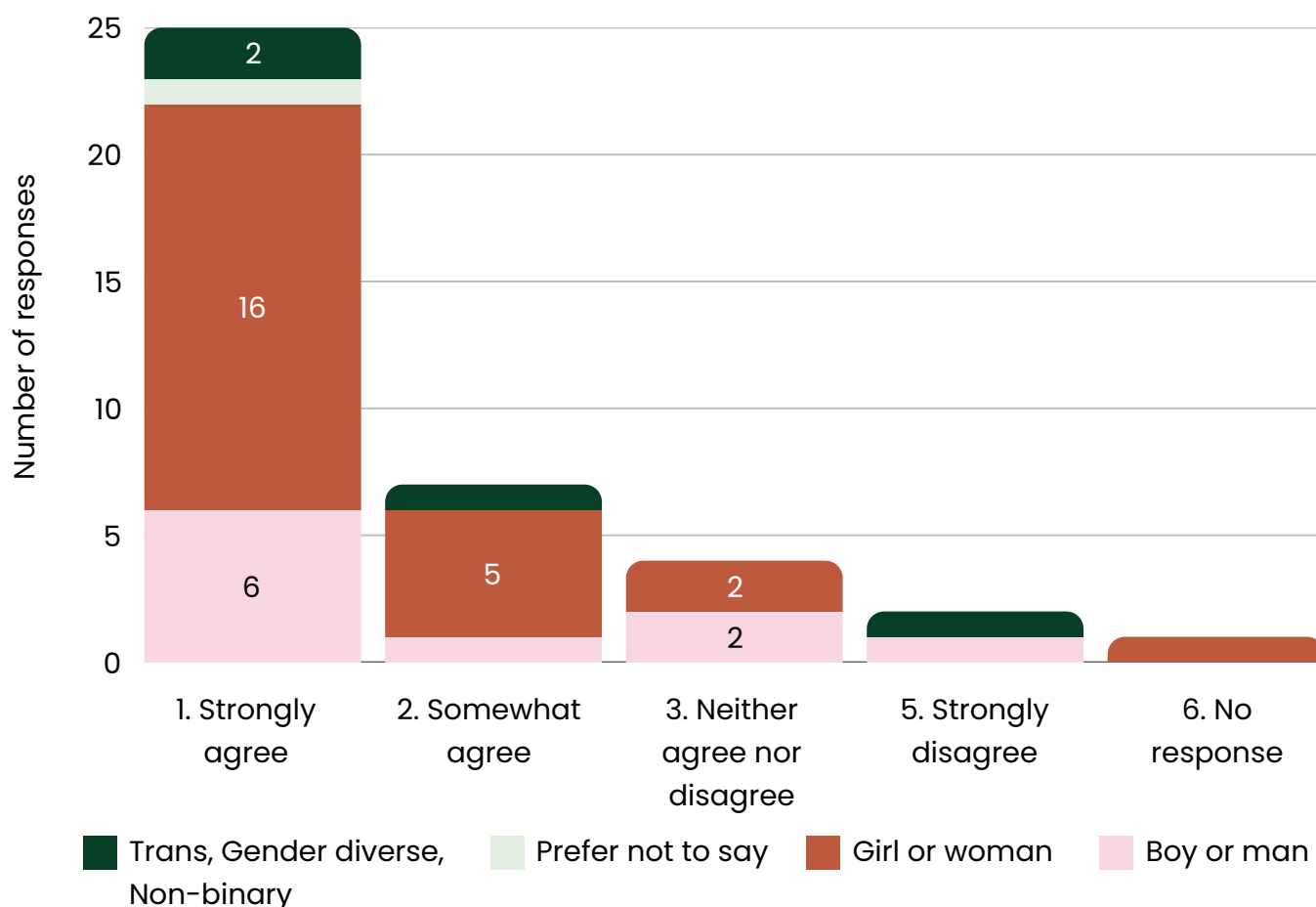


Figure 7 Peer-led workshop participant survey responses to the scale question 'Participating in the workshop has made me more confident challenging my peers when I hear them repeat myths or misconceptions about consent', by gender.

Participating in the workshop has made me more confident challenging my peers when I hear them repeat myths or misconceptions about consent.



Positive impact of the partnership

Finding: The partnership has resulted in changes at a practice level among project staff and increased organisational confidence in the subject area

Findings from the final project staff focus group indicate that Taking Action has resulted in changes at a practice level among project staff. This ranged from increased knowledge and skills working with young people, to increased organisational confidence in holistic approaches to preventing gender-based and sexual violence that integrate sexual health and pleasure.

Project staff reported the benefits of learning from each other across a range of areas, including skills that support genuine co-design and peer-led approaches such as an openness to learning. Project staff also reflected that staff involved in the project's management and delivery had developed confidence and skills in project and partnership management, as well as in their capacity to have conversations in their personal lives about affirmative consent. This change was noted particularly in early career staff. As a focus group participants shared:

I've learned a lot about managing partnerships and obviously still got a lot to learn, but this was the first partnership that I've kind of been a manager in where I didn't feel like we were positioned as the experts.

Project staff final focus group participant

This demonstrates the importance of cross-disciplinary, partnership approaches that enable a project's benefits to occur beyond the primary intended audience, and of having supportive teams that enable the growth and development of all staff, especially those in early career roles.

Project staff focus group participants also discussed the historical aversion of the women's health sector to talking about sex, particularly in a sex-positive and pleasure focused way and as a part of gender-based violence prevention, and how this project has seen a shift in attitudes and increasing confidence within organisations and a desire to explore further opportunities to integrate these approaches. As was shared:

Somebody outside the organisation has commented about how women's health organisations really need to get more comfortable about talking about sex. You know, and I just feel like, that's a phenomenal kind of opportunity that we do have and [can] own that story... And I think without this project there'd be no confidence, or limited confidence.

Project staff final focus group participant

Unanticipated outcomes

Finding: Taking ACtion has had positive unanticipated outcomes including community building and professional development

Community building

A key theme emerging from the final evaluation focus groups with YAG members and project staff was community building, with findings suggesting that this was an unanticipated but crucial outcome of Taking ACtion. YAG participants at the final evaluation focus group spoke about their new community as one of the most significant changes to come from the project. They reflected that this gave them energy and had also supported them to develop professional networks. As one focus group participant reflected:

The community aspect has been amazing...And then getting to meet the people that we delivered workshops to as well. And the people that I've talked about it in my personal life and in my professional life and the connections that I feel like I've made to people through being involved with Banksia and being involved with WHIN and all of that community has been such a highlight of this for me.

YAG final focus group participant

Project staff at the final evaluation group similarly spoke about the importance of building the community around the YAG and other young people who are interested in and working in areas related to affirmative consent, sexual pleasure, sexual health and gender-based violence prevention to support them to carry this work forward. It was noted that engaging other groups of young people would require different project approaches. As one focus group participant emphasised:

If you are like building the capacity, confidence, and community around those who are already having these conversations and are at the forefront generating change, there's nothing wrong with doing that because you need to keep them going to keep pushing at the front to freaking drag the snowball along. Absolutely. Like that's okay. Like it's just about knowing that that's what you're doing and not trying to present that work as engaging super marginalised young men who've never thought it, who are at risk of perpetrating. Different approaches.

Project staff final focus group participant

In the final YAG evaluation focus group, the conversation also highlighted the importance of community building not just as an outcome from the project but also an enabler that had built the confidence and capacity of young people to have conversations about affirmative consent. YAG members reflected that they initiated conversations around affirmative consent and called out non-consensual behaviour to strengthen the support for young people in their lives or knowing that project staff or other participants would back them up if they were also present. As a focus group participant shared:

Especially if you're out for drinks and sometimes things will happen slightly and you can actually think it's really not okay [and] having the voice to do that. I feel like before that I definitely would've just stayed quiet cause I wouldn't feel confident in saying that. Especially knowing you girls and Tash and Megan would absolutely, if you guys were there, you would just back me up. So it's kind of like in spirit, they're there supporting what you're seeing.

YAG final focus group participant

Ultimately, this finding emphasises the importance of community building to create supportive and enabling environments for young people to engage in community mobilisation and activism; to support young people to have a voice, to avoid isolation, burn out and attrition; and to achieve systems and cultural change.

Professional development of YAG members

Findings from evaluation focus groups indicate that the Taking ACtion project has supported the professional development of YAG members. YAG evaluation focus group participants reflected that their involvement in the project had led them to consider further professional work in the field, strengthened their professional networks, and helped them to develop skills in other areas such as communication and leadership. As noted by a focus group participant:

I feel like for me as well, personally career wise, I think this has been really impactful and how I interact with young people and kind of interacting with community generally and thinking about what I want to do in my life and what kind of jobs I'd like to have and things like that. And having the support and people to ask about and connections and stuff like that has been really, really helpful.

YAG final focus group participant

This reflects the impact of projects like Taking ACtion, which can have benefits for participants beyond the life and outside the scope of defined and anticipated project parameters. It may also reflect the impact of utilising peer-led and co-design approaches that recognise young people not only as the intended audience for a project, but as individuals who can be actively involved in projects as professionals, and the potential of projects outcomes to be realised through the networks of all involved – not just the intended participant.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE INITIATIVES

RELATIONSHIPS ARE THE FOUNDATION

The success of the Taking Action project underscores the importance of building strong relationships at multiple levels. Relationships between young people and project staff, between young people, between project staff, between project staff and stakeholders, and between partner organisations more broadly have been crucial for project success. Relationships built on trust and mutual respect create safe, inclusive and engaging environments. These environments allow for the genuine, honest, and open conversations that are essential for addressing the stigma and shame surrounding sexual pleasure and consent. These types of relationships take time to develop and project plans need to reflect this.

The project's co-design approach, which centred the voices and experiences of young people, was particularly effective in fostering these relationships and ensuring that the project was responsive to the needs and preferences of its participants. By genuinely valuing young people as partners in the project and the diversity in their thoughts and experiences, it created a space where it was safe to explore complex concepts in supportive and non-judgemental ways. This is important for building the confidence and capacity of young people to have conversations about affirmative consent, sex and pleasure. The strength of the relationships between project staff and YAG members meant that young people felt safe to share suggestions for improvement or ways that their full participation could be supported. This allowed staff to be responsive to the needs of young people, enabling longer term engagement.

Developing or strengthening long-term relationships with stakeholders builds trust and facilitates collaboration. Drawing on existing WHIN and BGCS relationships and networks was vital to promoting Taking Action project activities, building interest in the project and engaging with young people. However, existing relationships were not sufficient to secure the targeted number of workshop bookings. Investing in relationships with stakeholders enables conversations about concerns, risks and resistance to be transparent and for tailored strategies that address any identified issues to be developed. Planning for stakeholder engagement and relationship development should start early to allow sufficient time given the social stigma around these topics.

The relationships between project staff and partner organisations were key enablers of the project, however areas for improvement were identified in the evaluation. Formalising and actively managing the organisational partnership through well-articulated governance mechanisms that involve senior leaders could strengthen the relationship between organisations and reduce reliance on individual staff relationships. This is particularly relevant in the context of sharing organisational resources, infrastructure and policies, as was the case in this project.

UTILISE COMPREHENSIVE, SEX-POSITIVE, PLEASURE INCLUSIVE APPROACHES

The evaluation findings highlight the importance of comprehensive, sex-positive, and pleasure-inclusive approaches to consent education. These approaches not only increase knowledge and understanding of affirmative consent but also promote positive attitudes towards relationships, sexual health and pleasure. By integrating these elements, the project was able to engage young people in meaningful discussions about consent, respect, and mutual pleasure, which are critical for preventing sexual violence and promoting respectful relationships. The inclusion of diverse perspectives, particularly those of LGBTIQA+ individuals, further enhanced the relevance and impact of the project. Future initiatives should address the diverse needs of young people, centring those from marginalised communities.

Integrating consent education within comprehensive sexuality and relationships education rather than isolating it was also an important feature of the Taking ACTION approach. Ensuring a comprehensive, holistic approach realistically reflects how young people experience relationships and sexuality and is important for relevance and engagement. Similarly, framing the legal aspects of sex and consent within ethical sex approaches that focus on mutual respect, pleasure, and the absence of coercion resonates with young people. This shifts away from a negative, risk-focused approach and emphasises instead the strengths of young people and their capacity to build the skills for practicing consent.

Future initiatives should adopt comprehensive, sex-positive, and pleasure-inclusive approaches to consent education that include skill development, including communication and negotiation, to maximise their impact on young people's knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours.

PRIORITISE INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Through the project planning and implementation, inclusion and accessibility were prioritised. Examples of this include hybrid and online delivery, the language used in resources, venue selection, offering multiple opportunities and formats for engagement, offering reimbursement for travel or internet expenses, and resource design (i.e. font, colour contrast, audio described video). While accessibility and inclusion were not clearly identified as key themes in the evaluation, this may be a result of the evaluation structure and questions. It may also be possible that these themes were not identified in the evaluation because they were embedded in the project approach and the project was responsive to the needs of individuals to ensure all people could participate fully, meaning that participants didn't recognise these themes as separate to the project generally.

While there was some attrition of YAG members due to unforeseen personal circumstances, there was a high-level of ongoing engagement from a small committed and enthusiastic core group. Given the diversity of young people engaged in the YAG (including LGBTIQ+ young people and young people with disabilities), their ongoing engagement and their positive experience indicate that the efforts to prioritise inclusion and accessibility were successful.

Future initiatives should prioritise flexibility and responsiveness, plan for universal access, and allocate budget to support accessibility.

PEER-LED APPROACHES AND CO-DESIGN REQUIRE TIME, SKILL AND RESOURCING

The peer-led and co-design approaches used in the Taking ACTION project were key to its success but also required significant time, skill, and resources. These approaches ensured that the project was relevant and impactful by actively involving young people in the design and delivery of project activities. However, the intensive nature of these approaches also posed challenges, including the need for high-level facilitation skills and the ability to be adaptive and responsive. Key to the success of these approaches was the commitment of project staff to genuinely work with, not for, young people which means sharing power, practicing curiosity, mutual learning and letting go of pre-conceived ideas of how things 'ought' to be done and the idea of being an 'expert'.

Implementing these approaches requires tailored YAG recruitment strategies that resonate with specific audiences. Recruitment would benefit from engaging young people in developing and disseminating materials to ensure relevance and appeal. Implementation also requires thorough consideration of the most appropriate model for engagement and remuneration to sustain participation and contributions from young people. While there is not a one-size-fits-all solution, the model chosen should reflect the project's expectation of involvement and time commitment.

Another important element of successful peer-led and co-design approaches is planning for capability building and ongoing support for young people that is adaptable and responsive. The needs of young people are highly variable depending on project activities and the skills and experience of the young people involved. Delivering training to the YAG at the beginning of their engagement meant that a shared understanding was developed and aimed to develop a sense of equity and safety amongst YAG members. i.e., that each person had access to the same information, had important perspectives to contribute and were valued for their contributions. This was an important foundation for the co-design processes and the fostering of positive group dynamics and peer relationships. Early delivery of tailored capability building sessions is an important consideration for future initiatives.

Adaptable and responsive capability building and support is particularly important for the implementation of structured peer education initiatives like the Taking ACtion workshops. For example, YAG members required additional time and support to practice and prepare for workshop delivery due to infrequent delivery of peer educator workshops and the high-level facilitation skills required to deliver structured group education sessions. It was important to be responsive to this need for successful implementation, even though it wasn't initially accounted for in the workplan. The delivery of formal, structured peer education initiatives (e.g., workshops with peer facilitators) requires more intensive support and resourcing than building the capabilities and confidence of young people for informal peer education (e.g., conversations with their existing peers and networks). As evidenced in the evaluation, both formal and informal peer education are valuable for increasing knowledge and supportive attitudes about affirmative consent, sex and pleasure. Future initiatives would benefit from clearly defining the model of peer education that is being undertaken and considering the level of resourcing required for successful implementation (e.g., time, remuneration, capability building, supervision, debriefing, ongoing staff support).

By centring the voices and experiences of young people, the project has not only strengthened relevancy and effectiveness of project activities and outputs, it has successfully increased knowledge and confidence of participants and also fostered a supportive community that can drive ongoing change. Considering ways to measure the impact of community building and the longitudinal impacts that can result from peer-led youth initiatives would be beneficial and an important addition to the evidence base.

ENGAGE ADULT INFLUENCERS

The evaluation found that social stigma was a key challenge that impacted project implementation. Efforts to reduce the stigma surrounding sexual pleasure, consent and young people are crucial for increasing young people's engagement and participation in education initiatives. These efforts need to be targeted across the community, not only at young people. For example, to address the considerable barriers encountered when trying to deliver workshops in community and youth settings complementary engagement strategies targeting parents, carers, the broader community and the workforce are necessary. These engagement initiatives need to be properly resourced and planned for to be implemented in the breadth and depth required.

Although not the explicit focus of Taking ACTION, it is clear that engagement of key adult influencers in the lives of young people is an important strategy to reduce barriers to young people's engagement in education initiatives and to support their ongoing development of knowledge, attitudes, confidence, and capacity to practice consent.

PARTNERSHIPS ARE VALUABLE AND REQUIRE ACTIVE MANAGEMENT

The partnership between WHIN and BGCS was a significant enabler for the project's implementation and success. The complementary skills, expertise, and networks of the partner organisations were important for reaching the young people and delivering high-quality project activities.

Creating opportunities for project staff from partner organisations to co-locate fostered collaboration and communication. Implementing project management tools and a regular meeting schedule with standing agendas also practically supported partnership working. The strength of the partnership and relationship between project staff members facilitated the flexibility required to continue progressing the project and overcome some challenges encountered.

The evaluation highlighted the value of active management of genuine partnerships, including clear governance structures, regular communication including between senior leaders, and transparency about diverse organisational policies and risk appetites. Focusing on these aspects in partnerships will enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of similar projects that rely on the close exchange of knowledge, skills and resources. Open and transparent conversations to establish shared processes and understandings at the beginning of the project are important for developing a resilient partnership.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation of the Taking Action project has provided valuable insights into the implementation and outcomes of the affirmative consent education initiative. Taking Action has demonstrated significant success in promoting affirmative consent and respectful relationships among young people. Through a comprehensive, sex-positive, and pleasure-inclusive approach, the project has effectively increased young people's knowledge and understanding of affirmative consent legislation, strengthened supportive attitudes, and enhanced their confidence and capacity to engage in conversations about consent, sex, and pleasure. The project's co-design and peer-led approaches were critical enablers of its success, fostering genuine engagement and ownership among young people who participated.

The evaluation findings underscore the importance of comprehensive, inclusive, and participatory approaches to consent education. Future initiatives should prioritise accessibility, invest in peer-led and co-design approaches, and actively manage partnerships to maximise their impact. Engaging key adult influencers and addressing social stigma are also crucial for sustaining and expanding the reach of consent education initiatives.

Based on the evaluation findings, the following recommendations are proposed to further strengthen and expand the impact of consent, sexuality, and relationships education initiatives for young people.



Artwork by Morgan (she/her)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS IMPLEMENTING CONSENT, SEXUALITY AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION INITIATIVES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Relationships are the foundation

- Develop and implement stakeholder engagement strategies that reflect the time and resourcing required to support relationship development and build trust. Include plans for proactively addressing concerns around risk and resistance and backlash.

Utilise comprehensive, sex-positive, pleasure inclusive approaches

- Utilise comprehensive rights-based, sex-positive, pleasure inclusive approaches to consent, sexuality and relationships education initiatives and in line with evidence informed best practice.
- Embed consent education in comprehensive sexuality and relationships education initiatives rather than isolating consent from the broader context.
- Contextualise legislation in ethical sex approaches that focus on respecting sexual partners, mutual pleasure, the absence of coercion and pressure, and interrogating power dynamics.

Prioritise inclusion and accessibility

- Incorporate intersectionality to address the needs of young people, including those from marginalised communities.
- Prioritise accessibility and inclusion in planning, design and implementation of initiatives, including allocation of budget and flexibility to be responsive to needs as they are identified.

Peer-led approaches and co-design require time, skill and resourcing

- Invest in peer-led approaches and co-design in all youth consent, sexuality and relationships education initiatives to strengthen accessibility, inclusion, relevance and impact.
- Appropriately remunerate young people for their time, expertise and contributions to co-design and peer-led initiatives and consider the most appropriate model for engagement and remuneration that is equitable and reflects the level of engagement.
- Plan initiatives to allow for sufficient time and resourcing for peer-led approaches and co-design and ensure that project staff have the skillset required.
- Tailor messages for recruiting young people for peer-led and co-design opportunities for specific audiences to reflect their motivations, priorities and preferences, and ideally craft messages in consultation with young people.

Engage adult influencers

- Explore opportunities to engage parents, carers and other key adult influencers in the lives of young people to reinforce education messages and normalise conversations about consent.
- Explore opportunities to implement whole-of-setting approaches to sexual violence prevention and youth consent, sexuality and relationships education in youth and community settings.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS DELIVERING INITIATIVES IN FORMALISED PARTNERSHIP

Partnerships are valuable and require active management

- Have a rationale for partner selection that considers complementary skills, expertise and networks that have been identified as key enablers for successful project implementation and outcomes.
- Explore organisational risk appetite, policies, procedures and ways of working during the establishment of the partnership to identify alignment and gaps, and develop a shared plan for partnership implementation.
- Create opportunities for project staff from partner organisations to co-locate if working in an in-person environment, with consideration of relevant policies and procedures for staff wellbeing, support and management.
- Formalise the partnership, for example via a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and include detail of roles, responsibilities, partnership review schedule (including MOU), and intellectual property.
- Actively manage the partnership at operational and strategic levels with a shared plan that includes involvement of senior leadership for management of human resources, organisational alignment, strategic planning and sustainability.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDERS

Relationships are the foundation

- Fund longer term projects to account for the additional barriers to engagement created by the stigma associated with young people, sex and consent, and the relationship development required.

Utilise comprehensive, sex-positive, pleasure inclusive approaches

- Fund longitudinal studies of program participants to understand how outcomes are sustained over time and to identify long-term impacts.

Peer-led approaches and co-design require time, skill and resourcing

- Prioritise funding for initiatives that utilise co-design and peer-led approaches and ensure the funding reflects the time and resourcing required to implement these approaches.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: RATIONALE AND EVIDENCE FOR PROJECT APPROACHES

The Taking ACtion project was grounded in evidence-informed approaches which influenced the design and implementation of project activities. Below is an overview of the rationale and evidence for the key elements that underpinned the project approach.

Diversity, inclusion and accessibility

People are diverse and so is sex and sexuality. Consent, sexuality and relationships education initiatives should be designed and implemented with an inclusive view of relationships and sexuality and ensure diverse communities are represented (Burton, Rawstorne, Watchirs-Smith, Nathan & Carter, 2021). This approach should be based in a broad understanding of sex activity and sexuality, reinforce the value of diversity and actively work to challenge discrimination and biases. Young people should be able to see themselves and their experiences represented in the content. If they are not represented, it can lead to feeling 'abnormal' which can increase shame and stigma and decrease confidence in the relevance of the information and in help seeking behaviours (Waling, Farrugia & Fraser, 2023).

There is need for tailored education initiatives that meet the specific needs of different groups, particularly those who experience marginalisation and those disproportionately impacted by sexual violence. However, all initiatives should be inclusive of diverse communities and work actively to be represent and be accessible for diverse experiences on the basis of gender, sexuality (sexual identity), disability, ethnicity, culture, class and other intersecting identities.

Ethical sex

An ethical approach to sex means focusing on respecting sexual partners, mutual pleasure, absence of coercion and pressure and developing the skills needed to communicate and negotiate ones own sexual desires and boundaries and to respect those of others (Fileborn, 2016). Utilising an ethical sex approach includes elements like:

- Caring for self (understanding and communicating wants, needs, boundaries, desires, identity, sexuality, pleasure)
- Caring for partners (respecting partners wants, needs, boundaries, desires, identity, sexuality, pleasure)
- Developing skills to communicate, negotiate and articulate desires and boundaries including safer sex practices
- Having awareness and understanding of power dynamics
- Having an equal say
- Challenging shame, stigma and social norms that create a hierarchy of sexual value that views practices or identities as inherently good or bad, acceptable or unacceptable, valued or worthless.

This approach aims to equip young people with the understanding and skills required to practice consent and build and maintain equitable and respectful relationships throughout their lives.

Peer-led approaches and co-design

Peer-led means project activities were run by people with same or similar identities or lived experiences as the intended audience wherever possible. The peer-led approach focuses on promoting understanding and skills through shared experiences, creating an environment for more open communication and reducing barriers to engagement. Peer-led approaches mean decision making is led by peers (for Taking Action, young people) and professionals take a support role.

Co-design means collaboratively designing services and solutions using person-centred approaches to develop practical, real-world solutions (Burkett, 2016). Co-design means that young people become active partners and leaders in designing and developing resources and other project activities. Co-design aims to make the services, resources or other interventions developed more relevant and effective and meet the needs of the people who will be using them.

Peer-led approaches and co-design have a foundation in working with people, not for them, aiming to ensure the diverse experiences of those impacted are central in design and implementation of initiatives, and ultimately create greater impact. Peer-led and co-design approaches mean decision making is shared, power dynamics are acknowledged, and there are constant efforts to work towards equitable power sharing between people all people involved.

Primary prevention of sexual violence

Sexual violence is a form of gender-based violence. *Change the Story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia* (Our Watch, 2021), is a robust synthesis of evidence on what drives violence against women and what works to prevent it. Change the Story details the strong and consistent association between gender inequality and violence against women and identifies the factors that most consistently predict men's violence against women at a population level and explain its gendered patterns. These factors are called the gendered drivers of violence against women, they are:

1. Condoning of violence against women.
2. Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public
3. and private life.
4. Rigid gender stereotyping and dominant forms of masculinity.
Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control.

In addition to the gendered drivers of violence against women, Change the Story articulates several factors which are specifically linked to men's use of sexual violence. These include:

- adherence to forms of masculinity that commonly emphasise control and dominance
- performances of strength and toughness through violence outside the home
- peer pressure and social expectations that men should never say no to sex and should have many sexual partners
- peer pressure to pursue sex with women in coercive and aggressive ways, and talk about women as sexual objects
- prior exposure to violence against a parent, or emotional, physical and sexual abuse during childhood
- current exposure to violent pornography.

Primary prevention initiatives aim to address the underlying gendered drivers of violence to ultimately prevent violence before it occurs. While gaps remain in the evidence for the primary prevention of sexual violence (Hooker et al, 2021), existing frameworks and emerging evidence are important foundations for all initiatives that aim to prevent sexual violence.

Sex positivity and pleasure

There is a lot of shame and stigma that surround sex and sexuality which can make it more difficult for people to access accurate and supportive information. Consent, sexuality and relationships education can often be fear based, focusing on risks and potential negative impacts of sex. This negative focus can further entrench shame and stigma, make it challenging for young people to ask questions and talk openly and honestly about sex and relationships, decrease help-seeking behaviour and contribute to poorer sexual and reproductive health outcomes.

Sex positivity is having a healthy attitude towards sex regardless of engagement in sexual activity. It is understanding that sex and sexuality are part of life, acknowledging the benefits of consensual, pleasurable sex and respectful relationships, and centring autonomy, agency and respecting other people's decisions. A sex positive and pleasure inclusive approach actively challenges shame, stigma and stereotypes, invites open and honest discussions, is non-judgemental and celebrates sexuality. Framing consent from a sex positive and pleasure approach helps the conversation be more holistic, engaging and relevant. A sex positive approach incorporating sexual pleasure can improve sexual health outcomes. Placing pleasure at the centre of safe-sex messaging and affirmative consent education is best practice health promotion, building people's sexual agency and confidence to talk openly about sex ((Burton, Rawstone, Watchirs-Smith, Nathan & Carter, 2021; Zaneva, Philpott, Singh, Larsson & Gonsalves, 2022).

Sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR)

Sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) are the integration of human rights into our understanding of sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing (World Health Organization, n.d; Sexual Rights Initiative, n.d.), for example the right to:

- comprehensive education on sexuality and reproduction
- choose if, when, how and how often to have children
- live without coercion, discrimination or violence
- access to accessible sexual and reproductive health services and support.

SRHR are essential to the right of all people to attain the highest standard of health and wellbeing and are integral to gender equality and social and economic development. Taking a SRHR approach includes raising awareness and understanding of one's own rights and the responsibility to uphold the rights of others; knowledge and understanding that can empower individuals and communities to advocate for themselves and for those whose rights are violated.

Strengths-based

A strengths-based approach focuses on personal strengths, social and community networks and positive influences. It moves away from focusing on deficits models and focusing exclusively on violence and victimisation, and instead views young people as experts in their own lives and helps them to identify their own strengths and areas for growth. Taking a strengths-based approach means practicing curiosity, asking young people what they know and think, being supportive and non-judgemental and creating hope, motivation and sustainable change, with a focus on empowerment and skill development.

Trauma-informed

Trauma-informed practice is an approach that recognises that trauma is common and that people accessing services and people delivering services may be affected by trauma. Trauma-informed practice is an approach that is holistic, empowering, strengths-focused, collaborative and reflective. It promotes physical, emotional, spiritual and cultural safety (Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, 2022). Trauma-informed practice and services can support people to feel safe, build trust, promote healing and cause no further harm. The core trauma informed principles are safety, trust, choice, collaboration, empowerment and respect for diversity (blueknot, 2019).

APPENDIX 2: THEORY OF CHANGE

Situation: Increasing rates of sexual violence and sexual assault; Victorian Law Reform Commission Report Findings and Recommendations; Legislative reform, the affirmative consent model, and empowering young people to understand consent.

Inputs	Strategies/activities	Outputs	Outcomes (Project Specific)		Long-term
			Short-term	Medium-term	
<p>Program funding</p> <p>Partnership</p> <p>Staff expertise</p> <p>Current research, data and information around consent, pleasure and sexual violence</p> <p>Settings/facilities for events, meetings, and workshops</p> <p>Existing sexual and reproductive health and prevention of gender-based violence resources and training materials</p>	<p>Develop a partnership agreement</p> <p>Scoping and development of project brief</p> <p>Recruitment, training and support of YAG</p> <p>Development of training materials and resources for YAG capacity building</p> <p>Engaging and relationship building with youth groups, sports clubs and other community settings</p> <p>Co-design and develop AC workshops</p> <p>Co-design of multimedia project</p> <p>YAG to plan, organise and deliver Youth Forum</p>	<p>MOU signed by WHIN and BGCC</p> <p>Project meetings held with partner organisations</p> <p>10–15 young people recruited for YAG</p> <p>YAG have group agreement</p> <p>Fortnightly YAG meetings</p> <p>Training materials and resources for YAG upskilling & AC workshops</p> <p>5 workshops in 2023</p> <p>10–15 workshops in 2024</p> <p>1 x Multimedia campaign</p> <p>1 x Youth forum</p>	<p>Partnership facilitates exchange of knowledge, skills and understanding between project partners</p> <p>Increased confidence of Taking Action project partners to undertake work with young people on affirmative consent to prevent sexual violence</p> <p>YAG members and project participants have increased understanding of Victoria's new affirmative consent legislation</p> <p>YAG members and project participants have increased understanding of affirmative consent, pleasure, and forms of sexual violence</p> <p>Young people have improved attitudes on affirmative consent, pleasure, and forms of sexual violence</p> <p>YAG members have increased confidence to have conversations with peers about affirmative consent, pleasure, and forms of sexual violence</p> <p>YAG members have increased awareness and understanding of resources, services, and referral pathways available for sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing and people who have experienced sexual violence</p>	<p>Strengthened practice of project partners in working with young people on affirmative consent to prevent sexual violence</p> <p>Project partners continue to share learnings and undertake advocacy together for systems to support practice around affirmative consent</p> <p>Increased number of peer-led conversations occur in the community around affirmative consent, pleasure, and forms of sexual violence</p> <p>Young people have increased confidence and capacity to engage in consent affirming behaviours</p> <p>YAG members share resources, services, and referral pathways available for sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing and people who have experienced sexual violence</p> <p>Findings from the project contribute to the evidence-base and research on working with young people to promote affirmative consent</p>	<p>Sustained partnership between WHIN and BGCC</p> <p>Changes in consent seeking practice and behaviour for young people (affirmative consent is being practiced).</p> <p>Sexual practices between young people are healthy, safe and consensual.</p> <p>Increased confidence of young people to say no to unwanted sexual encounters</p> <p>Reduced rates of sexual violence</p>
Assumptions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community settings are equipped and ready to engage in the project Young people have capacity to actively participate in the YAG Change is linear and occurs in a logical fashion The COVID recovery context will be stable and will not restrict youth participation in F2F activities and roll out will not be disrupted. 				
External factors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The context of COVID recovery means that practitioners are constantly needing to adapt to changing circumstances Given the project focuses on participatory, action-based approach it is anticipated that the program logic will continue to evolve throughout the life of the project. 				

APPENDIX 3: YOUTH ACTION GROUP BASELINE SURVEY

About the Taking ACtion project

The Taking ACtion project is an affirmative consent project being delivered in partnership by Women's Health in the North (WHIN) and Banksia Garden Community Service (BGCS).

About this survey

WHIN and BGCS are conducting this survey as part of the Taking ACtion project. You are being asked to complete this survey as you are participating in the project as a member of the Youth Advisory Group. We are interested in understanding what you know about consent, pleasure and sexual violence before we begin running training and other project activities with you. This will allow us to observe changes over the course of the project and understand what may or may not be working.

Some questions in this survey use the terms sexual partner and sexual activity/activities. These questions are not intended to ask specifically about your personal sexual partners or specific sexual activities you may or may not have engaged in. When you are answering the questions, it is ok to answer based on how you think you might feel or respond in a situation.

How your responses will be used

Your responses in this survey will be used for evaluation and reporting purposes, which may be shared with people who work at WHIN and BGCS, the Victorian Government and other organisations interested in the findings from this project.

Confidentiality and privacy

The survey is anonymous and confidential. Your answers will not affect your participation in the project or any other services or programs.

We will not share your name or other personal information with anyone, or in any reports or presentations about the project. Your responses will be combined with responses from other participants to protect your identity.

Consent

By completing this survey, you are consenting to participate.

Contact

If you would like more information about this survey, please contact the project team.

Questions

1. What is the postcode for the town or suburb where you currently live?
2. What is your age?
 - 12–14 years
 - 15–18 years
 - 19–22 years
 - 23–25 years
 - 25+ years
 - Prefer not to say
3. Do you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander? Check all that apply.
 - No
 - Aboriginal
 - Torres Strait Islander
 - Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
 - Prefer not to say
4. What is your gender identity? Check all that apply.
 - Girl or woman
 - Boy or man
 - Trans
 - Gender diverse
 - Non-binary
 - Prefer not to say
 - Prefer to self-describe (please describe below)
5. What is your sexual identity / sexuality? Check all that apply.
 - Lesbian
 - Gay
 - Heterosexual or straight
 - Bisexual or pansexual
 - Asexual
 - Queer
 - Questioning
 - Prefer not to say
 - Prefer to self-describe (please describe below)
6. Do you have a long-term health condition, impairment or disability that restricts your everyday activities?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Prefer not to say
7. In what country were you born?
8. What is the main language you speak at home?

9. What is your current educational situation? Check all that apply.
- High school student
 - University student—full-time
 - University student—part-time
 - TAFE / vocational student—full-time
 - TAFE / vocational student—part-time
 - Not currently studying
 - Other (please describe below)
10. What is your current employment situation? Check all that apply.
- Employed full-time
 - Employed part-time
 - Employed casually
 - Self-employed
 - Unemployed
 - Unable to work
 - Other (please specify below)
11. Prior to learning about the Taking ACTION project, I had heard of Victoria's affirmative consent legislation.
- Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
12. I know my rights under Victoria's affirmative consent legislation.
- Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
13. I know my responsibilities under Victoria's affirmative consent legislation.
- Yes
 - No
 - Unsure

14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Mark only one oval per row.*

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Removing a condom without consent (sometimes called stealthing) is a sexual offence.					
If a person wants to engage in a sexual act with another person, it is their responsibility to actively gain consent.					
If someone has been sexually assaulted, it is up to them to prove they did not give consent to the perpetrator.					
Consent cannot be assumed based on someone's previous sexual behaviours.					
A person does not consent if they engage in sexual activity because of force, harm or fear.					
A person has the right to change their mind and withdraw consent at any time when engaging in sexual activity.					

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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Saying yes to one type of sexual activity means saying yes to all types of sex and/or sexual activity.

It is okay to take intimate images or videos of someone without their permission if the images or videos are not shared.

If someone sends an intimate image or video, it is okay to share it with other people without their permission.

15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Mark only one oval per row.*

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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Sex can mean different things to different people.

I understand what it looks like, sounds like and feels like when someone is consenting to sex.

Everyone has the right to express their sexuality, sexual orientation and gender identity without coercion or violence.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Understanding more about my body, my partner's body, and how the body responds during sexual activity can support me to have safe, pleasurable sexual experiences.					
When it comes to sex, what feels good for one person may not feel good for someone else.					
Any sexual activity without consent is sexual violence.					
Everyone has the right to make their own decisions about when, where and with who they would like to be sexual.					
Not responding or silence are ways a person might communicate they are not consenting.					
Consent requires ongoing and mutual communication and decision making by each person involved.					
Gender inequality is a driver of sexual violence.					
Rape is the only form of sexual violence.					
I understand the ways people can communicate that they are not consenting to sex.					

16. Please describe how someone could know when their sexual partner is giving consent. Include any words, phrases or actions that might demonstrate sexual consent.
17. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Mark only one oval per row.*

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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It is important to be aware of verbal and non-verbal communication from sexual partners.

Being able to communicate with a sexual partner about pleasure is an important part of a respectful relationship.

Consent is important for all people, of all sexualities, in all kinds of relationships.

Sex is most pleasurable when there is clear, ongoing communication and enthusiastic consent.

People of all genders should be able to enjoy safe, respectful, fulfilling and pleasurable sexual experiences.

A respectful sexual relationship includes emotional as well as physical safety.

Communication and boundary setting are important parts of any respectful relationship, not only romantic and sexual relationships.

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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The goal of sex is to orgasm.

The media portrays a lot of examples of respectful, safe, pleasurable sexual experiences.

If a person is unsure if they want to have sex, it is ok for their partner to try to convince them to say yes.

18. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Mark only one oval per row.*

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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I would feel comfortable having conversations about consent with my sexual partners.

I would feel comfortable directly seeking consent from my sexual partners.

I would feel comfortable directly expressing what I consent to, and what I don't consent to.

I feel confident I would have the ability to respect and support my partner's sexual boundaries.

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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I feel confident I would know if and when my sexual partner had consented to sexual activity or not.

I feel confident I would be able to express my own sexual feelings and desires while also listening to my sexual partners' feelings and desires.

19. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Mark only one oval per row.*

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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I am confident in my ability to have conversations with my peers about affirmative consent.

I am confident in my ability to have conversations with my peers about intimacy and pleasure.

I am confident in my ability to identify when my peers have concerning attitudes about consent.

I am confident challenging my peers when I hear them repeat myths or misconceptions about consent.

20. When did you last have a conversation with a peer about consent?
- In the last week
 - In the last month
 - Over a month ago
 - Never
 - Unsure
21. When did you last have a conversation with a peer about pleasure?
- In the last week
 - In the last month
 - Over a month ago
 - Never
 - Unsure
22. When did you last have a conversation with a peer about sexual violence?
- In the last week
 - In the last month
 - Over a month ago
 - Never
 - Unsure
23. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Mark only one oval per row.*

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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I know where to find information about sexual and reproductive health, rights, and the services available.

I know where to find more information about sexual violence.

I would know how to respond if someone told me they had experienced or are experiencing sexual violence.

I would know what services are available for someone who told me they had experiences of are experiencing sexual violence.

24. Please indicate whether you have taken these actions in the past month...

	Yes	No	Unsure
Shared information about sexual and reproductive health with someone you know.			
Shared information about consent with someone you know.			
Shared information about sexual violence support services with someone you know.			
Helped someone you know to access support after they have disclosed that they have experienced sexual violence.			

APPENDIX 4: YOUTH ACTION GROUP ENDLINE SURVEY

About the Taking ACtion project

The Taking ACtion project is an affirmative consent project being delivered in partnership by Women's Health in the North (WHIN) and Banksia Garden Community Service (BGCS).

About this survey

WHIN and BGCS are conducting this survey as part of the Taking ACtion project. You are being asked to complete this survey as you participated in the project as a member of the Youth Advisory Group. We are interested in understanding what you know about consent, pleasure and sexual violence after the training and other project activities. This will allow us to observe changes over the course of the project and understand what may or may not be working.

Some questions in this survey use the terms sexual partner and sexual activity/activities. These questions are not intended to ask specifically about your personal sexual partners or specific sexual activities you may or may not have engaged in. When you are answering the questions, it is ok to answer based on how you think you might feel or respond in a situation.

How your responses will be used

Your responses in this survey will be used for evaluation and reporting purposes, which may be shared with people who work at WHIN and BGCS, the Victorian Government and other organisations interested in the findings from this project.

Confidentiality and privacy

The survey is anonymous and confidential. Your answers will not affect your participation in the project or any other services or programs.

We will not share your name or other personal information with anyone, or in any reports or presentations about the project. Your responses will be combined with responses from other participants to protect your identity.

Consent

By completing this survey, you are consenting to participate.

Contact

If you would like more information about this survey, please contact the project team.

Questions

1. What is the postcode for the town or suburb where you currently live?
2. What is your age?
 - 12–14 years
 - 15–18 years
 - 19–22 years
 - 23–25 years
 - 25+ years
 - Prefer not to say
3. Do you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander? Check all that apply.
 - No
 - Aboriginal
 - Torres Strait Islander
 - Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
 - Prefer not to say
4. What is your gender identity? Check all that apply.
 - Girl or woman
 - Boy or man
 - Trans
 - Gender diverse
 - Non-binary
 - Prefer not to say
 - Prefer to self-describe (please describe below)
5. What is your sexual identity / sexuality? Check all that apply.
 - Lesbian
 - Gay
 - Heterosexual or straight
 - Bisexual or pansexual
 - Asexual
 - Queer
 - Questioning
 - Prefer not to say
 - Prefer to self-describe (please describe below)
6. Do you have a long-term health condition, impairment or disability that restricts your everyday activities?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Prefer not to say
7. In what country were you born?
8. What is the main language you speak at home?

9. What is your current educational situation? Check all that apply.
- High school student
 - University student—full-time
 - University student—part-time
 - TAFE / vocational student—full-time
 - TAFE / vocational student—part-time
 - Not currently studying
 - Other (please describe below)
10. What is your current employment situation? Check all that apply.
- Employed full-time
 - Employed part-time
 - Employed casually
 - Self-employed
 - Unemployed
 - Unable to work
 - Other (please specify below)
11. Prior to learning about the Taking ACTION project, were you aware of the recent legislative changes to the definition of sexual consent?
- Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
12. I know my rights under Victoria's affirmative consent legislation.
- Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
13. I know my responsibilities under Victoria's affirmative consent legislation.
- Yes
 - No
 - Unsure

14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Mark only one oval per row.*

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Removing a condom without consent (sometimes called stealthing) is a sexual offence.					
If a person wants to engage in a sexual act with another person, it is their responsibility to actively gain consent.					
If someone has been sexually assaulted, it is up to them to prove they did not give consent to the perpetrator.					
Consent cannot be assumed based on someone's previous sexual behaviours.					
A person does not consent if they engage in sexual activity because of force, harm or fear.					
A person has the right to change their mind and withdraw consent at any time when engaging in sexual activity.					

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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Saying yes to one type of sexual activity means saying yes to all types of sex and/or sexual activity.

It is okay to take intimate images or videos of someone without their permission if the images or videos are not shared.

If someone sends an intimate image or video, it is okay to share it with other people without their permission.

15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Mark only one oval per row.*

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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Sex can mean different things to different people.

I understand what it looks like, sounds like and feels like when someone is consenting to sex.

Everyone has the right to express their sexuality, sexual orientation and gender identity without coercion or violence.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Understanding more about my body, my partner's body, and how the body responds during sexual activity can support me to have safe, pleasurable sexual experiences.					
When it comes to sex, what feels good for one person may not feel good for someone else.					
Any sexual activity without consent is sexual violence.					
Everyone has the right to make their own decisions about when, where and with who they would like to be sexual.					
Not responding or silence are ways a person might communicate they are not consenting.					
Consent requires ongoing and mutual communication and decision making by each person involved.					
Gender inequality is a driver of sexual violence.					
Rape is the only form of sexual violence.					
I understand the ways people can communicate that they are not consenting to sex.					

16. Please describe how someone could know when their sexual partner is giving consent. Include any words, phrases or actions that might demonstrate sexual consent.
17. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Mark only one oval per row.*

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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It is important to be aware of verbal and non-verbal communication from sexual partners.

Being able to communicate with a sexual partner about pleasure is an important part of a respectful relationship.

Consent is important for all people, of all sexualities, in all kinds of relationships.

Sex is most pleasurable when there is clear, ongoing communication and enthusiastic consent.

People of all genders should be able to enjoy safe, respectful, fulfilling and pleasurable sexual experiences.

A respectful sexual relationship includes emotional as well as physical safety.

Communication and boundary setting are important parts of any respectful relationship, not only romantic and sexual relationships.

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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The goal of sex is to orgasm.

The media portrays a lot of examples of respectful, safe, pleasurable sexual experiences.

If a person is unsure if they want to have sex, it is ok for their partner to try to convince them to say yes.

18. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Mark only one oval per row.*

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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I would feel comfortable having conversations about consent with my sexual partners.

I would feel comfortable directly seeking consent from my sexual partners.

I would feel comfortable directly expressing what I consent to, and what I don't consent to.

I feel confident I would have the ability to respect and support my partner's sexual boundaries.

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
----------------	----------------	---------------------------	-------------------	-------------------

I feel confident I would know if and when my sexual partner had consented to sexual activity or not.

I feel confident I would be able to express my own sexual feelings and desires while also listening to my sexual partners' feelings and desires.

19. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Mark only one oval per row.*

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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I am confident in my ability to have conversations with my peers about affirmative consent.

I am confident in my ability to have conversations with my peers about intimacy and pleasure.

I am confident in my ability to identify when my peers have concerning attitudes about consent.

I am confident challenging my peers when I hear them repeat myths or misconceptions about consent.

20. When did you last have a conversation with a peer about consent?
- In the last week
 - In the last month
 - Over a month ago
 - Never
 - Unsure
21. When did you last have a conversation with a peer about pleasure?
- In the last week
 - In the last month
 - Over a month ago
 - Never
 - Unsure
22. When did you last have a conversation with a peer about sexual violence?
- In the last week
 - In the last month
 - Over a month ago
 - Never
 - Unsure
23. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Mark only one oval per row.*

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
-------------------	-------------------	---------------------------------	----------------------	----------------------

I know where to find information about sexual and reproductive health, rights, and the services available.

I know where to find more information about sexual violence.

I would know how to respond if someone told me they had experienced or are experiencing sexual violence.

I would know what services are available for someone who told me they had experiences of are experiencing sexual violence.

24. Please indicate whether you have taken these actions in the past month...

	Yes	No	Unsure
Shared information about sexual and reproductive health with someone you know.			
Shared information about consent with someone you know.			
Shared information about sexual violence support services with someone you know.			
Helped someone you know to access support after they have disclosed that they have experienced sexual violence.			

25. Thinking about Taking ACtion and the content presented, how much do you agree or disagree with the following? *Mark only one oval per row.*

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Participating in Taking ACtion has helped me to understand what affirmative consent means					
Participating in Taking ACtion has helped me to understand what respectful relationships are					
Participating in Taking ACtion has helped me to understand what sexual violence is					
Participating in Taking ACtion has increased my confidence to ask questions about sexuality and relationships with someone you trust					

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Participating in Taking Action has increased my confidence to explain preferences about relationships and sexuality with current or future partners					
Participating in Taking Action has increased my confidence to identify violent and abusive behaviours					
I know how to find out more information on the topics discussed.					
The activity was interesting to me.					
The content presented made sense to me.					
I would recommend this activity to a friend.					
Being involved in this program has increased my social connections and networks					
As a result of this program, I have an increased sense of belonging in my community					

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
-------------------	-------------------	---------------------------------	----------------------	----------------------

I have opportunities to be involved in community projects and initiatives

As a result of this program, I have an increased knowledge and appreciation of different communities

I believe participating in the program contributes to supporting or improving my mental health and wellbeing

26. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about participating in the project?

APPENDIX 5: PEER-LED WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT SURVEY⁴

About the Taking Action project

The Taking Action project is an affirmative consent project being delivered in partnership by Women's Health in the North (WHIN) and Banksia Garden Community Service (BGCS).

About this survey

WHIN and BGCS are conducting this survey as part of the Taking Action project. You are being asked to complete this survey as you have participated in a peer educator delivered workshop on affirmative consent. We are interested in your feedback about the workshop and understanding what impact the workshop might have, for example the most important thing you learnt in the workshop. This will help us to understand what may or may not be working.

How your responses will be used

Your responses in this survey will be used for evaluation and reporting purposes, which may be shared with people who work at WHIN and BGCS, the Victorian Government and other organisations interested in the findings from this project.

Confidentiality and privacy

The survey is anonymous and confidential. Your answers will not affect your participation in the project or any other services or programs. Your responses will be combined with responses from other participants to protect your identity.

Consent

By completing this survey, you are consenting to participate. If you do not want to complete this survey, you do not have to.

Contact

If you would like more information about this survey, please contact the project team.

⁴ The survey questions were changed during implementation due to reporting requirements. All questions have been included, with changes noted.

Questions

1. What is your age?
 - 12–14 years
 - 15–18 years
 - 19–22 years
 - 23–25 years
 - 25+ years
 - Prefer not to say
2. What is your gender identity? *Check all that apply.*
 - Girl or woman
 - Boy or man
 - Trans
 - Gender diverse
 - Non-binary
 - Prefer not to say
 - Prefer to self-describe (please describe below)
3. Before the Taking ACTION workshops were you aware of the recent legislative changes to the definition of sexual consent? [Added]
 - Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
4. As a result of the workshops, I know my rights under Victoria's affirmative consent legislation.
 - Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
5. As a result of the workshops, I know my responsibilities under Victoria's affirmative consent legislation.
 - Yes
 - No
 - Unsure

6. Thinking about the activities and the content presented, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements. *Mark only one oval per row.*

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Participating in the workshop has helped me to understand what affirmative consent means [Replaced 'As a result of the workshops, I have a better understanding of what affirmative consent is]					
Participating in the workshop has helped me to understand what respectful relationships are[Added]					
Participating in the workshop has helped me to understand what sexual violence is [Added]					
Participating in the workshop has helped me to have a better understanding of ways people can communicate that they are consenting to sex					
Participating in the workshop has helped me to have a better understanding of ways people can communicate that they are NOT consenting to sex.					

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Participating in the workshop has helped me to have a better understanding of ways to respectfully and safely respond if someone communicates a sexual boundary with me.					
Participating in the workshop has increased my confidence to have conversations about affirmative consent with my peers					
As a result of the workshop, I would feel more comfortable having conversations about consent with my sexual partners [Removed]					
Participating in the workshop has increased my confidence to explain preferences about relationships and sexuality with current or future partners [Added]					
Participating in the workshop has increased my confidence to ask questions about sexuality and relationships with someone I trust [Added]					

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Participating in the workshop has made me more confident challenging my peers when I hear them repeat myths or misconceptions about consent.					
I know how to find out more information on the topics discussed. [Added]					
I prefer learning about consent from other young people (peer educators)					
The workshop was interesting to me. [Added]					
The content presented made sense to me. [Added]					
I would recommend participating in these workshops to a friend. [Added]					
7. What is the most important you learned in this workshop?					
8. Which activities did you find most engaging? Why?					
9. What did you enjoy about this workshop?					
10. Is there anything you would have changed about the workshop? What and Why?					
11. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about either or both workshops?					

APPENDIX 6: PEER-LED WORKSHOP STAFF FEEDBACK SURVEY

About the Taking ACtion project

The Taking ACtion project is an affirmative consent project being delivered in partnership by Women's Health in the North (WHIN) and Banksia Garden Community Service (BGCS).

About this survey

WHIN and BGCS are conducting this survey as part of the Taking ACtion project. You are being asked to complete this survey as you are a staff member in a setting where we have delivered a workshop on affirmative consent. We are interested in your feedback about the workshop and understanding what impact the workshop might have. This will help us to understand what may or may not be working.

How your responses will be used

Your responses in this survey will be used for evaluation and reporting purposes, which may be shared with people who work at WHIN and BGCS, the Victorian Government and other organisations interested in the findings from this project.

Confidentiality and privacy

The survey is anonymous and confidential. Your answers will not affect your engagement with the project or any other services or programs. Your responses will be combined with other responses to protect your identity.

Consent

By completing this survey, you are consenting to participate. If you do not want to complete this survey, you do not have to.

Contact

If you would like more information about this survey, please contact the project team.

Questions

1. What is your gender identity? *Check all that apply.*
 - Girl or woman
 - Boy or man
 - Trans
 - Gender diverse
 - Non-binary
 - Prefer not to say
 - Prefer to self-describe (please describe below)
2. Prior to learning about the Taking ACtion project, I had heard of Victoria's affirmative consent legislation.
 - Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
3. Please rate the following aspects of the workshops:

Very poor Poor Adequate Good Excellent

Content

Activities

Facilitation

Overall

4. . Would you like to add any comments in relation to your responses above?

5. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
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The workshops were easy to organise.

The workshops were relevant to the young people I work with.

The workshops had a positive impact on the young people I work with.

I would recommend the workshops to other youth and community services.

Engaging with the Taking ACtion project has made me feel more comfortable to talk to young people about affirmative consent.

6. Would you like to add any comments in relation to your responses above?
7. What aspects of the workshops did you find most valuable or impactful? Why?
This can include any aspect of the workshop organisation and delivery e.g., the resources provided, briefing meeting, content, activities, snacks.
8. Do you have any suggestions for ways to improve future workshops? This can include any aspect of the workshop organisation and delivery e.g., the resources provided, briefing meeting, content, activities, snacks.
9. Would you like to share any other feedback about the workshops or engaging with the Taking ACtion project?

APPENDIX 7: PEER-LED WORKSHOP DEBRIEF FORM

Facilitators:

Date:

Group:

Number of participants:

What worked well?

What can be improved?

What could be done differently next time?

Issues or reflections about logistics, organisation, materials etc

Any other comments

APPENDIX 8: YOUTH ACTION GROUP INTERIM FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

Introductions

Acknowledgement of Country

Thank you for taking part in this consultation to share your experiences and perspectives relating to your role on the Taking ACtion Project Youth Action Group.

About the evaluation

The aim of this evaluation is to understand how well the project is implemented, and what kind of impact it has on young people in relation to affirmative consent, including:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Confidence
- Skills

We are also interested in your experiences and perspectives about what it is like to be involved in a peer-led project on affirmative consent, and to contribute to the design and delivery of activities.

Privacy

The information you share today will be treated confidentially, and your personal views will not be shared outside of this room. When we write up the findings of this consultation, we will not use your names or any other information that may identify you.

Nothing you say will impact on your relationship with WHIN, Banksia Gardens or any other organisation connected to this project.

Consent

We like to audio-record our consultations so that we have an accurate record of what you say, which is important for when we analyse and write up our findings. The recording will not be shared with anyone, and will be deleted once we have written up a record of the conversation.

- Do you consent to being audio recorded?
- Do you have any questions for me before we start?

Start recording

Questions

Question		Notes
1	Introduce yourself by telling me your name and what motivated you to get involved in this project?	
2	In your own words, tell me what the Taking Action Project is all about.	
3	What kind of activities has the YAG been involved in and what have you learnt so far?	
4	Tell me about your experiences of being involved in the YAG: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the positives/benefits? • What have you found challenging? 	
5	How have you found the process of creating workshop content/materials for your peers?	
6	What are you looking forward to about the next phase of the project?	
7	Do you have any final comments?	

APPENDIX 9: YOUTH ACTION GROUP FINAL FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

Introductions

Acknowledgement of Country

Thank you for taking part in this consultation to share your experiences and perspectives relating to your role on the Taking ACtion Project Youth Action Group.

About the evaluation

The aim of this evaluation is to understand how well the project is implemented, and what kind of impact it has on young people in relation to affirmative consent, including:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Confidence
- Skills

We are also interested in your experiences and perspectives about what it is like to be involved in a peer-led project on affirmative consent, and to contribute to the design and delivery of activities.

Nothing you say will impact on your relationship with WHIN, Banksia Gardens or any other organisation connected to this project.

Privacy

The information you share today will be treated confidentially, and your personal views will not be shared outside of this room. When we write up the findings of this consultation, we will not use your names or any other information that may identify you.

Consent

We like to audio-record our consultations so that we have an accurate record of what you say, which is important for when we analyse and write up our findings. The recording will not be shared with anyone, and will be deleted once we have written up a record of the conversation.

- Do you consent to being audio recorded?
- Do you have any questions for me before we start?

Start recording

Questions

Question		Notes
1	How do you think the project has gone overall? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have been its strengths and benefits? • What have been the challenges and limitations? 	
2	Tell me about your experiences of working with the project coordinators as YAG members?	
3	What have been your observations about using a peer-led approach to this work? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have been the strengths of this approach? • What have been the challenges of this approach? 	
4	In what ways has the project contributed to your skills, knowledge, confidence and attitudes regarding affirmative consent?	
5	How are you using the knowledge and skills you've learned outside of the project?	
6	What have been the benefits for young people who have been involved in Taking ACTION project activities?	
7	What do you think has been the most significant change to come from this project, if any?	
8	What advice do you have for other young people who might like to be involved in a project like this in future?	
9	Do you have any final comments?	

APPENDIX 10: PROJECT STAFF INTERIM FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

Introductions

Acknowledgement of Country

Thank you for taking part in this consultation to share your experiences and perspectives relating to the Taking Action Project, as part of an evaluation of the Taking Action Project.

About the evaluation

The aim of this evaluation is to understand how well the project is implemented, and what kind of impact it has on young people in relation to affirmative consent, including:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Confidence
- Skills

We are also interested in your experiences and perspectives about the process of supporting young people in their role as leaders on a peer-led affirmative consent project.

Privacy

The information you share today will be treated confidentially, and your personal views will not be shared outside of this room. When we write up the findings of this consultation, we will not use your names or any other information that may identify you.

Consent

We like to audio-record our consultations so that we have an accurate record of what you say, which is important for when we analyse and write up our findings. The recording will not be shared with anyone, and will be deleted once we have written up a record of the conversation.

- Do you consent to being audio recorded?
- Do you have any questions for me before we start?

Start recording

Questions

Question		Notes
1	<p>Tell us about your experience of establishing the YAG for this project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider recruitment, TOR, consent, safety etc. 	
2	Briefly describe the role of the YAG, and the activities they have been involved in to date.	
3	<p>Tell me about your experiences of supporting the YAG so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What has worked well? • What has not worked well? • What have you found challenging? 	
4	What are your reflections on how the YAG members have found the process of creating workshop content/materials for their peers?	
5	Do you have any advice that might enable other organisations to effectively utilise/support YAG groups on projects of this nature?	
6	Do you have any final comments?	

APPENDIX 11: PROJECT STAFF FINAL FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

Introductions

Acknowledgement of Country

Thank you for taking part in this consultation to share your experiences and perspectives relating to the Taking Action Project, as part of its evaluation.

About the evaluation

The aim of this evaluation is to understand how well the project is implemented, and what kind of impact it has on young people in relation to affirmative consent, including:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Confidence
- Skills

We are also interested in your experiences and perspectives about the process of supporting young people in their role as leaders on a peer-led affirmative consent project.

Privacy

The information you share today will be treated confidentially, and your personal views will not be shared outside of this room. When we write up the findings of this consultation, we will not use your names or any other information that may identify you.

Consent

We like to audio-record our consultations so that we have an accurate record of what you say, which is important for when we analyse and write up our findings. The recording will not be shared with anyone, and will be deleted once we have written up a record of the conversation.

- Do you consent to being audio recorded?
- Do you have any questions for me before we start?

Start recording

Questions

Question		Notes
1	Tell me about Taking ACtion – what sets it apart from other consent and sexual violence prevention initiatives?	
2	What have been the main elements of the initiative? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What adaptations have you made along the way, if any? • What influenced you to make these changes (if any)? 	
3	What do you see as the key strengths of Taking ACtion?	
4	What have been the main challenges of Taking ACtion?	
5	Tell me about your experiences working in partnership on this project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What has worked well? • What has not worked well? • What have the benefits been? • What have you found challenging? 	
6	How has this partnership influenced <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your practice? • the approach taken to the project? • your organisation? 	
	What do you think has been the biggest impact of this program to date?	
	Do you have any final comments?	

APPENDIX 12: TAKING ACTION PROJECT AFFIRMATIVE CONSENT WORKSHOPS INFORMATION SHEET⁵

The Taking Action Youth Action Group (YAG) have co-designed three inclusive affirmative consent workshops for young people aged 15–25 years. There are two options available to be booked: 1) Series of 2 x 90min workshops OR 2) 1 x stand alone 2-hour workshop.

The workshops are designed to be delivered in person and the series of two is the preferred option to maximise impact and understanding. The workshops are available for groups of young people aged 15–25 years in community settings in the north metro region. The workshops are designed to be delivered to existing groups in youth and community settings, for example youth services, sporting clubs, community groups, tertiary education settings. The workshops are not able to be delivered in schools as part of classroom curriculum delivery.

About the workshops

The workshops are full of activities and discussions that explore the important concepts of consent, the law, sexual rights and communication. The workshops aim to empower and educate young people so that they know what it means to be treated with respect; understand their right to safe, consensual and respectful sexual experiences; and understand affirmative consent and the new laws.

The workshops use a rights-based, sex-positive approach. While the workshops discuss situations where consent is not present (sexual violence), detailed discussions about sexual violence are not the focus of the workshop (for example, we do not spend significant time discussing statistics).

The workshops are a great opportunity for young people to learn more about consent and the law, but more than that, they are an opportunity for young people to build skills and understanding for communicating consent – something important in all our lives.

Series workshops

Workshop 1 – Affirmative Consent 101 (90 min)

The first workshop in the series focuses on building an understanding of affirmative consent. Activities and discussion focus on the key concepts of consent and affirmative consent, situations when consent is not possible, affirmative consent legislation and affirmative consent in practice (scenarios). At the end of the workshop participants will have:

- Increased awareness and understanding of affirmative consent including the legislative changes.
- Increased understanding of the importance of affirmative consent.
- Increased comfort when talking about affirmative consent.
- Increased understanding of ways to put affirmative consent into action.

⁵ This content is adapted from the workshop information sheet developed as part of the project.

Workshop 2 - Communication + Consent (90 min)

The second workshop in the series builds on the foundation set in the first workshop. Activities and discussions focus on exploring what sex is and the importance of consent for all sexual activity, sexual rights, and communicating consent and boundaries with respect and safety. At the end of the workshop participants will have:

- Increased understanding of ways to put affirmative consent into action.
- Increased understanding of ways to respectfully respond when someone communicates a sexual boundary.
- Increased understanding of how actions can impact others including how they can make other people feel.
- Increased confidence and skills to communicate consent and boundaries.

Standalone workshop

Affirmative Consent 101+ (120 min)

The stand-alone workshop is the Affirmative Consent 101 workshop plus an additional activity from the Communication + Consent workshop. The additional activity focuses on communicating consent and boundaries with respect and safety and caring for self and partner.

FAQs

How many participants can attend a workshop?

The workshops are designed for groups of around 10 – 15 participants, however smaller or larger groups are possible.

Where can the workshops be delivered?

The priority area for delivery is Hume, however workshops can be delivered throughout the wider north metro region. Workshops can be delivered at the venue where groups usually meet or we may be able to provide a venue if needed.

Who facilitates the workshops?

The workshops are facilitated by at least two Taking ACtion YAG peer educators. Peer educators are always supported by Taking ACtion project staff, with project staff present at all workshops.

Who are the workshops for?

Groups of young people aged 15–25 years in community settings in the north metro region. The workshops are designed to be delivered to existing groups in youth and community settings, for example youth services, sporting clubs, community groups, tertiary education settings.

The workshops intended to complement the respectful relationships curriculum delivery in schools. The workshops are not able to be delivered in schools as part of classroom curriculum delivery. If you work in a school and are interested in the workshops, please get in touch to have a chat about what else may be available.

What is provided as part of the workshop?

All of the workshop materials are supplied. We can also provide snacks or catering if required.

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