

What is the Positive Choices study? The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine are working with the National Children's Bureau Sex Education Forum (NCB SEF) to evaluate relationships and sex education in secondary schools in England.

The student survey: As part of the study, a group of researchers will come to your school and ask all year 8 students to fill in a questionnaire. Completing the questionnaire should take about 45 minutes. The information we collect will help us assess how well the programme and our research methods work in secondary schools and will contribute to improving relationships and sex education for young people.

Protecting Pupils' Privacy: The questionnaire covers some sensitive topics, and it is very important that students have the privacy to complete the questionnaire without anyone else seeing their answers. To protect their privacy, ideally each student will sit alone at a desk and will be discouraged from looking at other students' responses during the survey.

Student consent: Researchers will ask students to give informed consent to take part in the study. Students who do not consent to taking part will be given an alternative activity. Students whose parents have opted them out of the study will not be asked to take part, and where it is possible for the school to make alternative arrangements they will not be in the room while the survey is taking place.

Confidentiality and anonymity: What students tell us in the questionnaire will be treated as confidential and anonymous and all data will be stored in accordance with the data protection legislation, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which came into effect in May 2018. The information students provide will be stored securely in our university offices and uploaded on to a computer that only the research team can access. Student names do not appear on the questionnaire. Each questionnaire instead has an individual code on it that is linked to a student name. We will keep a list of student names and codes, but this list will be stored securely on a computer completely separately to student questionnaire answers. No single researcher will have access to both sets of data, so no one will be able to link the answers students give to their names. When we analyse the answers to the questionnaire and write reports based on the data we will look at the results from lots of participants together not individual answers, so no one will be able to identify students' personal responses.

The role of researcher: A researcher will introduce the questionnaire to students and ask them to complete consent forms. Researchers will respond to student queries and, where necessary, clarify the meaning of questions contained in the questionnaire for students. Researchers will encourage students to focus on their questionnaire and make sure they do not look at each other's responses. The researcher will ask students to remain silent and not talk about anyone's personal experiences.

The role of the teacher (your role): We ask teachers to remain at the front of the room to support the researchers to manage behaviour and ensure students do not look at each other's responses. To protect confidentiality, any 1:1 support students need should come from the researchers in the room. Please remain in the room as the researchers are required to have a teacher with them at all times.

Teaching Assistants (TAs): TAs who are normally in the classroom to work with a student are welcome to stay while students are completing the questionnaire, but to protect confidentiality they should not work with the student on completing it. If you have a student who would need intensive 1:1 support to complete the questionnaire, please notify the person who is coordinating the study in your school so that accommodations can be made.

Support for students: Any student wishing to speak privately with someone about the survey or the topics it covers will have the opportunity to speak with the study manager, Ruth Ponsford, who will offer resources and make referrals to the school safeguarding lead as appropriate. If you have any queries or concerns about the research you can contact Ruth Ponsford, the lead researcher on the Positive Choices study, by phone on: 0207 958 8101 or email: ruth.ponsford@lshtm.ac.uk.