

RESOURCE

Sample participatory activity to generate ideas on values and language to use when describing the CSE program

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

We use this simple, participatory activity with partner school principals to generate a list of locally relevant, descriptive phrases to describe the CSE program. From this activity we gained insight into one values-based aspiration that teachers and parents have for youth, which relates to CSE: “becoming a well-rounded person.” We now amplify this frame in our strategic communications about our CSE program. In their feedback to Projet Jeune Leader, thousands of students, parents, and teachers continue to use this phrase and frame, suggesting that this narrative really sticks.



About Projet Jeune Leader

PJL is a youth-founded, youth-led, and youth-centered nonprofit organization established in Fianarantsoa, Madagascar. Since 2013, Projet Jeune Leader has delivered comprehensive sexuality education to young and very young adolescents (ages 10-16) in Madagascar's public middle schools, partnering closely with schools and school districts. To do this, we recruit dynamic young adults (aged 18-25) for their positive gender attitudes and potential as role models, train them rigorously over two months, and hire them under a full-time, paid contract if they pass an end-of-training assessment. We then integrate each of them into a partner public school where they teach a year-long, time-tabled CSE course to multiple grades using our age-segmented, gender-transformative, 27-module curricula. When they are not teaching, educators provide a package of other essential services (enrichment activities, counseling, medical referrals, and programs for parents and teachers).

About the Guidance Tool: *CSE We Can Count On*

Projet Jeune Leader has developed “CSE We Can Count On,” a publication sharing strategies, actionable guidance, and tools that we use in our work with tens of thousands of students, parents, teachers, and school officials in Madagascar to build and harness community support for in-school comprehensive sexuality education. This document, which accompanies the guidance tool, shares one of the resources that we use regularly.



Read “CSE We Can Count On” and accompanying resources at www.projetjeuneleader.org/resources/community-support.

The uses and success of this resource are undeniably dependent on the context in which CSE is being delivered. Even so, we hope that it serves as a source of inspiration and creativity for others – civil society organizations, international non-governmental organizations, and even governments – committed to delivering in-school comprehensive sexuality education in their own contexts.

Overview

The phrase “comprehensive sexuality education” is loaded jargon – and community resistance may be fueled by the obscure (and in some contexts, Westernized) meaning of terms like “comprehensive” and “sexuality.”

Many implementers have mitigated this barrier by labeling their CSE program with phrases like “family life,” “health education,” and “life skills based education.” This careful use of language is one way to frame the conversation on CSE.

Local stakeholders can provide ideas on how to describe CSE that are positive and relevant for the local context and for different audiences. For example, Projet Jeune Leader used this simple participatory activity with school principals to understand what language might resonate with parents and teachers when talking about CSE.

Activity Description

The activity can be done with a group of local stakeholders (youth, parents, teachers, principals, or program staff). The scenario can be adjusted accordingly to be relevant for instances where the stakeholder may have to explain the content and purpose of CSE to a pre-determined audience (parents, school officials).

The activity requires one facilitator, two different colors of paper, enough for each participant to receive one piece of each colored paper (cut into small squares, or “post-its”), markers, and a blackboard or flipchart paper.

To start, give a colored piece of paper (small square) to each participant.

Then explain the scenario to participants. In this case, for school principals, the facilitator says: “I would like you to imagine that a **parent** of a student comes to your office and wants to know about the CSE program in your school. On your paper, I would like you to complete the following sentence to answer them:

“The CSE educator teaches about ...”

Emphasize that we are interested in what participants would really say in real life – especially if this has happened to them before. Specify that there are no wrong or right answers.

Once everyone has finished, the facilitator collects the papers and groups them (on a table) into subgroups by theme. They should not be displayed on the board yet.

Then, give the second, different colored paper (small square) to each participant.

Explain the same scenario, but this time, a teacher has come to their office and wants to know what the CSE program does in their school.

Participants must complete the same sentence, imagining they are talking to a **teacher**.

“The CSE educator teaches about ...”

Once everyone is done, the facilitator collects the papers and quickly groups them by common themes.

The facilitators then can stick the participants’ ideas – formed into subgroups – on a wall/board. Keep the ideas for parents on one side, and the ideas for teachers on the other. If there are groups that overlap between the two audience categories, you can put them in the middle.

The facilitator can share their initial observations about the subgroups (“I notice that...”; “It’s interesting that ...”)

Then, the facilitator can ask participants to explain the rationale behind why they use those words. If based on a real experience, do they think it worked well to explain the CSE program this way? If the language used for specific audiences is different, why might that be?

Using the Activity Results

After the activity, the CSE program staff can review the language and ideas shared by participants. Some things to consider when reviewing the ideas are:

- Are there natural communication opportunities (language or metaphors) that can help advance support for CSE in the local context? If so, how can we strengthen and amplify these messages in our program and among partners?

- Are the dominant conversations or talking points at odds with how we would defend the CSE program? If so, how can we shift the conversation to be more helpful?
- What are the best practices we can share across partners? How can we minimize the barriers for people to use the positive language, metaphors, and messages in response to CSE resistance in the local context?

After reviewing the results from this activity, Projet Jeune Leader found that the way school principals describe the CSE program usually falls into one of three categories: sexual and reproductive health education, youth development, or life skills.

Our later analysis of their answers also showed slight differences in their description depending on their audience. While most principals said they would tell parents that CSE Educators teach their children about reproductive health, many said they would emphasize life skills or youth development around teachers.

For parents, principals seemed to be more likely to express how the CSE program fills a recognizable need at the household level. The principal from Talata Ampano middle school elaborated on this: *“There are many parents that were not even comfortable to talk to their child about menstruation, but when the CSE program started, then they became brave. In other words, the CSE program helps parents talk to their children about reproductive health.”*

For the first time, we realized that we may need to use language about our program segmented by audience, especially for teachers who are most sensitive to issues of sexuality taught in school.

From this activity we also gained insight into one values-based aspiration that teachers and parents have for youth, which relates to CSE: “becoming a well-rounded person.” We now amplify this frame in our strategic communications about our CSE program. In their feedback to Projet Jeune Leader, thousands of students, parents, and teachers continue to use this phrase and frame, suggesting that this narrative really sticks.

- *“The CSE program is wonderful, it educates youth going through puberty and develops them into **well-rounded people**. We parents are happy to have you.” - **Parent**, CEG Ambohimadana*
- *“The CSE program should be expanded to the whole country so our youth can grow into **well-rounded individuals**.” - **Teacher**, CEG Mahatsinjony*
- *“Parents and CSE Educators support each other in raising us youth, the goal being to have us turn into **well-rounded adults**.” - **Student**, CEG Rakotozafy Alphonse*



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