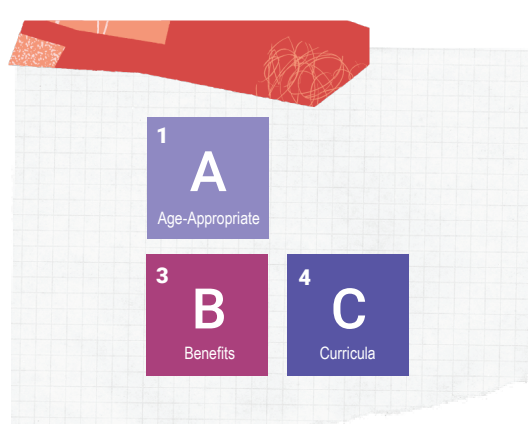




COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION (CSE):

FOUNDATIONAL LEARNING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE

ABCs ABOUT CSE



AGE-APPROPRIATE, accurate, curriculum-based approach that helps young people gain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to make informed and healthy choices about relationships.

BENEFITS schoolchildren and adolescents by teaching about relationships as they biologically mature and face decisions that affect their lifelong physical, emotional, and social well-being.

CURRICULA covers more than just information about puberty and the prevention of disease and pregnancy. It also explores cultural norms, gender equity, decision-making, negotiation, and other risk-reducing skills.



DID YOU KNOW?

CSE is particularly critical during younger adolescence, ideally before young people undergo puberty, transition into adulthood, and initiate sexual exploration.



CSE PROTECTS THE HUMAN CAPITAL OF ADOLESCENTS

CSE can help keep adolescents in school and healthy, but not all students have equitable access to quality CSE.



EDUCATION CONSEQUENCES

Early pregnancy and marriage is estimated to prompt **5 to 33 percent** of adolescent girls to leave school¹



HEALTH CONSEQUENCES

- **Pregnancy and childbirth complications** are among the leading cause of death among adolescent girls globally²
- An estimated **1.7 million adolescents** are living with HIV worldwide, with 160,000 adolescents newly infected in 2021³

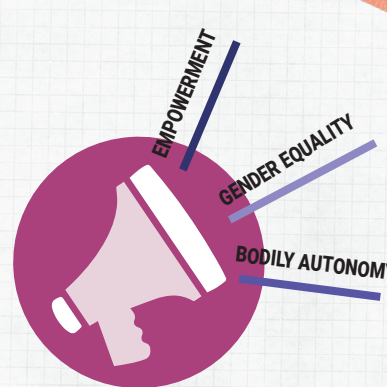


DID YOU KNOW?

- Only one-third of adolescents have accurate knowledge about how to prevent sexually-transmitted infections (STIs).
- More than 50% of female youth (ages 15-24 years) in rural areas of sub-Saharan Africa have been pregnant before their 18th birthday.⁴



BENEFITS OF TEACHING CSE



- Equitable access to accurate information improves knowledge about STIs, empowers adolescents to exercise bodily autonomy, increases the use of condoms and contraception, and fosters protective behaviors
- Integrating gender equality principles into the CSE curriculum can help young people to develop healthy, respectful relationships and to understand and protect their rights



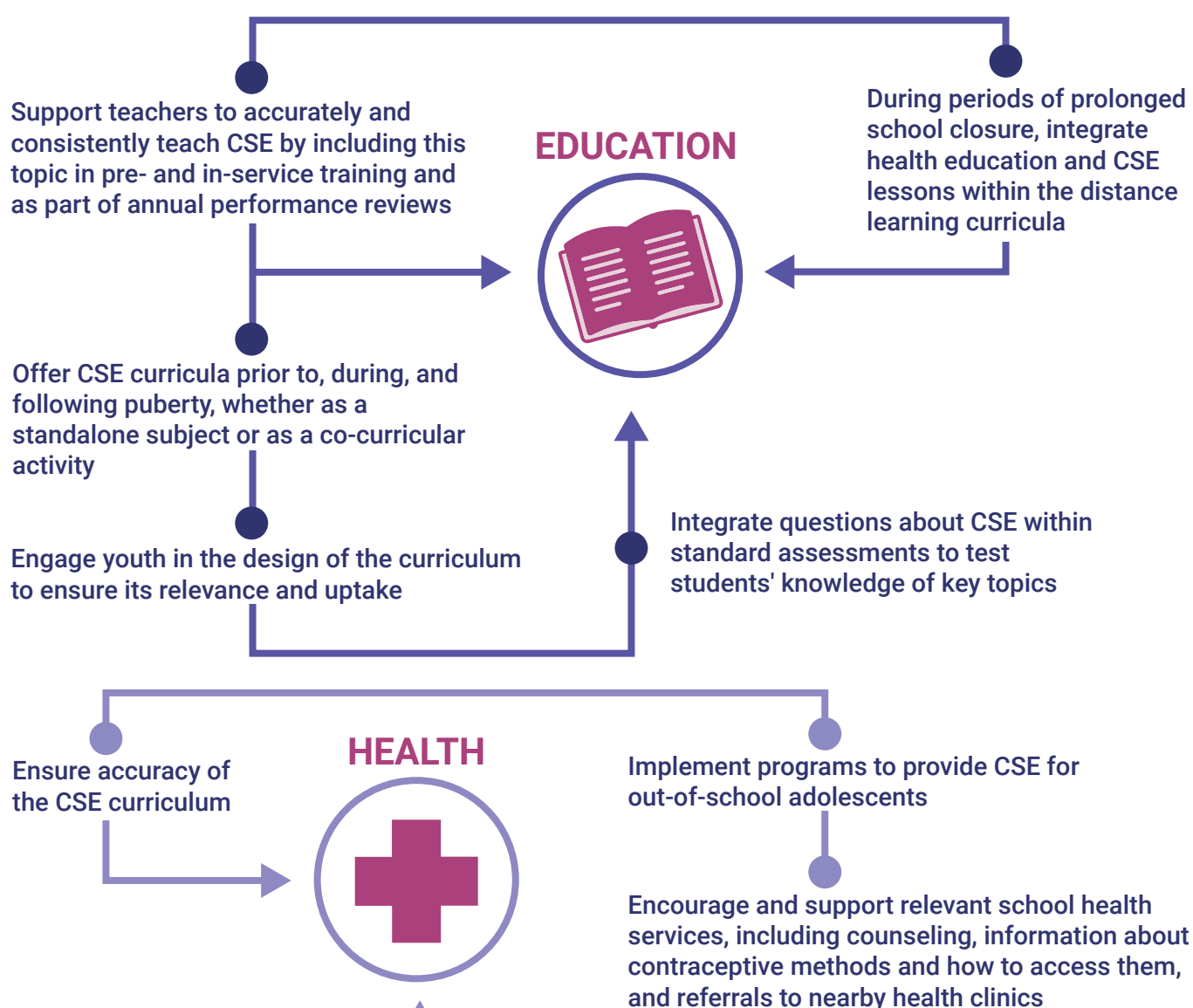
DID YOU KNOW?

CSE curriculum is most effective when it addresses gender or power relations and when it is culturally relevant and context appropriate



ENTRY POINTS FOR HEALTH & EDUCATION SECTORS

Many countries have policies or strategies that support CSE, including teacher training and monitoring its delivery.⁵ Education and health sectors can work together to provide accurate information and relevant services.



DID YOU KNOW?

Twenty countries have signed onto the “Ministerial Commitment on comprehensive sexuality education and sexual and reproductive health services for adolescents and young people in Eastern and Southern Africa” to facilitate CSE adaptation and implementation.⁶



References:

1. Wodon Q, Male C, Nayihouba A, Onagoruwa A, Savadogo A, Yedan A, et al. Economic Impacts of Child Marriage: Global Synthesis Report. 2017.
2. WHO. Adolescent and young adult health fact sheet. 2022. Available from: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescents-health-risks-and-solutions>.
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4. UNAIDS. 2019. Women and HIV: a spotlight on adolescent girls and young women.
5. UNESCO. The journey towards comprehensive sexuality education: global status report. Paris: UNESCO; 2021.
6. Wekesa FM, Nyakangi V, Onguss M, et al. Comprehensive sexuality education in sub-Saharan Africa. 2019. Available from: <https://aphrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/CSE-in-SSA-FINAL-2019.pdf>.

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