

# SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION SUCCESS FOR UKYP

Following UKYP's campaign to improve sex and relationships education (SRE) in schools, the Government has announced a range of reforms, including making PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) a compulsory part of the curriculum for 5 to 16 year-olds. This will include consistent sex and relationships education for all young people.

This is a huge campaign success for UKYP. Katrina Mather, 16, who has led on the campaign

over the past two years said, "Young people want to make healthy and informed decisions about sex and relationships, but until now, too many have been let down by the education system. The Government's decision to listen to young people and ensure good quality sex and relationships education is a huge step forward and one that is supported by young people throughout the country.

"No school or parent should be able to prevent a young person

receiving good, high quality sex and relationships education. Young people want the facts. We will continue to fight to ensure young people's voices are heard on this issue and that every young person, regardless of background, school, or faith has the opportunity to learn about sex and relationships.

"Young people have been the driving force behind this decision today and must continue to be fully involved in every aspect of designing the new curriculum."

## CAMPAIGN HIGHS AND LOWS



Robert Sassoon, MYP for Reading

"The high point of our campaign was definitely this announcement by the Government, which is down to the extremely hard work of a lot of good people, not in the least my two UKYP colleagues, Katrina Mather and Josh McTaggart, who have worked tirelessly to ensure that this end result has happened. One of our low points was perhaps an article in the Daily Mail in December calling us "half-witted" and "sublimely fatuous" for our campaign. To be honest, I found that, if anything, that article simply spurred us on and convinced us that we were doing the right thing!"

## THE KEY TO CAMPAIGN SUCCESS

"For young people who wish to see something they are passionate about come into realisation, then there a few important things they must do. Firstly, be prepared to fight for it. Compulsory SRE didn't come easily and it was definitely a long battle. Secondly, ensure you get as much support from local people as possible, if there isn't local support for an issue then it will be difficult to gain national support. Finally, don't give up, the campaign may be long and hard, but the end result will be worth it in the long run."



Josh McTaggart, South West PG Rep

# Key Campaign Dates



**JULY 2006**  
MYPs elect the improvement of SRE as a UKYP campaign

**2006-2007**  
MYPs survey over 20,000 young people about SRE



**JUNE 2007**  
UKYP publish a report "SRE: Are You Getting It?", highlighting that only a quarter of 11-18 year-olds receive good SRE



**OCTOBER 2008**  
The Government announces a range of reforms, including making PSHE a compulsory part of the curriculum for 5 to 16 year-olds

**JUNE 2008**  
UKYP wins the Children & Young People Now Positive Images award for its SRE campaign



**DECEMBER 2007**  
SRE makes the front page of The Times newspaper as a result of a UKYP letter to the Government supported by health professionals, other youth charities, MPs and celebrities such as Davina McCall and Danni Minogue



**DECEMBER 2007**  
5 MYPs meet with Schools Minister Jim Knight to discuss UKYP's survey results and report

**FEBRUARY 2008**  
The Government announce it will review SRE provision, with UKYP member Josh McTaggart as co-chair of the review

## Let's talk about RELATIONSHIPS

By Claire Smith,  
Sutton Youth  
Parliament

As fascinating as the studies into SRE are, it seems to me that the most important aspect is the 'R' in SRE.

'Relationships' is a significant aspect of the entire issue of sex. Lax teaching of it or its total omission from lessons is a disservice to the young people of today. The main problem with teaching the relationships aspect of the issue is that it's a sticky subject. In a modern society where the student-teacher relationship is scrutinised and analysed constantly, it isn't difficult to see how there is little basis for the trust and communication

needed to deal with the highly sensitive issue of relationships.

As a response more external speakers have been bought in, not only to rightly deal with the complicated and under appreciated scientific aspects of sex education, but also to deal with relationships. The issue is, after all, one of emotions and feelings, something difficult to teach in the regular format.

Young people ought to be given more choice about the relationships education they receive and the way in which they receive it. I firmly believe that schools should be made to

provide relationships lessons, and this practice should be checked up on regularly to make sure the essential information is being provided, as this will reach the greatest number of people.

Young people should not be allowed to miss out on this vital part of education, essential for their emotional wellbeing and their development. The education system for it should be chosen by the young people, through individual consultation and constant review to make sure young people get an input and get their voice heard.