



## **Introduction**

The research described in Part One of this resource demonstrates that many same-sex attracted students are actively disadvantaged in their schooling. When not being directly discriminated against, the majority of these students are invisible. This invisibility in the social world of schools is mirrored by an invisibility in the formal structures and processes of the education system. Curriculum and welfare frameworks largely ignore the existence of same-sex attracted students. Whilst policies and programs exist at the Departmental level challenging inequities for NESB students, koori students, girls, boys, and students with disabilities, those students that are same-sex attracted appear not to exist in policy. Research and program initiatives addressing students with “special needs” do not mention them.

Although this lack of specific reference is problematic there are a number of policy frameworks that school communities can draw on to support work that aims to create inclusive, safe learning environments for same-sex attracted students. This booklet, which forms Part Two of the SSAFE in Schools resource, explores relevant legislation and policy, and argues from these frameworks that schools must strive to ensure same-sex attracted students are not disadvantaged in their education, in order to fulfil their obligations to all students. Part Three will then look at ways of enacting these policies and frameworks and developing comprehensive approaches to supporting same-sex attracted students and challenging homophobia.

## **Public Education: the Next Generation**

Commissioned by the Victorian Minister for Education in March 2000, Public Education: The Next Generation (PENG) reviews public education in Victoria and defines the strategic direction of schools in the future. The review found wide acceptance in the community for the view that the goals of schooling are largely related to fostering social and economic participation for all citizens.

PENG places major emphasis on guaranteeing universality of access to public education, and on equity and social justice. This includes

recommendations stating things such as “public schooling promotes diversity, social cohesion and reconciliation” (p 8), and statements such as “all people have an equal right to have their interests taken into account in decisions about schooling....All students are welcome in public schools, which must be free from all prejudice and discrimination” (p 23) and “Above all, public education is a framework of universal opportunity in which students from every social group should achieve in full measure, and the rights of one are grounded in the commitment to the rights of all” (p23).

PENG refers to “The Adelaide Declaration on the National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century” (April 1999 – attended by all State, Territory and Commonwealth Education Ministers) and the goals declared there, including -

3. Schooling should be socially just, so that:
  - 3.1 students’ outcomes from schooling are free from the effects of negative forms of discrimination based on sex, language, culture and ethnicity, religion or disability; and of differences arising from students’ socio-economic background or geographic location.
  - 3.2 the learning outcomes of educationally disadvantaged students improve and, over time, match those of other students.

(in DEET, 2000b: 74).

PENG does not at any stage refer to young people who are disadvantaged or may have experienced prejudice or discrimination due to their sexual orientation. Three possible conclusions can be drawn from this –

- same-sex attracted students are included implicitly in statements about “all students” and “educationally disadvantaged students”
- same-sex attracted students are included amongst “all students” but are not understood to be disadvantaged or marginalised
- same-sex attracted students are not included.

Given that sexual orientation is an attribute for which people cannot be discriminated against under law (see below) the last conclusion can clearly not be the correct one. The research from Part One of this resource indicates that same-sex attracted students do experience detriment in, and are marginalised by, some of their experiences at school. It is therefore incumbent on schools to recognise and respond appropriately to the needs of these students.

While PENG and The Adelaide Declaration can be used as a framework that supports same-sex attracted students, the Commonwealth 'Talking Sexual Health' framework explicitly mentions sexual orientation, and is a more useful tool.

Talking Sexual Health (ANCAHRD, 1999:59), the national framework for education about sexual health, provides a definition of diversity, that is inclusive of sexuality:

Acknowledging diversity among students is crucial to ensuring that school-based programs are relevant to all students. Diversity refers to the broad range of differences amongst students and their communities and includes aspects related to gender, drug use, race, geographic location, culture, socio-economic background, age, disability, religion and sexuality (1999:38).

This definition of diversity, which is inclusive of sexuality, does not conflict with others in use in education (such as PENG, and the Adelaide Declaration, above) it merely provides a greater level of detail. It is possible for schools to adopt an inclusive definition such as this one in identifying the diverse needs of their own students.

### **The school Charter**

All Victorian state schools are required to have a school charter (a three-year plan that sets out how the school will work to help its students achieve their full learning potential). The charter outlines what is unique about the school and its programs. This is an appropriate place to include policy that supports same-sex attracted young people, within the context of equity and safety for all students, as the Charter sets the broad direction for the whole school. The writing of the charter is directed by The Department of Education to be an open process that actively includes school council and other interested members of the school community (DEET, 2000c), and thus it offers an opportunity for engaged discussion on these issues.

## **Curriculum**

The Curriculum and Standards Framework (CSF) provides the basis for curriculum planning in Victorian schools from Preparatory – Year 10, and for reporting on student achievement. It sets out the major areas of learning to be covered and describes learning outcomes to be achieved by students. The CSF is organised into eight nationally agreed Key Learning Areas. The major content and process elements of each key learning area at each level are arranged in strands. Within each strand, the CSF puts together statements of major material to be covered (curriculum) and the expected outcomes that students should attain following successful teaching and learning of that material (standards).

Of the eight Key Learning Areas (KLAs) within the CSF, 'Health and Physical Education' is the one in which discussion of sexuality is traditionally located. To differing extents, the other seven also offer some opportunity. Exploration of the Learning Outcomes within each strand of each KLA exposes various opportunities for appropriate discussion of homosexuality across the curriculum.

Both the Curriculum and Standards Framework 2 and the Framework for Student Support Services in Victorian Government Schools provide clear indication that curriculum across all Key Learning Areas needs to better represent the needs of disadvantaged students. The following provides suggestions for areas of the Curriculum and Standards Framework 2 that offer opportunities for inclusion of sexual and gender diversity issues.

### **Health and Physical Education (H&PE)**

The Health and Physical Education KLA has three strands. One relates to physical education, whilst the other two look at "Health of Individuals and Populations" and "Self and Relationships". Some of the Learning Outcomes that could include curriculum on same-sex attracted and gender diverse young people follow. I have provided further detail with some of these as examples.

## **At Level 5 (to the end of Year 8) –**

### **Strand – Health of Individuals and Populations.**

Learning Outcome 5.1 – Describe health issues about which young people make decisions, and strategies that are designed to maintain or improve their health.

Achievement in this area is said to be evident when the student is able to:

- identify important physical, social and emotional factors that contribute to young people's health and wellbeing
- compare the health interests and concerns of young people with those of other age groups
- identify appropriate ways of responding to areas of concern at a personal, home or community level
- identify positive and negative aspects of risk taking and specify strategies to minimise harm in different situations

### **Strand – Self and Relationships**

Learning Outcome 5.2 – Describe the effect of family and community expectations on the development of personal identity and values.

Achievement in this area is said to be evident when the student is able to:

- describe family influences that shape personal values and identity explain community attitudes and laws that influence a sense of right or wrong, good or bad
- describe actions to respond to challenges

## **At Level 6 (to the end of Year 10) –**

### **Strand – Health of Individuals and Populations**

Learning Outcome 6.1 – Analyse the positive and negative health outcomes of a range of personal behaviours and community actions

Learning Outcome 6.3ext – Review national or State strategies for addressing contemporary health-related issues.

Achievement in this area is said to be evident when the student is able to:

- identify the current health status of groups relevant to a particular health issue
- examine the factors – social, political and economic – that contribute to this issue getting public attention
- critically analyse the personal, social and environmental factors that contribute to the issue
- identify strategies used to address the selected issue
- evaluate the health outcomes of the action taken

Learning Outcome 6.4ext – Review the policies and priorities of major health bodies in meeting the health needs of a selected group.

### **Strand – Self and relationships**

Learning Outcome 6.3 – Analyse ways in which individuals and groups seek to influence the behaviours of others concerning friendships and relationships.

Achievement in this area is said to be evident when the student is able to:

- explain the contribution of different roles and responsibilities in friendship and sexual relationships to young people's health and wellbeing
- describe and explain ways in which sexual relationships are portrayed and promoted in society and the impact of these on young people's views of relationships
- demonstrate communication and cooperation skills necessary to cope effectively with changes in relationships and groups
- identify the range of people and services available to support young people's sexual and emotional health needs

Learning Outcome 6.6ext – Analyse the changing nature of stereotypes and how this affects individual, family and community expectations.

Achievement in this area is said to be evident when the student is able to:

- outline stereotypes associated with gender, age, sexuality, friendship, relationships and culture

- identify changes that have occurred in stereotypes
- explain how stereotypes affect individual experiences, understandings, attitudes and relationships
- explain how stereotypes influence family and community expectations

## **The Arts**

The Arts KLA contains eight strands referring to different areas of arts practice. One of these is 'media', which contains the following Learning Outcome.

Learning Outcome 6.4 – Analyse the characteristics and role of the media in different cultural contexts (explain ways in which media texts reinforce or challenge social, cultural and artistic values).

Across the Arts there are opportunities to discuss the ways in which the experiences of individuals in their social worlds shape their creative output.

## **English, including English as a Second Language (ESL)**

English as a KLA offers many opportunities for discussion on a wide range of issues. The three English strands are aimed at skills improvement in speaking and listening, reading, and writing. Useful Learning Outcomes include –

Learning Outcome 5.1 – Listen to and produce a range of spoken texts dealing with some challenging themes and issues.

Learning Outcome 5.9 – Use a range of text types to write about some challenging themes and issues.

Learning Outcome 6.1 – Listen to and produce a range of spoken texts to examine different perspectives on complex themes and issues.

Learning Outcome 6.2 – Compare and contrast the use of language in spoken texts that present different perspectives on complex themes and issues.

Learning Outcome 6.5 – Read a range of texts and use them to discuss different perspectives on complex themes and issues.

Learning Outcome 6.9 – Use a range of text types to convey detailed information and discuss different perspectives on complex themes and issues in writing.

### **Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE)**

The SOSE KLA includes four strands, relating to 'society and environment', 'history', 'geography' and 'economy and society'. Relevant Learning Outcomes from this area include –

Learning Outcome 5.2 – Examine the origin of Australia's legal system and how Australian laws are made.

Learning Outcome 6.5 – Explain the key changes in social and political attitudes and values in modern Western society.

Achievement in this area is said to be evident when the student is able to:

- describe the ways in which significant events affected change in such areas as family structures, gender roles and work organisation
- explain how the values of particular societies changed as a result of significant events
- examine the ways in which advances in technology affected other areas, such as health, medicine, transport, education
- evaluate the effect of significant events and ideas on groups

Learning Outcome 6.2 – Analyse a proposed change in the law in Australia and explain the legal processes to implement the change.

Civics and Citizenship Education has been identified as a cross-curriculum area of education which should be prioritised. It encourages students to understand citizenship rights and responsibilities, and to participate in school-based decision making (DEET, 2000:18, A-Z Guide for Parents). Civics and citizenship is taught mostly within the SOSE KLA, and offers many opportunities for discussion of issues relating to diversity across communities, and values relating to equity and social justice.

## **Science, Technology, LOTE and Mathematics**

The **Science** KLA includes a biology strand. Whilst Learning Outcomes in this area do not focus on social issues, homosexuality can clearly be discussed in such curriculum areas as reproduction and genetics.

The remaining three KLAs (**Technology, Languages Other Than English (LOTE)** and **Mathematics**) appear to offer the least opportunity in curriculum for discussion of sexuality based issues. But, as with the other five KLAs, these three are bound by “principles of gender equity and equal opportunity for students from all ethnic, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds” and the “requirement that the learning outcomes of students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds should, over time, better match those of other students”

This exploration of the CSF is not exhaustive. The opportunities for inclusion of issues related to sexual diversity within existing curriculum frameworks are many. With the exception of the Health and PE KLA however, there is a clear lack of resources and structured programs available for teachers to use in the classroom.

## **Health and Wellbeing Frameworks and Student Support**

The Framework for Student Support Services in Victorian Government Schools (Department of Education, Victoria, 1998) was developed in response to the Suicide Prevention Victorian Task Force Report (July 1997). The Framework describes the principles, arrangements and additional resources provided to strengthen student welfare and support services.

The Suicide Prevention Victorian Task Force Report identifies gays and lesbians, particularly adolescents who are just acknowledging their sexuality, as “a particularly high risk group, especially in rural areas” (1997:40) and as a “population of special concern” (1997:38). In its response to this report the Framework states that schools need to “develop relevant and appropriate curriculum...to enable students to better deal with difficult issues” (1998:1:18), provide “pastoral care and other strategies that support students at risk” (1998:1:18), develop “flexible and appropriate curriculum for students at risk” (1998:1:19) and provide professional development to teachers “with a focus on primary prevention strategies and skills in the identification, monitoring, management and referral of students at risk and the development of a positive and supportive school environment” (1998:1:13).

On the basis of the Framework for Student Support Services, schools are expected to develop and monitor “appropriate measurable student welfare provision” (1998:7). These services are expected to be supported by committee structures at school, cluster and regional levels. The “foundation for student welfare and support structures” is claimed to be “the provision of flexible, relevant and appropriate curriculum, professional development to support staff and a range of appropriate early intervention services for students in need and at risk” (1998:10). As the Task Force Report upon which the Framework has been developed identifies gay and lesbian young people as “a particularly high risk group” (1997:40) the Framework is clearly stating that relevant and appropriate curriculum and a range of appropriate early intervention services are required for gay and lesbian students.

The Framework document is supported by the Framework for Student Support Services Teacher Resource (1999). This resource defines early intervention and details strategies for implementing early intervention programs. These include assessing risks and identifying needs; providing school-based counselling and support; developing programs to improve skills; and monitoring and evaluating student support programs (1999:32).

These strategies rely on identification by the school of at-risk young people and their issues. For this to happen for same-sex attracted young people, a culture must be created within the school that is conducive to young people talking about their sexual orientation. Doing so must not feel like an increased risk for the young person, and must not lead to further problems, such as isolation, harassment or disclosures beyond those trusted and permitted by the young person themselves.

With that said, clearly it must not be a requirement of welfare services and structures aimed at supporting same-sex attracted students that they disclose their sexual orientation before they receive support. Successful support within schools will be geared towards environmental change focused on school culture and practice, so that all same-sex attracted young people benefit, not just those who publicly identify as lesbian or gay.

The Framework also incorporates the School Focused Youth Service (SFYS), a joint initiative of the Department of Education (now DE&T) and the Department of Human Services. SFYS has been tendered

across all forty-one school clusters in the state to “develop a continuum of services which enhance the effectiveness of links between the primary prevention and early intervention work done by school-based support services and the secondary level of intervention provided by the community sector” (DOE 1998:2:6). One of the seven ‘target groups’ of SFYS is young people who “display concerns regarding sexuality” (1998:2:7).

The range of frameworks and resources available to schools in developing programs to support students in their health and welfare is a reflection of the importance the community places on student wellbeing. This is underpinned by the duty of care responsibilities of schools. As with school curriculum, the policy context shaping student welfare in schools provides appropriate opportunities for supporting same-sex attracted students, both as a part of the general student population and as a group “at-risk”.

### **Equal Opportunity Policy and Codes of Conduct**

The Talking Sexual Health Framework acknowledges schools as a part of the broader community, and points towards extant policy and legislation that must be followed in developing programs for schools. These include policies and frameworks on gender equity, indigenous sexual health, drug education and mental health. The Framework also notes –

Australian schools have legal obligations to comply with, in their provision of safe and supportive environments for students. Effective provision of education about STIs, HIV/AIDS and BBVs involves the examination of legal as well as moral and ethical issues around sexuality, so it is likely that issues such as discrimination may arise and they need to be addressed.

Schools are both providers of services and are employers, and have legal and moral responsibilities for the ‘duty of care’ of students under both State/Territory and Commonwealth legislation. Anti-discrimination legislation at both State/Territory and federal levels is a relevant framework for creating and maintaining safe and supportive learning environments free from harassment and discrimination for all students.

(1999:19)

The Commonwealth Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act 1986 is described as being of “particular relevance” (1999:19) here, and schools are referred to the relevant anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation in each State and Territory with a view to incorporating them into school-based policies and practices (1999:20).

Under the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act (1995) it is against the law to discriminate directly or indirectly against someone because of their “lawful sexual activity/sexual orientation”. This “includes gay men, lesbians, bisexual or heterosexual persons, sex workers”. One of the six areas of “public life” in which the Act has force is in education, and

“an educational authority must not discriminate against a student by denying or limiting access to any benefit provided by the authority by expelling the student or by subjecting the student to any other detriment”.

The term “any other detriment” should be read broadly. If same-sex attracted young people feel unsafe, are harassed, experience violence, and/or leave school before completing Year Twelve because of negative experiences, schools may be in breach of this legislation.

The Act also states that:

“Staff and students have a right to be treated fairly by staff and fellow students regardless of gender, sexual orientation and race”

(Equal Opportunity Commission, 1996:3)

### Harassment

Sexual harassment is also unlawful under the Act. The definition of sexual harassment includes “unwelcome comments about a person’s sex life” and “sexually offensive comments, anecdotes or jokes” (EOCV, 1995). In the area of Education –

It is unlawful for –

- teachers or other staff to sexually harass students
  - students to sexually harass teachers or other staff
  - students to sexually harass other students
- (EOCV, 1995).

Significantly, in relation to both discrimination and harassment, the Commission explains that:

“Inaction may also amount to an implicit authorisation or encouragement of discrimination or sexual harassment. This means that a teacher or principal who ‘turns a blind eye’ to discrimination or sexual harassment by students may be liable on the basis of authorising or assisting discrimination”

(Equal Opportunity Commission, 1996:14)

### Codes of Conduct

All state schools are expected to develop codes of conduct for both students and staff. These are to be inclusive of anti-bullying and anti-harassment policies. The DEET Bullying website [Addressing Bullying Behaviour – It’s Our Responsibility](#) describes the process for developing the student Code of Conduct as working on

“the premise of creating a safe, positive and supportive school environment in which each student can enjoy their opportunities, both academic and social, and achieve their greatest potential educationally”.

The Code of Conduct should also aim to “foster the promotion of positive, non-discriminatory relationships among students”(DEET, 2001). Once again we see an implicit acknowledgement that homophobia is wrong, because discrimination is wrong, and all students should feel safe and supported.

Clearly, prevention of bullying in schools will have positive outcomes for same-sex attracted students. Plummer’s (1999) work [One of the Boys – Masculinity, Homophobia, and Modern Manhood](#) found that words such as ‘poofter’ and ‘faggot’ were common currency in bullying behaviours, and that they were ranked as the ‘worst’ words that could be said by one student to another. It is important where homophobic language and behaviours are identified in bullying cultures within schools that the homophobia is tackled, alongside the bullying. The way that bullying is often enacted through homophobic social practices needs to be unpacked and addressed.

## **Teacher Support and Professional Development**

Talking Sexual Health regards the professional development needs of the school community as a key component in its successful delivery and notes that many teachers feel inadequately prepared for dealing with the complexity of issues involved in delivering comprehensive sexuality education.

It is unrealistic to expect teachers to change their teaching approaches to assist young people to examine the broader social context of issues around STIs, HIV/AIDS and BBVs without adequate and comprehensive professional development....Harrison and Dempsey (1998) recommended that professional development programs should not only focus on improving the knowledge base of teachers, but on developing skills to build an appropriate classroom climate, to recognise and cater for the diversity of students, and to link at-risk students to appropriate services.

(1999:59).

Professional development provides a strong base for the development of a whole-school approach to supporting same-sex attracted students. Training must provide opportunities for teachers and other staff of the school to learn about the issues and experiences of same-sex attracted students, to understand relevant policies and legislation and their own legal obligations, and to explore and clarify their own personal values and attitudes.

## **Whole School Programs**

Increasingly it is recognised that the complex health and welfare needs of school students cannot be addressed solely through curriculum, or the approach traditionally understood as 'student welfare'. Successful programs focussed on such issues will also address school policy, codes of conduct, school culture, relationships between the school and the broader community, professional development needs of teachers, and other areas of school activity. This approach has come to be known as a 'whole school approach'. Addressing the complex needs of lesbian and gay young people and challenging homophobia in school communities require such a multi-pronged approach.

Talking Sexual Health argues strongly for a whole school approach to sexual health education that is inclusive of issues of same-sex attraction. "Taking a whole school approach" is the first of five "key

components” for the development and delivery of comprehensive sexuality education.

A whole school approach means more than the implementation of the formal curriculum. It means ensuring that the messages students learn through the informal curriculum are supported by policy, guidelines and practices in the student welfare and pastoral care areas. For example, it is of limited use for students to examine the implications of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation if in the playground or during sport they observe no response to or support for a student who is harassed for this reason...

(1999:22)

The ‘Talking Sexual Health’ Framework also endorses the Health Promoting Schools model as appropriate for developing a whole school approach to sexuality education. The Australian Health Promoting Schools website quotes the World Health Organisation as saying:

Health promoting schools are schools which display, in everything they say and do, support for and commitment to enhancing the emotional, social, physical and moral well being of all members of their school community.

(Australian Health Promoting Schools, 2000).

The Health Promoting Schools model is presented as comprising of three overlapping areas:

- ? curriculum, teaching and learning;
- ? school organisation, ethos and environment;
- ? and partnerships and services

(Education Victoria, 1999).

In each of these areas, principles that support equity of access, promotion of social and emotional health and the creation of safe environments are primary (AHPSA, 2000). The very nature of such a model suggests that its success or failure could be measured by its ability to cater to disadvantaged students, such as those who are same-sex attracted.

The Health Promoting Schools model is an appropriate model for implementing the recommendations of Talking Sexual Health and initiating comprehensive support for same-sex attracted young people.

### MindMatters

Schools across Australia are being resourced and trained in the implementation of MindMatters, a whole school approach to mental health promotion for all students. Mindmatters resources include a series of books and a website designed to aid schools in adopting a whole school approach. These focus on issues such as prevention of self-harm and suicide, dealing with bullying and harassment, stress and coping, and understanding mental illness. The "Community Matters" resource focuses on supporting particular groups of young people, including those who are same-sex attracted.

MindMatters clearly offers schools another opportunity to work towards support of same-sex attracted students.

A whole-school approach must engage and include the entire school community, including parents. Part One of this resource details the policy response of organisations representing parents of students in state schools.

The next section of this resource explores practical issues and strategies in developing and implementing a comprehensive whole-school approach that is inclusive of the needs of students who are same-sex attracted.

### **Issues relating to Catholic and other Independent Schools**

For non-government schools, there may be some differences in the ways same-sex attracted students are acknowledged and supported. These differences are differences in some areas of policy; all schools are covered by the legislation.

All schools are bound by the legislation under the Equal Opportunity Act 1995 to ensure that no student suffer discrimination, including being subjected to **any detriment**, on the grounds of their actual or presumed sexual orientation (EOC, 1995). Sexual harassment, including the use of "sexually offensive comments, anecdotes or jokes" is illegal in all schools (EOC, 1995). Teachers or Principals in every school in Victoria may be liable under these laws if they "turn a blind

eye" to incidents of discrimination or harassment that are occurring in the school (EOC, 1996: 14).

All schools must develop their curriculum within the bounds set by the Curriculum and Standards Framework. As detailed above, the CSF offers ample, appropriate opportunities for development and delivery of curriculum that is inclusive of same-sex attracted students needs.

In the specific area of health education, the Talking Sexual Health Framework acknowledges the complexity of teaching sexuality education within a religious context and, whilst acknowledging that diverse religious views need to be taken into account in developing sexual health programs, indicates that:

"This does not mean that young people with strong religious beliefs should not have relevant teaching about health and safety, especially in sexual health...While it is appropriate for school-based sexuality education programs to take in to account the needs and values which the school serves, consideration must also be given to the sexual health education needs of all students" (1999:42).

Representatives of peak organisations from both the state and independent school sectors supported and provided advice during the development of Talking Sexual Health. In the particular case of the Talking Sexual Health Parents Guide this included the Australian Council of State School Organisations, the Australian Parents Council, the National Council of Independent Schools Associations, the Catholic Education Office of Victoria and the Association of Schools Councils of Victoria.

Independent schools regularly utilise and adapt policy frameworks intended for state schools, but they are generally not bound by them. Whole-school approaches and frameworks are commonly used in independent schools, and welfare, wellbeing and pastoral care policies and practices are generally predicated on the same assumptions as those in state schools – all students have a right to feel safe and supported; bullying and harassment will not be tolerated; and, social justice is a positive virtue.

Thus, whilst policy may be individualised down to the school level in independent schools, general principles regarding the rights and needs of same-sex attracted students and the inappropriateness of

homophobic harassment and discrimination will be congruent with those of state schools.

## **Conclusion**

The research evidence from Part One of this resource demonstrates that being same-sex attracted and attending school can often be a difficult experience. Schools are charged with a duty of care to provide a safe and supportive environment for all students.

This survey of some of the policies, frameworks and programs available to schools to support and guide their work makes it clear that:

- ? schools are expected to support and enhance the well-being of all of their students, and particularly those who are marginalised and at-risk;
- ? this implicitly and explicitly includes those students who are same-sex attracted; and
- ? there are opportunities within existing curriculum frameworks for education that is inclusive of sexual orientation issues. These opportunities are mirrored at the broader level - existing whole-school approaches to health are completely amenable to explicit support for same-sex attracted students.

The third part of this resource will outline some grounded principles that might inform and guide the work of individuals and whole-school communities as they go about supporting and affirming sexual diversity and minimising the likelihood of homophobic social practices.

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