

Evaluation Report:

Respect. Safety and Sexual Health for Youth
A project of the SWOYA Community Development and Research Society

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Evaluation by:

Judi Stevenson
Minerva Research & Communications
Email: minerva@saltspring.com
Tel: 250-537-5567

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Overview

In February of 2012, SWOVA carried out a planned project on respect and safety in sexual health for young women and men in the Southern Gulf Islands. Building on prior experience and learning from a pilot project conducted in 2011, the project provided grade 11 students in the secondary school on Salt Spring Island (which serves all of the Southern Gulf Islands) with a series of opportunities to explore aspects of sexual health and healthy sexuality in the context of intimate relationships.

The starting point for the project was the need expressed by secondary school students, in the course of working with SWOVA's facilitators on the R+R (Respectful Relationships) curriculum that they have been delivering for over 10 years, to have more time for in-depth learning and discussion of those particular issues.

The components of the project, which took place at the school over two days, were:

A series of 90-minute sexual health information workshops, facilitated by local medical doctors in an interactive discussion format, which all of the grade 11 students attended in gender-mixed groups of roughly 25.

A series of sexual health "talking circles", focused on issues of sexuality within the context of respectful relationships. They were facilitated by SWOVA's R+R staff in an interactive discussion format, and attended by all grade 11 students in gender-mixed groups of roughly 25.

A newly developed "talking circle evening" workshop, open to parents and teens from the community to attend together. It was also facilitated in an interactive discussion format by SWOVA's R+R staff.

An informational Sexual Health Fair, held at the secondary school at noon hour, which all secondary school students were free to attend.

Workshop participants (both youth and parents) provided feedback on all components of their experience, answering short questionnaires at the end of each one they attended.

Questionnaires were also made available at the Sexual Health Fair. The number of visitor responses in that context was limited, which organizers reported was due to the students' interest in and interaction with the exhibits at the fair, as well as the dialogue it sparked with each other. The questionnaire was not an effective means of capturing that engagement, suggesting that another approach to evaluation should be planned if the "fair" model is used in the future.

What follows in this report is a presentation and analysis of the assessment data collected from (i) the sexual health information workshops, (ii) the respectful sexual health talking circles for youth, (iii) the sexual health talking circle evening for parents and youth and (iv) the sexual health fair.

In the tables below, yellow highlighting has been used to call attention to gender differences of at least 8 to 10%, suggesting significant differences.

Sexual Health Information Workshops

A total of 91 students completed feedback/assessment questionnaires at the end of these four workshops, 50 girls and 41 boys. In the previous year's pilot project, workshops were organized on a gender-separate basis, on the grounds that teens would be likely to feel more comfortable and talk more freely about sensitive topics in that situation. However, a significant number of students indicated in the pilot project evaluation that they would have preferred mixed gender groups for these discussions. Accordingly, the format was modified for the current year's project.

As part of the evaluation, the youth were presented with seven statements and asked to rate them on a five point scale, indicating "how true" each statement was for them. The tables show the results for all four workshop groups, taken together. Students were not asked to comment on or explain their responses to these statements.

1. I enjoyed the workshop.

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Somewhat true	Quite true	Very true	TOTAL
Girls	1 (2.0%)	3 (6.0%)	19 (38.0%)	22 (44.0%)	5 (10.0%)	50 (100%)
Boys	-	3 (7.3%)	16 (39.0%)	15 (36.6%)	7 (17.1%)	41 (100%)
TOTAL	1 (1.1%)	6 (6.6%)	35 (38.5%)	37 (40.7%)	12 (13.2%)	91 (100%)

Over 50% of participants enjoyed the workshop, answering "quite true" or "very true" about this statement. Taking the 50% mark as an indicator of positive engagement, this is a good result. Boys were somewhat more likely to say "very true", and girls to say "quite true".

2. I learned new things about sexual health in the workshop.

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Somewhat true	Quite true	Very true	TOTAL
Girls	-	10 (20.0%)	14 (28.0%)	19 (38.0%)	7 (14.0%)	50 (100%)
Boys	1 (2.4%)	6 (14.6%)	16 (39.0%)	9 (22.0%)	9 (22.0%)	41 (100%)
TOTAL	1 (1.1%)	16 (17.6%)	30 (33.0%)	28 (30.8%)	16 (17.6%)	91 (100%)

Almost 50% of the youth agreed that they had "learned new things" at the workshop, with boys being more positive than girls, another good result. The fact that 20% of the girls and almost as many boys said that this was only "a little bit true" or in one case "not at all true" suggests the possibility that the designers of this workshop (doctors) may have underestimated the level of awareness of sexual health issues that at least some youth in grade 11 already have.

3. I felt it was safe to express my thoughts and opinions in the workshop.

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Somewhat true	Quite true	Very true	TOTAL
Girls	2 (4.0%)	8 (16.0%)	20 (40.0%)	15 (30.0%)	5 (10.0%)	50 (100%)
Boys	1 (2.4%)	1 (2.4%)	15 (36.6%)	16 (39.0%)	8 (19.5%)	41 (100%)
TOTAL	3 (3.3%)	9 (9.9%)	35 (38.5%)	31 (34.1%)	13 (14.3%)	91 (100%)

Again, almost 50% of the youth "felt it was safe to express their thoughts and opinions" in the workshop, apparently a good result. However, in this case, the fact that the boys were quite a bit more positive than girls in responding to the statement suggests the possibility that the mixed

gender grouping may not have worked well for a significant proportion of the girls, at least 20% and perhaps up to 60%, depending on interpretation.

4. I think the activities we did in the workshop were helpful.

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Somewhat true	Quite true	Very true	TOTAL
Girls	3 (6.0%)	8 (16.0%)	19 (38.0%)	15 (30.0%)	3 (6.0%)	48 (100%)
Boys	-	8 (19.5%)	13 (31.7%)	17 (41.6%)	3 (7.3%)	41 (100%)
TOTAL	3 (3.4%)	16 (18.0%)	32 (36.0%)	32 (36.0%)	6 (6.7%)	89 (100%)

Positive responses at the “quite true” and “very true” levels were above the 40% mark but did not reach the 50% mark in response to this statement, with girls somewhat less positive than boys. This suggests the value of reviewing students’ recommendations (see below) in order to increase and/or make revisions to the activities used in this workshop in future years.

5. Because of the workshop, I am able to see more clearly how sexuality is linked to intimacy and emotionality.

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Somewhat true	Quite True	Very true	TOTAL
Girls	5 (10.0%)	12 (24.0%)	22 (44.0%)	8 (16.0%)	3 (6.0%)	50 (100%)
Boys	2 (4.9%)	9 (22.0%)	19 (46.3%)	7 (17.1%)	4 (9.8%)	41 (100%)
TOTAL	7 (7.7%)	21 (23.1%)	41 (45.1%)	15 (16.5%)	7 (7.7%)	91 (100%)

Only about 24% of the youth responded “quite true” or “very true” to this statement, suggesting that the links between intimacy, emotionality and sexuality could have been more clearly established in the workshop. There were no significant differences between the girls’ and boys’ answers.

6. I want to talk more with others about sexual health.

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Somewhat true	Quite True	Very true	TOTAL
Girls	7 (14.0%)	18 (36.0%)	15 (30.0%)	8 (16.0)	2 (4.0%)	50 (100%)
Boys	5 (12.2%)	14 (34.1%)	14 (34.1%)	3 (7.3%)	5 (12.2%)	41 (100%)
TOTAL	12 (13.2%)	32 (35.2%)	29 (31.9%)	11 (12.1%)	7 (7.7%)	91 (100%)

In responding to this statement, almost 50% of the youth said that it was “not at all true” or “a little bit true”, and only about 20% said it was “quite true” or “very true”, with boys in the majority. The wording of the question limits interpretation, since it is not possible to know who the youth thought “others” would mean. In future evaluations, it would be useful to rephrase this question or include a follow-up probe to gain further insight.

7. I would recommend to other youth that they attend this workshop.

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Somewhat true	Quite True	Very true	TOTAL
Girls	2 (4.0%)	4 (8.0%)	11 (22.0%)	19 (38.0%)	14 (28.0%)	50 (100%)
Boys	1 (2.4%)	6 (14.6%)	11 (26.8%)	15 (36.6%)	8 (19.5%)	41 (100%)
TOTAL	3 (3.3%)	10 (11.0%)	22 (24.2%)	34 (37.4%)	22 (24.2%)	91 (100%)

This statement received the most positive responses of all, with over 60% of the youth saying it was “quite true” or “very true”. Girls were somewhat more positive than boys, which is a bit surprising in light of the gender differences in relation to previous statements.

When asked how the workshop could be improved, comments ranged widely and were not always serious in tone. A sample of those that would count as “constructive criticism” follows:

- ▶ Smaller groups so as to make it less awkward to speak up.
- ▶ More time for questions. Get started a bit quicker.
- ▶ Make it more interactive.
- ▶ I think there could be a male facilitator too.¹
- ▶ Have more of an agenda/plan.
- ▶ More discussion from the students.
- ▶ Build a safer environment, make us feel more comfortable, be more open and non-judgmental.
- ▶ Don’t do quizzes the whole time.
- ▶ Do a bit more than a powerpoint, maybe some activities.
- ▶ More activities.
- ▶ Let the students talk.

The final question asked the youth to give the workshop an overall rating on a scale of 1—5. About 40% gave it a rating of “very good” or “excellent”, somewhat less than the 50% goal, with 16.5% indicating that, for them, it was just “okay”.

	Not good	Okay	Good	Very good	Excellent	TOTAL
Girls	-	7 (14%)	22 (44%)	13 (26%)	8 (16%)	50 (100%)
Boys	-	8 (19.5%)	17 (41.5%)	10 (24.4%)	6 (14.6%)	41 (100%)
TOTAL	-	15 (16.5%)	39 (42.9%)	23 (25.3)	14 (15.4%)	91 (100%)

Sexual Health Talking Circles for Youth

This second set of four workshops focused on sexual health in the context of respectful relationships, and was facilitated by SWOVA’s senior R+R facilitators, one female and one male. A total of 104 students completed the feedback/assessment questionnaires at the end of the sessions: 59 girls and 45 boys. The questionnaires were the same as for the previously-discussed sexual health information workshops.

1. I enjoyed the workshop.

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Somewhat true	Quite true	Very true	TOTAL
Girls	-	3 (5.1%)	22 (37.3%)	24 (40.7%)	10 (16.9%)	59 (100%)
Boys	2 (4.4%)	3 (6.7%)	12 (26.7%)	20 (44.4%)	8 (17.8%)	45 (100%)
TOTAL	2 (1.9%)	6 (5.8%)	34 (32.7%)	44 (42.3%)	18 (17.3%)	104 (100%)

¹ SWOVA’s efforts to find a male doctor to deliver workshops this year were unsuccessful.

Slightly more than 60% of the attending students said they enjoyed the workshop at the “quite true” or “very true” levels, with more girls than boys answering with the neutral “somewhat true”, a good response.

2. I learned new things about sexual health in the workshop.

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Somewhat true	Quite true	Very true	TOTAL
Girls	8 (13.6%)	14 (23.7%)	17 (28.8%)	14 (23.7%)	6 (10.2%)	59 (100%)
Boys	5 (11.1%)	11 (24.4%)	12 (26.7%)	12 (26.7%)	5 (11.1%)	45 (100%)
TOTAL	13 (12.5%)	25 (24.0%)	29 (27.9%)	26 (25.0%)	11 (10.6%)	104 (100%)

Only about 35% said they had “learned new things” at the “quite true” or “very true” levels, with no significant gender differences. Given the very general wording for this question, as well as the medical connotation of the phrase “sexual health”, it might be useful in the future to ask instead about participants’ learning in relation to specific objectives as defined by SWOVA. As well, in their “recommendations” (see below), several students commented that much of the material was familiar to them from previous years of R+R workshops.

3. I felt it was safe to express my thoughts and opinions in the workshop.

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Somewhat true	Quite true	Very true	TOTAL
Girls	3 (5.1%)	5 (8.5%)	18 (30.5%)	16 (27.1%)	17 (28.8%)	59 (100%)
Boys	-	2 (4.4%)	6 (13.3%)	23 (51.1%)	14 (31.1%)	45 (100%)
TOTAL	3 (2.9%)	7 (6.7%)	24 (23.1%)	39 (37.5%)	31 (29.8%)	104 (100%)

In responding to the statement about “feeling it was safe” to speak freely in these workshops, nearly 70% of the youth said they did. However, the gender balance substantially favoured boys, just as it did in the doctor-led workshops discussed in the previous section. In this case, fully 82% of boys agreed with the statement at the “quite true” or “very true” levels, compared with 56% of girls.

This outcome adds weight to earlier speculation that mixed gender groups might be a discomfort or an impediment to free expression for some of the girls. As well, in their own “recommendations” for improving the workshop, several commented that the size of the groups was intimidating and made speaking freely difficult.

4. I think the activities we did in the workshop were helpful.

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Somewhat true	Quite true	Very true	TOTAL
Girls	1 (1.7%)	9 (15.5%)	21 (36.2%)	18 (31.0%)	9 (15.5%)	58 (100%)
Boys	2 (4.5%)	4 (9.1%)	14 (31.8%)	19 (43.2%)	5 (11.4%)	44 (100%)
TOTAL	3 (2.9%)	13 (12.7%)	35 (34.3%)	37 (36.3%)	14 (13.7%)	102 (100%)

When asked about the activities done in the workshop, about 50% of the youth said they had been helpful, a good result. Boys were somewhat more likely to respond positively.

5. Because of the workshop, I am able to see more clearly how sexuality is linked to intimacy and emotionality.

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Somewhat true	Quite true	Very true	TOTAL
Girls	5 (8.5%)	13 (22.0%)	18 (30.5%)	17 (28.8%)	6 (10.2%)	59 (100%)
Boys	4 (8.9%)	8 (17.8%)	17 (37.8%)	10 (22.2%)	6 (13.3%)	45 (100%)
TOTAL	9 (8.7%)	21 (20.2%)	35 (33.7%)	27 (26.0%)	12 (11.5%)	104 (100%)

About 37% of the youth agreed that they were “able to see more clearly how sexuality is linked to intimacy and emotionality” at the “quite true” or “very true” levels, as a result of the workshop. This falls below the 50% marker that the evaluator recommends as an objective.

6. I want to talk more with others about sexual health.

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Somewhat true	Quite true	Very true	TOTAL
Girls	7 (11.9%)	9 (15.3%)	24 (40.7%)	10 (16.9%)	9 (15.3%)	59 (100%)
Boys	8 (17.8%)	14 (31.1%)	8 (17.8%)	12 (26.7%)	3 (6.7%)	45 (100%)
TOTAL	15 (14.4%)	23 (22.1%)	32 (30.8%)	22 (21.2%)	12 (11.5%)	104 (100%)

The responses from youth to the statement about wanting to “talk more with others about sexual health” also fall below the 50% threshold. However, as indicated earlier, the results are hard to interpret because of the non-specific wording of the question. It would be helpful in the future if the question were more specific, or included a follow up to generate further details.

7. I would recommend to other youth that they attend this workshop.

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Somewhat true	Quite true	Very true	TOTAL
Girls	2 (3.4%)	3 (5.1%)	21 (35.6%)	16 (27.1%)	17 (28.8%)	59 (100%)
Boys	5 (11.1%)	5 (11.1%)	12 (26.7%)	14 (31.1%)	9 (20.0%)	45 (100%)
TOTAL	7 (6.7%)	8 (7.7%)	33 (31.7%)	30 (28.8%)	26 (25.0%)	104 (100%)

More than 50% would “recommend to other youth” that they attend a similar workshop at the “quite true” or “very true” levels, which is somewhat lower than for the doctor-led workshops. Girls were more positive than boys.

The youth were also asked more specifically whether they recommended having guys and girls together for this workshop or in separate gender groups. Although a strong majority said “together”, a fairly large number suggested a combination of both, i.e. that facilitators conduct a segment of the workshop in separate gender format and then bring both genders together to share and compare responses or outcomes in the second segment, as is normally done in R+R workshops. Given the evidence discussed above that the girls did not feel as safe or as comfortable to speak frankly as the boys did when they were together throughout, the approach of combining the strengths of separate gender and mixed gender approaches seems to be a good suggestion.

When asked how this workshop could be improved, comments ranged widely and were not always serious in tone. Some that would count as “constructive criticism” are as follows:

- ▶ More new topics. These were all discussed in SWOVA.
- ▶ There wasn't much new material.
- ▶ Better questions. They were not good or clear.
- ▶ Ask questions that don't have such obvious answers.
- ▶ It's a bit weird for persons who have never had sex before to answer questions about it.
- ▶ It takes more time for people to be comfortable and open up.
- ▶ More back and forth between guys and girls answering questions and truthing myths about each gender.
- ▶ More talking in small groups so that people have more confidence to talk. Longer course.
- ▶ Get more people to talk.
- ▶ Smaller groups.
- ▶ More time/guy facilitator.
- ▶ It's great the way it is.

The final question asked the youth to give the workshop an overall rating on a scale of 1—5. Almost 50% gave it a rating of “very good” or “excellent”, with only about 12% indicating that, for them, it was just “okay” or “not good”.

	Not good	Okay	Good	Very good	Excellent	TOTAL
Girls	3	5	21	22	6	57
Boys	1	3	20	17	4	45
TOTAL	4 (3.9%)	8 (7.8%)	41 (40.2%)	39 (38.2%)	10 (9.8%)	102 (100%)

Sexual Health Talking Circle for Parents and Teens

This workshop was a pilot to test the interest in the community for a discussion group involving parents and teens together. It was quite widely advertised, and drew 14 participants on a Tuesday night in February. Of the 14, eight identified as parents and four as teens. Two did not provide this information and one did not indicate gender, but because the group was small, all the answers provided are included in the tables that follow.

	Male	Female	Total
Parents	3	5	8
Teens	2	2	4
Other	-	1	1
	5	8	13

The first question in the feedback/assessment questionnaire asked participants to circle the number that best describes how much they agreed with each of six statements, as presented in the tables below. With such small numbers in the group, results are exploratory only, but percentages are given to provide a basis for informal comparison.

- *I think it is important for parents/adults and youth to talk together about sexual health and healthy relationships.*

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Some-what true	Quite true	Very true	Total
Parents			1		7	8
Teens					4	4
Other				1	1	2
			1 (7.1%)	1 (7.1%)	12 (85.7%)	14 (100%)

Based on this preliminary result, the importance of “talking together” is recognized by both parents and teens.

- *I think the talking circle and talking stick format made it easier for us to listen and speak to one another.*

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Some-what true	Quite true	Very true	Total
Parents			1	1	6	8
Teens			1	1	2	4
Other			1		1	2
			3 (21.4%)	2 (14.3%)	9 (64.3%)	14 (100%)

The majority agreed that the format of the workshop “made it easier” to talk and listen, although a higher percentage of parents than teens agreed at the “very true” level.

- *I understand more about the way the other generation thinks about sexual health as a result of the workshop.*

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Some-what true	Quite true	Very true	Total
Parents			2	2	4	8
Teens			1	1	2	4
Other				2		2
			3 (21.4%)	5 (35.7%)	6 (42.9%)	14 (100%)

Results in this case were more mixed, though generally positive. Given that responses to an open-ended question (discussed below) about ways to improve the workshop included several references to “needing more time”, it seems that a single two-hour workshop is only a starting point for understanding the other generation in relation to this sensitive topic.

- *I feel more confident to talk to the other generation about sexual health for youth as a result of the workshop.*

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Some-what true	Quite true	Very true	Total
Parents			2	4	2	8
Teens					3	3
Other			1		1	2
			3 (23.1%)	4 (30.8%)	6 (46.2%)	13 (100%)

At the risk of over-interpreting these small numbers, it is nonetheless interesting to note that parents were more strongly positive about “understanding more about how the other generation thinks” than about “feeling more confident to talk to the other generation”, whereas for the youth, the tendency was reversed.

- *I understand more about healthy sexuality as part of a respectful relationship as a result of the workshop.*

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Some-what true	Quite true	Very true	Total
Parents		1	1	4	2	8
Teens				2	2	4
Other		1		1		2
		2 (14.3%)	1 (7.1%)	7 (50.0%)	4 (28.6%)	14 (100%)

Almost 80% of the group responded positively at the “quite true” or “very true” levels, a very good result. However, the majority clustered at “quite true” in this case.

- *I understand more about healthy sexuality as part of violence prevention as a result of the workshop.*

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Some-what true	Quite true	Very true	Total
Parents		1	3	1	2	7
Teens		1	1	1	1	4
Other	1	1				2
	1 (7.7%)	3 (23.1%)	4 (30.8%)	2 (15.4%)	3 (23.1%)	13 100%

Just under 40% responded positively at the “quite true” or “very true” levels to this statement, suggesting that, if it is important to SWOVA to achieve this objective, some review and revision of the workshop may be needed. Limited time might also have been a limiting factor.

The questionnaire also included several open-ended questions and questions asking for a yes/no response, with an explanation or comments. The first of these asked, “*What is one important thing you learned tonight (or one new insight you had) about the challenges of sexual health for youth in our community?*” Answers were brief, suggesting limited time and energy at the end of an evening session. The ten responses were as follows:

From parents:

- √ I learned how differently the younger generation views sex compared to how we did.
- √ Parent pressure to conform.
- √ To have us extend trust in them and their choices and their privacy.
- √ Youth perspectives.
- √ It's great to converse in a circle with youths and adults.
- √ Erasing our adult experiences to connect and communicate with youth and their clean slate so we can relate and connect and learn.

From teens:

- √ I learned a ton.
- √ I saw the issues at large and the mosaic of differing views, beliefs and practices. I understand the adult perspective more.
- √ Knowing how to talk to parents about sex.

From 'other':

- √ They need more privacy. This generation is different than mine.

Participants were asked if they thought it would be good for more parents to attend a similar workshop. Thirteen out of fourteen said yes (92.9%). As a follow-up, they were asked how to attract more attendance. Their responses were as follows:

- √ More advertising, testimonials.
- √ Let more people know.
- √ Keep running them – word of mouth will grow with time.
- √ Salt Spring Exchange. Notice in school office.
- √ People need to experience the legitimacy and genuineness of the circle.
- √ Talk about it to others, write an article.

They were also asked if it would be good for more youth to attend. All said yes (100%). When asked how to encourage more attendance by youth, fewer ideas were suggested:

- √ More advertising, testimonials.
- √ Not sure (as a parent).
- √ Keep running them – word of mouth will grow with time.
- √ People need to experience the legitimacy and genuineness of the circle.

When asked for an overall rating of the workshop, a full 93% said “excellent” or “very good”.

► *What is your overall rating of tonight's workshop?*

	Not good	Okay	Good	Very good	Excellent	Total
Parents			1	3	4	8
Teens					4	4
Unidentified				2		2
			1 (7.1%)	5 (35.7%)	8 (57.1%)	14 (100%)

As a follow-up, they were asked for recommendations ways to improve the workshop. Their responses indicate the importance of having more youth in the room, and having more time for discussion and exploration of each other's points of view.

- √ Have more of a voice from the youth.
- √ Give youth more space to speak.
- √ More youth.
- √ More time. Have follow-up sessions.
- √ More time.
- √ Smaller group, more time, equal numbers of youth & adults.
- √ Longer, with food.
- √ It was great. Maybe more time needed.
- √ It is good as it is – maybe longer sessions or flexible session lengths?
- √ Plan to run a series.
- √ Don't let 2 or 3 of the [adult participants] do all the talking.
- √ Help/facilitate/regulate those who take too much space.

Sexual Health Fair

The Fair was an exhibition-style event, in which community organizations put a variety of materials on display, and provided information that included where to get help in an emergency, birth control and STI information as well. Tables were staffed with knowledgeable people of whom the youth could ask questions. Products such as condoms, lubricants and Valentine's candy were available free of charge.

The participating organizations were:

- Community Services
- GLOSSI (Gays and Lesbians of Salt Spring Island)
- IWAV (Island Women Against Violence)
- Options for Sexual Health
- Pharmasave
- Public Health
- SWOVA (Saltspring Women Opposed to Violence and Abuse)
- Victim Services

The opportunity for evaluation using a questionnaire format was limited under the circumstances of the fair. Those who voluntarily took a few moments to respond when asked numbered 39, of whom 21 were boys and 8 were girls. They were asked just four questions, in addition to their gender.

Q2: Did you learn anything new at the health fair?

	Yes	No	Total
Males	18	3	21
Females	7	1	8
Total	25 (86.2%)	4 (13.8%)	29 (100%)

Q3: Did you enjoy visiting the health fair?

	Yes	Some-what	No	Total
Males	12	8	1	21
Females	8	0	0	8
Total	20 (69.0%)	8 (27.6%)	1 (3.4%)	29 (100%)

Q4: Would you recommend that other youth your age visit a health fair like this one?

	Yes	No	Total
Males	15	5	20
Females	8	0	8
Total	23 (82.1%)	5 (17.9%)	28 (100%)

The final question asked, “*what is one way that the health fair could be improved?*” There were only two serious answers, a response rate which was interpreted by organizers as a reflection of the interest students displayed in the exhibition itself and the discussions it sparked among them.

“Getting kids more involved.”

“Maybe host is somewhat more ‘out of the way’.”

Conclusions

The sexual health workshops and fair that SWOVA and their community partners organized in 2012 for secondary school students in the Gulf Islands were well received overall. The program included four separate events:

- (i) a sexual health fair and exhibition which was open to all students over a school-day lunch hour;
- (ii) a sexual health information workshop for grade 11s, facilitated by two community doctors (four sessions available);
- (iii) a workshop on healthy and respectful sexuality in relationships, facilitated by SWOVA’s two senior R+R facilitators (four sessions available); and
- (iv) an evening workshop for intergenerational discussion about sexual health and respectful relationships, facilitated by SWOVA’s senior R+R facilitators for parents and teens, which was open to the community.

The sexual health fair was described as “well attended” by organizers, although exact attendance numbers were not available. In a limited evaluation context, the evidence indicated that about 80% of attending students “learned something new” and “would recommend the fair to other youth”. These are both positive indicators of the value of such a presentation for youth who are at an age when full and direct sexual information is important and not always easily accessible in a reliable form.²

² A number of studies indicate that most teens get the majority of sexual health information from each other or from the internet.

With respect to the sexual health information workshops, strong majorities of attending students agreed with statements indicating that they enjoyed them, that they learned new things, that they felt safe and that they would recommend them to other youth. As well, about 40% of them rated these workshops as “very good” or “excellent”, that is, 4 or 5 on a scale of 1—5. A lower proportion of students felt positive about the activities that were part of the workshop, or saw more clearly how sexuality is linked to intimacy and emotionality, or wanted to talk more with others about sexual health in the future. Differences between the girls and the boys were mostly small, except in the case of “feeling safe”. In that regard, a significant minority of girls answered at a lower level of agreement or disagreed that they felt safe, and followed up with comments indicating that the size of the groups was one inhibiting factor.

With respect to the workshops on health and respectful sexuality in relationships, even stronger majorities agreed that they had enjoyed them, that they felt safe and that they would recommend them to other youth. Almost 50% felt positive about the activities in the workshops, and rated the workshops overall as “very good” or “excellent”, (4 or 5 on a scale of 1—5). For these workshops, there was a higher level of agreement that, as a result of them, students saw more clearly how sexuality is linked to intimacy and emotionality. However, fewer students agreed that they had learned new things in these workshops, and several commented that the content seemed similar to work that they had done in R+R workshops in previous years. In their comments, most agreed that it had been a good idea to bring girls and boys together for the workshops this year, but a significant number suggested that a separate gender segment would be a good idea in future.

The parent and teen ‘talking circle’ evening was very much appreciated by those who attended. Their recommendations for the future included having more time and more participants involved.