



# Youth messaging checklist

Dos and don'ts in information, education  
and communication materials

The background of the slide is a sunburst pattern with multiple rays emanating from a central point, creating a sense of radiance and focus. The rays are in various shades of orange and brown, creating a warm and energetic atmosphere.

**Ensuring young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights requires access to comprehensive, gender-sensitive and rights-based education and information.**

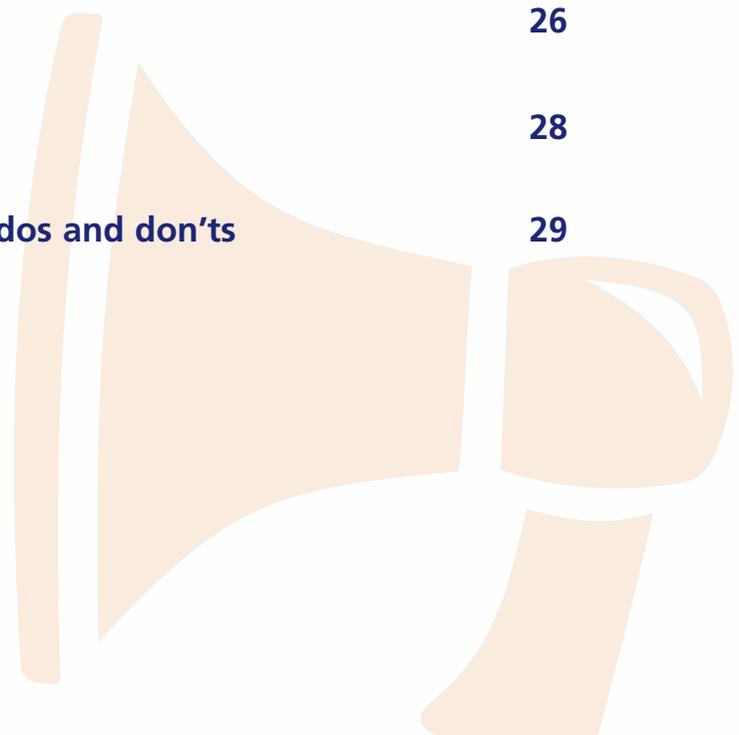
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# Communicating with young people

**Ensuring young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights requires access to comprehensive, gender-sensitive and rights-based education and information. Information, education and communication (IEC) materials are useful tools to communicate important information. Many IPPF Member Associations produce IEC materials that address a variety of issues related to young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights. However, the 2009 mid-term review of the Youth Team revealed a lack of consistency in messaging and quality of these IEC materials. The review demonstrated a need to help Member Associations develop new information, education and communication materials that are rights-based, youth friendly and reflect IPPF's core principles.**

IPPF's *Youth Messaging Checklist. Dos and Don'ts in Information, Education and Communication Materials* summarizes key messages and language, along with tips on images, design and development that can guide the production of new IEC materials. It can also be used as a tool to assess the quality of existing IEC materials.

## Who is this checklist for?

This checklist is designed to help Member Associations and the Secretariat develop more effective information, education and communication materials for young people. It will be most useful for those responsible for developing IEC materials, as well as those working on youth programmes and services.

## How should the checklist be used?

This checklist should be used when developing, updating or evaluating IEC materials. It is not a step-by-step guide on how to produce IEC materials, but it does provide a list of elements that should and should not be included in IPPF information, education and communication materials.

There are four sections:



**Messages and language**  
(categorized by topic)



**Images**



**Design**



**General dos and don'ts**

## How did we develop this checklist?

A full day was dedicated to producing this dos and don'ts checklist at the Youth Team's 2009 Youth Working Group meeting. Twenty participants from IPPF's six Regions participated in a series of workshop sessions to develop the initial points for this checklist. The checklist also draws on IPPF's *Style Guide and Messages Toolkit*.



## Messages and language

The following section outlines messages and language that should or should not be used when developing information, education and communication materials on nine key topics related to young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights. The topics are based on the main components of the IPPF Framework for Comprehensive Sexuality Education, with additional sections to examine messaging and language related to abortion and HIV and AIDS.

For each topic, there is a list of dos and don'ts for messaging and language. The dos and don'ts of messaging

include a list of key points that reflect IPPF's values and positions on each topic, with particular emphasis on young people. The messages are not intended to be the actual phrases or slogans that appear on IPPF IEC materials, but they form the essence of the messages that IPPF should communicate about each topic. The lists are by no means exhaustive, but summarize some of the key points related to each topic.

The dos and don'ts of language are based on the IPPF 2009 *Style Guide* and outline specific phrases and terminology that should be used in all IPPF materials.

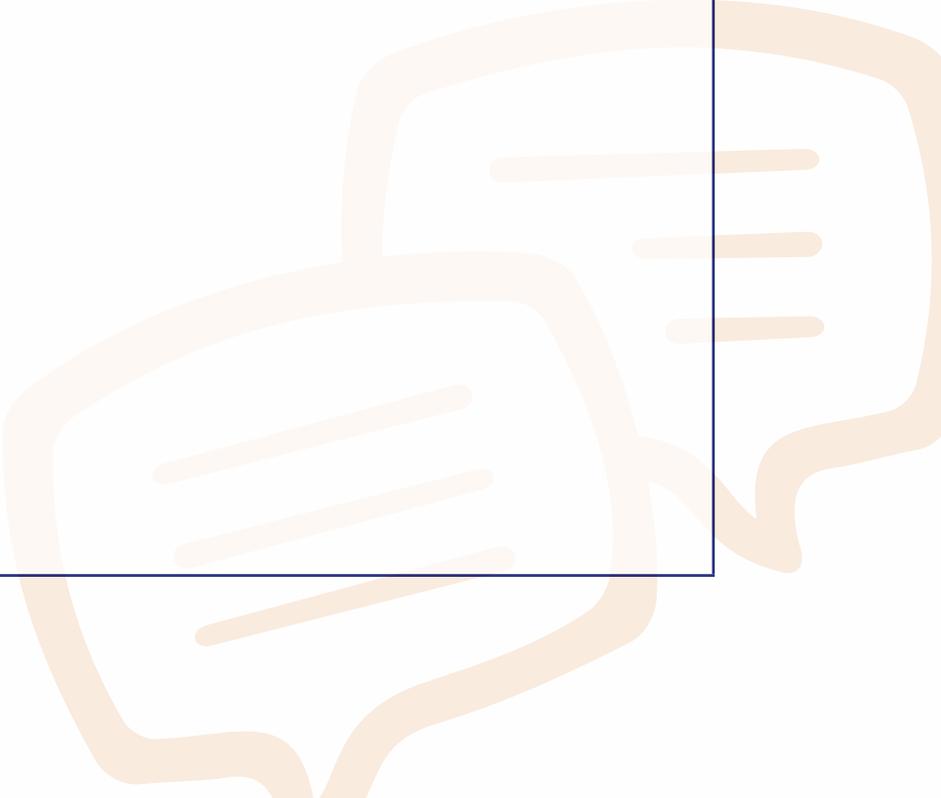


# Abortion messages

Messages to use	Messages to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Legal, accessible and safe abortion saves young women's lives. Only when young women have access to safe abortion services do medical complications and maternal mortality from unsafe abortion become truly rare.</li> <li>✓ All young women have the right to choose whether or not to carry a pregnancy to term and the right to access safe, legal and affordable abortion services. No young woman should be forced to become a mother.</li> <li>✓ All young women have the right to access safe abortion services.</li> <li>✓ All young women have the right to make decisions about their bodies and decide if, when and how to have a child.</li> <li>✓ There are different methods of performing safe abortions that can be used in different circumstances and depending on the young woman's choice (medical abortion, vacuum aspiration, surgical abortion).</li> <li>✓ Mandatory parental involvement or spousal consent laws and policies are barriers that prevent many young women from accessing safe abortion care. We encourage young women to seek the help of a supportive adult of her choice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Abortion is the same as killing.</li> <li>✗ References to the life of a fetus or the life/death of the 'baby'.</li> <li>✗ References to the rights of the 'unborn child' or the right to life of the 'unborn child'.</li> <li>✗ Safe abortion is bad for people's health.</li> <li>✗ The use of moralistic language (for example, abortion is a sin).</li> <li>✗ Young women must have parental, guardian or spousal permission to have an abortion.</li> <li>✗ Young women should feel guilty about having an abortion.</li> <li>✗ Abortion kills. (Abortion when performed safely carries very little complications; it is unsafe abortion that results in high levels of morbidity and mortality.)</li> </ul>

## Abortion messages (continued)

Messages to use	Messages to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="226 544 1115 624">✓ Unsafe abortion is a public health concern, especially for young women. Lack of access to safe abortion services is also a human rights violation.</li><li data-bbox="226 655 1115 699">✓ All safe abortion services must guarantee confidentiality.</li><li data-bbox="226 730 1115 922">✓ Reducing and eliminating unsafe abortion-related mortality and morbidity among young women requires a two-pronged approach: (1) provision of accessible youth friendly sexual and reproductive health services and comprehensive sexuality education; and (2) advocacy to make abortion safe, legal and accessible for all young women everywhere.</li><li data-bbox="226 954 1115 997">✓ No young woman should be forced to undergo an abortion.</li><li data-bbox="226 1029 1115 1189">✓ We care about women, which is why IPPF supports safe abortion. It is important to note that unsafe abortions result in negative consequences while safe abortions uphold a young woman's right to health, social justice and autonomy over her body.</li><li data-bbox="226 1220 1115 1337">✓ Men can play a supportive role as partners in safe abortion, which involves respecting a woman's right to make the final decision about the outcome of her pregnancy.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1122 544 1993 699">✗ Abortion is always a difficult or traumatic experience, or a tragedy for every young woman. (An unintended pregnancy is what is difficult, and an unsafe abortion can be traumatic. A safe abortion can actually be a supportive and relieving experience.)</li></ul>



# Abortion language

Prefer	Avoid	Why?
Anti-choice	Pro-life	The term 'pro-life' implies that pro-choice people are against life, which is not the case. On the contrary, we uphold a woman's right to health and life.
Pregnant woman	Mother (when talking about a pregnant woman)	Using 'mother' or 'father' during pregnancy implies that there is a 'child', which is not accurate since it is an embryo or fetus until birth.
Embryo Fetus	Unborn baby Unborn child Baby (during pregnancy or gestation)	'Unborn baby or child' gives the false impression that women are pregnant with a fully developed baby or child, when in fact they are pregnant with an embryo or fetus. Using the term 'baby' or 'child' also implies that the fetus or embryo has the same rights as children or babies, which is not the case.
Placed for adoption Choose adoption Make an adoption plan	Give up Get rid of Give away Surrender Relinquish Adopt out Put up for adoption	The preferred language is not judgmental and implies that women make responsible, well-informed decisions about adoption.
Contents of conception Products of conception	Dead fetus (when talking about induced abortion)	Medically correct terms.
	Using 'illegal abortion' and 'unsafe abortion' interchangeably	An illegal abortion and an unsafe abortion are not the same thing. Illegal abortions refer to abortions that do not meet the conditions set out in country legal frameworks. Many illegal abortions are unsafe, but illegal abortions can also be safe if performed by a trained health provider, with full equipment and medications, and under sanitary conditions. Unsafe abortions refer to abortions that are conducted under precarious situations and/or performed by an untrained or under-trained provider. It is possible to have an unsafe legal abortion.

## Abortion language (continued)

Prefer	Avoid	Why?
	Rights of the unborn	A fetus or embryo is not subject to human rights. Only people are entitled to human rights. While all life has <b>value</b> , including fetal life, it is only persons who have <b>rights</b> .
'Abortion is restricted' 'Restrictive abortion laws' 'Abortion is legal under the following conditions: ...'	Illegal	Abortion is totally illegal in only a few countries in the world. The majority of countries have restrictive laws or legislation relating to abortion. It is important to make the distinction, particularly so that young people are aware of the legal position of abortion in their country.
Promote choice	Promote abortion	IPPF supports every woman's right to choose the best option(s) concerning her sexual and reproductive health. This includes abortion, but may also include carrying a pregnancy to term. IPPF supports safe abortions when women choose this option for themselves.
	Avoid using the following terms interchangeably: 'unwanted pregnancy', 'unintended pregnancy' 'unplanned pregnancy'	<p>It is important to make the distinction between unplanned or unintended pregnancies and unwanted pregnancies:</p> <p><b>Unplanned or unintended pregnancy:</b> Unintended and unplanned pregnancies are mistimed pregnancies (in other words, a pregnancy that happens earlier than desired) that usually result from the non-use or ineffective use of contraceptives. It is important to remember that many unplanned or unintended pregnancies can become 'wanted' while planned pregnancies can become 'unwanted'.</p> <p>Focusing on a young woman's intentions is empowering, because it places important value on her desires and reality. However, young women around the world face many obstacles when trying to put their intentions into practice, particularly because of a lack of access to services, contraceptives and information, and a lack of control over their own sexuality and bodies.</p> <p><b>Unwanted pregnancy:</b> This is a pregnancy that a woman or girl decides is undesired, of her own free will. This is the kind of pregnancy that is most likely to lead to an abortion. Both intended and unintended pregnancies can become unwanted pregnancies.</p>

# Diversity messages

Messages to use	Messages to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ No young person should ever be discriminated against because of their sexuality, sex, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, race, ethnicity, nationality, HIV status, physical or mental disability, socio-economic status or health status.</li> <li>✓ Every young person is unique and diverse – we must respect all young people's differences and diversities.</li> <li>✓ We must move beyond tolerance towards <b>celebrating</b> young people's diversities!</li> <li>✓ Young people's diversities may be enabling or limiting depending on the context in which they live. Youth services, programmes and education should be designed and delivered in an equitable way that is responsive to their diversities.</li> <li>✓ No young person should be forced to conform to gender or sexual norms.</li> <li>✓ Families come in all shapes and sizes.</li> <li>✓ There is diversity between groups and within groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ References to people or behaviours as being 'normal', 'abnormal', 'natural' or 'unnatural'.</li> <li>✗ Assuming heterosexual and marital contexts.</li> <li>✗ Always linking lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning people with HIV and sexually transmitted infections.</li> <li>✗ Using the term 'diversity' to refer only to sexual orientation. (Diversity exists in all aspects of people's lives, including age, religion, socio-economic status etc.)</li> </ul>

# Diversity language

Prefer	Avoid	Why?
Common	Normal	Since all people are diverse, nothing is 'normal' for all people.
Diverse	Abnormal Strange Irregular Deviant Unconventional	The avoided terms have negative and judgmental connotations. People's diversities should be celebrated and not viewed as outside the 'norm'.



# Gender messages

IPPF understands gender as the array of socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to men and women.

Messages to use	Messages to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ All people are equal in dignity and rights.</li> <li>✓ No young person should be discriminated against based on his or her sexuality, sex, gender, sexual orientation or marital status.</li> <li>✓ Youth services, programmes and education must be gender-sensitive and promote gender equality and equity.</li> <li>✓ Sexual and reproductive health services for young people must be responsive to the diversities of young people and must be tailored to the specific realities of young people of all genders.</li> <li>✓ Young men play an important role in achieving sexual and reproductive health and rights. They can support women's sexual and reproductive health and rights, and also have specific sexual and reproductive health needs of their own.</li> <li>✓ All young people have the right to be in relationships or have a partner, regardless of their gender or sexuality.</li> <li>✓ All young people are entitled to protection from gender-based violence and to recourse if they experience any forms of violence.</li> <li>✓ Gender is fluid, dynamic and influenced by many contextual, societal, cultural and political factors.</li> <li>✓ Gender goes beyond males and females as there are also people who are transgender and intersexual.</li> <li>✓ Both women and men can carry condoms and initiate condom use. Protection from unintended pregnancy and from sexually transmitted infections is a mutual responsibility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Gender refers only to women's issues and women's rights.</li> <li>✗ Gender as a dichotomous concept of men vs. women. (In other words, it is important to recognize other gender identities and the distinction between gender, sex, gender identity and sexual orientation.)</li> <li>✗ Certain genders (male, female and/or transgender) are better or should have more rights than others.</li> </ul>

# Gender language

Prefer	Avoid	Why?
Men who have sex with men Women who have sex with women	Gay men (when referring to all men who have sex with men)  Gay women (when referring to all women who have sex with women)	The act of two people of the same sex having sexual relations does not make them gay. Being gay is a sexual orientation and can be a gender identity. Many men who have sex with men, and women who have sex with women, do not self-identify as being gay and may also have a spouse or partner of the opposite sex. These men and women may not self-identify as bisexual either. It is clearer to refer to the behaviour rather than an imposed identity.
Lesbian (when referring to women who self-identify as lesbian)	Gay women	Many lesbians feel that the term 'gay' refers more to men and overlooks the sexual identity and realities of lesbian women.
Female genital mutilation/cutting	Female circumcision	Using the term 'circumcision' implies that female genital mutilation/cutting is the same as male circumcision. However, the procedures are very different. Female genital mutilation/cutting is a manifestation of deep-rooted gender inequalities in society that place an inferior value on women and women's sexuality. It is often a much more severe form of disfigurement than male circumcision and can lead to numerous risks to women's health and well-being.
Sex offenders	Rapists	Rape is one of many types of sexual offence. Other types exist, including verbal and physical sexual harassment, sexual assault and voyeurism. The term 'sex offender' refers to a person who commits any form of sexual assault and abuse, which can include rape. However, the term 'rapist' should only be used when referring specifically to rape.
Survivors of sexual abuse	Victims of sexual abuse	'Survivors' is a more empowering term that also promotes self-esteem. However, there are some instances when the word 'victim' can be used appropriately. Therefore, the use of these two terms is context-specific.

# HIV and AIDS messages

Messages to use	Messages to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Linking sexual and reproductive health and HIV programmes and policies is critical to foster a comprehensive response to HIV.</li> <li>✓ Treatment and care for young people living with HIV must be available to all who want it, ensuring confidentiality and privacy.</li> <li>✓ Young people living with HIV have sexual and reproductive rights that must be respected, protected and fulfilled.</li> <li>✓ Voluntary counselling and testing, accompanied by effective options for treatment, must be accessible to all young people.</li> <li>✓ Condoms offer dual protection against pregnancy and HIV and AIDS.</li> <li>✓ Condoms must be used correctly in order to be effective. Young people should have access to information about how and when to use condoms, as well as how to talk about condoms and negotiate condom use with their partners.</li> <li>✓ HIV-related stigma and discrimination have negative impacts on the provision and use of health services, particularly among young people living with HIV.</li> <li>✓ Young people living with HIV must be empowered to take leadership roles in the response to HIV and AIDS.</li> <li>✓ Young people living with HIV can live fulfilling, happy and healthy lives.</li> <li>✓ Everyone has a role to play to support people living with HIV and to end stigma and discrimination.</li> <li>✓ Criminalization of HIV transmission should be eliminated and prevented.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ HIV is death.</li> <li>✗ HIV is a curse.</li> <li>✗ HIV is spread by sexual promiscuity.</li> <li>✗ HIV is only related to sexual activity.</li> <li>✗ People living with HIV are the only ones responsible for protecting others.</li> <li>✗ HIV only affects gay men.</li> </ul>

# HIV and AIDS language

Prefer	Avoid	Why?
HIV	AIDS virus HIV virus	There is no such thing as an AIDS virus. There is only HIV (the human immunodeficiency virus), the virus that can cause AIDS. The term 'HIV virus' would repeat the word 'virus', which is not correct.
Person living with HIV or person living with AIDS	AIDS victim AIDS sufferer	Many people living with HIV feel these terms imply they are powerless, with no control over their lives. Stating that a person is living with HIV is more positive and empowering.
Key populations	High risk group	'High risk group' implies that membership of a particular group, rather than behaviour, is the significant factor in transmission of HIV or sexually transmitted infections. This term may lull people who do not identify with a so-called 'high risk group' into a false sense of security. It is high risk behaviours such as unsafe sex or unsafe injecting practices that can spread HIV, not high risk groups.  'Key populations' are those where risks and vulnerability converge – they often include men who have sex with men, sex workers and their clients, and injecting drug users.
Sex worker	Prostitute Commercial sex worker	'Prostitute' is considered a disparaging term and does not reflect the fact that sex work is often a form of employment, not a way of life. Similarly, the use of 'commercial' before the term 'sex worker' is an unnecessary repetition.
HIV epidemic or AIDS epidemic	HIV/AIDS epidemic	HIV and AIDS are distinct from one another – HIV is a virus, whereas AIDS is a range of conditions that occur when a person's immune system has been damaged by HIV.
People who use drugs	Junkie Drug addict Injecting drug user	'People who use drugs' refers to a person's behaviour rather than imposing a pejorative identity or assuming the person is addicted to drug use.

# Pleasure messages

Messages to use	Messages to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ True sexual pleasure is mutual.</li> <li>✓ Sexual pleasure is more than mere physical stimulation or orgasm. It encompasses diverse forms of emotional, psychological and social fulfilment.</li> <li>✓ Sexual pleasure is experienced differently for different people.</li> <li>✓ Sexuality and sexual pleasure are important parts of every young person's life.</li> <li>✓ Masturbation is a natural, safe and enjoyable practice for young men and women; and it is a personal choice.</li> <li>✓ Safer sex is pleasurable sex: there is less risk of sexually transmitted infections and unintended pregnancy and it can be fun!</li> <li>✓ Eroticism is only one form of sexual pleasure.</li> <li>✓ The practice of dry sex – especially with the use of plants, herbs and products to dry a woman's vagina – has many negative health consequences for women.</li> <li>✓ All young people are sexual beings and are entitled to sexual pleasure, irrespective of age, race, gender, sexuality, religion, HIV status, disability or any other personal trait or characteristic.</li> <li>✓ Young people have the right to have and express sexual desires and fantasies, as long as they don't infringe on other people's rights and freedoms.</li> <li>✓ Information and education can enhance the experience of sexual pleasure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Pleasure is sinful, dirty or wrong.</li> <li>✗ Sexual pleasure is only experienced through orgasm.</li> <li>✗ Good sex means you always have to give your partner an orgasm.</li> <li>✗ Women's sexual pleasure is less important than men's sexual pleasure.</li> <li>✗ Adolescents and young people are too young to have sex.</li> </ul>

# Pleasure language

<b>Prefer</b>	<b>Avoid</b>	<b>Why?</b>
Sexual pleasure	Orgasm (when referring to all forms of sexual fulfilment)	Orgasm is only one form of sexual pleasure and it is not the height of sexual satisfaction for all people.



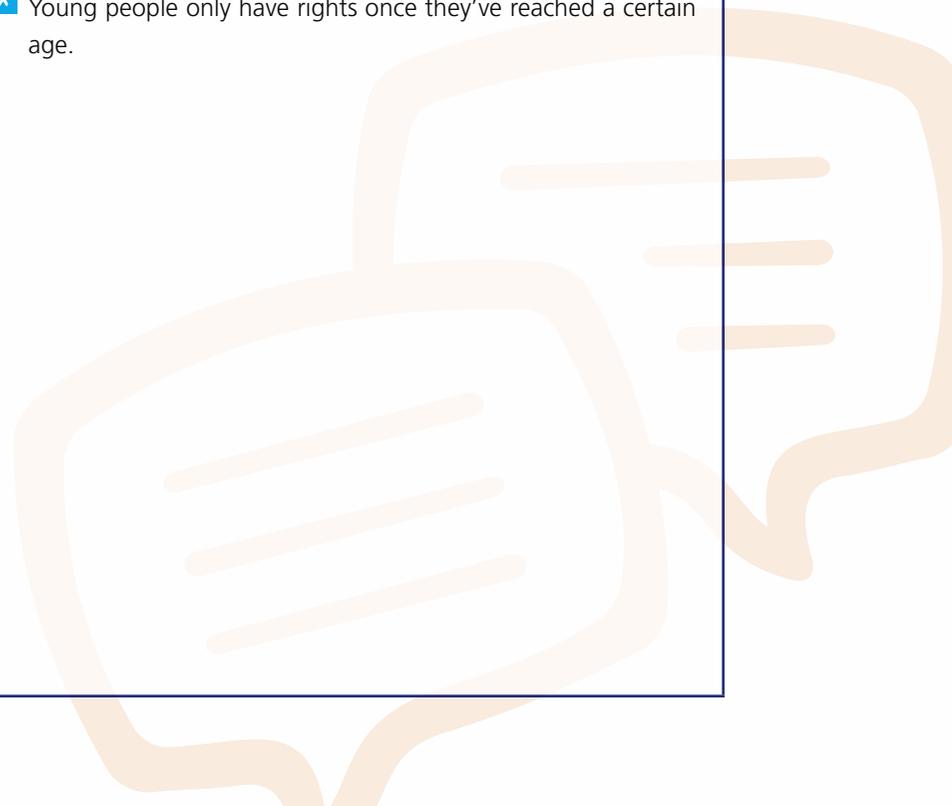
# Relationships messages

Messages to use	Messages to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Every young person has the right to relationships.</li> <li>✓ Healthy relationships are built on respect, equality and mutual consent.</li> <li>✓ Relationships are diverse. There are many different types of relationships (family, friends, sexual, romantic, long-term, short-term, gay, straight etc).</li> <li>✓ Relationships are more positive if there is trust, honesty and respect.</li> <li>✓ It's not wrong to say 'yes'; it's not wrong to say 'no'. The important thing is that you don't feel forced.</li> <li>✓ Love and sex are not the same thing.</li> <li>✓ Using condoms or other contraceptives does not mean you are unfaithful.</li> <li>✓ Relationships should bring mutual happiness and fulfilment.</li> <li>✓ Relationships should allow you to express yourself freely.</li> <li>✓ Relationships are a choice – no one should ever be forced into a relationship against their will.</li> <li>✓ Nobody owns another person.</li> <li>✓ Parental relationships are about support and helping young people become autonomous.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Assuming relationships are heterosexual.</li> <li>✗ Marriage is the only legitimate type of long-term and serious relationship.</li> <li>✗ People living with HIV and people living with disabilities can't have healthy relationships.</li> <li>✗ Assumptions that people in a relationship are the same race, religion or culture.</li> <li>✗ Unequal portrayals of relationships, where one person has more power than the other.</li> </ul>

# Sexual rights and sexual citizenship messages

‘Sexual citizenship’ is a concept that looks at the private and public spheres of sexuality and highlights the social, cultural and political factors that influence sexual expression. Sexual citizenship aims to foster societies where people can freely express and experience their sexuality, while taking responsibility for their own sexual lives and the sexual well-being of others. Participation and accountability are essential elements of sexual citizenship.

Messages to use	Messages to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ All young people are sexual beings and have sexual rights, whether or not they are sexually active.</li> <li>✓ Sexuality is diverse and can change over time.</li> <li>✓ All young people have the right to freely express and explore their own sexuality in a safe, healthy and pleasurable way.</li> <li>✓ All young people have the right to life, liberty and to be free from harm, which includes the right to express one’s sexuality and gender free from coercion or violence.</li> <li>✓ All young people have the right to privacy and to make decisions about their sexuality privately.</li> <li>✓ All young people have the right to decide freely on all matters related to their sexuality and to fully experience their sexuality and gender in a pleasurable way.</li> <li>✓ All young people have the right to education and information, including comprehensive gender-sensitive and rights-based sexuality education.</li> <li>✓ Every young person has the right to choose when, if, how and with whom to marry.</li> <li>✓ All young people have the right to hold governments and other leaders to account for their commitments to sexual and reproductive health and rights.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Young people should not have a role in decision making; they should listen, but not speak.</li> <li>✗ Young people should not participate in decision making until they reach a certain age.</li> <li>✗ Young people only have rights once they’ve reached a certain age.</li> </ul>



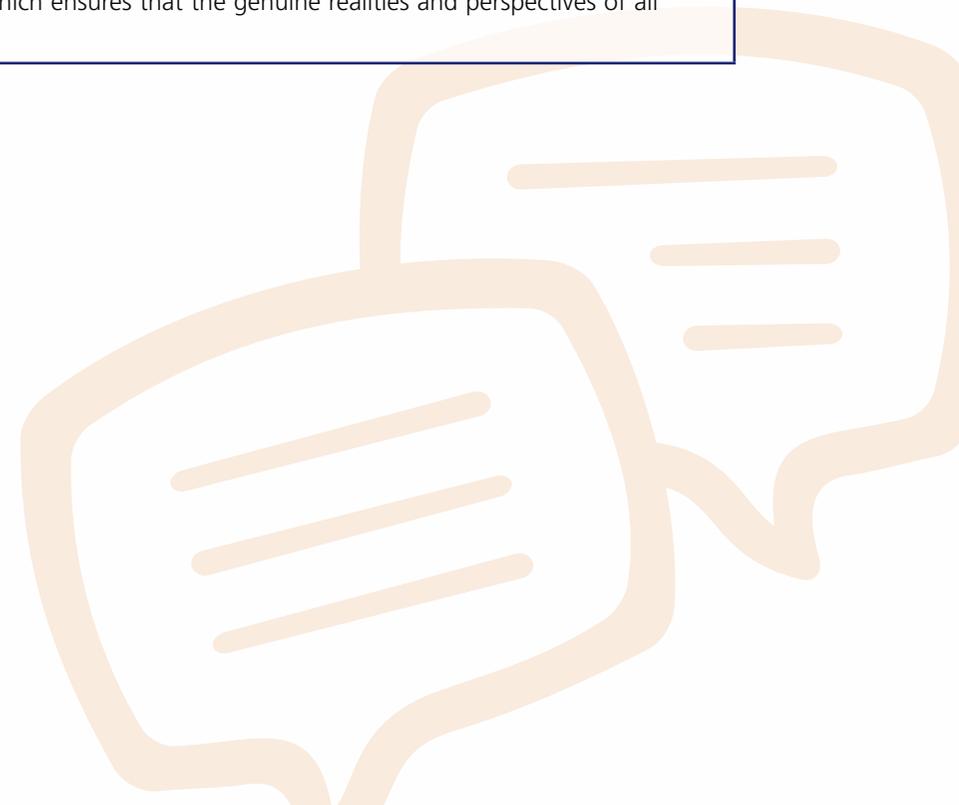
## Sexual rights and sexual citizenship messages (continued)

### Messages to use

- ✓ National laws and policies can either empower or prevent young people from accessing sexual and reproductive health and rights information and services. Advocacy is needed to ensure that all young people have access to comprehensive rights-based and gender-sensitive services and information.
- ✓ Governments are duty bound by national laws and international and regional human rights policies and agreements to uphold young people's right to sexual and reproductive health.
- ✓ Youth participation is essential to plan, implement and evaluate all policies and programmes on sexual and reproductive health and rights that affect young people.
- ✓ Religion often has an impact on young people's sexual and reproductive rights – sometimes positive, sometimes negative.
- ✓ Young people's sexual choices should not limit their participation in society. For example, young pregnant women and young parents should be able to continue and complete their studies.
- ✓ Everyone should practice responsible citizenship, which includes respecting other people's sexual rights.

# Sexual rights and sexual citizenship language

Prefer	Avoid	Why?
Meaningful youth participation	Youth involvement Youth consultation Youth participation	It is important that young people can participate fully and meaningfully in decision making and programmes. 'Involvement' and 'consultation' imply that young people are not equal partners, but are only consulted or invited to be involved in certain aspects of the process.
Youth-adult partnerships	Youth involvement Youth consultation Youth participation	Youth-adult partnerships are an empowering approach for young people and adults to work together. They are based on mutual respect and equality, and enable young people and adults to work in full partnership at all levels of decision making and action. The contributions of young people and adults are equally recognized and valued, which ensures that the genuine realities and perspectives of all partners are reflected.

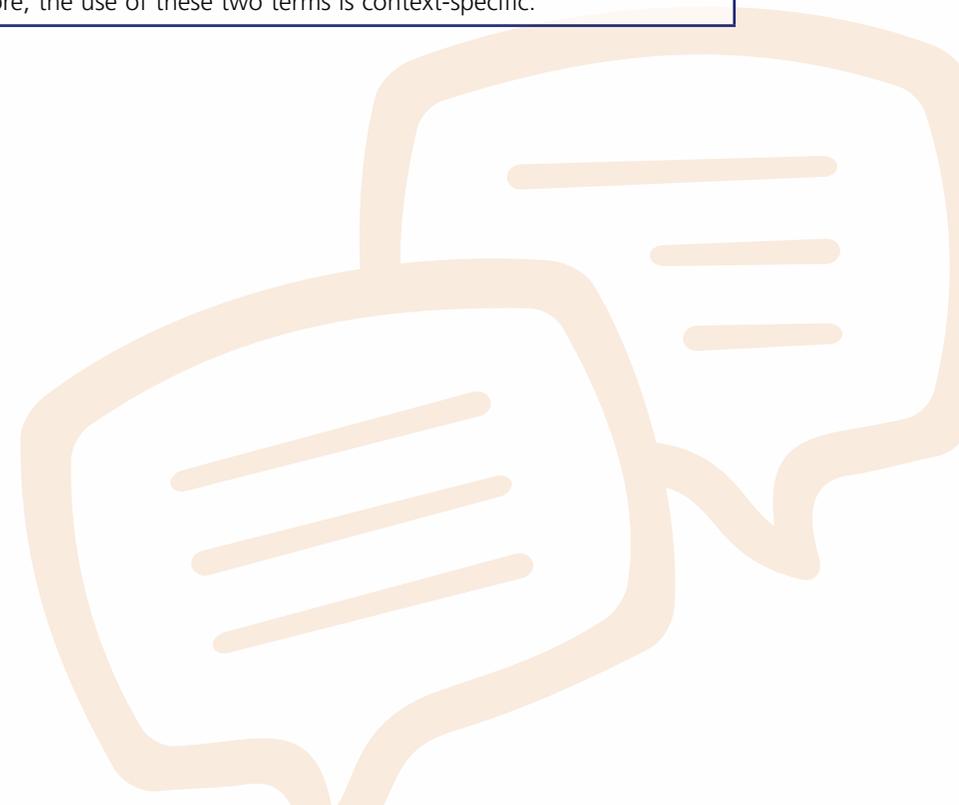


# Messages on violence

Messages to use	Messages to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ No person should inflict physical or mental harm or pain on another person.</li> <li>✓ All young people have the right to protection from gender-based violence and harm.</li> <li>✓ It is not only boys and men who are perpetrators of violence. Women and young girls can also be perpetrators.</li> <li>✓ Understanding the root causes of gender-based violence is essential to prevent and bring an end to it.</li> <li>✓ Marginalized groups of young people are particularly affected by gender-based violence (for example, because of the lack of access to legal protection, counselling and health services).</li> <li>✓ Services are available to young people who experience violence. Young people should have access to information about how to seek these services.</li> <li>✓ Bullying and sexual harassment are forms of violence.</li> <li>✓ Special efforts should be made to prevent and address violence against socially excluded groups.</li> <li>✓ Culture and religion should never be excuses for violence.</li> <li>✓ Violence is everyone's business; communities have a role to play in preventing violence and supporting people who experience violence.</li> <li>✓ Parents have no right to use violence against children.</li> <li>✓ Sexual violence affects people in different ways.</li> <li>✓ Rape is never acceptable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Messages that make people feel like helpless victims.</li> <li>✗ Assuming that gender-based violence only affects women. Men, transgendered and trans-sexual people also experience gender-based violence. Violence also occurs in same-sex couples.</li> <li>✗ Always using the term 'victim' when referring to people who experience(d) violence or always using the term 'survivor'. Choose the term that is most appropriate for the situation you are working in and for the target audience that you are trying to reach.</li> </ul>

# Language on violence

Prefer	Avoid	Why?
Sex offenders	Rapists	Rape is one of many types of sex offence. Other types exist, including verbal and physical sexual harassment, sexual assault and voyeurism. The term 'sex offender' refers to a person who commits any form of sexual assault and abuse, which can include rape. However, the term 'rapist' should only be used when referring specifically to rape.
Survivors of sexual abuse	Victims of sexual abuse	'Survivors' is a more empowering term that promotes self-esteem. However, there are some instances when the word 'victim' can be used appropriately (for example, when a person self-identifies as a victim rather than a survivor). Therefore, the use of these two terms is context-specific.



# Sexual and reproductive health and rights messages about young people

Messages to use	Messages to avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Every young person, regardless of their age, has the right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and well-being, including sexual and reproductive health.</li> <li>✓ Sexuality is an important aspect of all young people's lives, whether or not they are sexually active.</li> <li>✓ It is important to respect your body and the bodies of others.</li> <li>✓ Puberty and menstruation are biological processes that may occur at different times for different young people.</li> <li>✓ Reproduction is just one aspect of sexuality – many expressions of sexuality are not aimed at reproduction.</li> <li>✓ All young people must have access to a range of effective contraceptive methods and must be able to choose which method is best for them.</li> <li>✓ Condoms are not just about safety, but are also about pleasure. Safer sex is pleasurable sex.</li> <li>✓ All young people are sexual beings and are entitled to sexual and reproductive rights.</li> <li>✓ Masturbation is natural and healthy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Only married young people or those above a certain age are entitled to sexual and reproductive health and rights.</li> <li>✗ Young people who are (or have been) sexually active are dirty, impure, deviant, immoral or promiscuous.</li> <li>✗ Adolescent pregnancy is a purely negative thing. (Don't stigmatize against young pregnant women or young parents.)</li> <li>✗ Masturbation is a sin.</li> <li>✗ Portraying young people's sexuality as uncontrollable. The idea that young men are always able to perform sexually gives many mixed messages about sexual expectations to young men and young women.</li> </ul>

# Sexual and reproductive health and rights language about young people

Prefer	Avoid	Why?
Young people, young adult, young men, young women, youth	Youngster, kids, teenagers	This is about respecting the evolving capacities and choices of young people.
Emergency contraception	Morning-after-pill	The medical term is more accurate as emergency contraception can be used up to 72 hours after unprotected sex.
Safer sex	Safe sex	There is always some risk that condoms and contraceptives are not 100 per cent effective. The only method that is 100 per cent effective against sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy is abstinence. 'Safer sex' refers to condoms and contraceptive use, as well as other forms of sex that reduce the risk of transmission of sexually transmitted infections.
Young people living with disabilities	Mentally/physically handicapped young people	<p>A 'handicap' is the inability to complete a task that you wish to do. A 'disability' is an inability to do certain movements that the majority of the population can do, or a lack of sensory or cognitive ability that the majority of the population has.</p> <p>A disability may lead to handicaps for certain tasks. However, a disability does not necessarily mean that a person will be handicapped. If the person has access to tools, infrastructure and support to undertake the task in a different way, they might be fully able to accomplish it.</p>
Sexuality education	Sex education	'Sexuality' implies a more comprehensive approach to education that extends beyond sex to include gender, pleasure, relationships, emotions, violence etc.



## Images

This section offers tips on how to use images effectively – including photos, illustrations and other graphics – in information, education and communication materials.

If you do not have your own images, here are a couple of websites that offer images and photos for download which might be useful for IEC materials:

1. [www.istockphoto.com](http://www.istockphoto.com): Offers a variety of photographs, illustrations and graphic imagery at relatively low prices.
2. [www.bigstock.com](http://www.bigstock.com): Offers a variety of images and photos, but are generally of lower quality than istock.

Email [info@ippf.org](mailto:info@ippf.org) for good practice guidance on use of images and photography.

Dos of images	Don'ts of images
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Use colours that are catchy and attractive to young people, bearing in mind that engaging colour schemes do not have to be too bright and should not be tacky.</li> <li>✓ Be sure that photos and pictures reflect the context and setting where the information, education and communication material(s) will be used.</li> <li>✓ Positive images will communicate empowering messages.</li> <li>✓ Use images of people who reflect the diversities in the society where the IEC material(s) will be used. This includes using images of people of different genders, ethnicities, ages, religions, body shape and size etc.</li> <li>✓ If using images of people, make sure that their facial expressions communicate an appropriate tone or message.</li> <li>✓ Obtain written consent before using any images of people: email <a href="mailto:info@ippf.org">info@ippf.org</a> for an example of a photo consent form. When using images of people, be sure that they support the content of the IEC material. If consent is not given, use graphic elements rather than photos.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Don't use images for the sake of using images. It is not always necessary to use images, especially if you can't find any that portray the right tone.</li> <li>✗ Don't use too many images or crowd lots of images onto one page.</li> <li>✗ Avoid subliminal messages or images that potentially promote stereotypes, inequality, stigma or discrimination. For example, don't use images where women and children are always sitting down, while men are standing.</li> <li>✗ Don't use images of heavily pregnant women or babies in IEC materials that address abortion. When in doubt, don't use pictures at all for abortion-related materials.</li> </ul>

## Images (continued)

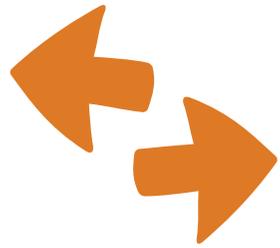
Dos of images	Don'ts of images
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="237 552 1234 660">✓ Ensure that you have the rights to use images (by the photographer, subject, artist etc). Establish or record whether the subject wishes to be named and identifiable, and always act accordingly.</li><li data-bbox="237 700 1218 772">✓ All photography must be credited with the name of the photographer and the country where the image was taken (for example, IPPF/Peter Caton/India).</li><li data-bbox="237 812 999 847">✓ When using photos, try to make sure they are high quality images.</li><li data-bbox="237 887 1227 1070">✓ For sensitive topics, try to make imagery discreet (for example, a flyer on contraceptives may not need images of pills or IUDs on the cover) or make sure that anyone shown in a photograph cannot be recognized. A few methods to make sure a subject's identity remains anonymous include taking images of the back of the person's head or photographing them as a silhouette.</li><li data-bbox="237 1110 943 1145">✓ For electronic presentations, try using images with voice-over.</li><li data-bbox="237 1185 943 1220">✓ For illustrations related to sexual pleasure, include the clitoris.</li><li data-bbox="237 1260 1234 1406">✓ Metaphorical images can be attention-grabbing as well as powerful. Examples include holding hands to symbolize relationships; crossroads to symbolize choices and decisions, and so on. Such images can be created using a camera but also by using software or traditional illustration techniques.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1290 552 1973 624">✗ Don't use too many colours, especially if the image you are using is very busy.</li><li data-bbox="1290 663 1850 735">✗ Don't use images that may reinforce stigma and discrimination.</li></ul>



## Design

Design is an important element of information, education and communication materials. The format, fonts, colours and layout used in IEC materials can determine how attractive, appealing and easy to read they are. Here are a few design tips to help create eye-catching and effective IEC materials. Email [info@ippf.org](mailto:info@ippf.org) for good practice guidance on design, typography and IPPF branding.

Dos of design	Don'ts of design
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Choose a medium/media that suit(s) the context and target audience (for example, booklets, flyers, posters, blogs, video etc).</li> <li>✓ Use slogans and designs that appeal to young people – involve young people in selecting a design that is catchy and appealing to them.</li> <li>✓ Use colour schemes that are associated with an issue, when appropriate (one example is using red for HIV materials). This is not necessary for all information, education and communication materials, but can be helpful in some circumstances.</li> <li>✓ Use attractive fonts that are easy to read.</li> <li>✓ Use symbols with well-recognized meanings when appropriate.</li> <li>✓ Try to remain consistent with IPPF's <i>Brand Guidelines</i>, respecting regional colour schemes.</li> <li>✓ Remember that small and light-weight IEC materials are easier to carry and store.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Don't overload information, education and communication materials with too much text (unless it is a booklet or longer publication).</li> <li>✗ Don't use too many different styles and colour schemes in the same IEC material.</li> <li>✗ Don't use too many fonts or font sizes in the same material.</li> </ul>



## General dos and don'ts

Here are a few final general tips to keep in mind when developing information, education and communication materials for young people. Member Associations can email [info@ippf.org](mailto:info@ippf.org) for good practice guidelines in developing information, education and communication materials. Guidance is available on use of photography and images, good design and typography principles, and how to maintain the integrity of the IPPF branding.

General dos	General don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Use clear and concise messages that also reflect the complexity of issues.</li> <li>✓ Know your audience and involve people from your target audience in developing information, education and communication materials.</li> <li>✓ Pilot all IEC materials with a small sample of your target audience before producing and distributing the final product.</li> <li>✓ Prepare materials in languages that are the most appropriate for your target audience.</li> <li>✓ Be creative in choosing a channel to deliver information, education and communication. For example, print IEC messages on objects that people in your target audience will use regularly (examples include pens, T-shirts, notebooks, mugs and so on).</li> <li>✓ Use catchy phrases that convey your message in a memorable way.</li> <li>✓ Be creative about where and how you distribute materials.</li> <li>✓ Case studies (testimonies of real-life stories) can be very powerful. They can be used alone or accompanied by photos, imagery or metaphorical design.</li> <li>✓ Monitor and evaluate IEC materials, including distribution strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Don't use language or images that encourage stereotypes or discrimination.</li> <li>✗ Don't develop IEC materials without establishing a clear and realistic dissemination strategy.</li> </ul>

## Who we are

The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) is a global service provider and a leading advocate of sexual and reproductive health and rights for all. We are a worldwide movement of national organizations working with and for communities and individuals.

IPPF works towards a world where women, men and young people everywhere have control over their own bodies, and therefore their destinies. A world where they are free to choose parenthood or not; free to decide how many children they will have and when; free to pursue healthy sexual lives without fear of unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. A world where gender or sexuality are no longer a source of inequality or stigma. We will not retreat from doing everything we can to safeguard these important choices and rights for current and future generations.

Published January 2011

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