



**“The program really gives you skills for dealing  
with real life situations”:**

**Results from the evaluation of the *Sex + Ethics*  
Program with young people from Wellington,  
New Zealand**

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# **Quantitative and Qualitative Results from the evaluation of the program with young people from Wellington, New Zealand**

## **1. Introduction**

The following evaluation report provides the quantitative and qualitative research results for the eight (8) groups of young people who took part in the *Sex + Ethics* program in Wellington, New Zealand. The first report, which included the evaluation results for the initial four (4) groups, was submitted to Wellington Sexual Assault Network (WSAN) in August, 2010. The current report combines the evaluation results arising from the total of eight (8) *Sex + Ethics* groups which were conducted across Wellington, New Zealand, in 2010. Both reports were reviewed by WSAN's Advisory Group for the project and comments were addressed as appropriate in the final reporting by the research team.

Overall, 94 participants were enrolled in the *Sex + Ethics* program. Of the 94 participants that enrolled in the program, 86 completed the pre-test administered in Week One (participation in the evaluation of the program was voluntary)<sup>1</sup>. Of these 86 participants, 68 were involved in evaluations at the beginning (pre-test) and completion (post-test) of the program duration. The attrition rate across the pre-test and post-test survey reflects the number of participants who either: a) dropped out of the *Sex + Ethics* program; b) chose not to complete the post-test survey or c) did not complete sections of the post-test survey that were necessary for the statistical analyses.

The program reached a wide sample of participants; 51.5 percent were female, 47.1 percent were male, and 1.5 percent of participants identified as transgender. Overall, 26.5 percent of participants identified as lesbian/gay/queer, and a further 4.4 percent as bisexual. The sample was also ethnically diverse, with 41.2 percent of participants identifying as Pakeha, and a large portion of the remaining participants identifying as Maori, Samoan, Tongan and Cook Islander.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For a summary of participant attrition, please see Appendix 1.

<sup>2</sup> More detailed participant demographics are outlined on page 10-17.

## **2. Background to the *Sex + Ethics* Program**

The *Sex + Ethics* program was developed in 2007 by Professor Moira Carmody of the University of Western Sydney with funding from the Australian Research Council (2005-2008) and in partnership with the New South Wales (NSW) Rape Crisis Centre. The first phase of the research involved in-depth face to face interviews with a diverse sample of young people from rural and metropolitan areas across Australia. Along with exploring young peoples' experiences of sexuality education, it asked young people what they wanted and needed from education to increase their engagement with the possible pleasures and complexities of sexual relationships. These research findings, combined with international best practice on violence prevention and sexuality education, informed the development of the six-week *Sex + Ethics* program.

The resulting six-week program was trialled with young people in NSW in 2007. The research evaluation of the trial showed that the *Sex + Ethics* program had strong positive effects in supporting young people to take up and use an ethical decision making framework for their sexual relationships. It also showed that six months after the program was completed 82 percent of young people reported using ideas learnt in the program and 74 percent had used skills they had learnt in sexual and friendship relationships as well as using ethical bystander skills.

These findings have also been identified in more recent evaluations in Australia. For example, large-scale evaluation studies of young people situated across urban and rural NSW in 2010 indicated that the *Sex + Ethics* program facilitated a substantial increase in participant understanding of their own, as well as their partner's, sexual needs. These findings are also consistent with diverse groups of young people. For example, young male Queensland NRL (QLD Rugby League) players, aged 16-18 years, reported an increased understanding of their own needs and their partners' needs in sexual relationships. Further to this, the program has been shown to be effective in developing ethical responsibility, including bystander skills, which emphasise *how to help* a friend or someone else if they are in a risky situation.

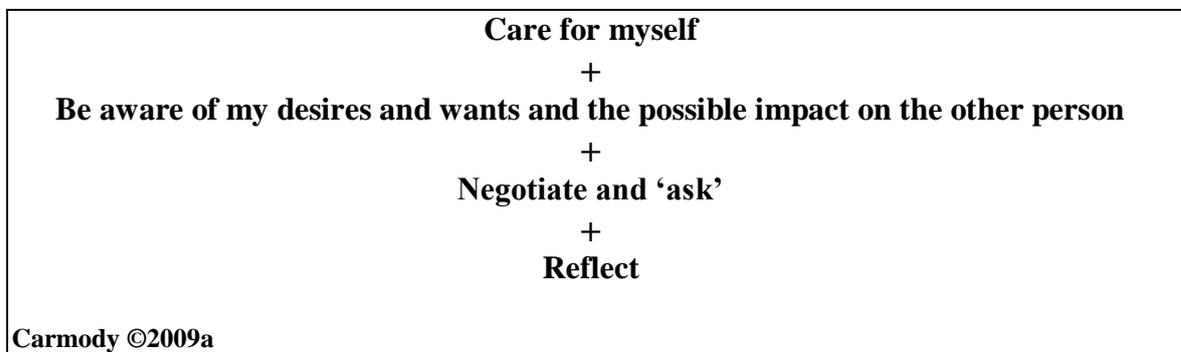
The qualitative data has also indicated increased knowledge of sexual violence, which is integral to further prevention efforts. Overall, 85-100 percent of participants across the above two studies reported using ideas and skills learnt in the program. This indicates that

the *Sex + Ethics* program was useful and meaningful to their lives 4-6 months after the program ended.

The *Sex + Ethics* program is underpinned by a number of key elements of best practice prevention research. These include clearly articulated theoretical foundations based on Foucaultian ideas about sexual subjectivity, ethics and gender (Schewe, 2002), bystander approaches (Banyard, Plante & Moynihan, 2004), as well as cognitive and social learning models which have been effective in generating behavioural change.

Many of these are simple, concrete concepts or tools that participants can use in their relationships. Of note are:

- The *Sex + Ethics* framework. This is a four step model that supports ethical decision making. This is presented in the program in the following way:



- The *Sunlight Test*. This idea encourages participants to ask themselves how they will feel about their actions ‘in the light of day’
- Experience of the difficult nature of non-verbal communication, and the importance of explicit negotiation and the skills needed to do this
- Legal information regarding sexual violence and the skills to negotiate consent
- Skills in being an ethical bystander.

This document provides a report of the evaluation outcomes of the *Sex + Ethics* Program in New Zealand from 2010-2011, conducted by the research team at the University of Western Sydney, Australia. The Wellington Sexual Abuse Network (WSAN), which hosted the program in New Zealand with funding from the Ministry of Justice, has developed a community development approach to introduce the concepts and ideas underpinning the *Sex*

+ *Ethics* program. This includes working closely with diverse local communities and developing culturally and sexually appropriate adaptations of the program to local conditions. This process will be reported on separately by the Wellington staff directly involved in this work.

As shown in the following evaluation of the *Sex + Ethics* program across Wellington, participants found these ideas appealing and memorable, and intended to use them. Furthermore, the 4-6 month follow-up evaluation data demonstrates, the participants involved in the program have implemented these ideas and skills in their lives. This is the strongest available demonstration of efficacy of the program.

### **3. Program Evaluation**

A number of limitations have been raised in the literature regarding the effectiveness of program evaluation. For example, program evaluations have been identified as being inadequate in terms of providing an indication of the areas that most need improvement (Ellis, 2008; Harvey, et al., 2007; Morrison, et al., 2004; Whitaker, et al., 2006). As Urbis-Keys Young (2004) has argued, program evaluations consistently over-emphasise participant satisfaction, and as a result there is a lack of focus on outcomes regarding the effectiveness of program content. A number of researchers suggest that few program evaluations rely on validated measurement tools (Morrison, et al., 2004; Perry, 2006; Tutty, et al., 2005). Research in this area also suggests that evaluations are being implemented too soon after program completion. Consequently, any long-term problems associated with the program, particularly in terms of its longevity and ability to impact participant behaviour change, are rarely assessed (Flood, 2005, 2006; Whitaker, et al., 2006). Given these problems, it is important to understand the most common forms of evaluation used in prevention education and how these are utilised in the *Sex + Ethics* program.

As shown in the following evaluation of the *Sex + Ethics* program across Wellington, participants found these ideas appealing and memorable, and intended to use them. Furthermore, the 4-6 month follow-up evaluation data demonstrates, the participants involved in the program have implemented these ideas and skills in their lives. This is the strongest available demonstration of efficacy of the program.

## 4. Types of Evaluation

The RESOLVE Alberta Canadian resource manual for school based sexual violence prevention programs identifies four different types of program evaluation, each serving different purposes, and providing different types of knowledge (Tutty, et al., 2005). These types of activities should not stand alone. Rather they should be seen as intrinsic to an ongoing cycle of evaluation.

**Needs assessments** provide information on the degree and nature of the identified issue within the community or population group in question, prior to the intervention/program. This type of evaluation is evident in the research conducted by Moira Carmody in 2007 when she conducted face to face in depth interviews with 56 young women and men of diverse sexualities and from diverse socio-economic and geographical locations across NSW (Carmody 2009a). It was this research on what young people wanted in sexuality and violence prevention education which underpinned the six-week *Sex + Ethics* program.

**Process evaluations** examine differentials in delivery, participant characteristics and program uptake. Process evaluations help to answer questions such as ‘what about this form of delivery, helped or hindered program success?’ or, ‘for which children, and under which conditions, is this program effective?’ Such evaluation seeks to elucidate the causal links between program activities and program outcomes. Process evaluations are built into the *Sex + Ethics* program, occurring in weeks 1 and 6 and in the 4-6 month follow up<sup>3</sup>.

**Customer (participant) satisfaction** studies provide an opportunity for participants to give feedback to program developers and presenters about what they did and did not like about the program. They provide important information, but should not be the sole form of evaluation. Australian practitioners at present sometimes appear to confuse the terminology of “customer satisfaction” studies with “process” evaluation. Customer satisfaction is included in the *Sex + Ethics* program at Weeks 1, 6 and again 6 months later. In addition to this, reflection activities built into the program that occur at the end or beginning of the weekly sessions, allowed educators to assess how satisfied participants were with the group as it was being developed. The inability of this form of information to demonstrate the

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<sup>3</sup> Whether young people were followed up 4, 5 or 6 months after the groups were completed was determined by the date of the final group session. The importance of a follow up some months later is to assess the longer term impact of the group.

efficacy of a program has been shown and argued many times over (see, for example, Weinbach 2005; Schewe 2002). Such subjective self-reports are vulnerable to a range of biases – imbalances within the information received that weights the findings in the directions of a more positive than negative outcome (see, for example Shek, Lee, Siu & Ma 2007) – and ‘demand characteristics’ – reporting what it is believed that the researcher or evaluator wants to hear (Perry 2006). For these reasons the *Sex + Ethics* program gathers participant satisfaction data but extends the evaluation methodology to include an outcome evaluation.

**Outcome (or impact) evaluations** seek to ascertain the effectiveness of the program in achieving its goals – ‘did it change what it sought to change?’ Outcome evaluations can be undertaken immediately after a program and over longer time periods to determine the degree to which change was maintained. Outcome evaluations require that the program goals are both clearly articulated, and realistic. The *Sex + Ethics* impact evaluation measures include three parts: 1) A pre-test survey administered in Week One; 2) A post-test survey administered in Week Six (directly following program completion); 3) A follow-up survey 4-6 months after the last group session. The follow-up survey is primarily administered by email, which is highly accessible to the young people. Overall, the evaluation strategy is able to assess the short and longer term impact of the *Sex + Ethics* program on participant’s self reported knowledge and behaviour concerning their sexual relationships.

Assessing the impact of the *Sex + Ethics* program requires a rigorous evaluation strategy. We aimed to evaluate specific aspects of the *Sex + Ethics* education program. For example, we were interested in evaluating participant responses surrounding the program content and approach, as well as the effectiveness of the program to promote positive change in young people’s intimate relationships. It involved data collection and analysis gathered at multiple stages: At pre-test (week 1), post-test (week 6), and follow-up (4-6 months).

There is a range of data which is collected from the three-stage outcome evaluation. However, the key evaluation question is ascertaining what impact, if any, the program had on young people’s behaviour and sexual relationships, and if this was maintained six months later. Two survey items were used to ascertain whether the program achieved its goal of increasing the knowledge and skills of young people to negotiate ethical and respectful sexual intimacy.

The first item aimed to determine participant understanding in working out what they wanted from a sexual experience. This is the first step in the sexual ethics framework, which is introduced in Week 2 of the *Sex + Ethics* program, and encourages young people to develop or refine their sense of self care. The question in the evaluation survey asked them to identify their level of agreement with the statement: ‘I know how to work out what I want from a sexual experience’.

The second item aimed to determine participant understanding of their partner’s needs in sexual experiences. This is the second step in the sexual ethics framework and is rarely explored in prevention education. It seeks to encourage ethical reflection, and the recognition that our own desires and wants have a potential impact on others. This component of the *Sex + Ethics* program underlines that ignoring the needs of the other in sexual relationships is unethical and may result in sexual violence, coerced and pressured sex. The question in the evaluation survey asked participants to identify their level of agreement with the following statement: ‘I know how to work out what someone else wants from a sexual experience or relationship with me’.

This methodology and additional qualitative data have been analysed to report on the research findings and to describe how the *Sex + Ethics* program has achieved the following objectives:

- Increase the capacity of young people who take part in the program to negotiate ethical and respectful intimate relationships
- Increase the knowledge of young people who take part in the program in regard to sexual violence
- Increase skills of young people who take part in the program to prevent sexual violence in a dating context.

## **5. Findings from the *Sex + Ethics* Evaluation**

The research and evaluation findings will be presented in the following order:

- Overview of participant demographics, including age, gender, sexuality and culture
- An overview of participants’ sexual experiences, including their experiences of pressured and unwanted sex

- Statistical findings of the pre test (Week 1) and post test surveys (Week 6) – Phase 1 evaluation
- Statistical findings of the 4-6 month follow up survey – Phase 2 evaluation
- Qualitative data provided by young people who participated in the follow-up survey, including knowledge gained by young people about sexual violence
- An overview of participants' satisfaction with the program and suggestions for refinement
- Feedback from educators involved in administering the *Sex + Ethics* program and their suggestions regarding the program's refinement

The research process involved in this evaluation was reviewed by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Western Sydney in April 2009, with approval number H6771. The research was also approved by the New Zealand Ministry of Health Ethics Committee on June 9<sup>th</sup> 2009.

## **6. Participants**

This section presents an overview of the demographic data of the young people who participated in the New Zealand *Sex + Ethics* evaluations. Also included is information gathered in the sexual experiences survey, undertaken at week three of the program. A more detailed breakdown is provided under the headings that follow.

A total of 86 young people participated in the first week evaluation of the *Sex + Ethics* program across the eight New Zealand sites. Eighteen (18) of these participants were not included in the statistical analyses because they either 1) left the program before the Week 6 (post) survey was administered or 2) did not complete the Week 6 (post) survey (please see Appendix 1 for attrition rates across the eight groups).

Participants were recruited through a range of youth-focussed media (student newspapers, youth radio programmes), youth-focussed social media and youth services and networks. However, the young people who volunteered to participate in the *Sex + Ethics* education program, and in the evaluation of this program, are not representative of a random sample. Rather, the participants who completed this program came from specific populations, and as a result, are more likely than other groups to represent particular subgroups (e.g. same sex

attracted young people). Furthermore, given that participants involved in this evaluation chose to partake in the program, they are perhaps more likely to report high levels of engagement and enthusiasm in relation to the program, and the program feedback.

### 6.1 Gender and Age of Participants

The remaining 68 participants included in the statistical analyses were aged between 16-26 years (Mean age = 20.02, SD = 2.41). Thirty-five participants were female (51.5%), 32 were male (47.1%), and 1 identified as a Trans woman (1.5%). Figure 1 provides the age distribution of participants. The young person who identified as Trans was excluded from the descriptive analysis for privacy reasons.

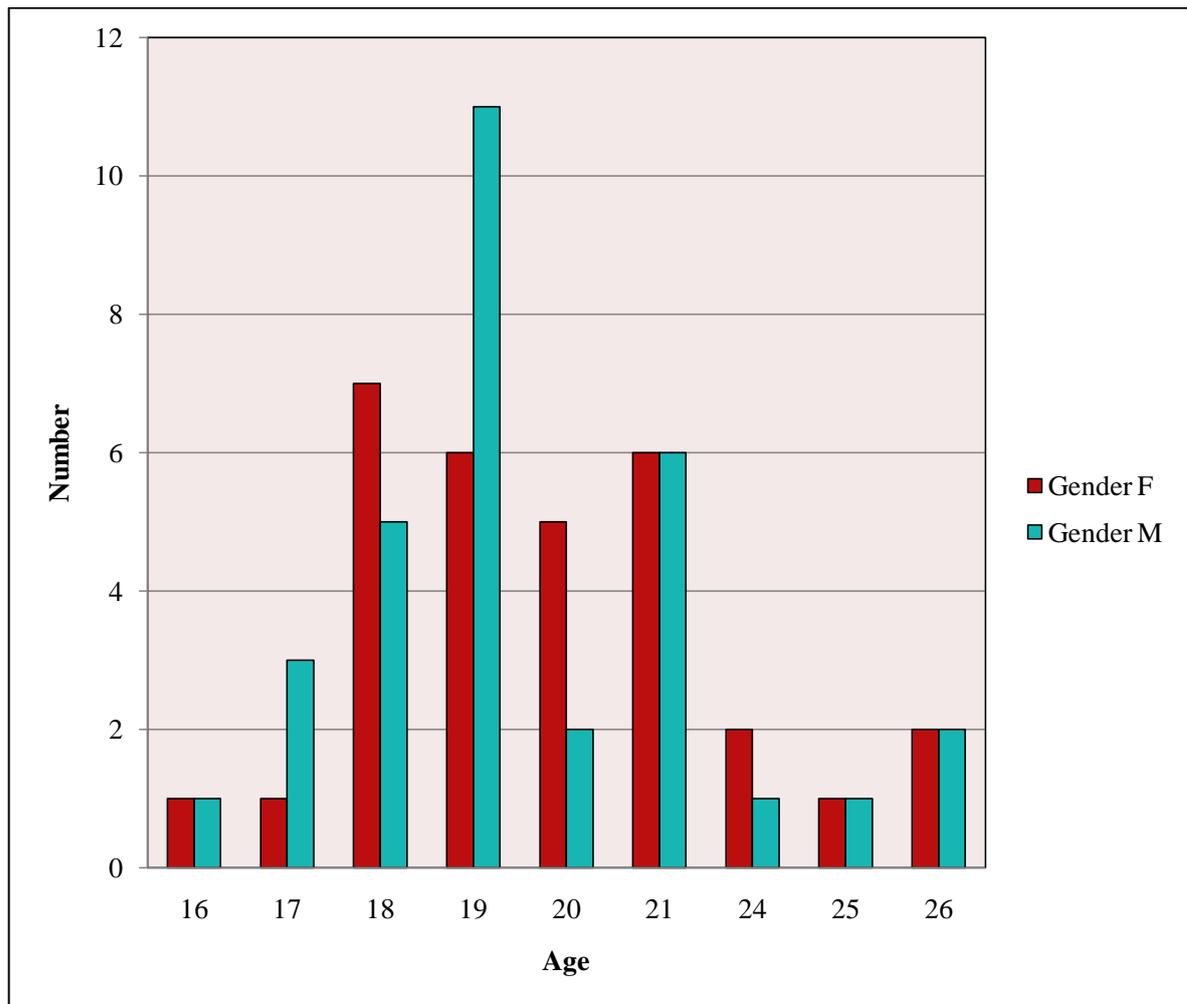


Figure 1. Age and gender of participants

## 6.2 Sexuality

The participants in the program identified with a range of sexualities. This information was collected using a Sexual Experiences Survey<sup>4</sup>, administered in Week 3 of the program. The majority of participants identified as heterosexual (60.3%), but a significant number identified as gay (10.3%) lesbian (2.9%), bisexual (8.8%) or queer (7.4%). The remaining 10.3% of participants indicated their sexuality to be 'Other', were 'Not Sure' or did not complete this question. Figure 2 provides frequencies across the range of sexualities in the group.

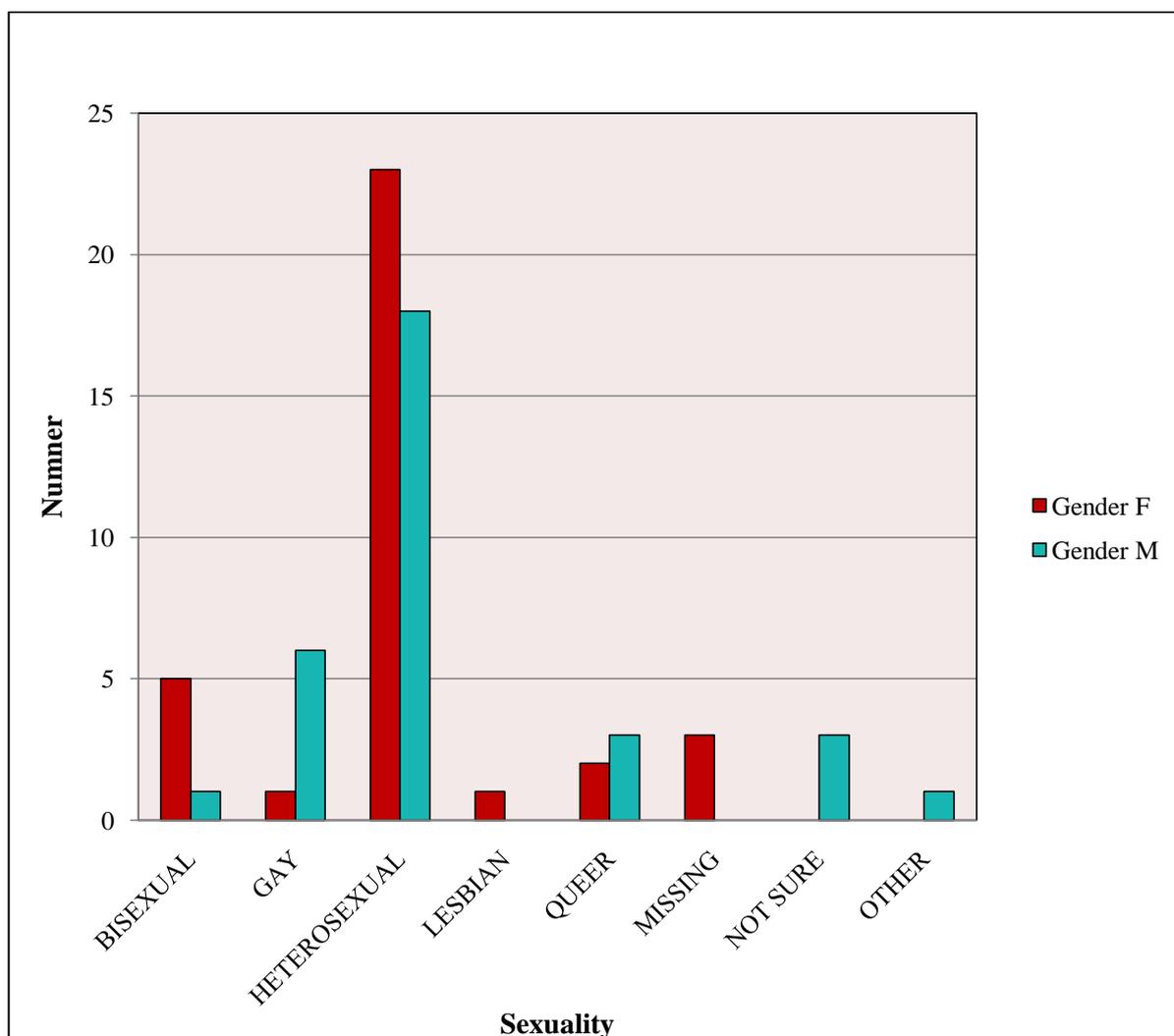


Figure 2. Participant sexuality in relation to gender

<sup>4</sup> The Sexual Experiences Survey was devised by Professor Moira Carmody. The survey asks questions regarding participants' sexual identity, as well as their sexual history (e.g. age of first consensual sexual experience). The survey also asks participants to indicate whether they had experienced pressured or forced sex.

### 6.3 Culture

In assessing the cultural background of participants, the demographic survey tool used in this program asked: “How would you describe your cultural background?” The survey regarding participant culture did not provide a general list from which participants might choose, or directions to provide only the culture to which they most strongly identify.

In response to this question, participants indicated a diverse range of self-described ethnic groups. The two largest of these were Pākehā/European New Zealander (41.2%), Samoan (14.7%), Māori/Pākehā (5.9%), Tongan (5.9%), South African (4.4%), Maori (4.4%) and Samoan/Cook Islander (2.9%). Similar percentages (1.5%) of participants identified as Chinese, Cook Islander, Filipino, Hawaiian, Samoan/Maori, Tokelan, and Tongan/Maori (Total = 10.5%). As indicated in this long list, many participants provided complex descriptors reflecting their diverse cultural background. An overview of the cultural descriptors used by young people is shown in Figure 3.

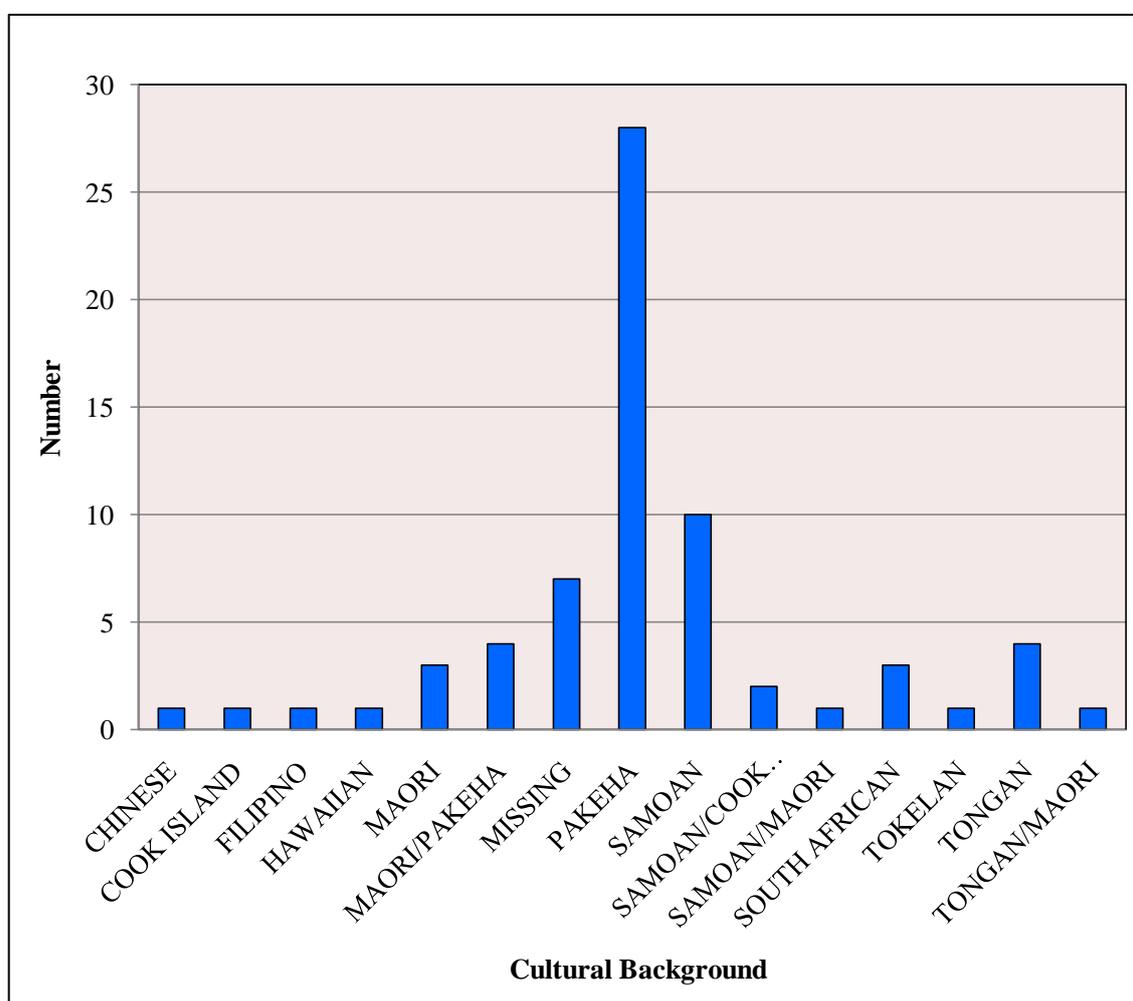


Figure 3. Cultural background reported by participants

## 6.4 Sexual Experiences

One of the important areas of information collected in this program was the sexual experiences of participants. This information was collected in order to assess the diversity of sexual experiences of young people in the education groups, and to cross reference these answers with data analysed following the completion of the groups. Two pieces of data from this information stands out as significant for this research. Firstly, whether participants have had sex or not, and secondly, whether participants have experienced pressured, forced, coerced or otherwise unwanted sexual contact. This information, along with participant's reported number of sexual partners, is presented below.

New Zealand data regarding the sexual behaviours of young people within this age group (16 to 25 years) is difficult to obtain. Findings from the 'Youth '07' Report: The Health and Wellbeing of Secondary School Students in New Zealand' (Adolescent Health Research Group, 2008) surveyed only young people in formal secondary school study. The data reported by these sources includes:

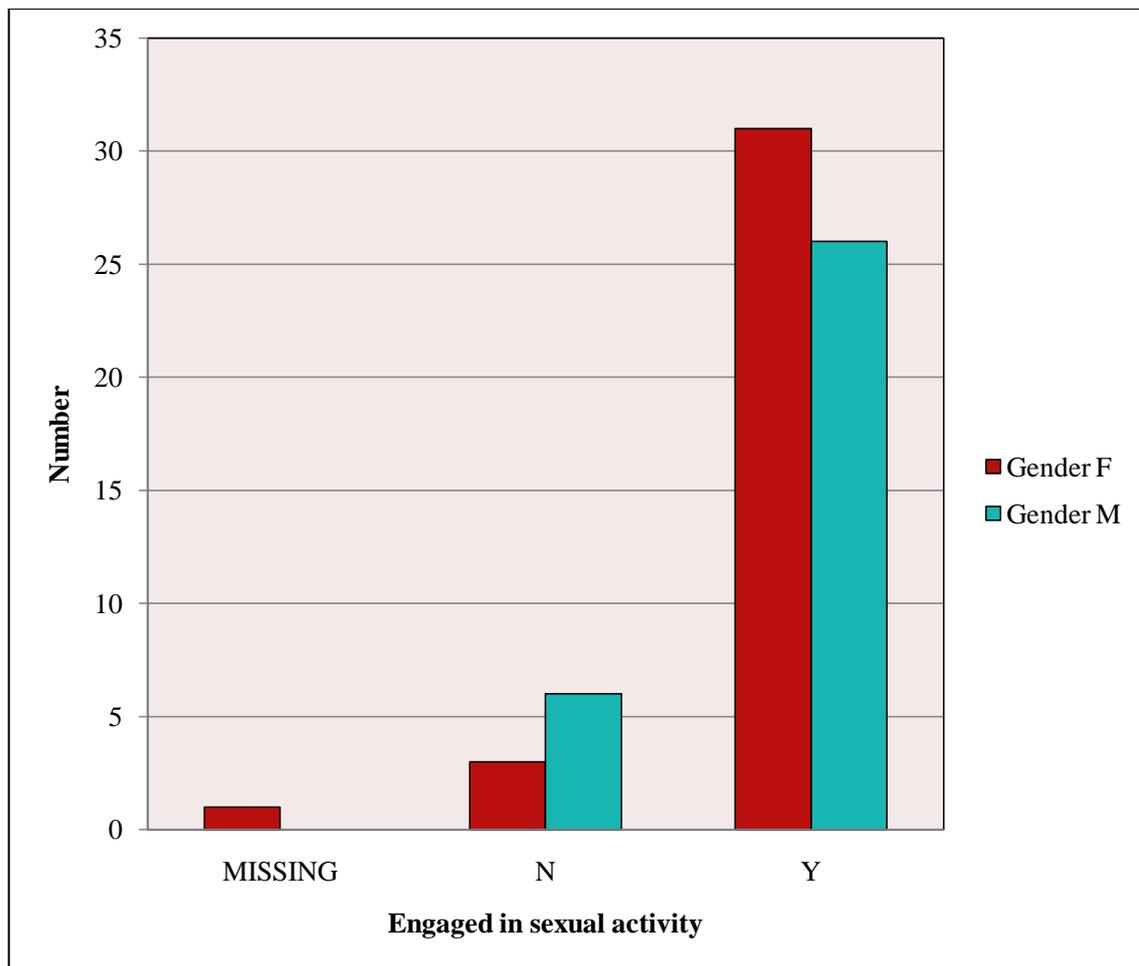
1. That 53.7% of school aged young people aged 17 years or over, had engaged in sexual intercourse.
2. 19.9% of female students and 5.4% of male students (13-17 years) reported having been 'touched in a sexual way or made to do sexual things that they didn't want to do.'

When measuring these experiences in the *Sex + Ethics* cohort two questions were asked.

1. Have you had any sexual experience with another person?
2. Have you ever felt pressure or been forced to have sex with someone?

These two questions required a yes/no answer. Subsequent to these a number of related questions were asked. This survey used only one, very broad, description of sex, stating in a note to participants "*We use the term 'sex' to refer to any kind of sexual contact with someone else*" and did not ask for specifics of types of sexual behaviour. Similarly, with regard to unwanted sex, the *Sex + Ethics* survey used a very open, subjective definition and did not ask experiences that may be described legally as sexual assault.

Of the 67 participants who answered this question, 86.6% reported having had sex. Specifically, 91.18% of the young women, and 81.25% of young men in the program reported that they had previously had sex. The frequency of male and females are illustrated in Figure 4.



*Figure 4.* Number of young people who indicated that they previously had sex

As may be predicted, the proportion of those people who had engaged in sexual activity increased with age. Figure 5 shows gender differences in age of first sex. When these numbers are broken down by the gender of the participant, we can see that young men were more likely to indicate a younger age of first sex than young women. However, there were no large differences in relation to age of first sex for the young men and women in this group [NB: 9 participants indicated they had not had sex].

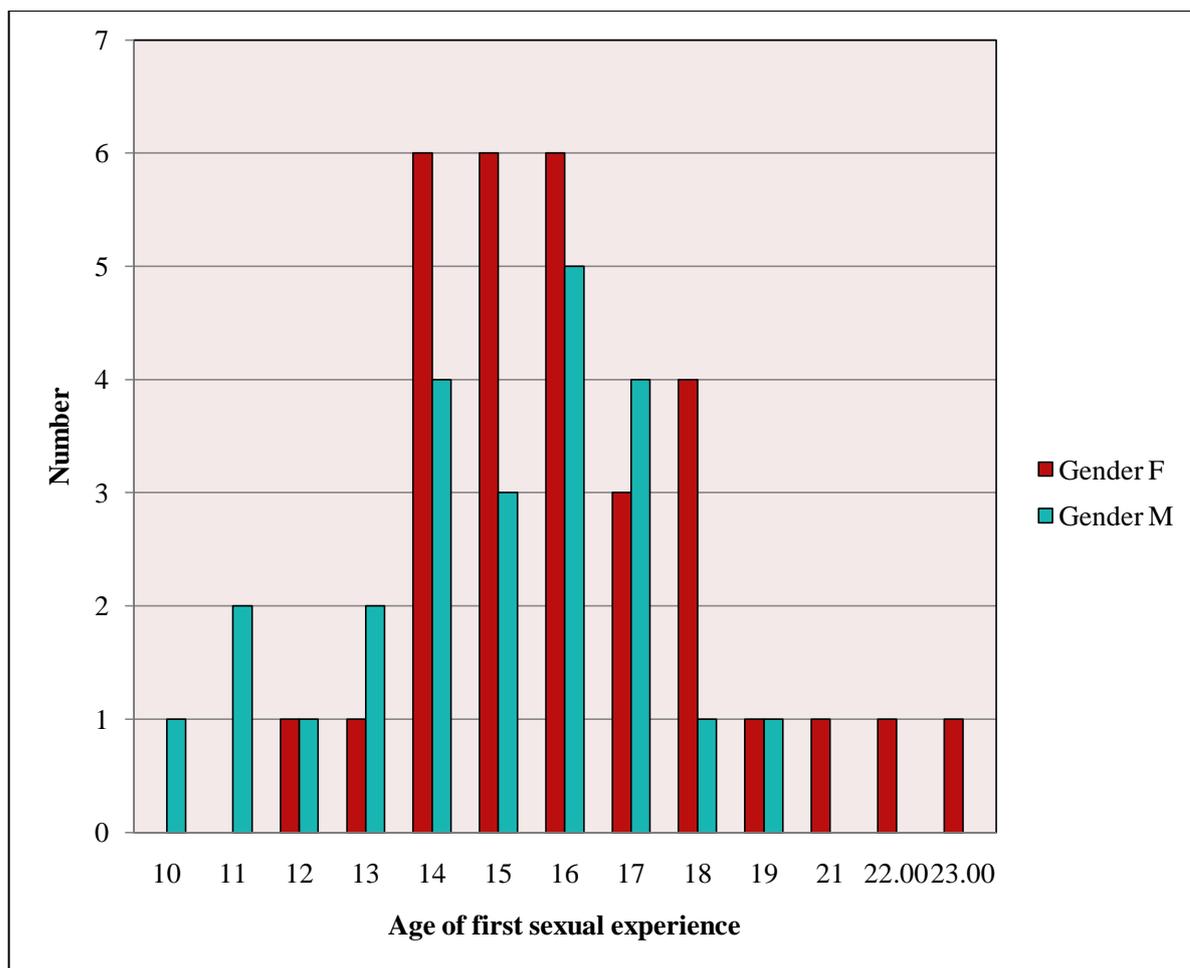


Figure 5. Age frequencies of first sex in relation to the gender of participants

### 6.5 Pressured and Unwanted Sex

Of the 68 participants who completed the Sexual Experiences Survey at Week 3, 42 participants (61.8%) reported having experienced pressured or forced sex. Specifically, 62.9% young women, almost 59.4% of young men reported this experience (see Figure 6). Of interest, when compared with the Youth '07 Report (2008), the proportion of young women and young men experiencing unwanted sex in the *Sex + Ethics* groups is substantially higher than the Youth '07 Report sample – 62.9% compared with 19.9% for women; 59.4% compared with 5.4% for men.

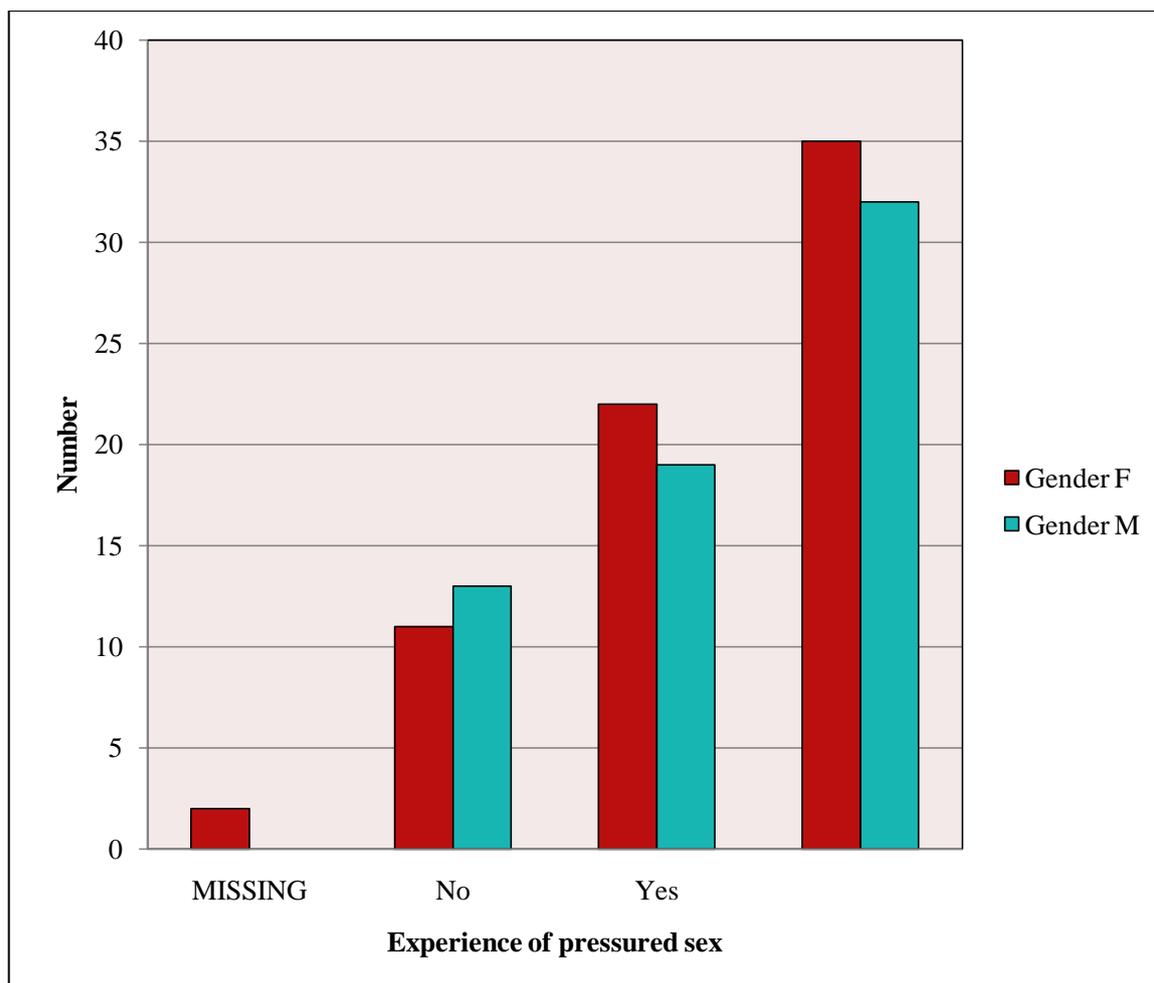


Figure 6. Number of participants who experienced pressured sex

There are many possible explanations for the trends indicated in the data. Given that the Sexual Experiences Survey was administered in Week 3 (following discussions about ethical sex), it may have been possible that the young people involved in the *Sex + Ethics* program were more able to identify previous sexual experiences as coercive or forced.

## 7. Quantitative Results Phase 1: Pre-test and Post-test Results

Overall, 68 participants completed the pre-test (before completing the program) and post-test (immediately following program completion) surveys. See Appendix 1 for an overview of attrition rates across all groups.

Participants in Phase 1 completed a short survey at the beginning and end of the six-week program. The statistical analysis examined participant scores for two questions across the pre-test and post-test surveys. The first question aimed to determine participant

understanding of what they wanted from a sexual experience. The question asked them to identify their level of agreement with the statement: 'I know how to work out what I want from a sexual experience'. The second question aimed to determine participant understanding of their partner's needs in sexual experiences. The question asked them to identify their level of agreement with the following statement: 'I know how to work out what someone else wants from a sexual experience or relationship with me'.

Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each. Both questions included a Likert scale of 5 responses: 'Definitely' (Score = 5), 'Mostly' (Score = 4), 'Sometimes' (Score = 3), 'Rarely' (Score = 2), and 'I have no idea' (Score = 1).

An overview of the mean results across the pre-test and post-test surveys are shown in Table 1. The statistical analysis indicated an increase in participant level of understanding of their own needs in sexual experiences before the group began (Mean score = 3.66) and six weeks later, following the completion of the program (Mean score = 4.35). As shown in Table 1, a dependent t-test analysis found a significant difference in participant scores for 'understanding of their own needs in relationships' at pre-test (before completing the program) and post-test (immediately following program completion),  $t(67) = -5.33$ ,  $p < .001$ .

The results from the analysis also show a significant increase in participant understanding of their partner's needs in sexual experiences from before the group began (Mean score = 3.37) and at six weeks (Mean score = 4.12). A dependent samples t-test found a significant difference in participant scores for 'understanding of their partner's needs' at pre-test (before completing the program) and post-test (immediately following program completion),  $t(67) = -6.20$ ,  $p < .05$ .

**Table 1**

*Pre-test and Post-test Mean Scores and t values for 'Understanding Own Needs' and 'Understanding Partner's Needs' in Sexual Experiences*

<b>Question</b>	<b>Pre-test Mean (SD)</b>	<b>Post-test Mean (SD)</b>	<b>t</b>
Understanding own needs	3.66 (.97)	4.35 (.62)	-5.33***
Understanding partner's needs	3.37 (.94)	4.12 (.70)	-6.20*

\*= p<.05

\*\*\*= p<.001)

**Table 2**

*Pre-test and Post-test Frequency and Percentage of Scores for 'Understanding Own Needs' in Sexual Experiences*

<b>Response Choice</b>	<b>Pre-test (n = 68)</b>		<b>Post-test (n = 68)</b>	
	Frequency of response	%	Frequency of response	%
No Idea	2	2.9	0	0
Rarely	5	7.4	1	1.5
Sometimes	20	29.4	2	2.9
Mostly	28	41.2	37	54.4
<b>Definitely</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>41.2</b>

The impact of the program is also observable across the pre-test and post-test frequency of responses. Significantly, 95.6% of post-test respondents indicated that they 'Mostly' or 'Definitely' understood their own needs in relationships.

The increase in participants' understanding of their own needs in sexual experiences is shown in Figure 7, which maps changes in participant responses across pre-test and post-test.

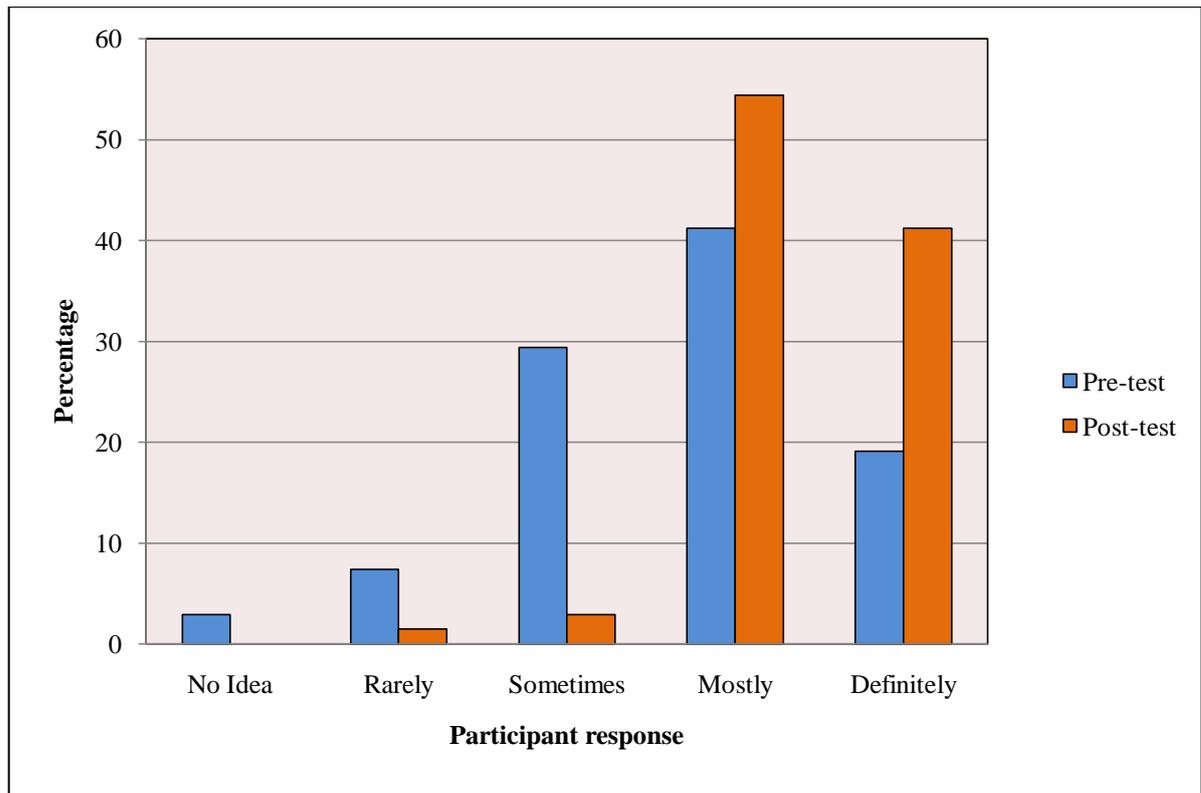


Figure 7. Percentage of scores recorded at pre-test and post-test for 'Understanding own needs in sexual experiences'

Table 3 outlines the frequency of responses recorded at pre-test and post-test for 'Understanding partner's needs in sexual experiences'. The results also found that 83.8 percent of participants in the post-test survey responded that they 'Mostly' or 'Definitely' had an understanding of their partner's needs in sexual experiences, as opposed to just 45.6 percent at pre-test.

**Table 3**

*Pre-test and Post-test Frequency and Percentage of Scores for 'Understanding Partner's Needs' in Sexual Experience*

Response Choice	Pre-test (n = 68)		Post-test (n = 68)	
	Frequency of response	%	Frequency of response	%
No Idea	4	5.9	0	0
Rarely	4	5.9	1	1.5
Sometimes	29	42.6	10	14.7
<b>Mostly</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>36.8</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>54.4</b>
<b>Definitely</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>29.4</b>

The increase in participant understanding of their partner's needs is shown in Figure 8:

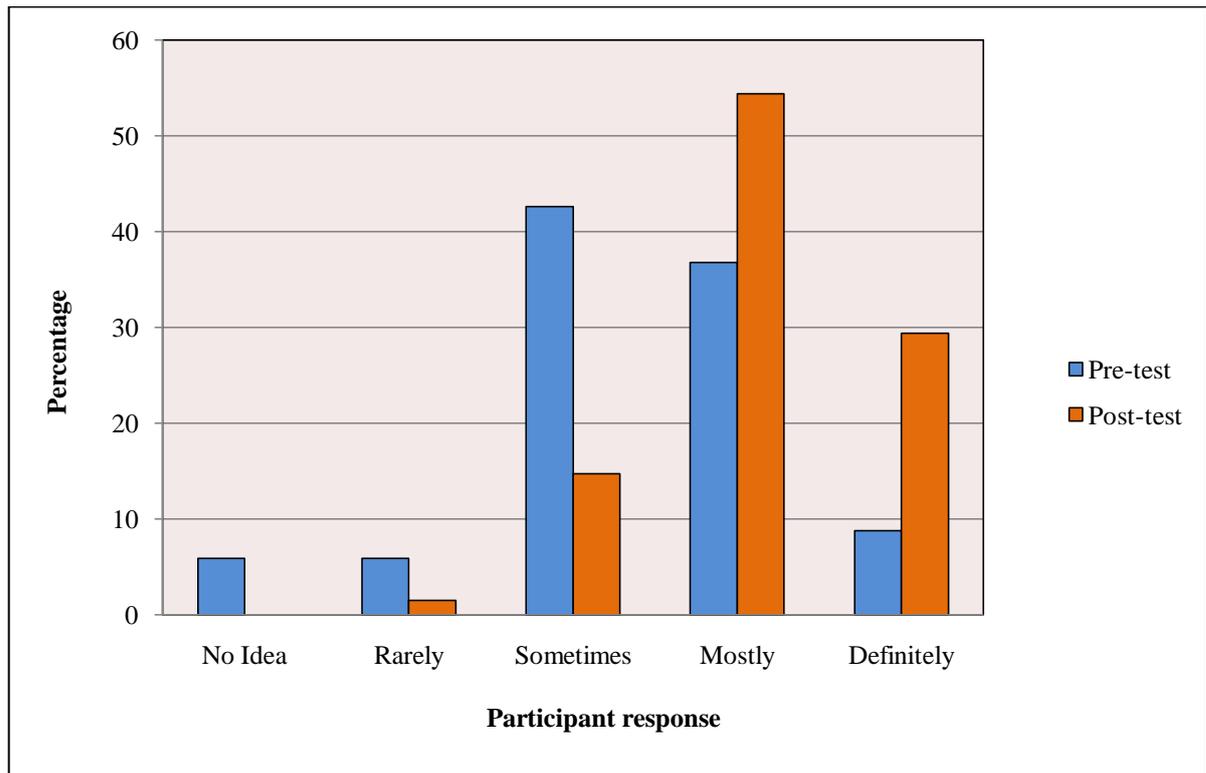


Figure 8. Percentage of scores recorded at pre-test and post-test for 'Understanding partner's needs in sexual experiences'

## 8. Quantitative Results Phase 2: Results from the Follow-up Surveys

The follow-up survey was sent out to the majority of participants electronically, 4-6 months following the completion of the program. As noted earlier, the time between the end of the program and follow-up varied across the groups. There were 68 participants who completed pre-test and post-test surveys (Phase 1). After the 4-6 month follow-up (Phase 2), there were 43 participants (63.24% of the original sample). Of this remaining group, 21 participants (49%) were male, and 23 (51%) were female.

The attrition rate recorded for the follow-up survey (37%) is consistent with rates observed in similar community-based web survey designs, where participant dropout rates average around 40 percent of the original sample (Cook, Heath & Thompson, 2000). Research suggests that with younger populations who can readily access the internet, web-based follow-up surveys result in more moderate levels of participant attrition than mail-out methods (Couper, 2000). Further, research suggests that email pre-notice through personal

web addresses, similar to the method used in this study, is more effective at lowering participant attrition than paper questionnaire methods of contact (Schaefer & Dillman, 1998).

The time between the post-test and follow-up (4-6 months) was also a factor to consider when reviewing rates of participant attrition. Overall, however, the email-based (and pen-paper) follow-up methods yielded a relatively high rate of response from participants. This low rate of attrition could be attributed to the strong relationships that were built between the educators and participants (see Kazdin, 1998).

### 8.1 The Use of Ideas and Skills from the Sex + Ethics Program

Responses from the follow-up survey indicate that 83.7% of participants reported using ideas and skills learnt from the *Sex + Ethics* program a ‘few times’, ‘sometimes’ or ‘many times’ (see Figure 9).

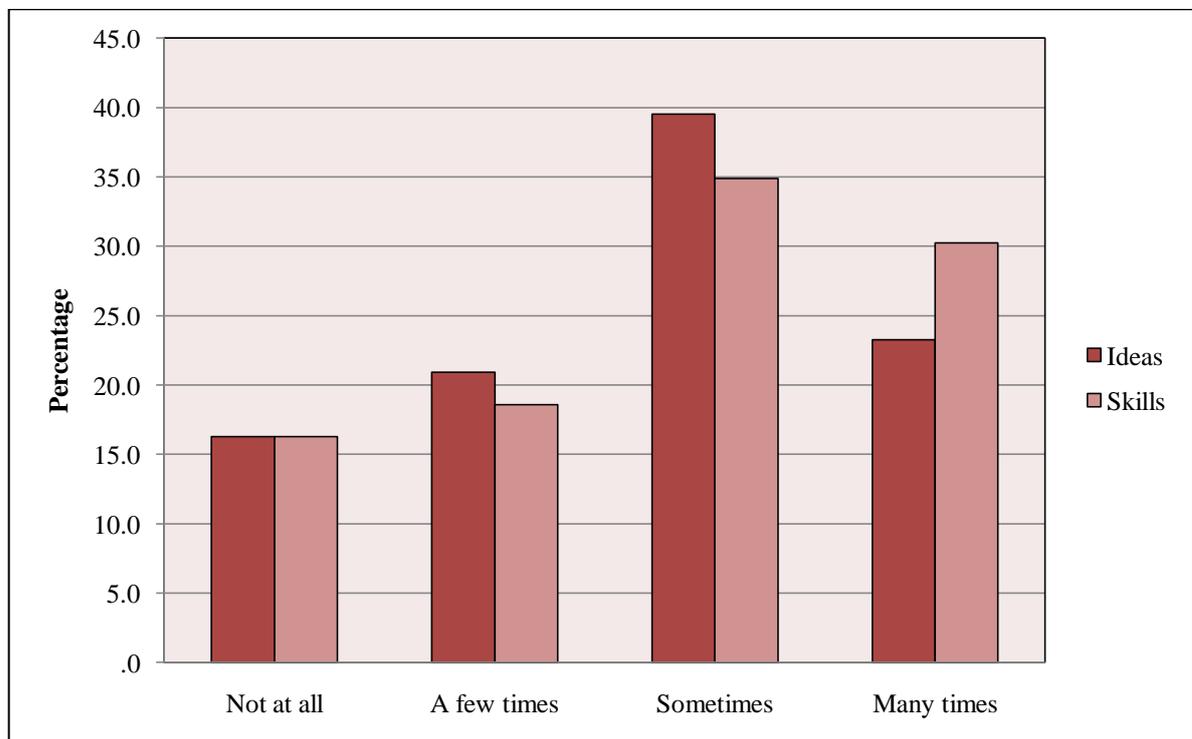
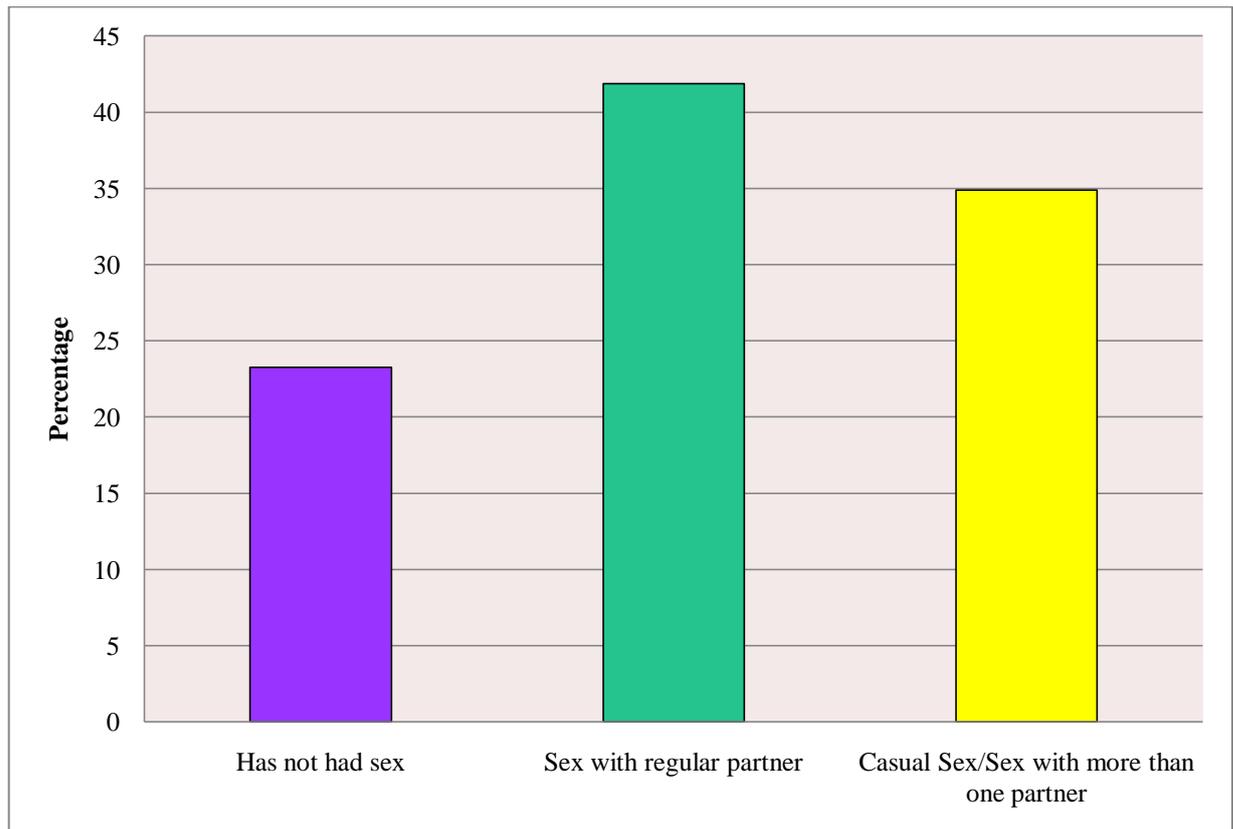


Figure 9. Frequency (%) of participant use of ideas from the *Sex + Ethics* program

### 8.2 Participant relationship data from the Follow-up survey

Figure 10 outlines the types of sexual relationships participants were engaged in during the 3-4 months prior to completing the survey. Overall, 76.74% of participants were engaged in a sexual relationship of some kind, and the majority (41.86%) with a regular partner. The

remaining participants (34.88%) indicated that they were engaged in casual sex or sex with more than one partner.



*Figure 10.* Percentage of participants who engaged in sexual relationships in the ‘past few months’ prior to completing the follow-up

More detailed analysis of the results revealed a number of patterns in the data. The frequency of participant use of the program ideas and skills were analysed across the three relationship types (‘no sex’, ‘sex with regular partner’, and ‘casual sex/sex with more than one partner’) using a mixed repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA).

As demonstrated in Figures 11 and 12, the majority of participants who indicated they had not, or had ‘a few times’, used skills from the program had generally not been involved in a sexual relationship ‘for the past few months’. Contrastingly, participants were most likely to use program ideas and skills if they had engaged in ‘casual sex’, or ‘sex with more than one partner’. This is perhaps unsurprising, given that young people who are having casual sex, or sex with a number of partners, are likely to engage with the program more frequently than those who are not having sex.

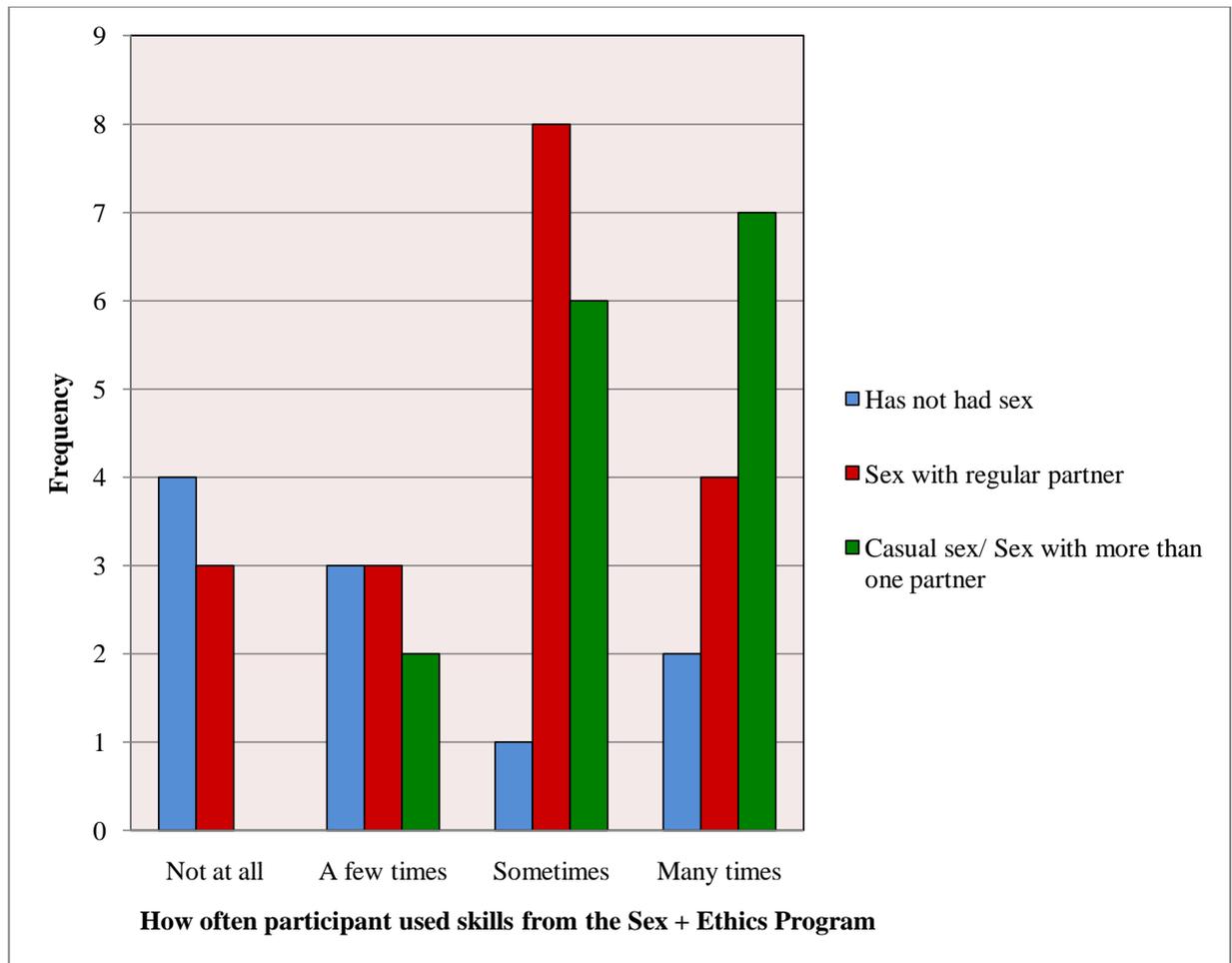


Figure 11. Frequency of participant use of program *skills* across relationship type

With the alpha level set at .05, the results found that the type of relationship participants were involved in was a factor in the number of times they used the *skills* from the *Sex + Ethics* program,  $F(2, 40) = 4.90, p < .01$ . While a pattern is observable in the descriptive data, no significant difference was found in terms of relationships type and use of the program *ideas*.

Overall, the results suggest that young people who were involved in casual sex or sex with many partners were more likely to use the skills they learnt from the *Sex + Ethics* program than those who were not having sex. However, there was no difference across relationship types in terms of using the program ideas.

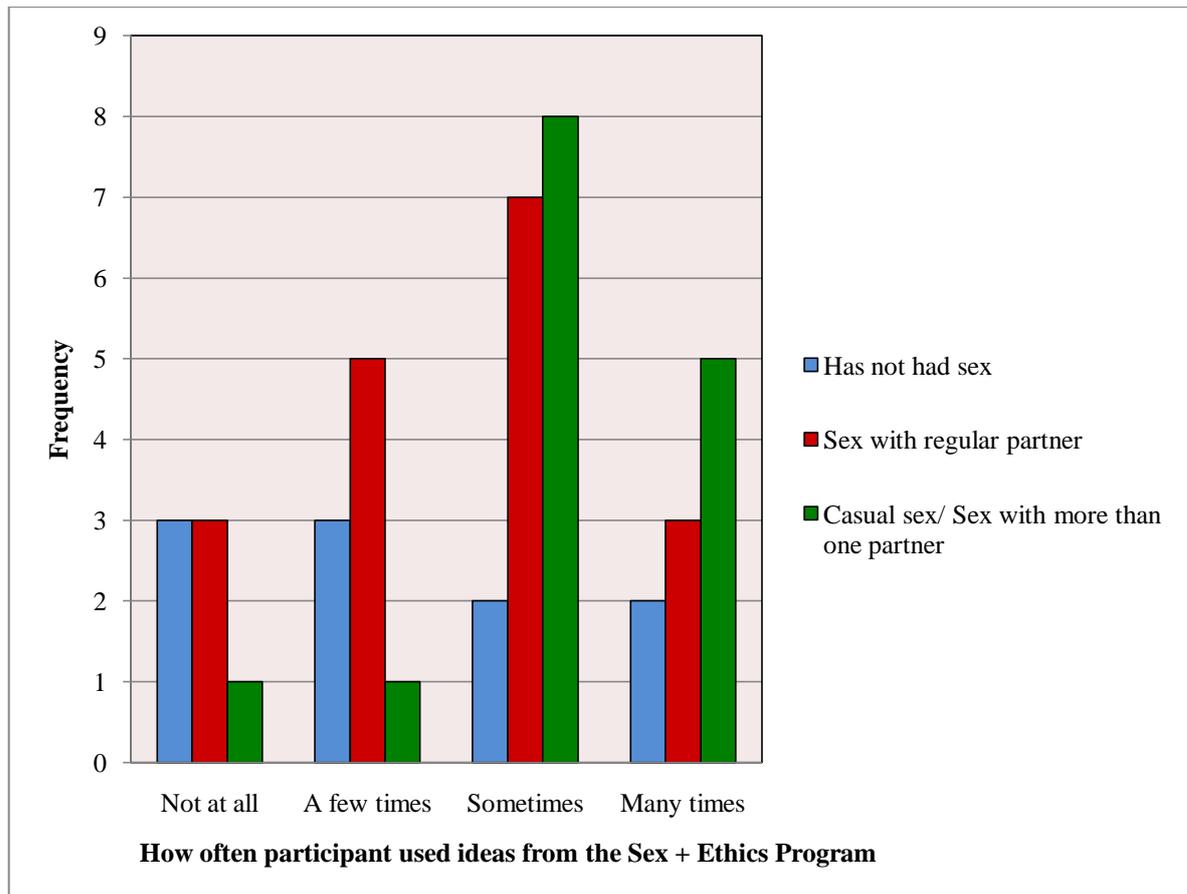


Figure 12. Frequency of participant use of program *ideas* across relationship type

### 8.3 Participant understanding their own, and their partner’s, needs in sexual experiences: Results across Pre-test, Post-test and Follow-up

As mentioned above, 68 participants completed their pre-test and post-test survey.

Overall, 43 participants completed all three phases of the survey evaluation: pre-test, post-test and follow-up.

Of the 43 participants who completed the follow-up survey, 37 answered the question relating to ‘Understanding of their own needs in sexual experiences’ and 39 answered the question relating to ‘Understanding of their partner’s needs in sexual experiences.’ Descriptive statistics for the scores relating to the above two questions are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4.**

Mean scores relating to: 1) Understanding their own needs in sexual experiences and 2) Understanding their partner's needs in sexual experiences, at pre-test, post-test and follow-up

	Pre-test		Post-test		Follow-up	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
<b>Understanding own needs (n=37)</b>	3.78	.98	4.35	.72	4.30	.81
<b>Understanding partner's needs (n=39)</b>	3.33	1.03	4.12	.65	3.92	.87

The results suggest that participant knowledge of their *own needs* in relationships was sustained across the post-test (immediately following program completion) and follow-up (4-6 months following program completion) measures. As shown in Figure 13, participants knowledge of their own needs not only increased dramatically across the pre-test and post-test evaluation, they were also able to hold on to these gains 4-6 months after their completion of the *Sex + Ethics* program.

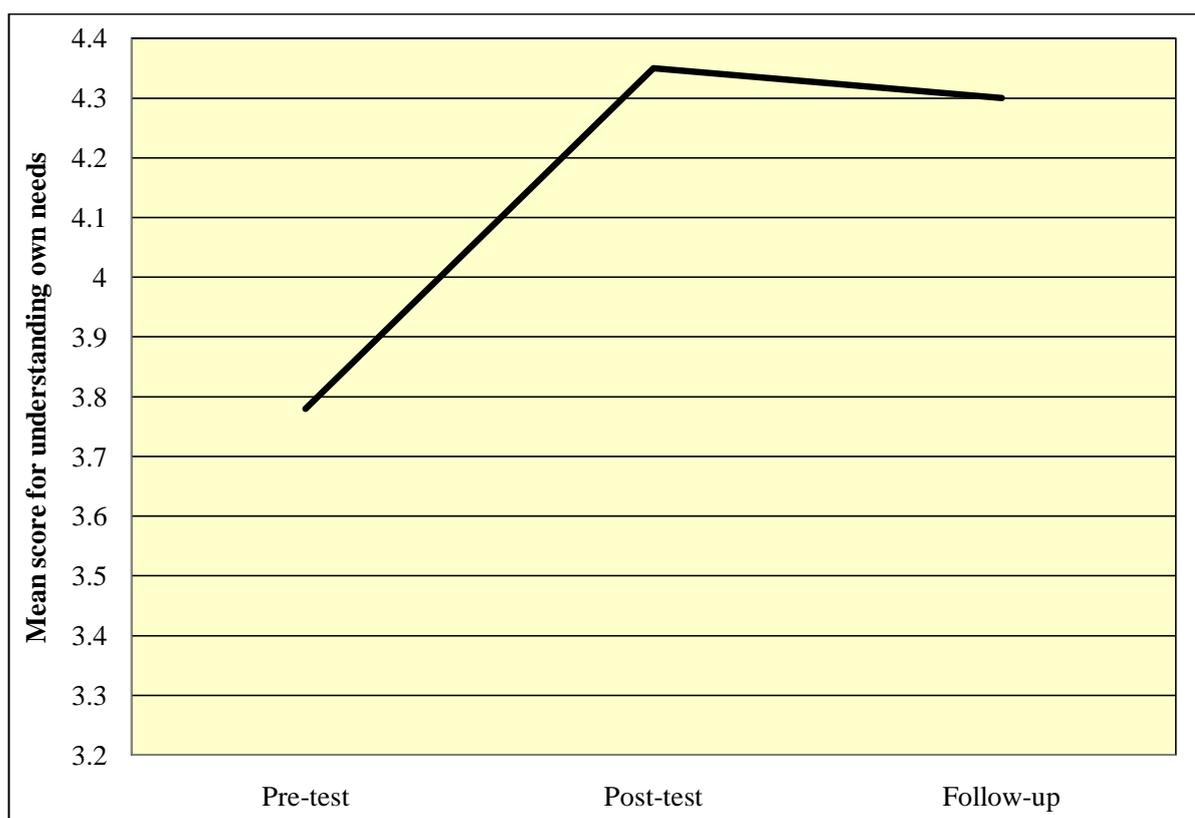


Figure 13. Mean score for 'understanding own needs in sexual experiences' at pre-test, post-test and follow-up

The statistical analyses surrounding participants' own needs in sexual relationships revealed a significant difference in scores across pre-test and post-test,  $t(67) = -5.33, p < .001$ . A significant difference in scores was also recorded across pre-test and follow-up,  $t(36) = -2.99, p < .01$ . This finding suggests that, compared to pre-test, participants at post-test (immediately following program completion) and follow-up (4-6 months following program completion) indicated a higher level of understanding regarding their own needs in sexual relationships.

Figure 14 maps the mean scores for participants' understanding of their partner's needs in sexual relationships, recorded by participants across pre-test, post-test and follow-up. The t-test results suggest that compared to pre-test, participants had significantly higher means at post-test (immediately following program completion),  $t(67) = -6.20, p < .001$ . Results from the t-test analyses also reveal a significant difference in the mean scores recorded at pre-test and post-test,  $t(38) = -3.53, p < .01$ .

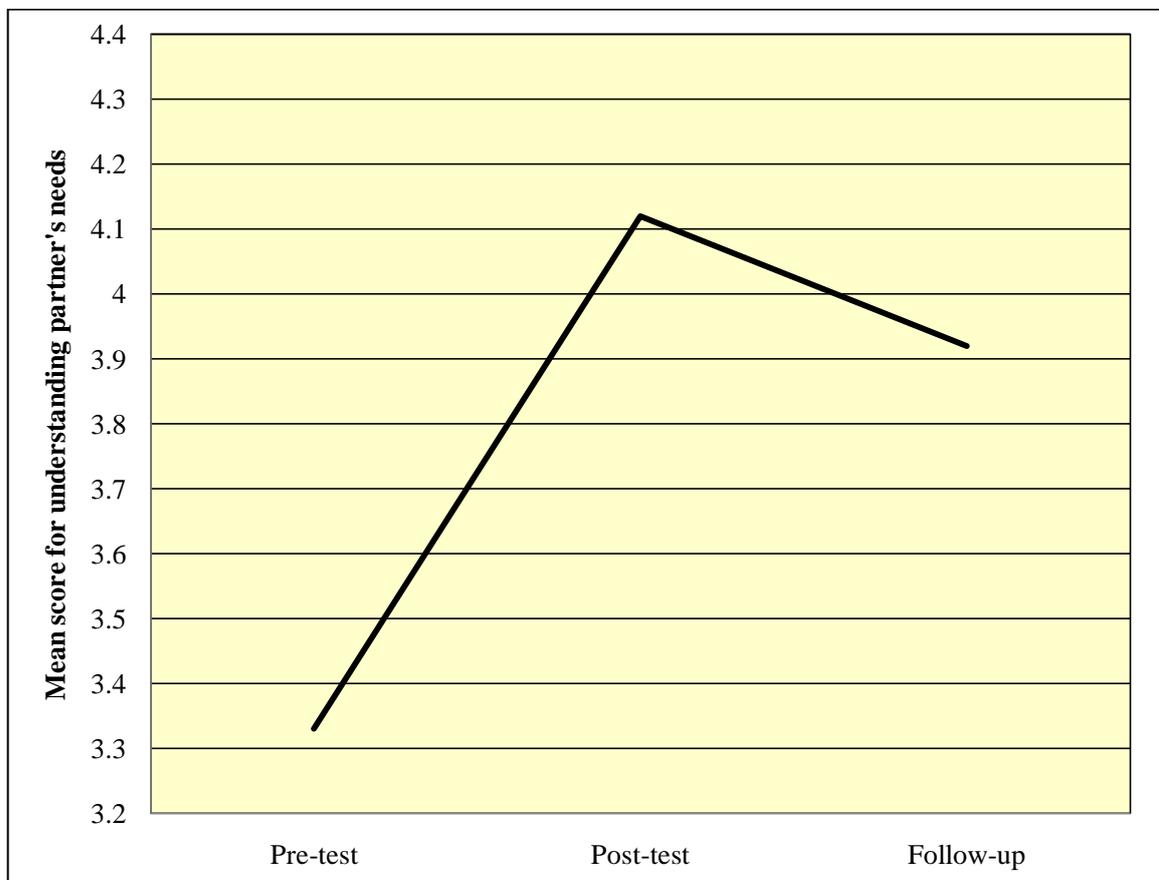


Figure 14. Mean score for 'understanding partner's needs in sexual experience' at Pre- test, Post- test and Follow-up

Overall, the results suggest that, despite an apparent downward trend from post-test to follow-up (as shown in Figure 14), participants still had significantly higher scores for ‘understanding their partner’s needs’ at follow-up than they did before they began the program.

#### 8.4 Patterns in results for heterosexual young men and women

Gender differences were examined for heterosexual participants only (n = 41). Overall, 18 young men, and 23 young women identified their sexuality as heterosexual.

Unfortunately, given the very small sample size of young people who identified as gay (n = 7), lesbian (n = 1), queer (n = 5), bisexual (n = 6) and other (n = 1), it was not possible to determine patterns in their data (particularly relating to gender differences) across pre-test, post-test and follow-up. Specifically, the likelihood of obtaining valid statistical data for these groups is unlikely due to the small sample size and lack of statistical power.

Mean scores across pre-test, post-test and follow-up were compared across heterosexual women and men. As shown in Table 5, below, both heterosexual men and women recorded an increase in scores across pre-test, post-test and follow-up for ‘understanding own needs in sexual relationships’.

**Table 5.**

*Mean Scores for ‘Understanding Own Needs in Sexual Experiences’ for heterosexual men and women*

<b>Understanding own needs</b>			
	<b>Pre-test (SD)</b>	<b>Post-test (SD)</b>	<b>Follow-up (SD)</b>
Heterosexual men	3.89 (.83)	4.28 (.75)	4.4 (.51)
Heterosexual women	3.65 (1.11)	4.39 (.66)	4.46 (.66)

The statistical analyses surrounding heterosexual participants’ own needs in sexual relationships were examined in relation to gender. The results revealed a significant increase in scores for heterosexual women across pre-test to post-test ( $t(22) = -2.92, p < .01$ ), but not for heterosexual men. As shown in Figure 15, there was a mean improvement in both heterosexual men’s, and heterosexual women’s, scores from pre-test, post-test to follow-up. No other significant differences in scores (t-values) were

recorded for heterosexual men and women for this item. However, due to the low sample size from post-test to follow-up (Male, n = 10; Female, n = 13) it is difficult to draw any conclusions from this data. Specifically, the small sample size and lack of power means that the likelihood of obtaining valid statistical data for these groups is unlikely.

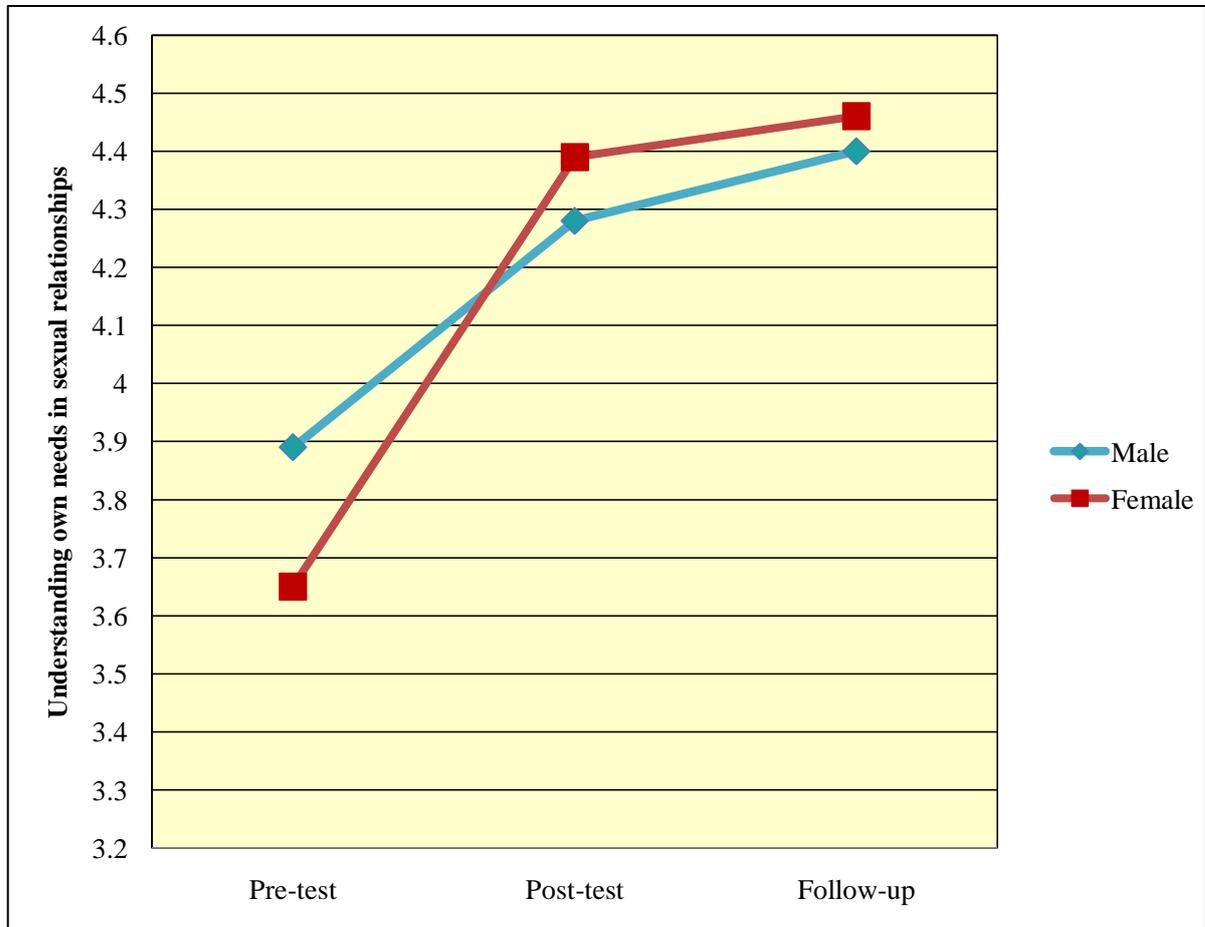


Figure 15. Mean score for ‘understanding own needs in sexual experience’ at Pre-test, Post-test and Follow-up

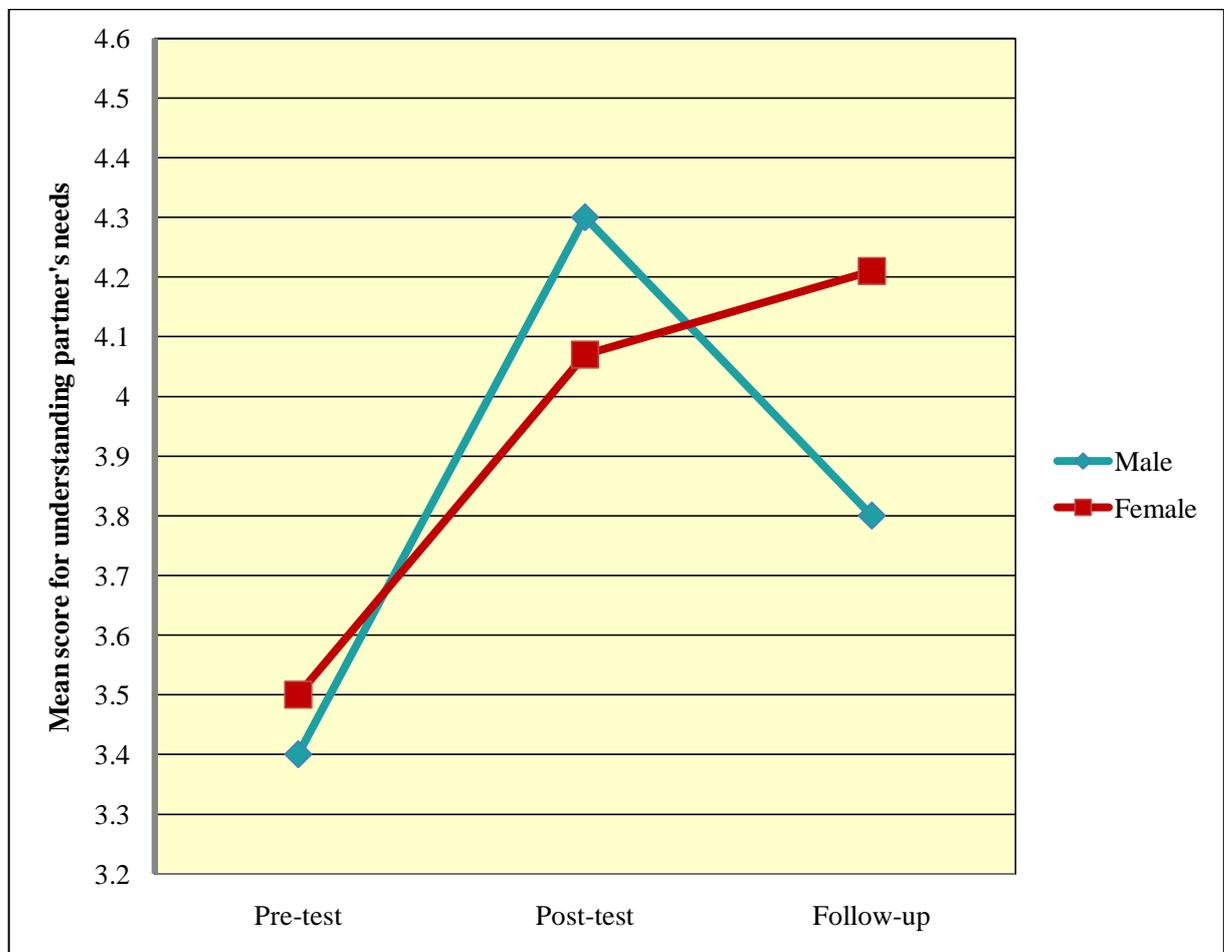
Interestingly, when the mean scores for ‘understanding partner’s needs in sexual relationships’ were compared across heterosexual women and men, there were a number of differences in the pattern of results (see Table 6 for mean scores). Statistical analyses revealed a significant increase in the mean scores across pre-test and post-test for both heterosexual men ( $t(17) = -2.40, p < .05$ ) and heterosexual women ( $t(22) = -4.04, p < .01$ ).

**Table 6.**

*Mean Scores for 'Understanding Partner's Needs in Sexual Experiences' for heterosexual men and women*

<b>Understanding partner's needs</b>			
	<b>Pre-test (SD)</b>	<b>Post-test (SD)</b>	<b>Follow-up (SD)</b>
Heterosexual men	3.44 (1.10)	4.17 (.71)	3.80 (1.14)
Heterosexual women	3.40 (.90)	4.04 (.71)	4.21 (.80)

However, as shown in Figure 15, while the mean pre-test (or 'base-line') score for 'understanding partners needs in sexual relationships' was similar for heterosexual men and women, men reported a higher increase in understanding their partner's needs from pre-test (before the program began) to post-test (after completing the program).



*Figure 16.* Mean score for 'understanding partner's needs in sexual experience' at Pre-test, Post- test and Follow-up

On one level, the peak in heterosexual men's scores for this item underlines the effectiveness of the program to increase their understanding of their partner's needs in relationships. This is a critical area for relationships education, given that the elevated levels of sexual assault for this age group often arise in a context where negotiation, consent and women's wants and needs, are invisible.

However, while their scores remained higher at follow-up than at pre-test, heterosexual men also reported a more substantial decline in their understanding of their partner's needs across post-test and follow-up than young women. This result supports previous findings in the prevention research, which suggests that young men might benefit from follow-up or 'booster' sessions in order to generate long-term behavioral and attitudinal change (Perry, 2008; Flood, 2005/06).

In comparison, young women reported an increase in their understanding of their partner's needs across post-test and follow-up. This result is consistent with previous research in this area, which suggests that young women are likely to take on the needs of their male partner's in relationships (Holland, Ramazanoglu, Sharpe, & Thomson, 1998).

No other significant differences in scores (t-values) were recorded for heterosexual men and women for this item. Again, the small sample size of heterosexual young men and women from post-test to follow-up (Male, n = 10; Female, n = 14) make it difficult to draw any clear patterns of behaviour from the data.

## **9. Qualitative Results: Responses from young people who participated in the Follow-up Survey**

The larger part of the follow-up survey included open-ended questions, which asked participants to share the knowledge and skills they had gained from the program since it ended. The following section presents a sample of qualitative responses from participants who completed the follow-up survey. The selection of participant comments presented here highlights the similarities and differences between the young people. The qualitative component also draws attention to what participants gained from the *Sex + Ethics* program and how they were currently using the skills 6 months later.

## **9.1 Participant's reflection concerning the 'ideas or skills' they learnt in the Sex + Ethics Program**

Overall, the participants involved in the New Zealand groups identified a number of themes from the *Sex + Ethics* program which they had taken up in their everyday lives and thinking about sexual relationships. For example, one of the most important components of the *Sex + Ethics* program is to encourage young people to be more aware of the needs and wants of themselves and their partners. This involves teaching young people the skills of both verbal and non-verbal communication and encouraging them to apply ethical reasoning when negotiating their own, and their partners, needs in sexual relationships. A number of young people commented on the usefulness of these skills in their sexual relationships after attending the program. For example, one young woman suggested that she had learnt about the significance of clear communication, and the 'importance of talking about things as you do them':

*"Enthusiastic consent - making my consent clear and easily understood. Communication and asking - the importance of talking about things as you do them. Reflecting on my experiences during and after, and discussing anything I'm not sure about."*

One young heterosexual man indicated that he was more 'open' and able to communicate with his sexual partner about her needs:

*"To be open about what I like and dislike. Listening to my partners about their needs and encouraging them to tell me those needs. Knowing situations which are not good times to try for sex. The importance of protection and regular sexual checkups."*

A number of participants also suggested that the program had taught them skills about communicating and being more honest with their sexual partners. For example, one young man indicated that he had learnt to be more 'direct' and 'explicit' with himself and his male partner(s) about sex and 'what (he) want(ed) out of relationships':

*"The most significant influence the program had over my ideas in sex have been over what is reasonable to ask of other people and other people of you. I have thus learned to be more direct, to ask explicitly what sexual contact means for the purpose of preserving"*

*what I want out of relationships (i.e. I don't want to use people and I don't want them to use me, because in a situation where someone 'wins' is not one I want be in)."*

Similarly, one young woman suggested that the *Sex + Ethics* program, and in particular the *Sunlight Test*, had helped her better evaluate her decisions around communication and consent:

*"It's okay to communicate and say what you want; consent is sexy, basically communication is REALLY IMPORTANT, and it's not okay to simply expect your partner to know what you want without talking about it and vice versa. The 'Sunlight' idea, where you evaluate how you would feel about your actions later (i.e. daytime), or how other people would feel has been very effective, and whether it's casual or serious sex, it's okay. Using the framework in decisions and sexual encounters has been helpful as well."*

The 'Sunlight test' was identified as a memorable component of the program for a number of participants. For example, another young female participant outlined that the idea of reflecting on an outsider's perspective helped her to 'check' her actions. The program also encouraged her to be more open and expressive in verbal communication:

*"The sunshine test - checking your actions by viewing them from an ideal 3rd person (who knows you completely and loves you) perspective. Awareness of different people's attitudes and more sensitivity to non-verbal communication. Greater motivation and courage to also check things out verbally."*

Another young woman indicated that the *Sex + Ethics* program had helped her to better understand the 'various types of communication' and 'non-verbal messages' involved in sexual and intimate relationships:

*"The most important skills learnt in the group was the various types of communication. In particular, learning to read the more subtle non-verbal messages was of great use"*

In the same way, one young man outlined that the program had been most valuable in improving his ability to 'read body language':

*“I already knew about reading body language but I feel that the course helped improve my body-language reading abilities.”*

One young woman indicated that the program had taught her skills about communication in her everyday life:

*“The ideas of better communication, and the ethical framework (realising your effect on others and being more aware of their perspective, even in issues not to do directly with consent).”*

Another young woman spoke about feeling more confident, knowing that she could now identify things that were unsafe for her and her partner:

*“In my relationship I have become more confident. Though I was before but I can now identify things that are unsafe in my relationship compared to before, to protect myself and my partner”*

One lesbian woman revealed that she had learnt the skill of ‘bringing up conversations about the relationship/sex in a non-threatening way’, as well as the ability to ‘say no successfully’:

*“That you need to take care of your own comfort levels when making decisions around sex. The idea that negotiations should involve finding out what you want and what the other person wants before trying to make a decision. Skills: Bringing up conversations about the relationship/sex. Being able to question in a non-threatening way to find out what the other person wants. Saying no successfully.”*

Similarly, another young woman communicated that she had used the framework to negotiate sex more effectively, including a ‘safe place’ to talk about her own, as well as her partners’ needs:

*“I have used the ethical framework in helping me negotiating sex. I have made a decision of what I want to do and then gave the person a safe place to explain to me what they are wanting and then deciding from there what to do next.”*

One young man also indicated that the program had taught him to better negotiate his partner's needs and 'be aware of physical boundaries' between himself and others:

*"Negotiating with somebody what they want, and what they feel comfortable with. Being aware of physical boundaries of myself and others. Asking if things are okay and being able to say no, and yes."*

## **9.2 Participant personal examples concerning their use of the ideas and skills from the Sex + Ethics Program**

A central tenet of the *Sex + Ethics* program is to teach young people the skills needed to negotiate ethical consent. In particular, the ethical framework aims to provide young people with knowledge, as well as tangible skills, to negotiate their sexual relationships. The effectiveness of the program to achieve this end was evident in participants' qualitative responses concerning their 'real life' application of these skills following the completion of the program. A number of participants provided specific examples where they were able to draw on the knowledge and skills they gained from the program. For example, one young woman revealed that she had used the skills she had learned to 'say no' to sexual requests from men in a way that made her 'feel good':

*"I was at a club and a guy asked if I wanted to go home with him. I knew how to say a firm no without making him angry or hurt. I felt good about using some of the skills we learnt."*

Another young woman suggested that the program had provided her with the skills she needed to negotiate her own needs and desires in sexual relationships. As shown in the following excerpt, this included communicating to her female partner that she did not feel comfortable, and to gain greater control in her sexual relationship:

*"I had sex with someone I knew. During sex I did not enjoy it and felt that it was something not for me. I stopped and explained to the person that this is not something I am wanting to do, and that I wanted to talk about what else to do instead of sex, as I was not ready and felt uncomfortable. It felt good, usually I would either hide away or would let the person have their way without them knowing what I was going through or thinking."*

One young man elaborated that the *Sex + Ethics* program had given him the confidence to ask what his partner wanted, and to ‘say no to things without feeling insecure’:

*“Being intimate with somebody and being able to confidently ask what they liked, and being confident to say no to things without feeling insecure and also being able to ask for things or say yes to things without feeling insecure.”*

Another young man elaborated on how he used the skills of ‘caring for the self’, ‘negotiating and asking’, as well as ‘reflection’, to inform his choices around consent. In particular, by applying ‘reflection-in-action’ he was able to negotiate an action plan with his partner that considered both of their needs, as the following response suggests:

*“I met a boy in the South Island and we really liked each other but we didn't confirm this until we were both really drunk one night and pashed in the bath. However we waited until we'd sat down a day or so later to talk about sex, what we enjoyed, signals, what we like about communication (basically consent) before we did anything else.”*

The participant’s above comment suggests that he was able to carefully consider his partner’s wishes and desires as well as his own before moving forward with the sexual relationship. Another participant indicated that the program had helped him to consider his partner’s needs, and the importance of negotiating and ‘asking’:

*“Ensuring that a partner was making the right decisions for herself when entering into a sexual situation”.*

One young woman suggested that she learned some ‘important lessons’ from the program, particularly the session on ‘how to ethically break up’. As the following response reveals, she was able to use the skills learned in the program to break-up with her partner in a different way than she had previously:

*“One of the most important lessons I learnt from the program was how to break up with someone. The first time I ended a long term relationship I broke up with him over text messaging. Through Sex + Ethics I learnt that if you have respect for a partner, you have*

*to break up in person which was what I did for the next long term relationship that I ended.”*

Another young woman indicated that the program had helped her to consider possible sexual experiences with others in ‘much more depth’ and in ways that were ‘more healthy for (her)self’:

*“Meeting a person I was attracted to whilst drinking, I found that my perspective on what was healthy for myself and them sexually was a lot different - and I felt like I considered the decision much more in depth.”*

Similarly, another young woman indicated that she used the skills she gained from the program to negotiate sex with her girlfriend, which included ‘making compromises’ based on her partner’s needs:

*“Just in negotiating times to have sex with my girlfriend. Making compromise as to what we will do on a certain occasion based on what both our boundaries are on that day.”*

Other participants offered more explicit examples of how they had applied the framework in their everyday lives. For example, one young woman offered an extended illustration of how she used ethical reasoning, including ‘the possible impact on the other person’ to guide her decision making:

*“I was hanging out with a friend of mine. I’ve had a crush on him for a while and he had just been crying and depressed. All of a sudden he started kissing me. I realised that he was just kissing me because he was upset and needed comfort. I broke the kiss very gently because I didn’t want to take advantage of him. I told him that if he wanted anything to happen then we can talk about it at a time when he feels better about himself. We then had a chat about why he was upset and everything. I think I did quite well. The both of us seemed satisfied with the situation. He has since talked to me and explained that he didn’t want anything to happen, he just wanted the comfort. He thanked me for not taking advantage of him.”*

Importantly, not all of the responses from participants involved effective ways to ‘say no’ to sexual experiences. As shown in the following excerpt from a young woman, the *Sex + Ethics* program also provides young people with the skills they need to ‘say yes’. This includes being open about ‘needs wishes and desires’ to ensure both partners are ‘comfortable and at ease in the situation’:

*“Recently, a slightly-drunk man approached me in a bar, wanting to have sex with me that night. Thanks to the skills from Sex + Ethics, I was able to negotiate with him and deal with his drunkenness effectively, so that, by the end, we were sure we both wanted to have sex. I was quite pleased with the approach I took. It ensured that both of us were comfortable and at ease in the situation, and I tried to make him feel as comfortable expressing his needs, wishes, and desires as possible.”*

For other young people, this included feeling safe when approaching new sexual terrains. One young woman indicated that the ideas and skills from *Sex + Ethics* aided in her negotiating bondage sex with her female partner. As she reveals in the following excerpt, she was able to reflect on why she felt uncomfortable, and outline what she wanted to change to ensure a safe space was achieved ‘before (she) did them, not during or after’:

*“Have been getting into some light bondage with a partner lately. It's new to us both so I have been making sure to check in before I do anything, and not to act until my partner says yes. A separate occasion (with me and my partner), when I was pretty drunk, my partner and I did some stuff that I hadn't really planned on doing, and was pretty intense. While it wasn't a negative experience, I reflected on why I felt a bit uncomfortable about it the next day and discussed with my partner that we needed to talk about these things before we did them, not during or after.”*

*“In both situations I described above, I felt a lot better for using the ideas and skills from Sex + Ethics. I would hate to accidentally go beyond my partner's boundaries, so checking in with her and knowing she's using enthusiastic consent as well makes me feel more reassured about what we get up to. With partner 2, having a framework to think about what we'd done, how I felt and why I felt that way was really reassuring. I also felt very comfortable raising the issue with him and explaining my point of view, rather than not wanting to mention it and have it stew in my head for ages.”*

### 9.3 Knowledge about Sexual Violence

The *Sex + Ethics* program was specifically designed to achieve a number of goals. Increasing knowledge about sexual violence was one key objective. However, previous research suggests that knowledge alone does not equate to sustained behavioural change - the goal of prevention education. While the following section outlines what the young people said about sexual violence, this should be read in the context of the skills required to prevent sexual violence before it happens. This is the goal of primary prevention. Some of these skills and the high uptake by the young people of these skills taught in the *Sex + Ethics* program have been outlined above.

In the follow up email survey, 31 of the 43 participants (72%) provided a response to the question: ‘the three most important things I learnt from the group about sexual violence are:’ Participants showed their knowledge of sexual violence covered a range of aspects. This included an increased understanding of the *complexity* of sexual violence, as shown in the following responses from participants: ‘that sexual assault can take many forms’; ‘something may be an assault to one person, it may not necessarily be an assault for another’; ‘sometimes there's a grey area between sexual assault and consensual sex, which was an interesting area to explore; it isn't black and white’; ‘sexual assault can take a number of forms, including rape, coercive sex, inappropriate touching, verbal pressure etc’; ‘as a male I should not be ashamed if I am sexually assaulted and I like a female can be assaulted’; and ‘assault can be very grey (as opposed to black and white).’

Participants also commented on the importance of *consent*: ‘It doesn't matter if you are together or not, you may be a couple that regularly has sex, but there has to be consent made’; ‘If you are too drunk, you are not in a position to give consent’; ‘No one ever has the right to lead you into a situation that you are uncomfortable with’; ‘Sexual assault isn't just 'rape' people are never 'asking for it' (by being drunk or in short skirts etc)’; and ‘It can result when one person makes assumptions about what another person wants and doesn't bother to check in.’

Participants also indicated by their comments that they had increased their understanding of the law about sexual violence and how having the skills to negotiate consent could assist both parties in preventing sexual violence.

A number of young people increased their understanding of the *impact* of sexual violence on victims and that responsibility for the crime did not rest with the victim: ‘That it is not acceptable, that there are things that can be done about it and that someone who is assaulted should not be afraid to take action’; ‘It’s not the victim’s fault ever, and it’s the responsibility of the initiator in any sexual situation to make sure their partner wants it to happen’; and ‘it’s a crime, it means the person is not being respected and don’t be drunk to the point you lose consciousness and your judgement.’

Participants also recognised that they had learnt some skills about *how to help* a friend or someone else if they are in a risky situation or if they are assaulted: ‘It is everyone’s responsibility to make sure that their sexual partner is OK with what is happening’; ‘How people still are quite naive about how often it happens, that giving support to these individuals is really important because you need to understand what is going on for them’; and ‘you have a duty to intervene in situations where you believe somebody to be in danger’.

These comments by 76% of the participants, 6 months after the education groups ended, indicate the knowledge they gained was still very clear in their minds. The range of responses indicate a comprehensive understanding of the complexity of sexual violence, its impact on victims and their willingness to support victims and that they feel they have the skills to assist effectively. We know that only about 20% of sexual violence cases are reported to authorities and if victims do talk to anyone it will be their friends. It is therefore very important to have young people in a range of communities who have thought through these issues and now have both the knowledge and the skills to help their friends.

#### **9.4 Ethical Bystander Skills**

In recent years, primary prevention research has underlined that attitudes which support sexual violence in the community are embedded in cultural norms. As a result, there has been a shift toward community-based solutions which address the limitations of current education programs to achieve long-term cultural change (or accomplish behavioural change in participants). For example, the work of Victoria Banyard, Elizabeth Plante and Mary Moynihan (2004, 2007) suggests that one of the limitations of prevention efforts has been too strong a focus on individual change rather than cultural change. Drawing from community psychology, Banyard et al (2004, 2007) underline that sexual violence ‘exists on

a continuum', where seemingly minor instances of sexual violence are rarely challenged in the community. They argue the need to build community competence in the face of sexual violence through 'bystander education' and more fully engage all community members in the process of sexual violence prevention (2004, p. 65). Bystander education has been identified as an effective method of engaging young men and women in 'pro-social behaviour' and aims to both increase community interest in prevention and encourage young people's active involvement in prevention and intervention (Banyard, 2004).

The *Sex + Ethics* program extends the work of Banyard et al (2004, 2007) by locating the goal of sexual violence prevention within a sexual ethics framework. Banyard and colleagues seek to build allies for survivors and to de-escalate risky situations through a model based on the mobilisation of pro-social behaviour on the part of potential bystanders (2004). However, their model has little to say about how elements of empathy, respect, mutuality and the negotiation of sexual needs are to be worked out between people known to each other. The *Sex + Ethics* program utilises research on bystander interventions but locates the program more broadly within sexuality and intimacy issues within relationships. For example, the *Sex + Ethics* program encourages young people to develop skills as competent and ethical friends and citizens in their communities. Not only is this important to their role as members of the wider community, who can carry sexual violence prevention efforts wherever they go, but they are also a key resource to their friends (Carmody, 2009).

The process of teaching participants to be an ethical bystander builds on the skills taught in the early weeks of the *Sex + Ethics* program, particularly concerning ethical reflection and decision-making in sexual relationships. Throughout the program the gendered context in which these decisions are made provides a backdrop to group discussions and questions. This is achieved by presenting real-life scenarios to encourage participants to reflect on how gender may impact on how people think, feel and act. For example, participants are encouraged to extend their ethical concerns to others and to realise that they can contribute to challenging sexual violence in all its forms in their friendship and community networks. As the sexual ethics framework focuses on care of the self and care of the other, this is not a big leap for many of them to make. The final session of the program teaches young people skills for safely intervening in a range of potentially risky situations. We were therefore interested to find out if they had used any of these skills since the groups ended (Carmody, 2009).

Overall, 46.5% of participants indicated that they had used ethical bystander skills that they had learned from the *Sex + Ethics* program since the groups finished. Young people used the skills in a range of situations including intervening in risky situations in clubs, pubs and parties. Many of the examples provided by participants focused on how they had used the skills they learnt in the *Sex + Ethics* groups to assist their friends concerning potential or existing relationship issues. For example, one young woman indicated that the skills she learnt were helpful in a situation where her friend was drunk and needed advice:

*“My friend was getting very sleazy text messages from a "friend" of hers that she knew to be a player. She was also very drunk and was going to go see him. Using my skills as gained from the program, I was able to not only stop this occurring but also convince her why he wasn't a suitable sexual partner.”*

Qn: ‘How did you feel about the approach you took?’

*“Good. Had I just left her drunk and vulnerable with him, I would have felt guilty as undoubtedly she would have regretted it. So, although it technically wasn't any of my business, I still felt better for intervening.”*

One young man gave an example of bystander intervention after one of his friends took advantage of another friend while drinking:

*“I had a friend that took advantage of another friend while we were drinking. I along with my group of friends as a whole made it very obvious to our friend it was not ok and he had gone over the line. We also supported the friend that had been taken advantage, letting her know that she was in the right and had nothing to be ashamed of and letting her know that she had the choice to take further action if she wished.”*

Qn: ‘How did you feel about the approach you took?’

*“It felt like the right approach.”*

The above response indicates that young people are willing to intervene in existing situations which could have very poor outcomes for the people involved. They also suggest that young people can develop a sense of community responsibility for preventing violence.

One young woman spoke about her willingness to intervene in situations where her friend's may be too drunk to make decisions about who they are hooking up with. Rather than ignore the situation, she has felt comfortable intervening to ensure that they are safe:

*"I keep an eye on my friends at parties, and if they are planning to go off with some boy, I stop them for a minute to ask them how they're feeling and see how drunk they are. There have been a couple of occasions where I've had a friend too drunk to be wandering off with a stranger, and I've basically told them so and taken them home."*

Another young woman felt that the knowledge and skills she learned were a valuable asset when giving advice to a friend who was confused about how she felt in a break-up:

*"A friend had a break-up with an emotionally abusive partner, and afterwards we had a conversation about how she was doing. She outlined the way that she felt about the break up, and I pointed out that many of the things she was saying sounded overwhelmingly harsh on herself. I suggested that a lot of his behaviours sounded, from an outsider perspective, to be quite abusive - and it provoked some thought on her part about whether it was a healthy relationship to go back to."*

Qn: 'How did you feel about the approach you took?'

*"I felt really positive, as it was based on things she'd told me rather than things I'd seen and could have misread - and as it was part of a discussion with her I didn't feel worried about disempowering her by interfering in ways she didn't want (which is one of my biggest worries with 'ethical bystander' roles)".*

One young man indicated that he had been in 'various instances' since completing the program where he was able to intervene, and 'ensure that the decisions (his friends) were making were the right ones':

*"In various instances, talking to friends (in town etc) to ensure that the decisions they were making whilst intoxicated etc were the right ones for both themselves and for the other party."*

Qn: 'How did you feel about the approach you took?'

*“Good. It was important to feel confident enough to communicate with friends when they were in these situations as it can be useful for them to hear a different perspective when making important decision.”*

Similarly, another young man gave an example of how he ‘gave (a friend) a talking to’ and ‘watched out for him’ after he realised he was too drunk to make ethical decisions:

*“A friend was very drunk and was kissing mostly every person at a bar and so I took him a side and gave him a talking to. I also watched out for him for the rest of the night as well. I felt proud of myself”*

## **10. Participant satisfaction with the Sex + Ethics program**

Participants were given opportunities throughout the 6 week program to provide feedback to their educators. In addition, they were also given the opportunity to give feedback to program developers and educators about what they did and did not like about the program in the 4-6 month follow-up survey. The below responses outline the broad spectrum of feedback given about the program:

*“It was a great programme and it really gives you skills for dealing with real life situations. Very valuable!!”*

*“It was a lovely group and I felt really supported and empowered by the experience, the facilitators were great and the group were amazing to work with.”*

*“I really felt safe in our group to talk honestly about issues of negotiating sex in a relationship. I didn't feel judged because we all brought issues to the group that might seem like they had obvious answers (like 'of course you shouldn't pressure your boyfriend!') but were able to talk honestly about the obstacles that can prevent acting ethically.”*

*“I just thought it was great learning other peoples' opinions around all the issues. We had a variety of people in our group and it was beneficial to learn how much opinions can vary.”*

*“I really enjoyed sex and ethics because it challenged me to question how often I thought about consent and why it's important. I'd been interested in these kinds of issues for a bit but it gave me a chance to focus on my own personal experience and relate that to others in my group. Having open and honest conversations about sex in a queer group was very empowering as there are so many myths and misconceptions towards how 'gay' sex is supposed to go, that it was a relief to hear from others the same insecurities, doubts and questions that I'd had for a long time.”*

*“I thought it was a great experience. A lot of the issues raised are common sense, although you often are not consciously aware of them. I think the discussions and perspectives of different people was really insightful.”*

*“It was a wonderful experience and I am really happy to have been a part of it. It would be great to see it run more often.”*

*“Thank you for giving me a better understanding of ethical relations.”*

*“The concept of the Sex + Ethics program is a very solid, sound, one. However, as one of the members of my group pointed out, those who voluntarily attend such a course are those least likely to need it. If this isn't already the case, perhaps the creators could design a variation of the program for use in health classes at school, to ensure that future generations have the knowledge the programme provides.”*

*“It was really helpful; meant a lot, (the educators) were awesome, the people were awesome, and I learnt a lot of really useful and applicable skills. It should be implemented in some form in sex ed across schools, in my personal opinion.”*

*“It was a really cool group of people to be a part of, and the safe environment made a huge difference to how I felt about it. The facilitators are awesome for creating that.”*

*“Sex + Ethics was a fantastic class, and it expanded my thinking a LOT. I have changed some of my behaviours because of what I've realised in Sex + Ethics, and I'm nothing but happy with the outcome.”*

## 11. Feedback from Educators

The educators involved in administering the *Sex + Ethics* program to groups of young people completed weekly debrief forms. They also completed a final written overview of the six week program. The debrief forms were formulated in an effort to capture educator experiences of the program. This had two parts: feedback on the response of the participants to the content and activities of the week and to provide an opportunity for the educators to reflect together on their working relationship. This was crucial to ensure that educators continued to follow ethical reflection of their own practice. For example, the educators were asked to record their general experiences of the sessions (including the ‘best’ and ‘worst’ aspects of the sessions), specific instances which arose regarding the exercises, as well as suggestions for improvement. The responses below represent a cross-section of responses from educators across the 8 groups.

A number of common themes emerged from educators in their responses to how the groups ran overall. Educators commented frequently on how the program was embraced by the young people with lots of enthusiasm. At the same time as it was challenging for participants and for the educators as well. These challenges arose for young people in reflecting on their own behaviour in terms of sexual intimacy and in other relationships, critically examining their sexual decision making and how they were treated and how they treated others. These challenges were seen to be a positive experience, for example; “they were enjoying themselves but also being challenged to be thinking stuff through”. Some educators were also challenged by the discussions raised in the groups. For others the challenge was to be culturally appropriate and still ensure gender norms were held up to scrutiny, to ensure active participation by all members of the group and to manage time effectively. Educators felt the challenges for young people were actively supported by using the sexual ethics framework, for example:

*“...the participants were very enthusiastic and receptive to the material and the ideas presented. They were very positive about the sexual ethics framework and could see how it could be used to help them make decisions about sexual intimacy, they also commented on how it could be applied to other areas in their life”.*

Educators were also asked to reflect on what they thought young people had got out of the program. Most educators commented on the important role the ethical framework played in

providing young people with the tools to reflect on present and past experiences. This provided a safe way to begin to unpick the tensions and challenges they felt they faced in terms of navigating their sexual lives. This was taken up differently depending on the profile of the group. For example:

*“Queer young men talked repeatedly about the pressure on them to be constantly sexual, and how this was sometimes very difficult to negotiate. Nearly every queer man talked about unwanted sex. Queer young women (many of whom were both sex attracted) discussed their experiences of sex with men quite differently than sex with women”.*

For another group:

*“I think the most positive were the discussions we held about the impact of culture on sexual decision – making, and the voicing of cultural norms within Tongan and Samoan communities as pressures/enablers that these young people felt they had to juggle constantly. The framework was totally embraced by the group, and they used it within sexual contexts comfortably”.*

Other areas commented on included: increased legal knowledge about sexual violence, and increased self knowledge and how to handle situations. For example:

*“I felt that each participant learnt something not only about themselves but also how to handle situations – such as being an ethical bystander – looking at safety for both the victim and bystander”.*

Another educator commented on their sense of the positive impact on participants:

*“The program enabled them to explore some of the complexities and appreciate the differing views and attitudes towards sex. What seemed to be particularly valued was the use of the reflective process as a way to make sense and learn from past experiences”.*

And also:

*“The framework challenged participants to reflect on their own actions, and it appeared that group members were relating it to their own real life situations as well as to the scenarios provided in the role plays and activities. Participants commented that they thought the program was helpful, and they appeared to become more comfortable with using the framework as the program progressed”.*

In addition educators commented on any changes they would make to their approach next time they ran the program. Primarily these issues involved ensuring targeting the approach, materials or educator background to a specific population group. This was seen as important to maximise impact and relevance. For example:

*“I think the queer group has different challenges and my approach would depend on whether I was delivering to a queer or mixed/predominantly heterosexual group. I put quite a lot of thought into making sure we opened up dynamics particular in the queer community as well as wider community pressures on men and women”.*

And:

*“I cannot imagine running Sex + Ethics within this cultural context without the expertise and knowledge of a Pacific educator. It would be completely culturally unsafe in my opinion. I don’t think this program would have made sense without the explicit cultural references and discussion throughout”.*

Recommended changes to the educator notes were minimal. Adaptations were made prior to the groups running to adapt activities and case studies to ensure cultural relevance. This was the case in both the Maori and Pacific Islander groups and the queer groups. Particular issues arise for these groups which include homophobic and racist violence. These aspects can easily be acknowledged within the program by judicious use of the ethical framework.

A few structural problems of group composition were experienced and these need to be minimised in the future. For example: low recruitment numbers resulting in a group being limited in diverse discussion and able to fully experience the activities; imbalance of gender with men dominating; physical locations proved difficult in university

environments as was the timing of sessions after evening meals. Despite these issues one educator sums up the overall mood of the educators who participated in the 8 groups:

*“Overall I feel very privileged and excited to be involved in facilitating this program. It was particularly rewarding to see how the young people participating in the program embraced the sexual ethics framework. I consider that the group provided the young people with a safe and supportive space to have genuine and honest discussions about sexual intimacy”.*

## **12. Implications of the Evaluation Findings**

The statistical analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data demonstrate significant improvements in participants’ knowledge and skills in negotiating ethical relationships following their completion of the *Sex + Ethics* program.

The quantitative results indicate a significant increase in participant ‘understanding of their own needs’ and ‘understanding of other people’s needs’ across pre-test and post-test measures. The follow up data indicates these increases were maintained a number of months later.

As shown in Figure 7, participant scores regarding understanding their own needs improved dramatically, with 95.6 percent of participants indicating that they ‘mostly’ or ‘definitely’ understood their own needs in relationships after they completed the *Sex + Ethics* program. Similarly, as shown in Figure 8, participants also indicated a significant increase in their understanding of their partners needs in relationships. The results for this quantitative measure demonstrated that 83.8 percent of participants responded that they ‘mostly’ or ‘definitely’ had an understanding of their partners needs, as opposed to just 45.6 percent at pre-test.

The qualitative data, collected 4, 5 and 6 months after the program ended, provided specific examples of the ways that participants were able to utilise the knowledge and skills gained from the program in their daily lives. As shown in Figure 9, 83.7 percent of participants indicated that they had used the ideas and skills gained from the *Sex + Ethics* program to guide their decisions and behaviour in sexual relationships.

Importantly, participant responses to open-ended questions illustrate how their ‘thinking’ about important decisions, and application of valuable skills gained from the program, were able to enhance their opportunities for ethical and respectful relationships.

The qualitative data also offers explicit examples of how participant engagement with the program content, including skills in ethical decision making, influenced their personal safety and ability to negotiate with partners. The young people demonstrated an increased understanding of the complexity of sexual violence and how they can assist others. Participant accounts of using their skills as ethical bystanders suggest that they were also able to use knowledge and skills gained from the program to assist their friends with relationship issues, as well as challenge risky situations in their immediate environment. The development of participant sense of community responsibility is not only integral to changing social norms which maintain violence, it also encourages and supports the movement toward long-term change in primary prevention.

Educators’ evaluations of the groups and their role in delivering the groups indicated a strong commitment to the program and a willingness to reflect on their own behaviour. There is a sizeable body of research that suggests it is an educator’s skill or use of self, that is the most important element of successful violence prevention program delivery (Berkowitz, 2004; Bowden, Lanning, Pippin & Tanner, 2003, for example). This was a key component of the five day training they completed before delivering the groups. Educators highlighted the need for refinement and adaption of the program for particular population groups and this was achieved with groups drawn from the queer community and from Pacific Islander communities.

Overall, the findings of this research evaluation of 8 groups demonstrate the high level of uptake by young people of the ideas and skills learnt in the *Sex + Ethics* program which was maintained over time. This particular study is important in adding to our knowledge about the efficacy of the *Sex+ Ethics* program. This pilot included a diverse sample based on gender, sexuality and cultural identity and the findings demonstrate that the program is meeting the needs of the majority of participants. The *Sex + Ethics* program is one part of a multiagency and multi sectoral approach to sexual violence prevention. It needs to be considered in the local context where WSAN has built a strong community of practice in the Wellington area.

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## 14. Appendix 1: Participant Attrition rates across Pre-test, Post-test and Follow-up surveys

Group	Enrolled in Program	TOTAL Completed Pre-test Survey (Administered in the first session - Week 1)	TOTAL Completed Post-test Survey (Administered in the last session - Week 6)	TOTAL Completed Follow-up Survey (Administered 4-6 months after program completion)
WSAN1	8	6	6	5
WSAN2	14	14	12	4
WSAN3	10	10	9	6
WSAN4	12	12	7	6
WSAN1B	10	8	8	5
WSAN2B	14	14	14	14
WSAN4B	18	14	6	3
WSAN5A	8	8	6	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>43</b>

The above table outlines the attrition rates for the eight (8) groups across Wellington.

Overall, 94 participants enrolled in the *Sex + Ethics* program. Of the 94 participants that were enrolled in the program, 86 participants completed the Pre-test administered in Week One. The attrition rate across enrolment and pre-test survey completion reflects the number of participants who either dropped out of the program, or opted out of the Pre-test survey.

A total of 68 participants completed the Pre-test and Post-test survey. The attrition rate across the Pre-test and Post-test survey reflects the number of participants who either: a) dropped out of the *Sex + Ethics* program; b) chose not to complete the Post-test survey or c) did not complete sections of the Post-test survey that were necessary for the statistical analyses.

A total of 43 participants completed the Pre-test, Post-test and Follow-up survey. The attrition rate across the Post-test and Follow-up survey reflects the number of participants who did not complete the Follow-up survey. There may have been various factors which contributed to the attrition rate across Post-test and Follow-up. Participants either: a) chose not to be involved in the Follow-up survey; b) did not provide Follow-up details for re-contact or c) Follow-up contact details were incorrect, and the Follow-up survey undeliverable.