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WHY WE NEED TO TEACH REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH**Joyce Catherine Harper***University College London Institute for Women's Health, United Kingdom*

Reproductive health includes puberty, the menstrual cycle, fertility, infertility, pregnancy, and the menopause. Historically these topics are rarely covered in school education in any detail. For those countries that deliver sex education, it usually concentrates on how not to get pregnant and how not to get a sexually transmitted infection. We have formed the International Fertility Education Initiative, a multidisciplinary group of experts working in reproductive health education and research (www.eshre.eu/ifei). Reproductive health education is not just for women; it is for all, including the LGBTQ+ community. Our school study has shown that young people want to ensure that education is LGBTQ+ inclusive. Some of this information is important even for those who do not want children. Menstrual cycle education should include information on ovulation and periods, what is a normal menstrual cycle, and what can go wrong, including endometriosis and polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS). Understanding the fertile window is important for all who menstruate but especially for those trying to conceive. It is also important to know that female fertility declines with age, especially after age 35. Infertility affects a growing number of people, and it is key that people know the limitations of fertility treatment, costs, etc. Our studies have found that most people stop fertility treatment due to emotional reasons. Preconception health, for both men and women, is key to fertility, a healthy pregnancy and the health of our future children. We have carried out extensive research on the menopause and many women are entering this key stage in their lives with little knowledge. Understanding what the menopause is, the symptoms, and treatments are key for all women. Reproductive health education for all is necessary, starting in schools and continuing throughout life.

Biography

Joyce is an author, academic, scientist and educator. She is Professor of Reproductive Science at University College London in the Institute for Women's Health where she is Head of the Reproductive Science and Society Group. She is a Director of the Embryology and PGD Academy which delivers an online certificate in clinical embryology, founder of Global Women Connected and Reproductive Health at Work, helping companies learn about reproductive health. She is author of *Your Fertile Years*. She has worked in reproductive science since 1987, written over 230 scientific papers and published three books. She is researching into fertility and reproductive health education, FemTech, IVF add-ons, gamete donation and the menopause. Joyce is a passionate educator at all levels and regularly appears on TV, radio and in the press. She is co-founder of the UK Fertility Education Initiative (www.fertilityed.uk) and founder of the International Fertility Education Initiative (www.eshre.eu/ifei).