

“Switched on Forum,” 19–21 February in Istanbul, Turkey

The UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) is organizing an international symposium on the theme of the sexuality education of young people in the digital age in Istanbul, Turkey, from 19–21 February 2020. The German Federal Centre for Health Education (BzGA) is supporting this event as a partner organization, together with the International Population Fund of the United Nations (UNFPO) and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF).

This conference has the title “Switched on” and serves as a platform for the global exchange of information surrounding the possibilities and challenges posed by online content on sexuality education. This includes, among other things, websites, blogs, apps, and social-media channels. Participants are professionals from the areas of education, healthcare, and technology as well as researchers, representatives of the United Nations and other international organizations – and of course young people themselves.

Today, worldwide most young people have access to the internet. Many use the internet to gather and exchange information on themes surrounding sexuality and relationships; this was clearly revealed in a BZgA study on youth sexuality from 2015. The conference will thus focus on the following questions: What information do young people find on the internet concerning sexuality and relationships? What are their sources and what contents do they share? These matters will be looked at from both research and practice perspectives.

In its international role as a WHO Collaboration Centre for Sexual and Reproductive Health (WHO-CC), the BZgA is a partner organization of this symposium. Since 2003, the BZgA has been a WHO-CC and as such supports the WHO Regional Office in Europe, particularly in the field of comprehensive sexuality education. In order to promote the implementation thereof within the European region, the WHO-CC, in close cooperation with an international panel of experts, has developed standards for good practice. Further, it has initiated and managed projects in the areas of training and research.

Website of this conference (English): <https://en.unesco.org/events/switched-sexuality-education-digital-space>

Social media: @UNESCO, #Switched On, #Sexuality Education

Additional resources:

- WHO Collaboration Centre for Sexual and Reproductive Health: <https://www.bzga-whocc.de/en/home/>
- Study on Youth Sexuality 2015 (in German): <https://www.bzga.de/infomaterialien/sexualaufklaerung/sexualaufklaerung/jugendsexualitaet-2015/>
- FORUM Sexuality Education and Family Planning (in German): <https://www.bzga.de/infomaterialien/fachpublikationen/fachpublikationen/heft-1-2019-social-media/>
- Sexuality of Students in the Internet Age (in German): <https://www.bzga.de/infomaterialien/fachpublikationen/fachpublikationen/sexualitaet-von-studierenden-im-internetzeitalter/>