SECCA App in Practice: Students with disabilities

What should teachers consider when teaching relationships and sexuality education to students with disabilities?

1. **People with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to abuse**
   Students with disabilities may have regular physical contact with carers, support workers, doctors and specialists, as well as with their parents, GPs and dentists. Being touched by so many people can leave students open to abuse.

2. **The concept of private and public can have different meanings for people with disabilities**
   The concept of public and private can have different meanings for people with disabilities. It needs to be made explicit to students that they are learning a private topic, which shouldn't be discussed with anyone who isn't a trusted adult.

How is the SECCA App useful for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

The app provides a platform for social stories and visual modelling, which are highly recommended tools for use with students with ASD. Social stories can be effectively used to reduce anxiety and communication stress in students with ASD. Students find the touchscreen intuitive and the diversity of images provides students with an inclusive library with which to communicate.

How is the SECCA App useful for students with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)?

Students with FASD may have a greater need for comprehensive RSE than other students. The complex system of symptoms associated with their disorder can interfere with the regulation of appropriate sexual behaviour.

It is common for individuals with FASD to be involved in inappropriate sexual behaviours, as either a victim or a perpetrator. Prenatal alcohol exposure can impact on a person's executive functioning, comprehension, adaptive behaviour, social skills, impulsivity, and inhibition. There can be a gap between a person's chronological and biological maturation and their cognitive age.

A lack of appropriate RSE may also contribute to inappropriate sexual behaviours. The SECCA App can provide additional opportunities for students with FASD to learn about and discuss sexual health issues.

How is the SECCA App useful for students with physical disabilities?

The SECCA App has been designed for use with eye gaze technology. The audio component of the app means that it has the potential to function as a speech generating device.

Why are visual aids important for students with disabilities?

1. **Images and symbols can transcend language barriers**
   Students with disabilities may not have the language to express their understanding of RSE concepts, or to communicate their daily needs. Images and symbols can act as communication aids between students and their teachers and peers.

2. **Visual aids can be personalised**
   The SECCA App features 1800 illustrations and over 350 images. In addition to this, the app facilitates the use of personalised visual aids, such as pictures of a student's own friends, family and familiar locations. In the hierarchy of visual aids, colour photographs are second only to the object or person themselves in ease of comprehension for students with ASD.

3. **Visual aids can help provide structure and routine**
   Visual supports can help to provide structure and routine, encourage independence, build confidence, improve understanding, avoiding frustration and anxiety, and provide opportunities to interact with others. They can make communication physical and consistent, rather than fleeting and inconsistent like spoken language can potentially be.

How do the foundation games help teachers assess a student's understanding of concepts?

The foundation games are tools you can use to gauge a student's comprehension of the content. The manner in which a student responds to the games, and the time it takes to complete them, provides an indication of the student's learning level for RSE.

Foundation games also give you an insight into the knowledge students bring to RSE. Students may already have strong comprehension of some concepts, but not others. The foundation games provide a chance to assess this awareness.