# Responsibilities in a sexual relationship - Contact tracing

Through this activity, you will explore the concept of contact tracing and your rights and responsibilities in regard to sexual health.

Like many other groups within our society, many young people find it difficult to seek the help they require to enhance their own health, safety and wellbeing. In relation to accessing health services, there are often perceived and actual barriers that prevent young people from receiving medical care.

In a community where sexually transmitted infection (STI) rates are increasing, learning about your responsibilities for managing sexual health and if necessary, notifying past/current partners through contact tracing is important.

While knowledge about STIs is important, learning about testing and communicating with past/present partners about their sexual health is equally important as many young people negotiate intimate and sexual relationships.

Duration: 60 minutes

**Focus of the learning**

* Understand the importance of STI testing as part of healthy sexual relationships.
* Understand contact tracing and their responsibilities in a sexual relationship.
* Develop positive decision making skills regarding their sexual health.
* Increase awareness of services available to assist in contact tracing.

**What you need**

* Access to the [NSW Health Play Safe website](https://playsafe.health.nsw.gov.au/)

**Background information**

Young people are disproportionately affected by STIs. This is not solely due to sexual behaviour. If left untreated, STIs can cause serious and painful health problems, such as pelvic inflammatory disease in women, which can result in infertility. Among men, there is also some evidence that untreated STIs can lead to infertility. Early detection and treatment are crucial if we want to reduce infection rates.

Young people’s knowledge about STIs and BBVs has been found to be lacking when questioned through the [National survey of secondary students and sexual health 2018](https://www.latrobe.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1031899/National-Survey-of-Secondary-Students-and-Sexual-Health-2018.pdf). Key findings from the survey demonstrate that there continues to be room to improve young peoples’ sexual health knowledge; that students are largely engaging in responsible behaviours, though there is room to increase risk reduction practices; and that students are accessing a diverse array of educational sources to learn about BBVs and STIs.

### Activity – Contact tracing

Access the [NSW Health Play Safe website](https://playsafe.health.nsw.gov.au/). Create some notes on the following:

* What is contact tracing?
* What is the purpose of contact tracing?
* Who needs to be told if someone tests positive for a sexually transmitted infection (STI)?
* What are the various ways of communicating to past and current sexual partners in relation to a positive test for an STI?
* What are the benefits of contact tracing for the individual and the community?

### Activity – Communication

The [Let them know website](http://www.letthemknow.org.au/) has been developed by the Melbourne Sexual Health Centre to help people who have been diagnosed with Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea, Syphilis and other STIs to tell their sexual partners that they might also be at risk.

The website provides four methods for communicating with a partner. Some of these methods can be done anonymously and others can be personalised.

Access the [Let them know website](http://www.letthemknow.org.au/).

* Why is it important to have various options for contact tracing?
* What might influence which option a young person chooses to inform a partner of a positive STI test?
* What method of communication do you think most young people would choose to use for the purpose of contact tracing? Provide some reasons for your answer.
* Predict the reaction of someone who receives an anonymous SMS or email via this website. Give reasons for your answer.
* How does the way an individual communicates this type of information impact on the way that it is received, e.g. what they say and how they say it?
* The website provides some basic advice for individuals who choose to have a conversation with their partner, rather than text or email.
  + What could the individual with the STI diagnosis do to make the conversation less confronting or easier for them and/or the partner involved?

Choose one of the four modes of communication and construct an STI contact tracing conversation. Complete ONE of the following.

* Write a letter or email (anonymous or personal).
* Create a fictional SMS chat between a person with an STI diagnosis and their partner.
* Create a face to face or verbal conversation including both of the different roles of sender and receiver. Write a script or record using video, voice memo or an animation site such as [Voki](https://l-www.voki.com/).

### Additional resources to explore and learn more

[NSW Kids and Families - Youth Friendly General Practice video](http://au.professionals.reachout.com/youth-friendly-general-practice-video) outlines:

* the broad (holistic) role of the General Practitioner (GP)
* how to access a GP
* confidentiality in health care.

More information on what is involved in a sexual health check up, confidentiality and how to access a Medicare card can be found on the [NSW Health website](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/sexualhealth/Pages/sexual-health-check-up.aspx)

[Sex Health Check - What's involved in a sexual health check in Australia](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hqRHR3s2D2Y) - Video focuses on getting tested for chlamydia and the process of contact tracing.

[ReachOut.com – All about your healthcare rights](http://au.reachout.com/all-about-your-healthcare-rights) (http://au.reachout.com/all-about-your-healthcare-rights) - Provides information for young people about

* rights as a health consumer
* how age affects rights
* how to make a complaint about a doctor or health provider
* rights regarding treatment and consent.