

ESW Open Seminar Series

Wednesday 21 March, 12-1pm
Ground Floor Meeting Room, Essex House

Rachel Heah
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‘Bringing Research to Their Doorsteps’:

Reflections on using synchronous online focus groups
for researching young people’s experiences of
school-based sex and relationships lessons

The English Government is currently looking into reforming the curriculum on relationships and sex education. Consultations are ongoing and the new curriculum is expected to be rolled out in 2019.

In this seminar, Rachel will argue that in order to produce a curriculum which is current, relevant, and meets children’s and young people’s informational needs, it is crucial for these reforms to take into account their voices and opinions.

Rachel’s PhD research involves advocating for a ‘bottom-up’ approach to reforms. In furthering this objective, she has spoken to secondary school pupils about their experiences of sex and relationships lessons to gather examples of good practices and to find out what, if anything, required improvement.

The internet is now an important part of children’s lives: schoolwork, gaming, information, entertainment, social networking, etc. Online research methods are, therefore, a good way of facilitating research with children and young people - especially when the research involves topics that can cause embarrassment or awkwardness, such as sex and relationships.

In this presentation, Rachel will reflect on using web-conferencing software, Adobe Connect, for conducting synchronous, online focus groups with young people in secondary school and youth group settings.

