Association of British Paediatric Nurses
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Committed to promoting the development of children's nursing through evidence based information about practice and education

Press release – embargoed until 00.00hrs 3rd September 2026

On World Sexual Health Day – 4th September 2026 - the Association of British Paediatric Nurses calls for inclusive, equitable care for everybody.

The Association of British Paediatric Nurses (ABPN) is proud to support World Sexual Health Day 2026 and this year's global theme, "Every Body", which reminds us that sexual health, rights, justice, and wellbeing belong to every person without exception.[1]

As healthcare professionals working with infants, children, young people, and families, children's nurses recognise that access to high-quality, evidence-based health information and services is fundamental to lifelong health and wellbeing. The ABPN is using World Sexual Health Day to highlight the importance of ensuring that all children and young people, regardless of their background, identity, culture, ability, or circumstance, can access safe, inclusive, and compassionate healthcare.

The ABPN recognises that children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex social and digital world. As they develop, they are likely to have questions about their bodies, puberty, relationships, consent, online content, and sexual health. Health inequalities, stigma, discrimination, and unequal access to services can significantly affect their physical health, mental wellbeing, confidence, and future life opportunities.

Children's nurses work across the health system and often engage with children, young people, and families at times when trusting relationships have already been established. This places them in a unique position to promote the health and wellbeing of children and young people. Working in hospitals, community settings, schools, and specialist services, they provide accurate, age-appropriate health information; safeguard those at risk of harm; and recognise children and young people's developing autonomy, rights, and capacity to make informed choices. They also advocate for equitable access to care and work collaboratively with families, multidisciplinary teams, and multi-agency partners to support positive health and wellbeing outcomes.

[1] https://worldsexualhealthday.org/

On World Sexual Health Day 2026, the ABPN calls on healthcare organisations, educators, policymakers, and professional bodies to:

- Recognise sexual health as part of holistic child and young people's health and wellbeing, including in paediatric and community services.
- Ensure that all children and young people have access to inclusive, evidence-based and age-appropriate health education and support.
- Address inequalities that prevent some young people from accessing healthcare services.
- Ensure the voice and rights of children and young people are central to the design and delivery of sexual and reproductive health services.
- Strengthen partnership working across health, education, and social care sectors.
- Recognise and support the role of children's nurses as advocates for children's rights, wellbeing, and equitable healthcare.

Nicola Fielding, Registered Children's Nurse, Nursing Lecturer and Association of British Paediatric Nurses member says:

> *'The theme for World Sexual Health Day 2026 is 'Every Body', reminding us that every child and young person deserves to be treated with dignity, respect, and understanding. As children's nurses, we have a vital role in promoting health, supporting informed decision-making, safeguarding vulnerable children, and advocating for equitable access to services. We must ensure that no young person faces barriers to receiving the information, support, and care they need to thrive.'*

Notes for editors

- The term *child* refers to infants, children, young people and young adults up to 25 years of age.
- For the purposes of this press release, *young people* includes adolescents and young adults aged approximately **11–25 years**.
- The ABPN recognises the vital role of primary care, community services, school nursing, CAMHS, adult mental health services and Emergency Departments in supporting children, young people and families.

- The Association of British Paediatric Nurses is the oldest children's nursing association in the world, established in 1938, with members spanning clinical practice, education, leadership and research.

Website: www.abpn-uk.com

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