

**Media Release  
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## **BEDROOM NEGOTIATION SKILLS**

Having the awkward condom chat has become a whole lot easier, thanks to an informative new resource with tips on negotiating safe sex.

Developed by the sexual healthcare experts, Marie Stopes International, and launched during Sexual Health Week (9-15 November), the resource was produced following research indicating a number of Australians are uncomfortable to ask their partner to use a condom.

“Condom use is the only way to safeguard your sexual health, yet unfortunately a number of Australians would rather risk their health than have the conversation with their sexual partner,” said Jill Michelson, National Clinical Adviser for Marie Stopes International.

“The ‘Tips on Negotiating Safe Sex’ guide will hopefully equip them with the communication tools and skills that they feel they need to be able to negotiate safe sex.”

The guide has been launched in response to research which found that 1 in 10 women either rarely or never felt comfortable to ask their partner to wear a condom.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, recent research commissioned by Marie Stopes International on 1,000 sexually active males and females nationally found that:

- 9 out of 10 sexually active adults stated that they have had sex without a condom.
- Over half (56.2%) of all sexually active adults stated that they have never had an STI check-up.
- 6 out of 10 sexually active adults have not had an STI check-up since they last had unprotected sex.
- Almost half (47.5%) of sexually active adults that have had unprotected sex and were not in a monogamous relationship the last time they had unprotected sex were between the ages of 35 and 40.
- People aged between 18-24 (65%) and 35-40 (57%) were the age groups most likely to never have had an STI check-up.

To spread the safe sex message and encourage conversations about condom usage, Marie Stopes International with support from Family Planning QLD and Sexual Health & Family Planning ACT, has developed and launched Australia's first ever national Sexual Health Week, being held from the 9 – 15 November.

“STIs and unplanned pregnancy are key health issues that affect many Australians, and we’re hoping that with Sexual Health Week we empower males and females to take control of their sexual health to avoid becoming a statistic,” said Ms Michelson.

More information on Sexual Health Week, including the ‘Tips for Negotiating Safe Sex’ fact sheet can be found at [www.sexualhealthweek.com.au](http://www.sexualhealthweek.com.au)

**About Marie Stopes International:** Marie Stopes International is a not-for-profit sexual and reproductive healthcare provider, with centres in the ACT, VIC, NSW, QLD and WA. MSI offers a range of services, including abortion, vasectomy, sexually transmitted infection check-ups, contraception and community-based health promotion and education. The organisation is part of a global international partnership that delivers vital health services to over five million people in 42 countries worldwide. Surplus funds support Marie Stopes International Australia, our charity partner, which works to save lives and improve sexual and reproductive health in Indigenous Australia and throughout the Asia-Pacific region. For more information on the organisations, visit [www.mariestopes.com.au](http://www.mariestopes.com.au) and [www.mariestopes.org.au](http://www.mariestopes.org.au) (ends)

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<sup>1</sup> Real Choices: Women, contraception and unplanned pregnancy. Marie Stopes International/Web Survey. January 2008.