

Heuristic Evaluation of [Sex Academy]

1. Problem/Prototype Description

I evaluated Sex Academy, a platform that provides a safe and healthy space for students and parents to access customized sex education content recommendations and peer story-sharing of lived experiences.

2. Violations Found

SEVERITY 4

SEVERITY 3

SEVERITY 2

SEVERITY 1

SEVERITY 0

H1

1. **H1 Sign-up looks actionable even when it should be greyed out or hidden** SEVERITY 1

On the signup pages, the sign-up button looks actionable before all required fields are filled out (e.g. your kids()' age).

Fix: Until all fields are filled out, grey out or hide the sign-up button.

2. **H1 Visibility of System Status** SEVERITY 1

- a. Task 2

- b. Problem: After viewing a piece of recommended content, it is not explained or shown if long-time users will return to the same feed, or if viewed content will visibly change, be greyed-out, or move to the bottom of the recommended articles, and also how to archive the content which is part of the task

- c. Suggested Fix: Grey-out or show that a recommended piece of content has already been viewed by the user, or include a list of bookmarked articles somewhere, perhaps on the user page

3. **H1 Visibility of System Status** SEVERITY 4

- a. Task 2 / 3
 - b. Problem: Sharing via the bottom bar plus icon, “podcast on healthy relationship” does not state where it is “Shared successfully” or indicate a UI update: is it a public or private post, a link saved to the clipboard?
 - c. Suggested Fix: Edit the “Shared successfully” message, or produce a changed output on a user feed or separate location
4. **H1 It’s unclear if “My mood” is public or not** SEVERITY 2
I’m not sure, looking at the presentation of “my mood,” if that’s private (just for me to know) while the article is public, or if both are shared together.
Fix: Perhaps add a “lock” icon or a “world” icon emphasizing visibility.
5. **H1 Visibility of System Status** SEVERITY 3
- a. Task 1
 - b. Problem: Unclear if “Explore” or “Story” is the current screen, as neither bottom bar icon has changed and there is no screen header
 - c. Suggested Fix: Highlight or change the current screen’s bottom bar icon
6. **H1: Visibility of System Status** SEVERITY 3
- a. Problem Description: I couldn’t figure out what page I was on right from the login
 - b. Rationale: Users probably are familiar with some kind of either infinite scroll of things that they already like on the home screen. However, when looking at the bottom, it seems like the only options are explore and story, neither of which look like the landing page.
 - c. Suggested Fix: Either rename explore to something that combines exploring with stuff that the user already likes or add a new page type.
7. **H1: Visibility of System Status** SEVERITY 3
- a. Problem: Could not figure out when my document is saved.
 - b. Rationale: Even after I clicked save, there is no indication on the actual document itself that the document has been saved.
 - c. Suggested Fix: Put a little message somewhere to tell the user that the document is saved. This could be kind of like how on Google Docs there is a little last saved icon.

8. **H1: Visibility of System Status SEVERITY 3**
 - a. Problem: Could not figure out which platform my story was shared to.
 - b. Rationale: After I clicked share, it just says that my story is shared, but I could not figure out which platform the story was shared to.
 - c. Suggested Fix: In the popup that happens after the story was shared, just make a quick note about which platform, like Email, or Twitter, that the story was shared to.

H2

9. **H2 What going back after signing up does is unclear SEVERITY 2**

You're able to go "back" after signing up, taking you back to the sign-up screen; does this delete the account that was just made? Is the account not fully set up yet? It's unclear.

Fix: Either change the text from "Sign up" to "Continue" on the sign up screen, or remove the back button from "Find interesting topics"
10. **H2 Match between System and World SEVERITY 1**
 - a. Task 1
 - b. Problem: The wording "Find interested topics" upon login implies that the topics are interested in the user, which could be confusing for a first-timer selecting tags
 - c. Suggested Fix: Rename "Find interested topics" to "Find topics that interest you"
11. **H2 "Secret Santa" implies anonymity SEVERITY 4**

Along a similar vein to #23, typically "secret santa" implies a certain level of anonymity between both parties; I was surprised when I was brought to the chat screen and found all that information automatically disclosed by both parties. The options "share to secret santa" and "send to AI chatbot" might not make sense to new users without description.

Fix: Keep "Secret Santa" anonymous by default. Perhaps rename to "Secret Sharer" since "Secret Santa" has a very particular connotation re: gift-giving, This maintains the feeling of intimacy and the fun alliteration! Also, provide short description of the two options for new users.
12. **H2: Match between System and World SEVERITY 2**
 - a. Problem: I could not access the profile page from the search page for

the articles.

- b. Rationale: It's confusing that the profile picture is still there if it cannot be clicked on.
- c. Suggested Fix: It would make sense to just add a link to the profile page at all levels.

13. **H2:** After clicking the pink plus button on the bottom middle, the sample text "sharing a podcast on healthy relationships..." might not make sense to the user because the input should be text, yet the sample text mentions sharing a podcast. **SEVERITY 3**
Fix: give more clear instructions/sample text in the text box.

14. **H2 Tapping on the "heart" opens the article SEVERITY 2**
When tapping on the "heart" on an article, I expect it to add a "like" to the count, rather than open the article up.
Fix: either fill in the heart to emphasize that it isn't clickable, or else make it so tapping the heart adds to the count.

H3

15. **H3 Changing parent status clears kids dialog box SEVERITY 2**
On signup page 35, if you change "parent" status, it clears the age dialog box.
Fix: Persist the value of the kids dialog box even when it the text field is hidden
16. **H3 clicking "X" buttons in the story and explore pages always goes back to the home page. SEVERITY 2**
When clicking the "X" buttons, I expect to be taken to the last screen I was at; however, they instead always take me to the home "Recommended" screen.
Fix: Always go back a step instead of going to the home page.
17. **H3 Back button doesn't work on the "You can write about..." page SEVERITY 3**
If the user accidentally selects that they want to write a story, they don't have the option to go back until they click "Go write one!"
Fix: Enable the back button so the user can exit this screen if they want.

18. **H3 Can't deselect "My mood" SEVERITY 3**
If I don't want to publish/save a mood with a story, but accidentally select one, there's no clear way to deselect it.
Fix: Add an "x" icon that the user can tap to clear their selection.

19. **H3 User Control and Freedom SEVERITY 4**
 - a. Task 3
 - b. Problem: On the "Secret Santa" conversation screen, there is no way to block further messages or contact support to report this user if the conversation goes awry, which seems especially important with how this app targets students who might be underage and of various identities, and at risk of harassment or harm, especially with the relatively anonymous matching
 - c. Suggested Fix: On the "Secret Santa" screen, include a stickied safety message and ways to contact support or immediately leave a conversation to protect users from harmful actors (also, in this demo, the back button does not work)

20. **H3: User control and freedom SEVERITY 3**
 - a. Problem: Could not remove stories, likes and archives.
 - b. Rationale: I want a way to be able to remove stories, likes and archives from my page.
 - c. Suggested Fix: Perhaps put a little minus icon so that people can just remove them.

21. **H3: User Control and Freedom SEVERITY 2**
 - a. Problem: Couldn't go back from the profile page
 - b. Rationale: I want to be able to go back to the page I was on from the profile page.
 - c. Suggested Fix: Just implement the back button.

22. **H3: User Control and Freedom SEVERITY 2**
 - a. Problem: I could not go back from the search menu
 - b. Rationale: There is no way to leave the search page. The options on the bottom of the screen disappear. There also is no back button either, leaving me no alternative. Also, clicking the X on the top right seems to have brought me back, which is not very intuitive at all.
 - c. Suggested Fix: Make a back button in the top left corner or keep the different menus at the bottom of the screen.

23. **H3: User Control and Freedom** SEVERITY 4
 - a. Problem: Could not leave the Secret Santa frame
 - b. Rationale: After I reached the Secret Santa window and was matched with someone, there was nothing I could do. I could not type a message to send to the random person. I also could not click on the back button, which was frustrating.
 - c. Suggested Fix: It seems like something that is easy is to just fix the back button. But also, there should be some way to unmatched the secret santa.

24. **H3:** The “you are all set” screen comes right after the topic selection screen, but users are not given an exit to go back in case they realize they selected too few or miss-selected any topics. SEVERITY 3
 - a. Fix: Add a go back button so that users can adjust their topic selections.

25. **H3:** The profile screen doesn’t allow users to click on the back button to go back. Although users can click on the options on the bottom, they might be more accustomed to use the back button on the top left. SEVERITY 1
 - a. Fix: enable the back button.

26. **H3 “Back” button after saving takes you back to the editor** SEVERITY 2

Once I’ve saved a story I’ve written, I’m probably done editing it; the big ♥ back button should probably take me back to my profile, the story page, or to the main articles page.

Fix: Change the ♥ Back button to “Done” and then change where it takes the user; it should target one of the top pages.

H4

27. **H4 The search bar looks like a header** SEVERITY 2

When opening the search view, the search bar looks more like a header than an editable text field; it doesn’t match the convention of your other text fields across the app.

Fix: Add an outline and icon next to the search text

28. H4 “Story” navbar item removes the navbar SEVERITY 3

Typically, when moving back and forth in a tabbed design, you want to keep the tabs visible. I don't expect to be taken to an entirely new screen when clicking a tab. (“+” is okay, it looks like a button that will take me somewhere else).

Fix: Keep the navbar available in the “Story” screen and remove the story screen's back button.

29. H4 Clicking the profile icon in the “Story” page moves you to a story editor SEVERITY 3

Throughout all other pages of the app, clicking your own profile icon takes you to your own profile page. The behavior is inconsistent here.

Fix: Make the profile button take you to your profile page.

H4: Consistency and Standards

- a. Problem: When in the “saved story” window, clicking on the person icon in the top right corner brings me back to my story.
- b. Rationale: I would expect that clicking on the top right corner would bring me to the profile icon, which is normal.
- c. Suggested Fix: Changing it so that the profile icon always brings me to the profile page.

30. H4 I'm not sure what the colors on the settings/edit profile pages mean SEVERITY 1

Certain elements of the profile page, such as “Location” and “Interested topics” use bullet points of red or green colors. I'm not sure what this indicates.

Fix: Make the colors consistent. If the colors mean something (for example, “on” or “off”, use an icon or a switch to indicate this.)

31. H4 Consistency and Standards SEVERITY 1

- a. Task 1
- b. Problem: There is an initial “Login” screen and then a capitalized “LOGIN” on the next screen, which could confuse users who might think these are two different login screens
- c. Suggested Fix: Standardize the capitalization

32. H4 Consistency and Standards SEVERITY 1

- a. Task 1 / 2

- b. Problem: The “Search” bar is the most prominent on the Explore screen, and the section headers (“Recommended,” “Videos,” etc.) are only slightly larger than the text for the content
- c. Suggested Fix: Reduce the prominence of the “Search” via an icon, and include a filter icon for “Videos,” “Articles,” and “Podcasts” so that “Recommended” can be a larger size which matches how it is a section header

33. H4 Consistency and Standards (and H8) SEVERITY 1

Task 1 / 2

- a. Problem: The text size for the content varies widely, which also runs rather small for a phone; the content provider text is as large as the content’s medium, followed by the title in bold and then the blurb in the same size but grey, with the number of hearts in pink and most visibly contrasting with the content info
- b. Suggested Fix: Perhaps increase the size of the content text, possibly by putting only one piece of content to span the phone’s width (and include scrolling), and reflect on the information hierarchy with how the content’s hearts are more prominent than the title, tags relevant to the user’s search, medium, and information source

34. H4 Consistency and Standards AC SEVERITY 3

- a. Task 2
- b. Problem: A minor concern, but on the user profile, there are heart, star, sun, and check mark icons, but not all four icons appear on the content viewing link or on the user-generated stories, which could confuse users on how to get this status
- c. Suggested Fix: Include a way to tap the sun and check mark icons, add description or change the icons to include text

35. H4 Consistency and Standards SEVERITY 3

- a. Task 2
- b. Problem: On the user profile, the heart icon denotes “5 felt loved,” on the content viewing screen the heart icon goes unnamed, and in the comment section the heart icon denotes “Like,” which could be confusing for users who are unsure what their tapping on the heart signifies
- c. Suggested Fix: Standardize the meaning of the heart and possibly use different icons for popular content, liked comments, or user story sharing

36. H4 Consistency and Standards ACD SEVERITY 4

- a. Task 2 / 3
 - b. Problem: On the bottom bar, the user may be unsure how the plus icon differs from the write story icon in terms of creating their own content or stories, as it seems that the user can share pre-made content with the plus icon while the write story button shares their personal stories to a forum for “Secret Santa” matching
 - c. Suggested Fix: Include more actions for the plus icon, or adjust the plus and write story icons so the functions are more clearly delineated (perhaps the plus icon becomes an upload or share button)
- 37. H4 Consistency and Standards SEVERITY 3**
- a. Task 2
 - b. Problem: The User page shows “Archives” but there seems to be no way to archive or bookmark content, and the icon button on the bottom bar seems to only allow “Share” to a public feed, instead of including a “Save” button which is present on the “Secret Santa” screen, and this is part of the task 2 feature
 - c. Suggested Fix: Add a “Save” or bookmark button, possibly by repurposing the plus icon or adding it per article (since the star icon seems to denote “inspired”)
- 38. H4 Consistency and Standards SEVERITY 3**
- Task 3
- a. Problem: In the “write story” screens with “Share to” and “Before getting response,” it is unclear if users are posting their stories to their existing social media, to an in-app forum thread (as they are required to “write a response to someone else’s story” before messaging a “Secret Santa”), to their private feeds, or another location
 - b. Suggested Fix: Rework the “Share to” pop-up window to include an additional button with “share to the forum,” list all possible locations (and private or public settings as necessary), or grey-out the forum interface until the user types a message so that it is clear which audience the user is sharing content with
- 39. H4: Consistency and Standards SEVERITY 2**
- a. Problem: I was confused by what the story feature is, since I’m more used to an Instagram story.
 - b. Rationale: I could not figure out what the story feature was. When I dug into it further, it seems like it is more like a journal, or a blog. It also wasn’t clear who the audience is, as in is it the user for themselves or is it for other people too.

- c. Suggested Fix: The icon makes sense, but the word story is confusing. Perhaps change to journal or blog, depending on who the end audience is going to be.
40. H4: Consistency and Standards **SEVERITY 1**
 - a. Problem: The explore page has a star.
 - b. Rationale: Normally, a star means favorites and I don't think it is used for explore very often.
 - c. Suggested fix: I don't use Instagram, but it could be useful to look at what Instagram uses for their explore icon.
41. H4: Consistency and Standards **SEVERITY 1**
 - a. Problem: There are multiple back buttons on the story writing screen for both the upper and lower levels.
 - b. Rationale: I could not figure out the difference between the two different back buttons.
 - c. Suggested fix: You could just remove one of the back buttons.
42. H4: Consistency and Standards **SEVERITY 2**
 - a. Problem: The search bar in the search menu is not apparent.
 - b. Rationale: I could not find the search bar in the search menu, since I thought that the place where it said search was the section title.
 - c. Suggested Fix: It looks like the search bar blends into the top of the phone, which caused me to think that it is a section title. Maybe adding a searching magnifying glass or putting a top cap on the search bar would make it easier to identify.
43. **SEVERITY 2 H4:** The "Articles" screen under explore has a different visual format from the articles recommended on the main recommendation screen. Users might get confused by the absence of picture thumbnails.
 - a. Fix: Have a consistent standard for articles.
44. **SEVERITY 3**

H4: Under each piece of content, the options to react are not consistent with what's presented on the user profile screen. The users can only find heart and star instead of checkmark and sun.

 - a. Fix: add the warmth and affirmed reactions on each content page.
45. **SEVERITY 2**

H4: There is an option to save the story draft on the share story screen, but there's no "saved drafts" option in the user profile. Users might not be able to find their story drafts.

 - a. Fix: add a section for saved drafts in the user profile section.

46. SEVERITY 1

H4 Main page not scrollable

The main “recommended” page and articles page looks scrollable (content is cut off at the bottom) but in fact it’s not scrollable.

Fix: Either prevent items from being clipped, or else allow the screen to scroll (perhaps loading/finding additional content along the way)

47. SEVERITY 3

H4: The content author’s profile cannot be opened, so users have to make the decision to follow the author or not without seeing basic information of the author.

Fix: make the author’s profile clickable.

H5

48. SEVERITY 2

H5 No sign-up option for Facebook & Twitter

On login page 21, the fact that facebook/twitter signs you up is unclear (sign-up is hidden within the “email” page).

Fix: Clarify that Facebook/Twitter will also sign you up.

49. SEVERITY 3

H5 “Secret Santa” response error is not shown until after you commit to it.

Once you choose to share with a “Secret Santa,” you are presented with an error box prompting you to write a response to someone else’s story first.

Fix: This should probably be flagged before clicking on the button, perhaps with a little warning symbol, or by greying out the option and writing out the error message text.

50. SEVERITY 3

H5 Error Prevention

a. Task 3

b. Problem: Users may be unsure how to write a compelling response (one that would allow for effective “Secret Santa” match-ups in terms of content or length), as the “Don’t know” tab only lists possible topics of interest, and the user would be unaware of expected norms and guidelines on the forum

- c. Suggested Fix: In the “You can write about...” screen include a few starting prompts (“I had my first period when I was X, and I...”) or questions to guide the user, or have a sample short story outline (greyed-out) on the text box so the user has an idea of the sharing format (e.g. “I first encountered [this topic]...”, “it was significant because,” and “I still think about this [detail]”)

51. SEVERITY 1

H5: Error Prevention

- a. Problem: Allowed me to post with no content.
- b. Rationale: There should be some error checking to prevent the user from posting something that has no content.
- c. Suggested Fix: Make a catch that the share button is greyed out if there is no text there yet.

52. SEVERITY 1

H5: The sign up screen contains fields for name, email address, age, and password. Although the signup process may be intuitive, users might type in passwords that are too short or input a wrong format of name.

- a. Fix: provide examples above the blanks or state specific standards such as “must be 8 characters or more.”

53. SEVERITY 2

H5: The “share story” option allows users to complete the sharing action by clicking on a communication/social media app, but there’s no confirmation option for users to re-think before they commit to the action.

- a. Fix: add a dialog box asking users to confirm the sharing action.

54. SEVERITY 2

H5: The “share” screen has a single sharing button for users to complete the sharing action, but there’s no confirmation option for users to re-think before they commit to the action.

- a. Fix: add a dialog box asking users to confirm the sharing action.

H6

55. SEVERITY 1

H6 Sign up text field labels disappear

On signup page 31, once form elements begin to be filled out, the label disappears.

Fix: I recommend following a Material Design-esque strategy where the label

flies up into the top left corner in a smaller font so you can still see the form label.

56. SEVERITY 1

H6 Explain what the mic button does on the story-writing page

I'm not sure if the mic will start recording my voice (for a voice post/podcast) or if it will start dictation. I have to click it to see.

Fix: Add a small bit of helper text, like "Record your first voice post!"

57. SEVERITY 3

H6 Recognition not Recall

a. Task 1

b. Problem: After login the user is directed to choose several topics that interest them, but on the recommended content screen they are not reminded of which topics they selected, which challenges them to recall how the articles relate to their interests (especially if they select several topics of interest)

c. Suggested Fix: Include the tags that they selected on the top of the screen (perhaps smaller), or have each piece of recommended content have the tags that they are related to, as not all titles will be descriptive (such as in "Getting this party started" could be tagged with "Masturbation" and "Relationships & Sex")

H7

58. **H7 "My mood" icons may be difficult to click** SEVERITY 2

Re: Fitts' Law, with how small those emojis are, the user may be slow at or have trouble clicking the correct one.

Fix: Put the emojis and the "My mood" label on separate lines, then enlarge the emojis.

59. **C H7 Provide a way to view stories without sharing to Secret Santa**

SEVERITY 3

A power user/person who wants to contribute a lot to others' stories may not have a lot of their own stories to share. It would be nice for them to have a way to access and respond to stories who are searching for a response without having to write their own or go through that interface.

Fix: Provide a screen that allows the user to read and reply to others' posted stories.

- 60. H7 Flexibility and Efficiency of Use SEVERITY 2**
 - a. Task 1
 - b. Problem: There is an initial “Login” screen to choose Email, Facebook, or Twitter, and then another “LOGIN” screen to sign in, and then the user must click the bottom message to create an account; this could be repetitive for long-time users who need to go through two screens to login, and first-time users have 3 screens instead of possibly two which increases their rate of attrition
 - c. Suggested Fix: Move the “Create an account” to the first “Login” screen that has the “Explore personalized” explanation and potentially make the email / password sign-in already present on this screen as well (this might involve shrinking or moving the graphic)
- 61. H7 Flexibility and Efficiency of Use SEVERITY 2**
 - a. Task 1
 - b. Problem: First-timer users on the “select topics” screen can only choose from the listed tags and cannot search or type for additional tags (it is possible that none of these tags may apply to them), or they may want to select no tags and see default recommended content on sex education (some users may not know where to begin and want to see where the app thinks they should begin)
 - c. Suggested Fix: Include the option on the starter screen to search for more tags, or continue with selecting a topic of interest
- 62. H7 Flexibility and Efficiency of Use SEVERITY 2**
 - a. Task 3
 - b. Problem: After publishing a story and going through the initial matching process with a conversation partner, there is no clear indicator on how to return to speaking with this matched user after an initial conversation and shared story, especially if the connecting or conversation process takes a long time, and this app focuses on “building long-term relationships”
 - c. Suggested Fix: Include a personal list of long-term conversation partners with ways to contact them in the future (maintain the relationship), or set a prescribed time limit or warn that this conversation may be short to protect anonymity (emphasize its ephemerality)
- 63. H7 Flexibility and Efficiency of Use (and H6 / H10) AC SEVERITY 3**
 - a. Task 3
 - b. Problem: This may be resolved in the high-fi, but there is no indicator or icon button on how to get to the non-”Secret Santa” forum for

long-term users without writing another response to someone else's story (or if you are a first-timer, there is not a warning directly after tapping the write story button that you must first post before read the forum's stories). This could be confusing for long-term users

- c. Suggested Fix: Include an icon or direct way to get to the app's forums without writing another story
64. **H7:** When the share button is clicked, the options include a variety of messaging apps and social media apps. Nevertheless, there's no in-app sharing option which will be ideal for most users since there is a huge social media element in the app. SEVERITY 2
 - a. Fix: add the option to share content within the app.
65. **H7:** The share story function allows users to share their stories via communication/social media apps. This might not be applicable to most users because the story format is very specific to SexAcademy and the content could be very personal. SEVERITY 2
 - a. Fix: get rid of the options to share outside of the app for story sharing.
66. **H7:** The "tell a story" screen provides very detailed instructions, but an expert user might already understand what to put in a story and doesn't need instructions. SEVERITY 1
 - a. Fix: add a "don't show this again" option.
67. **H7 Clicking on authors or category labels does not take you to a page about that author or category** SEVERITY 2

Articles are marked with "Article" or "Video" or "Podcast"; similarly, each article is associated with an author/creator. However, tapping on any of these simply opens the article, and a similar issue occurs with the @Mentions

Fix: Allow tapping either of these buttons to take you to a page dedicated to that author or category (e.g. to the "Videos" tab if you click on "Video", or to a page about "Emily F. Rothman" if you tap on them or their profile picture.)

H8

68. **H8 Login page alignment is off-center** SEVERITY 1

The login card on page 21 is aligned more to the right than left.

Fix: Center-align the card
69. **H8 Text field placeholder text should be lightly grey** SEVERITY 1

It's standard to keep placeholder text in a slightly lighter color to emphasize

that the text field is not yet filled out. The text fields used through Sex Academy use black or near-black text for their placeholders, making them difficult to differentiate from text the user actually typed.

Fix: Change the placeholder color to a grey color, perhaps #888

70. **H8 Aesthetic and Minimalist Design (and H4)** SEVERITY 0
- Task 2
 - Problem: The viewing an article page shows all the blurb text for “Child Mind Institute,” and the text after the first few sentences may not be strictly necessary as it takes up space and hides the “Comments” header, and users may not know to scroll down to see comments
 - Suggested Fix: Only show the first few sentences of the text, and then include a “see more” or arrow icon so readers can tap on it to read the rest of the blurb, and thus the comments header may be immediately visible at first glance
71. **H8 Aesthetic and Minimalist Design (and H4)** SEVERITY 1
- Task 2 / 3
 - Problem: The “Profile info” is highlighted as its own button but it is apparent that it is the user profile by the icon and username, and this style of header does not recur throughout the app
 - Suggested Fix: Remove the “Profile info” button for a more streamlined interface, and also as there is not a header for other screens in the app
72. **H8: Aesthetic and minimalist design** SEVERITY 2
- Problem: There was too much text on the explore page for each of the different items.
 - Rationale: There seems to be something like 5 different font sizes, each containing different information. I honestly felt like it was too busy.
 - Suggested Fix: Clean up the levels of information. It seems like each particle not only has a title, but also a subtitle. There is no need for the subtitles on these articles
73. **H8:** On the login screen, there’s a cancel button on the top left, and it might not be very useful for most users because it’s the first (second) screen that users see after they open the app. SEVERITY 1
- Fix: delete the cancel button.

H9

74. **H9 The “What would you like to get off your chest?” help text doesn’t look like help text, and is too far removed from the action. SEVERITY 2**
Currently, on the “Story” page, the “What would you like to get off your chest” section looks like a card that would take you to an article or another story; instead, it’s actually help text. I would probably take the help text and put it elsewhere, perhaps further down in the process.
Fix: Remove the profile picture and perhaps also the card-like look to make the text look less like an actionable object; and/or move the text farther down so the help text is more closely aligned with what it’s helping the user with – especially the part about “connecting you with someone who has been through what you have been though”
75. H9: Help Users with errors **SEVERITY 3**
- Problem: I could make a post with no content.
 - Rationale: I should not be able to make a post with no content
 - Suggested Fix: Make the post button greyed out or not allowed when there is no content to post

H10

76. **H10 Difference between parent and non-parent accounts is unexplained SEVERITY 3**
On the signup pages, the difference between a parent and non-parent accounts is unexplained, and there appears to be no difference between them in terms of the rest of the process.
Fix: I might add a small explainer page before the sign up screen explaining the difference
77. **C H10 provide a series of onboarding screens to orient the user to the functionality of Sex Academy SEVERITY 3**
Currently, when signing up, the user is immediately taken to the “Recommended” explore page. It may be good – especially for parents, but for both groups – to explore the functionality and use of the app, especially to highlight places where the user’s identity is shared, and to explain how this app can be used responsibly.
Fix: Provide an onboarding experience at sign-up, and a way to access it again from settings.

- 78. **H10 Help and Documentation** SEVERITY 2
 - a. Task 1 / 2
 - b. Problem: Long-time users who have forgotten how the platform works, or have technical questions, have no way to review the walkthrough or contact the team
 - c. Suggested Fix: In the already nicely created “Settings” screen in the user section, include a tab that allows users to contact support!
- 79. **H10 Help and Documentation** SEVERITY 3
 - a. Task 1 / 2
 - b. Problem: Users do not know how the recommended pieces of content were selected, as the feed includes reputable sources like the Child Mind Institute as well as popular Youtubers
 - c. Suggested Fix: Include a “more information” icon or a short blurb to increase transparency between the app and its users which is part of its educative goals, or possibly include a wiki (perhaps as a menu bar) with links to official sources or a rationalization for why certain content providers are recommended
- 80. **H10 Help and Documentation AC** SEVERITY 4
 - a. Task 3
 - b. Problem: Users do not have detailed information on the audience for their shared stories, or where their in-app messages will end up, for example the “You must first comment” message to get a “Secret Santa” is only visible after the story has been written, which adds confusion to how the forum differs from “Secret Santa” and if posting to one source will require posting to other sources
 - c. Suggested Fix: Add overall documentation on which interaction features the app supports (AI Chatbot, forums, content comment), and include the requirement that you need to post first as part of the warning on the “What would you like” screen instead of nesting it to the screen after the user has written a story

3. Summary of Violations

Category	# Viol. (sev 0)	# Viol. (sev 1)	# Viol. (sev 2)	# Viol. (sev 3)	# Viol. (sev 4)	# Viol. (total)

H1: Visibility of Status	0	2	1	4	1	8
H2: Match Sys & World	0	1	3	1	1	6
H3: User Control	0	1	5	4	2	12
H4: Consistency & Standards	0	7	5	8	1	21
H5: Error Prevention	0	2	3	2	0	7
H6: Recognition not Recall	0	2	0	1	0	3
H7: Efficiency of Use	0	1	7	2	0	10
H8: Minimalist Design	1	4	1	0	0	6
H9: Help Users with Errors	0	0	1	1	0	2
H10: Help & Documentation	0	0	1	3	1	5
Total Violations by Severity						80

Note: check your answer for the green box by making sure the sum of the last column is equal to the sum of the last row (not including the green box)

4. Evaluation Statistics

Severity / Evaluator	Evaluator A	Evaluator B	Evaluator C	Evaluator D	<i>We all did relatively equal work and we did a lot of synthesis on our ideas.</i>
Sev. 0	25%	25%	25%	25%	
Sev. 1	25%	25%	25%	25%	
Sev. 2	25%	25%	25%	25%	
Sev. 3	25%	25%	25%	25%	
Sev. 4	25%	25%	25%	25%	
Total (sevs. 3 & 4)	25%	25%	25%	25%	
Total (all severity levels)	25%	25%	25%	25%	

***Note that the bottom rows are *not* calculated by adding the numbers above it.**

5. Summary Recommendations

Overall, this prototype looked nice and felt okay to use! I really like the consistent soft pink/soft orange pastel look, with hard shadows to compliment it. The hard but solid shadows give it an approachable look that conjures the levity of cartoons but keeps itself grounded in the subject. The articles especially were easy to navigate and interact with, and I really liked a lot of the ideas that went into e.g. story-writing and the sign-up process.

Most of my recommendations came down to making sure that the navigation around the app was self-consistent; making sure that users knew what they were doing before they did it; and emphasizing contrasts when those contrasts existed. There were several places where the back button didn't work, or took me to an unexpected screen. I also expected the tabular navigation (between Explore and Story) to work a little bit

more like how other apps do, where the navbar stays when navigating to other tabs. Next, there were a few places (especially when story-writing) where I wasn't quite sure what was going to happen until I had already done it. I speak mostly about the secret-santa functionality here; I didn't realize I'd have to respond to someone else's story until I opted to share with a secret santa, and when I selected that, I had no idea it would bring me to a chat where my name and other personal information would be shared (until it already happened). I think here, it would be very good to have a few layers of confirmation before actually sharing information. Finally, the difference (if there is one) between writing a Story and sharing something with the "+" button, and the difference between teen and parent accounts, is left unexplained; it would be great to have just a bit more tutorialization/onboarding/explanation on these topics too (just to help orient the user to the app).

Again, overall, great job on this! I love the idea for the product; I'm looking forward to seeing it grow and develop. I really liked the functions that I used and again, the visual design of this is top-notch!

I cannot state my recommendations without talking about how much I love your idea and your prototype first! I think this is a platform that perfectly connects credible and interesting sex education and sharing personal feelings, which makes it such a safe and fun space for teenagers and parents. The aesthetics of your prototype is fun and lively, and the colors you chose fit your idea really well.

Here are some recommendations:

1. I think because of the nature of sex education, some younger users might not know what they want to know, for example, they don't know a lot of the terms. Therefore, it might be difficult to choose topics and base the recommendations on interested topics for certain users. I think it would be very beneficial to add a basic knowledge section for users to get familiar with sex education before they explore more topics.
2. I love the idea of connecting to strangers and sharing stories with them. I think it's more efficient to make the default interaction method sharing story & responding to story instead of bringing the users straight to chatting with strangers. This way, it's more intuitive since the "secret santa" feature is directly connected to the story sharing function.
3. I think that the story sharing functions should be prioritized for in-app sharing because it requires a special context that only your app provides, and it involves personal information that users might not want to share elsewhere.
4. Because this app includes spreading accurate educational information about sex, it might be a good idea to distinguish regular users (kids, parents) and professionals who are in the roles of educators. Perhaps you can add a little blue check mark (like on

Instagram) to the professionals' accounts? This way, average users know what content to trust and base their understanding off of, and misinformation can be better prevented.

Great job on the med-fi prototype! The pink accent color, cute icons, and sketch-like graphics feel warm and inviting, offering an aura of intimacy that seems integral to the mission of Sex Academy. I appreciate how your framework and three tasks seem to intentionally foster supportive user behavior and encourage positive conversations and engagement in sex education. This also translates into your specific design decisions, such as how the heart, star, sun, and check mark icons connote love, inspiration, warmth, and affirmation for user content.

Nonetheless, a significant portion of my evaluation is targeted to H4 (8 violations), which is linked to the H1 and H7 violations. (Note that I operated under the assumption that misaligned buttons and headings would be fixed in the hi-fi prototype, and I attempted to group my evaluation in collated categories.) For a specific H4 example, there seems to be a rather varied amount of icons and emojis without clear usage (for example, do the heart icons on the recommended content connote the same meaning as the heart icons on the user profile page, or the heart icon on the “Your story is saved!” back button?). Similarly, there is unfamiliar language used on several screens that violates H2, such as “Find interested topics” (Find topics that interest you?) and “Secret Santa” (the term is most used for gift exchange), and a wide range of different text sizes, colors, and locations.

Likewise, I wonder if the H1 and H7 violations would be remedied with more explicit detail or customizable features for long-time users and parent users, as neither of these app experiences were demoed. Since your mission is to encourage long-term relationships instead of short-term ones, I wonder how the task 3 peer-matching would work for a long-term chat buddy (or if the conversation ends after you leave, can you friend-request or follow them, or is the relationship continually anonymous?). Likewise, there is uncertainty on how the forum interactions would work for highly popular young users (is their advice any more trustworthy?), verified sex education teachers and healthcare professionals (could they promote or offer app-specific content?), and parents (how does their interaction compare or differ to users learning this material for the first time?), which seems directly tied to designing for how users will interact with each other for task 2.

This brings us to what I view as the most major concern, the H3 and H10 violations, due to the existing social taboo on discussing sex education and the wide variety of lived experiences and identities of the potential users. While this is a med-fi, since this app is intended for students — who tend to be minors, as in the task 3 demo — I would expect more safeguards to protect

users who are already engaging in vulnerable and intimate conversations for task 3. This could take the form of clear and visible buttons or numbers to call for additional help if the “Secret Santa” pairing goes poorly, or a report user if there is an unexpected bad actor in the social network, since one bad actor would wreak disproportionate impact on the intimacy and feel of this platform space. Likewise, for task 1, it seems essential to explain the rationale (especially for first-time users) for why certain content is recommended to them, since some users may be learning of this material for the first time. The recommended page includes an equal amount of official, peer-reviewed medical sources (Child Mind Institute) along with popular vloggers or podcasters (who may joke about these topics or assume some baseline knowledge), and seems to distinguish based on medium instead of type of content, such as factual work or personal story. Transparency on platform and content recommendations seems especially important to protect the mental health and education of users, along with the viability of this app’s social network!

These critiques may sound detailed, but that is because I am invested in seeing how the high-fi prototype will develop! Good luck for all the future work, and overall great job!

Heuristics

H1: Visibility of System Status

- Keep users informed about what is going on

H2: Match Between System & Real World

- Speak the users' language
- Follow real world conventions

H3: User Control & Freedom

- "Exits" for mistaken choices, undo, redo
- Don't force down fixed paths

H4: Consistency & Standards

- Words, actions, and UI elements should be consistent across the entire platform
- Follow platform and industry conventions

H5: Error Prevention

- Minimize error-prone conditions
- Remove memory burdens, support undoing, and warn your users when necessary

H6: Recognition Rather Than Recall

- Make objects, actions, options, & directions visible or easily retrievable

H7: Flexibility & Efficiency of Use

- Accelerators for experts (e.g., gestures, keyboard shortcuts)
- Allow users to tailor frequent actions (e.g., macros)

H8: Aesthetic & Minimalist Design

- No irrelevant information. Focus on the essentials.

H9: Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, & Recover from Errors

- Error messages in plain language
- Precisely indicate the problem
- Constructively suggest a solution

H10: Help & Documentation

- Easy to search

- Focused on the user's task
- List concrete steps to carry out
- Not too large