

Dear Parents: A Unified Call for Inclusivity and Comprehensive Sexual Health Education

Dear Parents,

Over the past few months there have been a lot of confusing messages about us and our work, and so we want to share a few things about sexual health education in schools.

We are educators – many of us also parents – and we dream of making sure that all schools are places where every student, no matter who they are, where they're from, or how they look, feels respected and free to be their authentic selves. We want you to know that we care deeply about the safety, learning, and happiness of all kids.

Over the past year, a small group of people have been working to put student health and safety at risk. They've been misrepresenting the work of sexual health centres, sharing misinformation about what's in the health curriculum, and campaigning for politicians to pass harmful legislation. This is resulting in sexual health organizations being banned from schools in some provinces, as well as restricting supports for trans and queer students. These decisions are impacting our teachers' abilities to teach, and they are limiting our children's chances to learn.

This damage is being done by a loud minority who are trying to divide us and make us feel suspicious and scared of each other. So instead, let's come together and tell our leaders to focus on what truly makes our lives and communities safer and better. Let's be louder.

Many of you are already familiar with us and our work. Maybe you've used our services, grabbed information resources from our websites and clinics, or stopped by our booth at a parade or festival. For years, and in some cases decades, we have all been on the same team, working for better health outcomes in our communities and our families.

Making sure that students can thrive at school needs the involvement of parents, teachers, and community support. As sexual health educators, our role is to help teachers and parents provide young people with the information they need to take

care of their bodies and their health. We believe in all of us having appropriate conversations, teaching fact-based information, and sharing resources that lead directly to young people living healthier and safer lives.

Like you, we want a future where students everywhere can thrive. We want spaces where everyone is welcome, of all religions and all families, where we get the health information we need, and, when it comes to our children's education, where we trust facts over scare tactics. By working as a community, we can make it so that every student, parent, and educator feels safe, respected, and empowered.

We're here for you, ready to listen, answer your questions, and eager to collaborate to build healthy communities. Thank you for entrusting us with the privilege of being a part of your lives and the lives of so many families. Together we'll face the uncertainty and emerge even stronger.

Signed by :

- Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights
- Alberta Society for the Promotion of Sexual Health (ASPSH)
- Cape Breton Centre for Sexual Health
- La Fédération du Québec pour le planning des naissances (FQPN)
- Halifax Sexual Health Centre
- Klinik Community Health Centre
- Planned Parenthood Newfoundland and Labrador Sexual Health Centre
- Planned Parenthood Ottawa
- Planned Parenthood Regina
- Planned Parenthood of Toronto
- Sexual Health Network of Quebec
- Sexual Health Nova Scotia
- Sexuality Education Resource Centre Manitoba
- South Shore Sexual Health