
Sex Education Toolkit

Future of Sex Education

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Introduction & Overview

A Letter to the Supporters of Sex Education

Dear Sex Ed Supporter,

This toolkit will prepare you to advocate for sex education in your schools and communities – with peers, parents, policymakers, and all the important stakeholders in school-based sex education.

Sex education is popular. When people know what sex education actually is and what it covers, they want kids to learn it in school. When people understand how sex education restrictions (like book bans, LGBTQ+ bans, and abortion bans) are part of a larger movement to gain power over people, they want to fight back. When we give people the tools they need to take action to support sex education, they do.

This toolkit will provide you with resources to demystify sex education, answer tricky questions, develop talking points and messaging resources, and inform district policy suggestions. Whether you've organized and advocated before or this is your first time, there is something in this toolkit that can support your work.

Sex education is powerful. It allows all people to better understand their bodies, themselves, and their relationships. It fosters kinder, more compassionate, and more just schools and communities.

We know that sex education works. We have decades of data that consistently prove people want sex education that covers a wide variety of topics to be provided to students in schools.

Advocating for sex education is local, effective, and can change the world.

Let's get to work.

-Future of Sex Education Partners

Advocates for Youth, Answer, Planned Parenthood Federation of America and SIECUS: Sex Ed for Social Change

Background Materials: Setting the Stage

Comprehensive sex education equips young people with the knowledge and skills they need to make informed, responsible, and healthy decisions about their bodies and relationships. Utilizing these foundational materials ensures educators are well-prepared to address sensitive topics with confidence and accuracy, fostering trust and meaningful engagement with learners.

● [THE TRUTH ABOUT SEX ED](#)

● [CONNECTING THE BANS](#)

● [IF/THEN SERIES](#)

● [THREE DECADES OF RESEARCH](#)



[The Truth About Sex Education](#)

This one-pager includes a range of the topics covered in sex education, as outlined in the National Sex Education Standards (NSES). These topics are not a fully comprehensive list, but instead a sampling of topics.

[Connecting the Bans](#)

More than 10,000 books were [banned](#) in US public schools from 2023 to 2024. Hundreds of new laws censor what teachers can talk about, ban sex ed, restrict teachers from teaching empathy, and put LGBTQ+ youth in danger. Those pushing this agenda call it “parents’ rights,” but it is a strategy funded by far-right activists at the national level to gain political power.

[If/Then Series](#)

SIECUS: Sex Ed for Social Change created [If/Then](#) to highlight the essential connections between comprehensive sex education and broader social issues such as LGBTQ+ rights, educational equity, menstrual equity, and online censorship. Our organization believes that by addressing these interconnected issues through comprehensive sex education, we can create an informed and supportive community that champions diversity, equity, and inclusion for all.

[Three Decades of Research](#)

For [Three Decades of Research: The Case for Comprehensive Sex Education](#), Eva S. Goldfarb, Ph.D. and Lisa D. Lieberman, Ph.D. examined studies from over three decades of research on sex education and found “evidence for the effectiveness of approaches that address a broad definition of sexual health and take positive, affirming, inclusive approaches to human sexuality.”

Communication & Advocacy Tools

We all want our kids to grow up safe, healthy, and confident. Age-appropriate sex education that covers a wide range of topics prepares young people for today's world, sets them up for success in all their relationships, and helps them learn respect and compassion for all. But because of well-funded groups with political agendas, kids are losing access to sex education that keeps them safe and helps them set boundaries with others. We need to stick up for better sex education in our kids' schools.

Talking Points

We all want the best education for our kids, including sex education. Sex education helps young people learn how to have healthy relationships, make informed decisions, love themselves for who they are, and have respect and compassion for all, including those who are different from them.

- Sex education in elementary school covers foundational building blocks around topics like consent and boundary setting with friends, understanding our bodies and puberty, and acknowledging and respecting different kinds of families.
- Sex education in middle school addresses relevant issues such as healthy peer relationships and anti-bullying, staying safe online, and media literacy skills to support kids in developing a healthy body image.
- Sex education in high school covers everything from birth control and safer sex to sexual decision-making and communication skills to understanding how society and culture shape our ideas about sex, gender, and race.
- Sex education addresses a wide range of topics in age-appropriate ways to help keep young people safe, healthy, and happy.

Sex education works. It gives young people the knowledge and skills they need to grow up safe, healthy, and confident, and it sets them up for success in today's society.

- [Research shows](#) that sex education helps young people [develop the social and emotional skills](#) they need to become kind and empathetic adults. Age-appropriate sex education that covers a wide range of topics leads to better body image, more empathy and respect for others, better communication skills, better management of feelings, better sense of self-control and safety, prevention of child sex abuse and dating and intimate partner violence, development of healthy relationships, better understanding of gender equity and appreciation of sexual diversity, and more protection against mis/disinformation, both online and from peers.
- [Research also shows](#) that sex education helps students become healthier and more well-adjusted adults. It leads to lower STI rates, [fewer unintended pregnancies](#), better self-esteem, healthier relationships, and more.
- From the American Medical Association to the American Academy of Pediatrics, [experts agree](#) that sex education that is comprehensive (covers a range of topics), inclusive, and medically accurate is critical for young people.
- Sex education teaches young people the importance of [treating everyone with dignity and respect](#), including themselves. This can [help build school connectedness, which in turn supports student achievement](#).



Sex education is not controversial. The overwhelming majority of Americans want young people to get sex education.

- The [vast majority of Republicans and Democrats agree](#) that sex education covering a wide range of topics is important to teach in middle and high school.
- [96% of parents](#) support having sex education in high school, and 84% of parents support having sex education in middle school. [91% of U.S. adults, including 83% of people who identify as conservatives](#), think it's important for young people to have access to age-appropriate sex education that is comprehensive (i.e. it covers a wide range of topics).
- Parents/caregivers want their kids to have the facts and feel safe and supported at school. Sex education has been shown to reduce bullying, discrimination, and harassment, meaning schools are safer for all youth.
- Sex education at school supports sex education at home. School programs reinforce the role of family communication about sex and relationships, supporting young people in talking with their parents/caregivers.

Sex education has never been universally accessible, but now it's even more at risk due to anti-sex education movements funded by powerful groups.

- [Extreme groups](#) are funding and organizing a vocal minority of individuals—wrongly portrayed as a grassroots effort—to stoke fear and confusion around sex education in communities across the country. Groups like [Moms for Liberty](#) blatantly lie to cause panic so they can dictate what is and isn't allowed in schools—including pushing for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs and banning students from safely using the bathroom that matches their gender identity.

- To create an illusion of grassroots resistance, these groups have brought people from other towns or states to pretend they live locally and [take over school board meetings](#). They fund big social media disinformation campaigns and [harass](#) young people, parents, and school staff who advocate for real education and safe schools.
- [Project 2025](#), detailed policies, created by many former Trump Administration employees, that plans to functionally ban sex education and replace it with abstinence-only-until-marriage programs that also push their gender ideology of men in power and women at home.
 - Project 2025 redefines “pornography” as anything related to sex, consent, gender, or LGBTQ+ topics, and then bans pornography nationally (even for adults). This will make teaching sex education illegal, and label anyone who tries to teach it a sex offender.
 - Project 2025 makes it very easy for a parent to sue a school and win if the school teaches anything they don’t like, helping groups like Moms for Liberty dictate what gets taught in our schools by threatening school boards with endless lawsuits.

You can take action to advocate for sex education in your community starting today. All you need to do is ask the right questions and join with others in your community to ensure sex education for all.

- You can [find out who is making decisions](#) about sex education at your local school. It may be a health coordinator, an individual teacher, or a district-wide School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC). You can contact the teacher, coordinator or committee chair to learn about how decisions about sex education are made and what is currently being taught.
- You can find out from your local school’s PTA and/or school board what sex education is taught in your community. This includes how often and when sex education is being taught, as well as what topics are being taught, what curriculum is being used, and who is teaching the program.
- If you want to advocate for better sex education in your community, go to [EducateUS](#) to get trained on how to do it, and connect with others in your community doing this work.

Sign-on Statement: Purpose

The purpose of this sign-on statement is to publicly demonstrate widespread support for sex education across the health and medicine, education, child development, LGBTQ+, and sexual and reproductive health communities. By gathering endorsements from hundreds of organizations, this statement highlights the collective agreement on the importance of providing sex education that is medically accurate, age appropriate, culturally responsive, trauma informed, and inclusive to students.

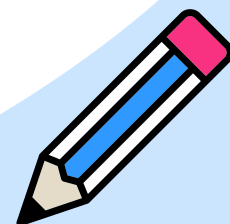
Advocacy

- **Leverage Support:** Organizations can use the statement to show policymakers and their community the broad support for sex education, helping to influence legislation, school board decisions, Departments of Education and Health policies, and more.
- **Raise Awareness:** Schools and organizations can share the statement to educate parents, students, and community members about the benefits of comprehensive sex education, helping to bring additional partners into the fight for sex education.



Policy Development

- **Informed Decisions:** Schools can reference the statement when developing or revising their sex education curriculum to ensure it aligns with widely supported best practices.
- **Resource Allocation:** Organizations can use the statement to advocate for funding and resources to implement or improve sex education programs.



Partnerships

- **Collaboration:** Schools and organizations can form partnerships with the signatories to share resources, training, and support for sex education initiatives.
- **Unified Voice:** By joining the statement, schools and organizations become part of a larger network advocating for sex education, amplifying their voice and impact.



PLEASE NOTE: The statement should only be used for 501(c)3-related advocacy activities and should not be used for any 501(c)4-related advocacy efforts.

Sign-on Statement

Dear Colleague,

We, the undersigned, represent a broad constituency of education, health, and child development advocates and professionals, healthcare and medical experts, and religious leaders who are committed to the provision of sex education in schools for all young people in the United States (U.S.).

School-based sex education taught according to the [National Sex Education Standards](#) gives young people the knowledge and skills they need to grow up safe, healthy, and confident and make healthy decisions about sex and relationships, now and in the future. Ensuring that young people have sex education that is medically accurate, age appropriate, culturally responsive, trauma informed, and inclusive empowers them with the information they need about sex and relationships without shame or judgment.

Over [three decades of research](#) demonstrates that school-based sex education provides young people with the foundation they need to thrive, have better health outcomes, and become more well-adjusted adults. It often leads to better body image, more empathy and respect for others, improved communication skills, and increased ability to regulate feelings. It supports bystander interventions and creates an increased understanding of gender equity and appreciation of sexual diversity. Sex education has been shown to delay the onset of sexual activity, increase condom and contraception use, and lead to lower STI rates and fewer unintended pregnancies. It also helps prevent child sex abuse, decrease intimate partner violence, and increase protection against mis/disinformation, both online and from peers. These outcomes and the topics covered in sex education are what we need young people to receive from trusted teachers and unbiased experts.

Due to the patchwork of education laws and standards across the U.S., as well as unprecedented attacks against schools, young people are often increasingly being denied the information and services they need. Without adequate access to LGBTQ-inclusive and culturally responsive sex education, young people are going to suffer. Too many young people don't have access to sex education, or the programs in their school are shaming and/or inaccurate. We stand with the overwhelming majority of young people, parents/caregivers, educators, and health and medical professionals who support access to sex education.

Sincerely,

Future of Sex Education Partners and the Undersigned Organizations

Sign-on Statement: Supporters

- Act Now: End AIDS (ANEA) Coalition
- Active Minds
- Advocates for Youth
- AIDS Alabama (AL)
- AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth & Families
- AIDS Foundation Chicago (IL)
- AIDS United
- Alabama Campaign for Adolescent Sexual Health (AL)
- All Souls Community Church of West Michigan (MI)
- Alliance for Public Schools
- American Academy of HIV Medicine
- American Atheists
- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
- American Humanist Association
- American Sexual Health Association
- American Sexually Transmitted Diseases Association (ASTDA)
- American Society for Reproductive Medicine
- Amplify Youth Health Collective (OK)
- Answer
- BK Forge (NY)
- BOOST Collaborative
- Cardea
- Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York (CIDNY) (NY)
- CenterLink: The Community of LGBTQ Centers
- Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
- EducateUS
- EngenderHealth
- Equality California (CA)
- Equality Illinois (IL)
- Equity is the Word
- ETR
- EyesOpenIowa (IA, IL)
- Fact Forward
- Family Equality
- Feminist Majority Foundation
- Five Horizons Health Services (AL, MS)
- Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power & Potential (GCAPP) (GA)
- Girls Inc.
- Girls Inc. of Long Island (NY)
- GLSEN
- Guttmacher Institute
- Health Connected (CA)
- Health Not Prisons Collective
- Healthy Teen Network
- HIV+Hepatitis Policy Institute
- Honestly - Youth Sexual Health (OK)
- Housing Works, Inc. (NY)
- Human Rights Campaign
- Human Rights Campaign Foundation
- Ibis Reproductive Health
- If/When/How: Lawyering for Reproductive Justice
- Indivisible
- Ipas
- Jewish Women International
- Lambda Legal
- Medical Students for Choice
- Michigan Organization on Adolescent Sexual Health (MOASH) (MI)
- NASTAD
- National Abortion Federation
- National Association of School Psychologists

Sign-on Statement: Supporters (Cont.)

- National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network
- National Coalition of STD Directors
- National Council of Jewish Women
- National Education Association
- National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association
- National Health Law Program
- National Institute for Reproductive Health
- National Network of Abortion Funds
- National Organization for Women Foundation
- National Women's Health Network
- National Women's Law Center
- Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church (TN)
- Our Turn
- Partners in Sex Education (New England)
- Physicians for Reproductive Health
- Planned Parenthood Advocates of Arizona (AZ)
- Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette (OR, WA)
- Planned Parenthood Federation of America
- Planned Parenthood Great Northwest, Alaska, Hawai'i, Indiana, Kentucky (AL, HI, IN, KY, WA)
- Planned Parenthood Keystone (PA)
- Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts (MA)
- Planned Parenthood Mar Monte (CA, NV)
- Planned Parenthood of Delaware (DE)
- Planned Parenthood of Greater Ohio (OH)
- Planned Parenthood of Greater Texas (TX)
- Planned Parenthood of Maryland (MD)
- Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington, DC, Inc. (DC, MD, VA)
- Planned Parenthood of Northern, Central and Southern New Jersey (NJ)
- Planned Parenthood of South, East and North Florida (FL)
- Planned Parenthood of Southwest and Central Florida (FL)
- Planned Parenthood of Southwestern Oregon (PPSO) (OR)
- Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest (PPPSW) (OR)
- Planned Parenthood Pennsylvania Advocates (PA)
- Planned Parenthood Southeast (AL, GA, MS)
- Positive Women's Network-USA
- Power to Decide
- Power U Center for Social Change (FL)
- Prevention Access Campaign
- Pride Action Tank
- Red, Wine & Blue
- Religious Community for Reproductive Choice
- Reproaction
- Reproductive Freedom for All (formerly NARAL Pro-Choice America)
- RISE: Healthy for Life (TN, VA)
- Sacred Well Congregation and Coastal Virginia Unitarian Universalists (VA)
- Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine (SAHM)
- Secular Student Alliance
- Sexual Violence Prevention Association (SVPA)
- SHAPE America

Sign-on Statement: Supporters (Cont.)

- SIECUS: Sex Ed for Social Change
- SisterReach Illinois (IL)
- SisterReach, Inc. (AL, AR, KY, MS, TN)
- Society for Public Health Education
- State Innovation Exchange (SIX)
- Stop Sexual Assault in Schools
- Teen Health Mississippi
- Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church (TN)
- The AIDS Institute
- The American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors, and Therapists (AASECT)
- The Sex Ed Initiative (IL)
- The Trevor Project
- The Well Project
- Towson Unitarian Universalist Church (MD)
- Trailhead Institute (CO)
- Trans&
- UCSF Bixby Center for Global Reproductive Health (CA)
- Union for Reform Judaism
- Unitarian Universalist Association
- Unitarian Universalist College of Social Justice
- Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury (CT, NY)
- Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Fairbanks (AK)
- Unitarian University Fellowship of Montgomery, AL (AL)
- University of Minnesota Healthy Youth Development - Prevention Research Center (MN)
- URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity
- UU Mass Action (MA)
- UU Mt. Airy (PA)
- Virginia Women's Foundation (VA)
- Vivent Health (CO, IL, MI, MO, TX, WI)
- Voto Latino
- Women's Foundation of Florida (FL)

Message Testing Report 2024

School-based sex education continues to enjoy widespread support across the United States. According to a 2023 Planned Parenthood study, 96% of parents believe sex education is essential in high schools, with 84% advocating for it in middle schools. However, turning this broad support into actionable steps to defend and advance sex education policies remains a significant challenge. The EducateUs Tool Message Testing Report 2024 addresses this critical gap by exploring how messaging can inspire action.



Defending/Addressing the Opposition

Anticipating and addressing opposition is a crucial component of implementing and sustaining comprehensive sex education programs. This section provides educators and advocates with practical strategies, evidence-based responses, and messaging techniques to effectively counter resistance and build support for inclusive, accurate, and equitable education.

The opposition to teaching sex ed in public schools is loud and organized, but in the extreme minority. That's why they resort to the political tactic of spreading disinformation in order to ban sex ed—they know they can't win a fair fight. Opposition groups like the Heritage Foundation and Moms for Liberty are well-funded national political organizations supported by the same donors that fund MAGA politicians and Project 2025. Their goal is to frighten and confuse parents in order to score partisan points and gain political power—but the more we tell the truth, the harder it is for their strategy to work.

They say: Kids are too young to learn about this stuff.



We say: Schools use age-appropriate material recommended by pediatricians and mental health experts to make sure kids learn what they need to be healthy and safe. Teaching consent in kindergarten might involve a lesson about sharing crayons or hugging. Much later, those concepts can be used to talk about relationships and sex.

They say: Schools are indoctrinating my kids behind my back.



We say: Sex ed curricula are among the most transparent education a school provides. Parents can opt-out of any lesson or program they don't want their child to participate in, and in most cases the entire curriculum is available online to read. Sex ed instruction intentionally fosters conversations at home about personal family values, providing worksheets and opportunities for parental involvement.

They say: Sex ed materials are pornographic.



We say: Schools use age-appropriate material recommended by pediatricians and mental health experts to make sure kids learn what they need to be healthy and safe.

They say: Teaching kids about gender and sexuality will make kids gay or trans.



We say: Every school has LGBTQ+ students—kids do not become confused about their own identity because someone else's is also respected. Talking honestly about gender identity in school makes school a safer place for everyone. Even kids who identify as straight are less likely to be bullied and harassed in a learning environment that treats everyone with respect.

They say: Elementary school kids don't need to learn about gender.



We say: Children begin to understand gender around age 3, mostly through interacting with their parents. Research shows kids are healthiest when we support their ability to communicate about gender and allow them to be who they are.

SIECUS Releases Report on Attacks Against Comprehensive Sex Education

SIECUS: Sex Ed for Social Change released its publication titled "[Exposing Hate: The Truth About Attacks on Our Kids, Schools, and Diversity.](#)" The report addresses the fervent attacks by right-wing groups against age appropriate and medically accurate comprehensive sex education.

Read the Executive Summary [here](#).



Strategies for Engaging: How to Talk to the Opposition

Outlined below are several strategies to address harmful statements or actions you may observe. When considering which strategy to choose it is important to consider your goals, your safety, and dynamics of power and privilege. At times, all we can do is diffuse a tense situation, but fostering real social change often requires us to shift our perspective, viewing adversaries as potential allies rather than enemies.

Calling Out

This is often the go-to strategy, especially when we are passionate about a topic. Calling Out involves directly confronting someone publicly, with the goal of drawing attention to their behavior. Calling someone out should be reserved only for those with power, to stop harassing behavior when safety is a concern or when other strategies have been unsuccessful.

- **Pros:** quickly brings attention to the issue
- **Cons:** can cause defensiveness and “doubling down” of beliefs



In Action: A local school board appointee is a member of a known hate group and repeatedly spreads harmful misinformation during school board meetings. An advocate may choose to address this at a school board meeting by calling out the individual and their rhetoric during public comment.

Calling In

Activist [Loretta J. Ross](#) coined the term “Calling In” and describes it as [“a call out done with love.”](#) Calling in still addresses the harm being done, but does so respectfully and privately by inviting someone into a conversation so they have the opportunity to learn and do better. The CLARA method described below can be used as part of the call in strategy.

- **Pros:** [has the potential to bring about change](#)
- **Cons:** can be time-consuming and emotionally exhausting



In Action: A harmful comment is posted on a townwide social media group, sparking a heated argument. An advocate privately messages the original poster with an invite to a conversation at a local cafe. The advocate approaches the cafe discussion with curiosity, listening to the poster's perspective and sharing their own beliefs respectfully. While they agree to disagree initially, the ongoing dialogue creates opportunities to gently challenge and shift the poster's perspective.

Calling On

Recognizing the emotional toll that can come from calling in, activist [Sonya Renee Taylor](#) suggested “[calling on](#)” as an alternative that shifts the burden of transformation to the person who caused the harm. This method simply requires acknowledging the harm and calling on the person to do better.

- **Pros:** [quick and less emotionally exhaustive](#)
- **Cons:** the person who caused harm must recognize the harm and want to do better



In Action: After learning that a guest speaker was invited to their teen’s health class, a parent’s research uncovers the speaker is from a [crisis pregnancy center](#) (AKA anti-abortion center). The parent notifies the teacher, who admits to not being aware of the connection and the presentation is canceled.

The CLARA Method

This de-escalation method was originally created by Bonnie Tinker to engage in difficult conversations around sexual orientation, but [has been adapted](#) and used in a variety of settings. This 5-step model lowers heightened emotions to foster meaningful dialogue. This strategy can be particularly helpful when facts and data are insufficient.

- **Pros:** quickly de-escalates and encourages empathy
- **Cons:** requires practice and patience

The CLARA method employs five components:

CENTER: Replace judgements with empathy

LISTEN: Listen to understand

AFFIRM: Find common ground to establish a connection

RESPOND: Directly respond to the issue

ADD: Offer a new perspective or a concrete action step

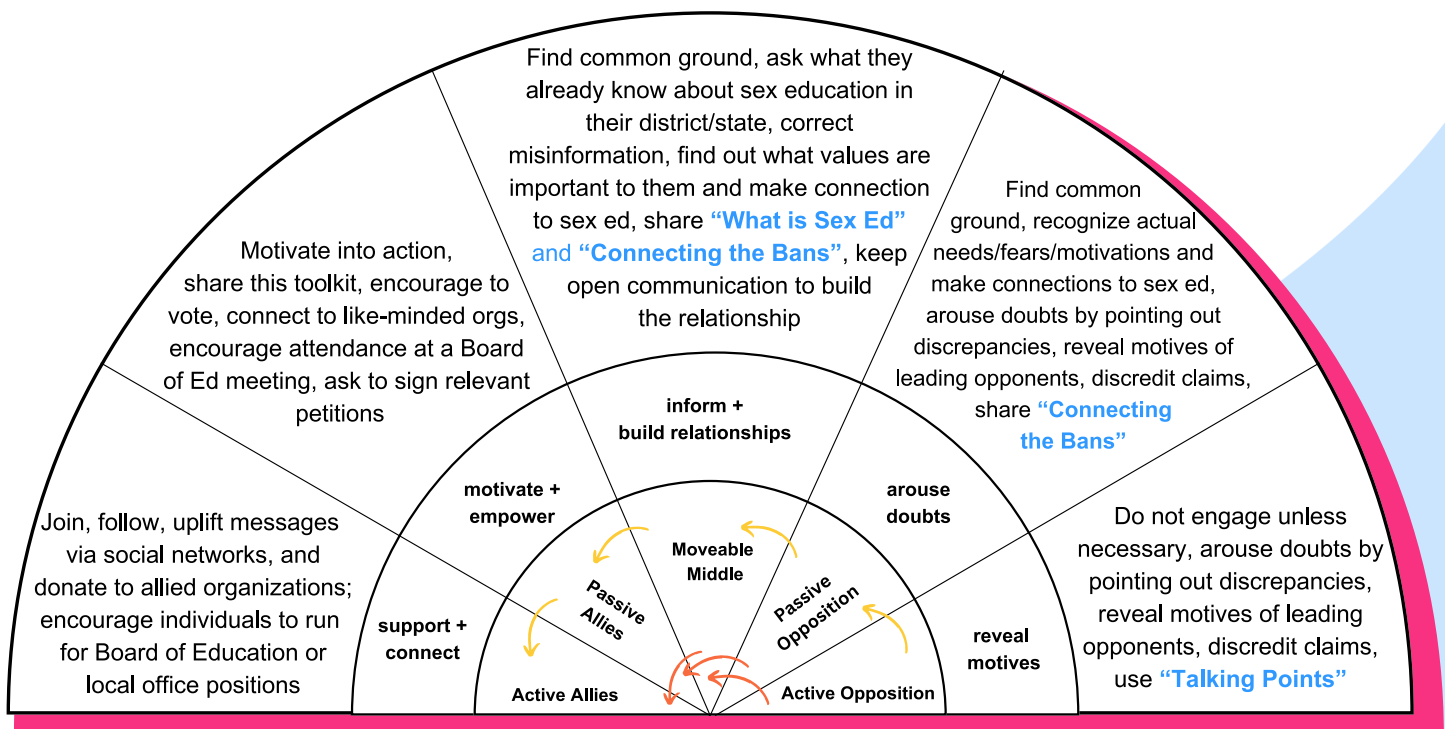
Carefully choosing your method of engagement gives you the best chance to support meaningful change while keeping yourself and those around you emotionally and physically safe.



In Action: During Q&A at a presentation on the upcoming sex education curriculum, an audience member expresses their anger at the speaker for promoting topics they believe to be inappropriate for children. The speaker takes a deep breath to **CENTER** as they **LISTEN** to the concerns. They then **AFFIRM** the speaker’s concern for their child and echo their own concern for the safety of all the students. They **RESPOND** by explaining how the purpose of the proposed education is to help keep young people safe. The speaker concludes by **ADDING** that an overview of the lessons is available on the school’s website and encouraging the audience member to review the lessons and request a meeting if they still have concerns.

Sex Education Spectrum of Allies

This sex education-specific "Spectrum of Allies" is a strategic tool designed for sex education advocates to identify and effectively engage with different individuals or groups based on their level of support or opposition to comprehensive sex education. Each category requires a tailored approach to maximize impact and foster positive change. The spectrum categorizes people into five distinct groups: Active Allies, Passive Allies, Moveable Middle, Passive Opposition, and Active Opposition. "Passive" refers to individuals and groups who have taken a stand but aren't actively working towards change, unlike those who would be categorized as "Active." The "Moveable Middle" refers to individuals who haven't yet decided or are not yet invested in sex education. The arrows demonstrate how utilizing the provided strategies can help shift individuals closer towards becoming an active ally of sex education.

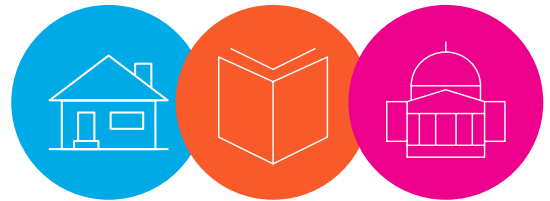


Engagement and Community Building

Building strong relationships with students, families, and community stakeholders is key to fostering a supportive environment for comprehensive sex education. This section offers guidance on cultivating trust, encouraging collaboration, and creating inclusive spaces that empower communities to champion equitable and evidence-based education.

Parents' Checklist to Support their Children's Sex Education

Click [here](#) to learn what you can do at **home**, to help improve what is happening in your local **schools**, and what you can do at the **state** and **federal levels** to support your child's sex education.



A Parent's Guide to Understanding Sex Education in Your School

A [Parent's Guide to Understanding Sex Education in Your School](#) is crucial for fostering open communication between caregivers and children about sensitive topics. It empowers parents/caregivers to support and reinforce the information their children are learning, helping to ensure consistency and clarity in messages about health, consent, and relationships. Additionally, it enables parents/caregivers to address their own concerns or misconceptions, advocating for an inclusive, age-appropriate curriculum that aligns with their family values.

A/f/Y

So You Want to Speak Up for Sex Education



The EducateUs Tool is a quickstart guide designed to empower parents and caregivers to confidently advocate for comprehensive sex education at school board meetings, public hearings, and other community forums. This practical [resource](#) provides clear, actionable tips to help you effectively share your story, address common concerns, and champion policies that support young people's health and well-being.

Community Engagement Toolkit: A Guide to Advancing Sex Education in Your Community

The [Community Action Toolkit \(CAT\)](#) gives you the tools you need to become knowledgeable about sex education, build support in your state or community, implement sound policies, and institute or defend effective sex education programs that support and affirm young people's right to honest information.

The Toolkit is designed to serve as a resource for all advocates: students, parents, teachers, school administrators, health professionals, youth-serving professionals, policymakers, and concerned community members.



Youth Activist Toolkit

This [guide](#) is designed for youth activists that want to organize for change. It contains tips and tools gathered from youth activists working on issues such as reproductive justice, gun violence, climate change, racial inequity, conflict resolution, and so much more.

The goal of the Youth Activist Toolkit is to walk you through some basic steps an organizer can take to develop a strategy, build collective power, and use that power to create meaningful, lasting change. It also addresses important topics like practicing self-care or resolving group conflict on your path toward victory.



Youth-Adult Partnership Framework

The Youth-Adult Partnership (YAP) framework empowers young people and adults to work in full partnership envisioning, developing, implementing, and evaluating programs and/or policies that impact young people.

Youth-Adult Partnerships entail the:

- Integration of young people's lived experiences and expertise with adults' experiences and expertise;
- Opportunity for each party to suggest and make decisions; and
- Recognition and valuing of the contributions of adults and young people.

Policy & Legal Guidance

Understanding the policy and legal landscape is essential for implementing comprehensive sex education that aligns with local, state, and federal requirements. This section provides educators and advocates with clear guidance on navigating legal considerations, complying with regulations, and leveraging policy to support equitable and inclusive education programs.

2024 SIECUS Policy Playbook

1. Healthy Youth Act (Mandate)

Goal: To mandate that all young people of the state receive sex education according to the National Sex Education Standards in a K-12 framework.

Resources for policy language and definitions: [National Sex Education Standards](#)

Policy Language Example:

1. [California](#)

2. Healthy Youth Act (If, Then)

Goal: To ensure that all young people offered sex education receive it in accordance with the National Sex Education Standards in a K-12 framework.

Resources for policy language and definitions: [National Sex Education Standards](#)

Policy Language Example:

1. [Colorado](#)
2. [Illinois](#)

3. Inclusive Language in Sex Education

Goal: To ensure Sex Education teaches sexual orientation and gender identity in an inclusive and respectful way and redacts its emphasis on the goal of marriage as a life outcome.

Resource for policy language and definitions: [The Trevor Project](#)

Policy Language Options:

1. [Rhode Island](#) (Note: this is a negative policy, however the policy language could be co-opted.)
2. [Iowa](#) (Note: this is a negative policy, however the policy language could be co-opted.)

2024 SIECUS Policy Playbook (Cont.)

7. Support for Teachers

Goal: This policy would create a state fund that would help teachers pay for training, professional development and/or continued education. The fund would include expenses associated with the training of the teachers such as travel, per diem, and substitute coverage.

Resource for policy language and definitions: [Professional Learning Standards for Sex Education](#)

Policy Language Options:

1. [Pennsylvania](#)
2. [Hawaii](#)
3. [Delaware](#)

8. Personal Body Safety

Goal: All K-3rd grade students will be able to define bodily autonomy and personal boundaries, and consent. Students will be able to list medically accurate names for body parts, including the genitals. Students will be able to identify different kinds of families and relationships. Students would be able to define sexual abuse and identify behaviors that would be considered child abuse

Resource for policy language and definitions: [National Sex Education Standards](#), [Erin's Law](#)

Policy Language Options:

1. [Delaware](#)
2. [Minnesota](#)
3. [Florida](#) (Note: this is a negative policy, however the policy language could be co-opted.)

9. Respect for Diverse People and Families

Goal: All K-3rd grade students will be able to identify different kinds of families and explain why it is important to show respect for different kinds of families; define gender, gender identity and gender-role stereotypes, discuss the range of ways people express their gender and how gender-role stereotypes limit behavior as well as demonstrate way to treat all people of all genders, gender expressions, and gender identities with dignity and respect.

Resource for policy language and definitions: [National Sex Education Standards](#).

Policy Language Options:

1. [Florida](#) (Note: this is a negative policy; however, the policy language could be co-opted.)

2024 SIECUS Policy Playbook (Cont.)

10. Safe and Supportive Schools

Goal: Mandate that all persons in public schools, regardless of their disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other specified characteristic, have equal rights and opportunities in the educational institutions of the state. The State Department of Education must develop resources or, as appropriate, update existing resources for in-service training on school site and community resources for the support of LGBTQ+ lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ+) pupils, and strategies to increase support for LGBTQ+ pupils, as specified. Schools operated by a school district or county office of education and charter schools use those resources to provide training at least once every 2 years to teachers and other certificated employees of those schools that serve pupils in grades 7 to 12, inclusive.

Resource for policy language and definitions: [National Sex Education Standards](#)

Policy Language Options:

1. [California](#)

11. Mandate HIV Education

Goal: Mandate that HIV/AIDS education be included in all public schools.

Resource for policy language and definitions: [National Sex Education Standards](#)

Policy Language Options:

1. [Oklahoma](#)
2. [Washington](#)

12. Dispensing Contraception in School Based Health Centers

Goal: Mandate that all public schools' school based health centers dispense contraception.

Resource for policy language and definitions: [National Sex Education Standards](#), [Child Trends](#)

Policy Language Option:

1. [Illinois](#)

2024 SIECUS Policy Playbook (Cont.)

13. State Board of Education supporting LEAs during attempts to censor instructional materials.

Goal: Prevention of local school boards censoring instructional materials and/or library materials.

Every state adopts broad minimum content standards in core subjects and adopts standards-aligned curriculum frameworks to guide local curriculum development and implementation. It is a state priority that LEAs use instructional materials that are aligned with those standards and frameworks, and LEAs must ensure that such materials are available to all students. Local governing boards are responsible for adopting instructional materials and policies for local instruction and learning and making specific curriculum decisions.

Policy Language Options:

- [California Department of Education](#)
- [California Attorney General](#)

Contact Information & Additional Resources

Access to trusted experts and supplemental resources is vital for enhancing the effectiveness of comprehensive sex education programs. This section provides contact information for support, along with a curated list of additional tools and references to deepen understanding and strengthen implementation efforts.

Advocates for Youth

Rights. Respect. Responsibility.

Advocates for Youth partners with youth leaders, adult allies, and youth-serving organizations to advocate for policies and champion programs that recognize young people's rights to honest sexual health information; accessible, confidential, and affordable sexual health services; and the resources and opportunities necessary to create sexual health equity for all youth. For more information about Advocates for Youth, visit www.advocatesforyouth.org.

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Answer

Graduate School of Applied
and Professional Psychology

Founded in 1981 as the New Jersey Network for Family Life Education, **Answer** provides and promotes comprehensive sexuality education for young people and the adults who teach them. From its inception, Answer has provided [high-quality training](#) to educators and health professionals to ensure they are prepared to provide the information young people need and deserve to make healthy decisions. In 1994, Answer also began using the power of peer-to-peer communication in the publication of its award-winning, teen-written [Sex, Etc.](#) magazine and website, which allows teens to directly access accurate and developmentally appropriate sexuality information. To learn more about Answer visit <http://answer.rutgers.edu>.

FoSE
Future of Sex Education



Planned Parenthood is the nation's leading provider and advocate of high-quality, affordable sexual and reproductive health care for all people, as well as the nation's largest provider of sex education. With nearly 600 health centers across the country, Planned Parenthood organizations care for all patients with compassion, with respect, and without judgment. Through health centers, programs in schools and communities, and online resources, Planned Parenthood is a trusted source of reliable education and information that allows people to make informed health decisions. Planned Parenthood is made up of many separate nonprofit organizations. Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA) is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that supports the independently incorporated Planned Parenthood affiliates, which operate nonprofit health centers across the U.S.



Since 1964, **SIECUS** has asserted that sexuality is a fundamental part of being human, one worthy of dignity and respect. Through policy, advocacy, education, and strategic communications efforts, SIECUS advances sex education as a vehicle for social change—working toward a world where all people can access and enjoy sexual and reproductive freedom as they define it for themselves. For more information about SIECUS, visit www.siecus.org.

For more information or to contact the partners of FoSE, please reach out to Info@FutureofSexEd.org.

