

Responding to resistance to teaching sexual health education in an LGBTQ-inclusive manner

Complaints or concerns that you might hear:

1. Gay sex is unnatural.

Response: In all populations and all cultures around the world there are people who are attracted to the same sex. Like left handedness, it is a natural variation of the human population. Over 1,500 species of animals have same-sex behaviours.

2. Why are you teaching about gay sex in your classroom?

Response: I am teaching about all aspects of sexual health in a developmentally appropriate manner. Excluding important sexual health information is irresponsible.

3. What you're teaching goes against my religion and family values.

Response: As teachers, we do not condone children being removed from our classes when we teach about Aboriginal people, people of color, people with disabilities, or gays and lesbians.

Response: You can teach your child your own values at home. Public schools teach everyone about respecting diversity and valuing everyone.

Response: This is not about parent rights. Children have the right to an inclusive education free from discrimination.

Response: The School Act requires education in British Columbia to be conducted on strictly secular and non-sectarian principles. The curriculum in BC stresses tolerance and inclusion, and places high importance on discussion and understanding of all family groups and relationships.

4. It's not your job as a school to teach my kids about sex.

Response: As part of the mandated curriculum set out by the Ministry of Education, I am required to teach about sexual health to my students. The Health and Career Education IRP is available on the ministry website if you would like to have a look at the prescribed learning outcomes. You'll also find the Alternative Delivery Policy outlined in the IRP document.

5. Teaching gay sex will make my child want to try it.

Response: There have been a number of studies done that show that there is no connection between an inclusive curriculum and changing someone's sexuality.

Response: *There have been a number of studies done that indicate that many youth engage in sexual activities with others of the same sex, regardless of whether they define themselves as gay or straight.*

6. Are you gay? Why are you pushing your personal agenda?

Response: *My sexual orientation is irrelevant to the subject matter that we are discussing and your question is inappropriate.*

Your response could also follow this format:

- *I don't need to be a person of colour to ...*
- *I teach antiracism work and I don't need to be a person of colour to do so.*
- *I teach antisexism work and I don't need to be a woman to do so.*
- *My agenda comes from the Ministry of Education which values and celebrates diversity. Our curriculum is inclusive of the diverse populations that we serve.*

7. Gay sex is just wrong.

Response: *In a public institution we, as teachers, do not discriminate against groups of people. Your language is discriminatory.*

8. Why aren't my family's traditional values being included?

Response: *In a public institution, we teach in a manner that doesn't exclude groups of people, especially those protected under the British Columbia Human Rights Code.*