

# SEX-ED KEEPS US HEALTHY



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## GENERAL MESSAGING

For SRH Week 2020, we're talking about how sex-ed keeps us healthy. Did you get comprehensive sexuality education as a young person – or sex-ed that taught you to be afraid, ashamed, or embarrassed to talk about sex? We know quality sex-ed helps us take care of our health, prevents violence, and helps people have healthy relationships. Health care providers, educators, parents, and students all have a role to play. Learn more: [www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek](http://www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek)

What's true and what's not when it comes to sex-ed? If you got sex-ed while you were in school, chances are you heard negative stereotypes and persistent myths – like that young people who receive sex-ed are more likely to have sex earlier or engage in riskier sex. For SRH Week 2020, we've debunked the biggest myths about sexuality education: <https://www.actioncanadashr.org/sex-ed-myths>

## SEX-ED AS VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Comprehensive sex-ed can be an essential intervention in preventing childhood sexual abuse, intimate partner violence, and sexual violence. Educating children about their bodies (including correct names of genitals), bodily autonomy, and safe/unsafe touch gives them the tools and vocabulary to reach out to trusted adults and healthcare professionals when they need help. Quality sex-ed also helps young people develop a positive body image and reduces of shame around genitals, desire, and sexuality in general. #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives [www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek](http://www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek)

## SEX-ED TO TAKE CARE OF OUR HEALTH

When done right, sex-ed can be life-changing and have positive impacts on public health. Myths exist that sex-ed encourages kids to engage in sex earlier and have more risky sex, but research proves that sex-ed (in or out of schools) does not increase sexual activity, sexual risk-taking behaviour, or STI/HIV rates. In fact, comprehensive sex-ed leads to better knowledge around sexuality by promoting positive attitudes towards using protection, seeking out sexual health care, nurturing healthy relationships, and getting consent. #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives [www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek](http://www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek)

Comprehensive sex-ed is a human right recognized globally. Each of us has the right to receive relevant and accurate health information so that we can make important decisions about our health and our lives. #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives <https://www.actioncanadashr.org/resources/sexual-health-info/sex-ed/sex-ed-human-right>

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## SEX-ED AS ANTI-BULLYING

What do we mean when we say #SexEdSavesLives? A lot of things. When it comes to bullying, homophobia and transphobia can go beyond obvious hostility. Failing to intervene or ignoring LGBTQI2S+ experiences can also be harmful. Inclusive sex-ed can normalize LGBTQI2S+ identities, and in turn even be lifesaving - calling trans folk by their preferred names and using their correct pronouns can drastically reduce risk of suicide. Seeing your identity or family reflected in your learnings is essential to feeling comfortable in your own skin. A safe learning environment for LGBTQI2S+ kids can benefit all children, as the risk of suicide and risk-taking behaviors of all students is lower in schools with LGBTQI2S+ inclusive policies and gender-sexuality alliances (GSAs). #SRH2020 [www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek](http://www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek)

## SEX-ED FOR RESPECT FOR LGBTQI2S+ COMMUNITIES

For many students, schools can be a sanctuary. For others, it can be a place where they experience violence. A study conducted by EGALÉ found that:

- 64% of LGBTQI2S+ students do not feel safe at school
- 74% of trans students, 55% of sexual minority students, and 37% of LGBTQ students report being verbally harassed because of their gender, sexual orientation, or family
- 21% of LGBTQI2S+ students report physical abuse

LGBTQI2S+ inclusive sex-ed curricula and policies are essential to creating safer learning environments for all youth. #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives <https://egale.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/EgaleFinalReport-web.pdf>

## SEX-ED FOR HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Young people want to learn about healthy relationships. Developing the skills to nurture these relationships, from friendship to romance to hook-ups, is key to leading healthy lives. Sex-ed teaches the skills to build healthy relationships, and strong relationships help us manage stress, problem-solve, and overcome life's challenges. Healthy relationships can also be an incredibly enjoyable and enriching part of our lives, since we all need and deserve connection. Knowing what's healthy helps tackle sexual violence and toxic relationships. #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives

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## **SEX-ED TO LIVE AN EMPOWERED LIFE**

We often think it is inevitable that sex education will conflict with the worldview of religious communities. It doesn't have to! Sex-ed is about giving young people the tools and information they need to make informed choices and live their values (including religious, spiritual, and familial values) in an empowered way. [www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek](http://www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek)

Having more information about our bodies, how it works, how to take care of our health, how to navigate healthy relationships and then building the skills to communicate effectively and assert boundaries can in fact make it easier to clarify how we want to live our lives and give us the power to live out that vision. Quality sexuality education respects different worldviews and upholds everyone's human rights. #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives [www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek](http://www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek)

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## GENERAL MESSAGING

This #SRHWeek, we're talking about how #SexEd keeps us healthy. Healthcare providers, educators, parents, and students all have a role to play. Learn more: [www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek](http://www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek) #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives

What's true and what's not when it comes to #SexEd? You've probably heard some of the myths – like that sex-ed means young people will have sex earlier. But #sexedsavelives. Let's debunk myths about sex-ed: <https://www.actioncanadashr.org/sex-ed-myths> #SRH2020

## SEX-ED AS VIOLENCE PREVENTION

#DYK: 87% of women aged 18-25 have experienced #GBV? Yet, most people aren't taught the skills to avoid sexually harassing others or how to respect "no". Sex-ed can be central to violence prevention. #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives <https://mcc.gse.harvard.edu/reports/the-talk>

Comprehensive #sexed can help prevent childhood sexual abuse. Educating children about their bodies, #bodilyautonomy & safe/unsafe touch gives them the tools to reach out to trusted adults when they need help. #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives [www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek](http://www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek)

## SEX-ED TO TAKE CARE OF OUR HEALTH

#Sexed is crucial to taking care of our health. Access to a comprehensive education can address the root causes of negative health outcomes and give folks the right information to take care of their bodies. #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives [www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek](http://www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek)

When done right, #sexed is good for #publichealth. Sex-ed doesn't increase sexual activity, risk-taking behaviour or STI rates. It promotes seeking sexual healthcare, nurturing healthy relationships, using protection & getting consent. #SRH2020 [www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek](http://www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek)

Comprehensive #sexed is a #humanright. Each of us has the right to receive accurate health information so that we can make important decisions about our health & our lives. #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives <https://www.actioncanadashr.org/resources/sexual-health-info/sex-ed/sex-ed-human-right>



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## SEX-ED FOR RESPECT OF LGBTQI2S+ COMMUNITIES

Inclusive #sexed can contribute to a safer society for trans folk and a healthcare system better equipped to meet their needs #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives <http://transpulseproject.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Trans-PULSE-Statistics-Relevant-for-Human-Rights-Policy-June-2015.pdf>

When society treats people's sexual or gender identities as "wrong", we get negative health outcomes. LGBTQI2S+ youth often face stigma, prejudice, & discrimination at school – but inclusive #sexed can help. #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives <https://www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek>

64% of LGBTQI2S+ students do not feel safe at school. Inclusive #sexed builds a safer learning environment for young people who are facing marginalization and barriers. #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives <https://egale.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/EgaleFinalReport-web.pdf>

"Don't ask, Don't tell" isn't an option in our schools. LGBTQI2s+ inclusive #sexed can support safe spaces for all students and ensure respect and openness to sexual diversity and gender identity and expression. #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives <https://www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek>

## SEX-ED FOR HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

#Sexed teaches the skills to have #healthyrelationships, which help us manage stress, problem-solve, & overcome life's challenges. Knowing what's healthy helps tackle sexual violence and toxic relationships. #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives [www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek](http://www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek)

Young people want to learn about #healthyrelationships. Developing the skills to nurture these relationships, from friendship to romance to hook-ups, is key for healthy lives. Comprehensive #sexed helps us get there. #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives [www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek](http://www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek)

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## **SEX-ED TO LIVE AN EMPOWERED LIFE**

Young people want #sexed that speaks to them in all their diversity and equips them with the knowledge to take care of their own health. LGBTQI2S+ inclusive sex-ed gives young people the tools to be empowered. #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives [www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek](http://www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek)

Sexuality can be positive, comfortable & empowering – but we don't often hear that in #sexed. Comprehensive sex-ed connects young people with important information they need to live healthy lives. #SRH2020 [www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek](http://www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek)

Myth: #sexed isn't compatible with faith. Sex-ed is about giving young people the info they need to make informed choices & live their values. Quality sex-ed respects different worldviews & upholds #humanrights. #SRH2020 #SexEdSavesLives [www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek](http://www.actioncanadashr.org/srhweek)