

TEACHING GENDER AND SEXUAL DIVERSITY VIOLATES MY PARENTAL RIGHTS TO EDUCATE MY CHILDREN ACCORDING TO MY BELIEFS

A social movement that calls itself the “Parental Rights Movement” is seeking to restrict educators’ ability to teach sexual health and gender diversity. These restrictions are commonly targeting the rights of children, youth, and students to be referred to by the name and pronouns they use, especially those of transgender, non-binary, and gender-diverse youth without permission from their parents or guardians. The movement is accelerating legislation that targets transgender, non-binary, and gender diverse youths’ ability to receive gender affirming care such as legal name change and gender identification forms.

The “Parental Rights Movement” is intentionally spreading harmful disinformation about the life-affirming and essential practices of sexual health education and celebrating 2SLGBTQIA+ identities. It is essential to identify disinformation and combat it in our classrooms and communities.



HOW TO RESPOND TO DISINFORMATION IN YOUR CLASSROOM AND COMMUNITY

“I HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW WHAT MY CHILD IS LEARNING IN SCHOOL, IT IS MY PARENTAL RIGHT”

Under the convention on the rights of the child (CRC), to which Canada is party, parents are one of the duty bearers in a child’s life. Duty bearers are responsible to ensure children receive education (Article 28) and that education will, amongst other things, be directed toward “...peace, tolerance, equality” (Article 29). Educational curriculum is informed by children’s rights and developed by boards and other institutions in different jurisdictions. Provincial and territorial legislation may include a right for a parent, guardian, or caregiver to remove their child/ children from classes, but those provisions are not universal and require investigation at the local level.

More FROM SAFER:

Use the QR Code below to access additional tipsheets and info on the SAFER project.



2SLGBTQIA+ IDENTITIES

Everyone deserves to be
treated respectfully.

EXAMPLE RESPONSE:

"I appreciate your enthusiasm about your child's education and willingness to be involved in their educational experience. You are welcome to review the worksheets and documents that your child brings home, and ask me any questions for clarification on the curriculum set by the province."

EXAMPLE RESPONSE:

"Gender identity, sexuality, and sex education are big topics, but essential to be taught in schools, as mandated by the province. I can understand your hesitation about these topics being taught in class, but I assure you that they are essential to building the educational development and sense of belonging of your child. I'm afraid parents and guardians can't prevent the curriculum from being delivered, and I invite you to chat with the principal or superintendent if you have any further questions."

"I DO NOT CONSENT TO MY CHILD LEARNING ABOUT GAY AND TRANS ISSUES IN CLASS AND IT'S WITHIN MY PARENTAL RIGHTS TO PREVENT THAT FROM HAPPENING."

Schools and educators have a responsibility to deliver the curriculum that is mandated by the province. As such, topics such as sex education, consent, social and emotional learning, and gender identity will be covered as part of the curriculum. While these can be big topics, and certainly have a lot of politically-motivated misinformation surrounding them, they are no less important than any other subject matter taught in schools. To prevent children and youth from learning about these topics is detrimental to their educational and social development, and may have lasting effects on their sense of belonging and self-esteem.

RESOURCES:

What You Need To Know About The "Parental Rights" Protests

<https://canadians.org/analysis/what-you-need-to-know-about-the-parental-rights-protests/>

Where the 'Parents' Rights' Campaign Came From. And How to Push Back

<https://theyee.ca/Opinion/2023/09/21/Parents-Rights-Sexual-Orientation-Gender-Campaign-Push-Back/>

The far-right web behind the parents' rights movement

<https://saskdispatch.com/articles/view/the-far-right-web-behind-the-parents-rights-movement>

"Parents' Rights" Rhetoric Is Rooted in Radical Conspiracy Theories

<https://thewalrus.ca/parents-rights-conspiracy-theories/>