

CALIFORNIA HEALTHY YOUTH ACT



MY SCHOOL MY RIGHTS KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

What is the California Healthy Youth Act?

The California Healthy Youth Act is a 2016 law that requires all California schools to teach comprehensive sex education to their students at least once in middle school and once in high school.

Why does this matter?

We know that people have healthier lives when they're given the knowledge and skills they need to have positive and safe relationships and behaviors. The law reminds us that sexuality is a normal part of human development.

How does this law affect you?

Because of this law, your school has to teach you comprehensive sex ed that is medically accurate, unbiased, inclusive of LGBTQ people, and appropriate for students of all races and genders. If you're a student with disabilities or an English Learner student, sex ed has to work for you. Ultimately, the law makes sure that sex ed gives you the tools you need to make healthy decisions about your life—your health, relationships, and well-being. Your school is not allowed to only give you information about abstinence, or not having sex.

What is “comprehensive sex ed”?

Comprehensive sex ed includes lessons on preventing and treating STIs and HIV. It discusses pregnancy—how to prevent it, the importance of prenatal care, and pregnancy decisions about parenting, abortion, and adoption. It addresses body image and gender, including gender identity and gender stereotypes, and sexual orientation too. And it helps you navigate relationships and provides information about sex trafficking and where to go if you're experiencing abuse. All these topics should be taught in your sex ed class.

What if my parent/guardian disagrees?

Most California parents support comprehensive sex ed. It encourages all students to talk to their parents or trusted adults, building better communication about these topics at home as well as providing important factual information in class. When you're scheduled for a sex ed class, your parent/guardian will receive a school notice that explains what the class will cover and offers a chance to review the curriculum and materials. If your parent decides that they don't want you getting sex ed, they can take you out of the class by asking in writing to the school.

What can I do if my school STILL doesn't provide comprehensive sex ed?

If you're still not getting the kind of sex ed required by the law, you can contact the ACLU and make a complaint. Your school won't know you made the complaint and the ACLU will follow up with the school to make sure they make changes.



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