



WHAT IS SEXUALITY EDUCATION?

Québec schools have exercised their responsibility with respect to sexuality education for almost 40 years. Today, sexuality education is even more necessary than it was when it was introduced into schools in the 1980s. The contemporary social context, characterized by modern technologies, reinforces the need to take action. This new context (smartphones and the Internet) exposes students to many sources of information on sexuality, some of which is distorted, unbalanced, unrealistic, sometimes contradictory and often degrading.

These challenges create an imperative for us to help young people navigate their developing sexuality in a way that is fulfilling and safe.






Sexuality education falls under the Québec Education Program. The subject has been compulsory since August 2018 for all students in Québec, from kindergarten to Secondary 5 (Education Act, section 461 and 20182019 Directives, provision 2.4.2, Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, MÉES).

Sexuality education constitutes a true social project as it takes into account and strengthens the values and principles of a democratic society.

It promotes a comprehensive, positive vision of sexuality. In addition to enabling students to acquire knowledge, sexuality education also helps them develop respectful, egalitarian attitudes and behaviours. Sexuality education is rooted in values such as equality between women and men, respect for diversity, respect for the physical and psychological integrity of individuals, a sense of responsibility and well-being.

WHAT IS SEXUALITY?

Sexuality is often associated solely with the biological dimension, while it is actually influenced by the interaction of five dimensions.

Biological  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and functioning of the body • Sexual and reproductive health 	Psychoaffective  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body image and identity • Expression of emotions and needs • Development of the emotional world 	Socio-cultural dimension  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Societal messages that influence identity construction (gender stereotypes) • Legal framework around rights and freedoms related to sexuality
Dimension relationnelle  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relations with others • Ability to communicate, negotiate and resolve conflict 	Dimension morale  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles that influence how sexuality is viewed and that guide individual choices 	



COMPULSORY CONTENT

Sexuality education is based on specific content that takes into account a child's age and level of development. The content has been developed by experts in sexology, health and pedagogy, based on the orientations and recommendations of recognized organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS).



A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

The school and the family play complementary roles in sexuality education. The complementary nature of these roles reinforces the efforts of both.

 <h3>Parents</h3>	 <h3>The school</h3>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ are the most influential mentors in their children's lives, passing on their values and principles ○ discuss the dimensions of sexuality with their children ○ reach out to the school if needed and participate in available workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is an ideal environment for offering sexuality education given the amount of time students spend there, and because the adults at the school have a meaningful relationship with the students ○ has competent, trustworthy teachers and professionals supporting the students ○ creates a respectful climate for sharing and chooses opportune moments for intervening in sexuality education ○ establishes a structure so that all students receive the same information

WHO WILL TEACH IT?

A workshop can be led by different members of the team, such as a teacher, special education teacher, psychoeducator or nurse. Certain community organizations also offer dynamic workshops geared to the children's age.

WHAT MATERIAL WILL BE USED?

Workshop facilitators will use pedagogical frameworks developed by the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur (MÉES). As with other subjects taught at school, sexuality education requires a variety of content and teaching methods. However, they are always geared to the children's age.

INFORMATION

For more information about sexuality education, please contact the school's principal.

VIDEO, AVAILABLE IN FIVE LANGUAGES

Produced by the Commission scolaire de Laval: Sexuality education demystified [Translation] (link to be included after the translation)

http://www2.cslaval.qc.ca/spip.php?article4450&var_recherche=%C3%89ducation%20%C3%A0%20a%20sexualit%C3%A9

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SOURCES

Documents on sexuality education produced by the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur are available here: (link to be inserted after the translation):

<http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/professionnels/dossiers/education-a-la-sexualite/>

Inspired by the CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal, Direction régionale de la santé publique, The five dimensions of sexuality [Translation], SEXOcllic [online], January 2019 (link to be inserted after the translation) (Page accessed in May 2019),

[\[https://santemontreal.qc.ca/fileadmin/fichiers/professionnels/DRSP/sujets-a-z/SEXOcllic/Comprendre/2019/Globalite-de-la-sexualite_Janvier_2019.pdf\]](https://santemontreal.qc.ca/fileadmin/fichiers/professionnels/DRSP/sujets-a-z/SEXOcllic/Comprendre/2019/Globalite-de-la-sexualite_Janvier_2019.pdf) (Page consultée en mai 2019)

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