

Who Should Read this Document?

SJASD caregivers and parents that have questions about Manitoba's human sexuality education or 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion policies and practices.

Questions and Answers for Caregivers on Human Sexuality Education & Supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ Students

Human Sexuality Education

1. What's taught in human sexuality education?

We teach age-appropriate human sexuality education as outlined in the provincial curriculum. Specifically, human sexuality education is part of the [Physical Education and Health Education curriculum](#) and covers a variety of topics including anatomy, healthy relationships, and safe practices. Teachers are trained to deliver human sexuality education in a developmentally sensitive way in Kindergarten, grade 2, 5, 7, 9 and 10. The content helps students develop the life skills they need to make healthy lifestyle choices.

2. Does human sexuality education cover sexual orientation and gender identity?

Human sexuality education is separate from the supportive environments we are creating in our schools for students to be themselves. Human sexuality education focuses on anatomy, healthy relationships, and safe practices in a developmentally sensitive way depending on the age group. That said, students are naturally curious and may bring up sensitive questions in the classroom. Teachers are trained to answer these questions in an age-appropriate way while being respectful of the context, situation and any parental sensitivities that may exist.

3. What if I don't want my child to take part in human sexuality education?

We strongly encourage parents with questions about human sexuality education to reach out to their child's teacher for further information. Teachers are the best source of accurate information on what is being taught in the classroom.

That said, if a parent takes this step and still feels they aren't comfortable with the content, they have the right to opt out of school-led instruction in favour of an alternative delivery setting. Parents can opt out on their child's annual registration form, or they can contact their teacher for more information.

Please note that parents that opt-out are responsible for ensuring that content is delivered to their child in an alternative setting. Teachers will provide caregivers with learning material and parents must sign off on what has been taught to their child.

Supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ Students

4. Does SJASD support 2SLGBTQIA+ students in school?

Yes. SJASD has a responsibility to ensure our schools are safe, caring and inclusive places for all our students. We do this through our [Respect for Human Diversity policy](#), which in itself is reflected in the province's [safe and caring schools initiative](#). Our support for 2SLGBTQIA+ students is also grounded in provincial and federal legislation including the [Canadian Human Rights Act](#) and the [Manitoba Human Rights Code](#). Ultimately, we have a responsibility to ensure that the services we are providing protect the human rights of our entire school community.

Did You Know?

Students are better able to learn and grow into responsible citizens when they have a sense of belonging in their schools.

5. How does SJASD support 2SLGBTQIA+ students?

Students are better able to learn and grow into responsible citizens when they have a sense of belonging in their schools. We work hard to ensure that students see themselves reflected broadly in the curriculum and school environment. This could include things like ensuring there are age-appropriate diverse reading and curricular materials available in the classroom. It could also include safe space signage, affirming the identity students express, having gender inclusive bathroom options available, providing gender inclusive supports, and showing diversity in general at the school level.

6. My child is gender diverse. What is SJASD doing to ensure children like mine feel safe in school?

We are a gender-affirming school community that respects human diversity. Students should feel comfortable being themselves in our schools. If they have any concerns, they should reach out to a trusted adult. Our school-based teams have a responsibility to respond in an age-appropriate and evidence-informed way to students that may request support relating to sexual orientation and gender identity.

7. As a parent, I have concerns about the availability of gender inclusive books in classrooms and school libraries. What can I do?

We strongly encourage parents with questions about diverse books to reach out to their child's teacher or school administrator for further information. Teachers are the best source of accurate information on what books are available to students in their classrooms. Teachers can also liaise with Library Technicians on materials that may be available in school libraries. It is important to know that diverse reading materials are age-appropriate and help to support a sense of belonging for all our students. Teachers and administrators work with caregivers to ensure a positive educational experience for each student.

8. I have concerns about students using their preferred name and pronoun without parental consent. What do you say to that?

We have a responsibility to respect a student's preferred name and pronoun usage. This responsibility is grounded in human rights legislation and diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives as per provincial requirements.

In most cases, gender affirming support for students takes place with parental involvement. But coming out can be a stressful experience for any 2SLGBTQIA+ student, and some students might have concerns or initial concerns about expressing their identity to their loved ones.

Ultimately, we know that a student that is supported in their self-expression has a greater likelihood of positive mental health outcomes. It can be tough for kids to feel comfortable being themselves, especially when there is a lot of polarization around this issue. We prioritize the wellbeing of our students, and will involve parents, caregivers or trusted adults as per the wishes of our students.

Still Have Questions?

Contact your child's teacher or school administrator.



St. James-Assiniboia School Division
Great Schools for Growing and Learning