

What is SOGI-inclusive Education?

SOGI stands for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. SOGI-inclusive education fosters safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environments for all students. This approach promotes diversity and empathy with the purpose of reducing bullying and discrimination towards those who identify as Two-Spirit or Indigiqueer, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and others (2SLGBTQI+).

SOGI-inclusive education aims to celebrate every student's unique identity so they can see themselves and their families reflected in their learning environments and resources. SOGI is incorporated into classrooms in an age-appropriate manner and is not a separate curriculum.

There are often misconceptions about SOGI-inclusive education. This document outlines common myths and corresponding facts.

SOGI-inclusive education promotes a specific sexual orientation or gender identity

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FACT: SOGI-inclusive education does **not** promote any specific identity or orientation and is designed to create a safe and welcoming environment for all students. It aims to combat discrimination by fostering representation of all types of people within classroom resources and enhancing awareness of the experiences and challenges faced by 2SLGBTQI+ individuals.

Did you know?

Sexual orientation and gender identity are protected under the BC Human Rights Code, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and provincial legislation.

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“The most important task for schools is to provide a safe, nurturing, non-violent atmosphere... for all students, inclusive of all gender identities.”

— Public Health Agency of Canada, 2014

Government of Canada Website: Questions and Answers: Gender Identity in Schools



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SOGI-inclusive education is about “recruiting” students to be 2SLGBTQI+

FACT: SOGI-inclusive education aims to create understanding, acceptance, and inclusion for 2SLGBTQI+ individuals. It does **not** seek to recruit or influence students' sexual orientation or gender identity.



Did you know?

SOGI 123 has reduced bullying and sexual orientation discrimination for all students, including heterosexual students*

**As reported by BC students in grades 7 to 12 through the BC Adolescent Health Survey*

SOGI-inclusive education is the same thing as sexual health education

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FACT: SOGI is a distinct and separate topic from sexual health education. SOGI-inclusive education is designed to promote understanding, and includes topics like identity, respect, and belonging.

Sexual health education is part of BC's Physical and Health Education curriculum and focuses on the biological, physiological, and reproductive aspects of human sexuality. Sexual health education is taught separately and follows specific guidelines.

SOGI-inclusive education violates parents' rights

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FACT: SOGI-inclusive education is meant to complement parents' efforts in teaching essential values of tolerance, respect, and acceptance of all people. It does not undermine parental rights but rather contributes to a greater understanding of diversity and inclusion.

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SOGI-inclusive education is not needed because these issues are not relevant to all students

FACT: These issues are relevant to every student. Having inclusive classrooms, and SOGI-inclusive education and anti-bullying policies improve the school climate, reducing discrimination, depression, anxiety, substance use, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts for all students. SOGI resources help ensure schools are welcoming for every person.



Did you know?

30% of 2SLGBTQI+ respondents* have been the victims of cyberbullying, compared to 8% of cisgender heterosexual respondents.

**Respondents of the Second National Climate Survey on Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia in Canadian Schools conducted by the University of Winnipeg and the University of Manitoba in partnership with Egale Canada.*



SOGI-inclusive education is a recent and controversial addition to education

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FACT: Although SOGI has gained increased attention recently, it is **not** a new concept and is supported by many educational organizations, school districts, and child development and health experts. SOGI-inclusive education, like the inclusion of diverse cultures and races, has been part of the broader goal for diversity and inclusion in schools for decades.

Hear from Families Like Yours

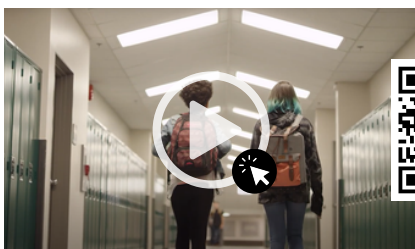


Watch these informative videos created by **SOGI 123**, an inclusive education initiative developed by the ARC Foundation.

For Elementary Families



For Secondary Families



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SOGI-inclusive education is inappropriate for students

FACT: All students learn about topics such as respect, compassion, and diversity, while more complex topics like discrimination and injustice may be explored in later years. SOGI-inclusive resources play a pivotal role in addressing fundamental human ideals such as acceptance and a sense of belonging.

Age-Appropriate Topic Examples

Elementary: K - Grade 5

- Individual and family diversity
- Encouraging respectful curiosity
- Celebrating others' differences
- Understanding gender identity and gender stereotypes

Middle: Grades 6 - 8

- Gender stereotypes and bullying
- Gender and appearance in media
- 2SLGBTQI+ human rights
- Celebrating differences and roles as allies

Secondary: Grades 9 - 12

- Social justice vocabulary
- Gender stereotypes in literature
- Discrimination
- Justice, rights, and freedoms
- Indigenous perspectives of gender

SOGI-inclusive Education

SOGI-inclusive education takes many forms within our schools and classrooms including:

Environment

- **Language:** Discussions and materials use inclusive language that respect students' identities.
- **Visible Support:** Classrooms may feature posters and imagery to affirm commitment to diversity and inclusion.
- **Anti-bullying:** Bullying is actively addressed through policies, interventions, and assemblies.
- **Literature:** Books, materials, and assignments avoid stereotypes and may feature 2SLGBTQI+ characters and SOGI themes to reflect diversity.

Support

- **Peers:** Student-led clubs provide inclusive spaces for 2SLGBTQI+ and allied students.
- **Counselling:** School counsellors may offer counselling services as well as referral to community agencies for students and families seeking supports related to SOGI.
- **Staff:** Teachers approach SOGI topics with compassion, ensuring safe spaces for students to ask questions, share experiences, and express themselves.
- **Families:** Open communication with parents/caregivers that respects privacy and addresses concerns is encouraged.

Resources

Greater Victoria School District: Policy 4305 - Gender Identity and Gender Expression
www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/documents/name/policy-4305

SOGI 123: Parents' Guide to SOGI in Schools
www.sogieducation.org/resource/parents-guide-to-sogi-in-schools

SOGI 123: Two Spirit Belonging in SOGI-Inclusive Frameworks
www.sogieducation.org/resource/two-spirit-belonging-in-sogi-inclusive-frameworks

Government of Canada: Gender & Sexual Diversity Glossary
www.btb.termiumplus.gc.ca/publications/diversite-diversity-eng.html

Thank You

If you have any questions, please reach out to your school. Thank you for helping create a more understanding, inclusive, and accepting community.

