

New Coalition, 144 Groups Strong, Stands Up for Sex Ed

Over 140 community and health organizations join to show support

What: At Queen's Park today, the new Ontario Coalition Supporting Health Education (OCSHE), made up of over 140 community agencies, parent groups, hospitals, educational not-for-profits and health care organizations across the province, will declare its unwavering support for the new sexual health education component of the Health and Physical Education curriculum in Ontario's schools.

The updates to the sexual health education component of the curriculum have polarized community agencies and parents across the province. The OCSHE has formed in response to the public protests and boycotts from a variety of groups who are unhappy with various aspects of the new curriculum. Representatives from member OCSHE organizations including Muslims for Ontario's Health and Physical Education Curriculum and Planned Parenthood Toronto will be at Queens Park prior to question period to speak about the importance of the new curriculum for today's students.

OCSHE will also be releasing a public service announcement made by youth to encourage an honest discussion of sexual health education and its positive impact on health and wellbeing.

When: **Wednesday, September 23, 2015 at 9:45 a.m.**

Where: MEDIA STUDIO - Legislative Bldg - Rm 148
First Floor – West wing
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A1A2

Who: A diverse panel of individuals from Ontario-based community agencies, hospitals, parent groups and health care organizations as well as community youth members.

- Rabea Murtaza, Founder of Muslims for Ontario's Health and Physical Education Curriculum
- Doug Kerr, Parent Activist
- Sarah Hobbs-Blyth, Executive Director, Planned Parenthood Toronto
- Maya Roy, Executive Director, Newcomer Women's Services Toronto

Why: Despite vocal opposition from some groups in Ontario, the updated sexual health education component of the curriculum is supported by parents, health professionals, educators and community groups across the province. It is based on scientific and medical evidence and the "most extensive curriculum consultation process ever undertaken" by the Ontario Ministry of Education.¹

The OCHSE believes that the health and well-being of students is a shared responsibility that includes students themselves, parents, educators, administrators, and community partners. Coalition members are calling on supporters of the new curriculum to speak out and make their voices heard.

The coalition supports the curriculum because:

- It is healthy.
- It is founded on research, science, prudent public health principles, and an adherence to the Ontario Code of Human Rights.
- It accepts the realities of the sexual pressures we all face even before we have sex.
- It respects the diversity of families and relationships – including same-sex families with children of all backgrounds.
- It will decrease bullying and isolation for people who are often ignored or ostracized simply by virtue of their identity.

For more information on the coalition and media kit, visit: <http://supportthealtheducation.ca/> on Sept 23rd.

For a list of the Ontario Coalition Supporting Health Education groups link [here](#).

To join the conversation on social media asks your questions using the hashtag #SupportSexEd.

Support the movement by signing OCSHE member, Samer Mansour's, change.org petition:
www.change.org/SupportSexEd

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Footnotes: [1] Ontario Releases Updated Health & Physical Education Curriculum, Parent Resources. Retrieved September 17, 2015.
<http://news.ontario.ca/edu/en/2015/02/ontario-releases-updated-health-physical-education-curriculum-parent-resources.html>