

# SOGI Explained

## SOGI 1 2 3 - Parent and Caregiver Resources

**Information about what SOGI-inclusive education looks like in Canadian schools.**

**Available in [English](#), [Mandarin](#), [Punjabi](#) and [French](#)**

The Ministry has created a new resource to respond to misinformation about SOGI-Inclusive Education. Please see this [SOGI-Inclusive Education Myth Busting document](#) for more details.

September 16, 2022: [Minister's, K-12 education partners' statement on support for SOGI](#)

The following information is provided to explain aspects of the curriculum related to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) and how it is being discussed in the classroom. It is important to note that **there is no separate and distinct SOGI program or curriculum**. However, throughout K-12 curriculum and school activities, students and teachers explore the topic of human rights and:

- What it means to value diversity and respect differences
- How to respond to discrimination
- Teachers may include discussions around the B.C. Human Rights Code, sexual orientation and gender identity.

### **SOGI and SOGI 123 are two different things.**

SOGI stands for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. It is an inclusive term that encompasses all individuals regardless of where they identify on the sexual orientation or gender identity spectrums. Every person has a sexual orientation and every person has a gender identity. SOGI includes heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit, cisgender, and more.

[SOGI 123](#) is a provincial resource to assist in helping school districts and educators to build caring and inclusive learning environments for students of all sexual orientations, gender identities or expressions, regardless of their race, culture, or religion. SOGI 123 was developed by the ARC Foundation in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, BC Teachers' Federation, UBC Faculty of Education, nine school districts in the province, educational partners, and local, national, and international 2SLGBTQ+ community organizations. Educators are not required to use this resource.

***62% of 2SLGBTQ+ students still feel unsafe at school. According to the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC), 19 per cent of B.C. high school students identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or otherwise non-heterosexual, and 42 per cent of LGBTQ+ high school students in the province report being victims of cyberbullying compared to 14 per cent of heterosexual students. In the past 12 months, according to the BCCPAC, lesbian, gay and***

***bisexual youth were seven times more likely than heterosexual youth to attempt suicide. This can change. If we work together!***

SOGI 123 provides resources in three areas: 1 – Policies and Procedures, 2 – Inclusive Environments, and 3 – Curriculum Resources.

The work being done is not unique - it is part of the Ministry of Education's mandated provincial curriculum in both public and private school systems. There is nothing overly new about this work and a new subject area is not being introduced. Teachers have been teaching this curriculum for years, but there is a legitimate need for increasing awareness of sexual orientation and gender identity to be as inclusive as possible. We hope this will clarify confusing and inconsistent messages being communicated by individuals and organizations not affiliated with our school district.

In July 2016, the provincial government amended the BC Human Rights Code to include gender expression as prohibited grounds of discrimination (sexual orientation was already included in the Code). Later that year, the Ministry of Education announced that explicit references to sexual orientations and gender identity must be included in all public and independent school districts' codes of conduct throughout the province. The Ministry of Education also recently implemented a redesigned curriculum, which provides educators the opportunity to teach in a more inclusive and personalized way. **It is important to note that curriculum is provincially mandated and adherence to the BC Human Rights Code is not optional for all schools and school districts.**

**School District 75 (Mission) is ensuring that the diversity that already exists within our school communities is reflected in classroom lessons.** Sexual orientation and gender identity are topics that are present throughout several curriculum content areas, but mostly arise in the physical and health education (PHE), language arts, and social studies curricula among many other topics. The PHE curriculum also has topics related to nutrition, physical activity, maintaining positive mental health, sexual health, child abuse prevention and drug education. Sexual orientation and gender identity are also sometimes discussed as they arise in the daily lives of students, and in the “teachable moments” that occur daily in classrooms. **All this information is age and developmentally appropriate and coverage of curricular content is done very respectfully.**

To build a strong community, it is important for all students, families, and staff to be reflected in the curriculum and in school life, meaning that we are inclusive of all types of families (single parent, mixed culture, intergenerational, foster families, blended families, adopted, same sex families, etc.) and individuals (regardless of how they identify or what their sexual preferences might be). **It is about respecting all people and the diversity of our society.**

In addressing SOGI in the curriculum, teachers do not suggest students develop a particular set of beliefs around sexual orientation or gender identity. **The approach is to build understanding of the diverse society that we live in and learn to treat each other with dignity and respect, regardless of our differences.** Most school districts throughout the province are beginning to use the SOGI 123 resource, but other resources may also be used to meet curricular outcomes.

It is important to note that the Provincial Government has allowed for some flexibility in the delivery of certain 'sensitive areas' of the curriculum, specifically topics related to reproduction and sexuality that some students and their parents/guardians may feel more comfortable addressing by means other than instruction by a teacher in a regular classroom setting. In such instances, students, with their parents' or guardians' consent, may arrange to address topics related to reproduction and sexuality by an alternative means. This must be arranged in consultation with their school.

The alternate means must be agreed upon by the students, their parents or guardians, and the school. The alternate delivery policy does not allow students to "opt-out" of learning about these topics. It is expected that students will, in consultation with their school, demonstrate their knowledge of the learning standard(s) or learning outcomes they have arranged to address by alternative means. These topics usually do not include lessons and topics related to sexual orientation and gender identity, unless they relate specifically to reproduction and sexuality.

All LGBT2Q+ students, employees and their respective families have the right:

- To have their confidentiality protected and respected;
- To self-identification and self-determination; and
- To have their identities, families and communities represented, respected and recognized within all aspects of the school environment

## FURTHER Resources

We encourage you to read the information on this webpage, including our Frequently Asked Questions and the Physical & Health Education Curriculum Connections outlined below, and visit the webpages below:

- **Physical & Health Education** <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/physical-health-education>
- **BC Government Media Release** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2017EDUC0104-001810>
- **BC Government SOGI Factsheet** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/factsheets/sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity-sogi-inschools>
- **BC Government Media Release** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2016EDUC0089-001625>
- **BC's New Curriculum** <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/>
- **SOGI 1 2 3 Resource Guide** <https://www.sogieducation.org/resource-guide>
- **BC SOGI Education** <https://bc.sogieducation.org/>
- **Fraser Valley Youth Society** <https://fvys.ca/>
- **Canadian Paediatric Society: Caring for Kids** <https://caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/behavior-and-development/gender-identity>

- **Gender & Sexuality: Kelty's Recommended Resources** <https://keltymentalhealth.ca/collection/gender-sexuality-kelty-s-recommended-resources>
- **Letter from Premier, David Eby | Support for SOGI**
- **SOGI in Curriculum FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)** <https://www.mpsd.ca/Programs-Services/parents/SOGI/FAQs>
- Ministry of Early Learning & Childcare Bulletin, June 30, 2023: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/running-daycare-preschool/childcare-bc-bulletin>

#### **VIDEOS**

<https://youtu.be/ZDSARFjk7X0>

<https://youtu.be/W5-BhcorOtI>