

Sexuality Education Justice (SEJ) Framework

Developed collaboratively by the SexEd! Strategic Cohort: Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice, California Latinas for Reproductive Justice, Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights, Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health and SPARK Reproductive Justice Now.

WHAT WE WANT: OUR VISION

- ★ We want sexuality education that has a **holistic** view of sexuality & sexual health, including positive body image, self-esteem, gender identity, sexual orientation, and communication and decision-making in relationships, and for sexuality to be seen as a part of life.
- ★ We want sexuality education that goes **beyond a deficit-based disease & pregnancy prevention framework** to recognize and celebrate sexuality as a natural part of human development.
- ★ We want **attention, commitment and resources** that focus on promoting overall sexual health of all people, including marginalized communities – people of color, LGBTQ folks, people with disabilities, immigrants.
- ★ Sexuality education is about **equity**, and we want quality sexuality education for all students and all people.
- ★ Sexuality education is a **core part of people's lives**, not an extra issue that we work on.
- ★ What we want is sexuality education **JUSTICE**.

THE PROBLEM

- Abstinence-only education doesn't work, and even "comprehensive" sexuality education can be a **narrow, one-size fits all approach** that doesn't build on the strengths, histories and experiences of young people, families and communities.
- Some students get better sexuality education than others. In many cases, this is because some schools have more money and resources: **it's an issue of equity**.
- Educators, parents, and others who provide information about sexuality do not have tools to teach sexuality education that is **holistic, non-deficit based, and is relevant to our families, communities and cultures**.

THE SOLUTION: SEJ

Sexuality Education Justice is holistic.

- ★ It addresses the **needs and realities of all people** – including people of color, indigenous people, immigrants and English language learners, people with disabilities, LGBTQ people, people of faith, and people of all ages and genders – and is based on the lived experiences and cultural norms of these diverse groups of people.
- ★ It incorporates **social, cultural & economic support** for pregnant and parenting youth, including directly addressing stigma & demonization of young people of color.
- ★ It addresses **cultural & societal myths, stereotypes and barriers** (e.g. shame & guilt) around sexuality & positive sexuality.
- ★ It's having the **power and resources** to make informed decisions about our gender, body, sexuality, relationships and wellbeing.

WHY DO WE NEED SEJ?

- ★ Sexuality education **impacts everyone**, not just the majority. So our approaches must resonate with all communities.
- ★ Sexuality education must **support, not demonize**, communities that are "left out", e.g. those whose power to make decisions about their bodies is compromised by existing approaches to sexuality education, like communities of color, LGBT communities, teen parents, etc.
- ★ Sexuality education must **build on the wisdom and experience of our communities**, and speak to the needs of our communities, in order to benefit our communities.

HOW DO WE ACHIEVE SEJ?

- ★ By building on community strengths:
- ★ **Youth** can engage in peer education, leadership development, and organizing to ensure that they and their peers are gaining the knowledge and power they need to make informed decisions about sex and sexuality.
- ★ **Parents** can break the silence and fear around talking about sexuality with their children if they have the tools they need to do so. Parents care about what their children are learning, they want to develop trust with their children, and they are willing to stand up for what is best for their families.
- ★ **Organizations** can ensure that the communities they serve have the culturally relevant support and resources that allow all people to make the best decisions for themselves regarding their gender, bodies, sexuality and relationships through providing direct services, developing tools, advocating for policies and organizing for change.