

Sex Education: Shame VS Knowledge

NO
BODY
SHAME
CAMPAIGN



At what age do we learn shame of our bodies?

When is it appropriate to have information about sex? Sexuality? Gender? Sexual Pleasure?

"You don't encourage people to take care of their body by telling them to hate it."

-Laci Green

#endbodyshame

"There is no wrong way to have a body."

-Glenn Marla

#endbodyshame

Sex Education

Young Children are often taught to be ashamed of their bodies, particularly their genitals. Often this is not on purpose, but due to parents feeling uncomfortable about body parts. Some ways that this shame is taught is by using slang terms like PeePee, or “privates” rather than actual names for body parts. Parents may stigmatize pleasure as sin or shameful if they notice their child touching their genitals.

Throughout school years children are taught to keep their genitals covered, and to not talk about them. As they age into puberty, formal sex education rarely includes talk of pleasure, although media provides many examples that sex is indeed all about pleasure. This contradiction can lead to shame around bodies, sex and sexual pleasure.

Did you know?

There are a few slang terms for penis and testicles, and most can be used in neutral or positive ways, or in ways that empower persons with a penis.

Yet there are many many more terms for vagina and vulva, and few of them are commonly used in a positive way. What message does this send about gender and value?

Gender

We socialize children, often pre-birth, according to their gender. This means that we have, often without meaning to, attached various values, personality traits, skill expectations and so forth to a child based on the visible genitalia that a child has. In school gender is reinforced by peers and by the teachers. There are gendered bathrooms, sorting of children by gender, gender based programs that children are often encouraged/discouraged to participate in based on their genitalia. If you would like to read more about gender and it's construction, we recommend Cordelia Fine's book "Gender Delusion"

Consent

From early childhood we may be taught some odd things about consent. Toddlers may learn that we will touch them however we want, when we want, particularly their genitals. Some parents may change and wipe regardless of their squawking about it. What message does this send children about their bodies? About Consent and Touch?

Gender plays a huge role in messages about consent. “Boys will be boys” and placing value on female purity sends a clear message that males aggressively pursue and females must be gatekeepers. This can be problematic for sexual autonomy and respecting that consent should be an enthusiastic YES, not merely the absence of a no. This message also prioritized male pleasure, and centres responsibility for sexual activity upon females, rather than persons of all genders being seen as sexual beings with personal responsibility for their own actions (not for the actions of others).

A Culture of Non Consent

The values that we teach children about their bodies, pleasure, consent and touch will be the building blocks upon which they form their views of adult sexuality, sexual interactions and consent for sex.

Currently we know that sexual assault is a prolific problem in Canada. Studies show that gender views play a huge role in sexual assault. Persons with sexually assaulting behaviours are most often assigned male at birth (cismales), and victims are most often persons who are female (cis or trans) or gay men.

In the resources page there are links that discuss in more depth these subjects regarding pleasure, slang for body parts, gender, consent and rape culture.

Sex Ed: Lies, Misinformation, Exclusion

- Sex Negative Information
 - Seniors
 - Het Normative
 - STI's
 - Gender Stereotypes
 - Absence of Pleasure
 - Fear Based (abstinence)
- <https://goo.gl/F5C6nt>
 - <https://goo.gl/jcc4En>
- What lies were you told?
- How did those lies impact you and your self image?

Sex Education: What's Missing

- Pleasure!
- Same Sex/Queer Sex
 - How-To's
 - Porn
 - Kink
 - Destigmatizing
- Gender as a social construct
- Risk Awareness rather than Fear

