

# Proposed Sex Education in Schools From Year One

November 22, 2013 at 12:46am

**\*\*Please note I have re-written my original note into this one with the idea being that it can be used for a broader audience (rather than the original one which specifically addressed my local school's issues).\*\***

I apologise for the length of this note, but it really is too important not to read, so please bear with me. I attended a Health Curriculum Community Evening at my children's primary school last week where we given the opportunity to hear from a couple of proposed new curriculums to be introduced to our school.

One of the presentations was by an organisation called 'Every Body Education' who have developed a sexuality education programme for primary schools – starting from Year One – that they are wanting to introduce to New Zealand. The talk was a general overview on how children have a right to accurate information about the names of their body parts and how bodies work, about future puberty changes and about healthy and respectful relationships and sexual behaviour. In the presenter's opinion, children get "too little information too late".

We had a very short question time before we were asked to vote in groups on whether the programmes we had heard from should become part of the curriculum at our primary school.

Based on the presentation by Every Body Education most of the group I was in were leaning favourably towards accepting this programme, but after some undecided discussion about the specifics of what they were wanting to teach our children at what ages someone went and grabbed one of their brochures (which we had been told we could take home with us) - which very quickly swung the majority in our group in the opposite direction.

Unfortunately once parents started talking outside after the meeting it appeared that most parents had voted in favour of the programme without reading the brochure which gave the specific programme outline. Once parents began reading the brochure outside, there were some horrified comments and people began to wish they could change their vote to a negative one.

I strongly felt that the details of this important issue needed to be brought to every parent's attention in our school for their feedback as I was concerned about the decision outcome for our school based on a small meeting representation. I posted a note on Facebook and sent out an email to every parent in the school that I had an email address for (which wasn't much) specifically outlining the programme that Every Body Education wanted to teach our children in order to give everyone the opportunity to have their voice heard on such a weighty subject. This is the graphic material being proposed:

## EVERY BODY EDUCATION BODY SCIENCE PROGRAMME:

### **Year 1 & 2 Programme (5-6 year olds)**

Students will learn:

- That they have ownership of their bodies.
- Scientific vocabulary related to sexual and reproductive anatomy.

- That conception usually happens when a sperm joins an ovum through sexual intercourse, but that there are many different ways that families are formed.
- That sexual activity is an adult activity.
- That the baby grows in the uterus/womb (not the stomach), and how it grows.
- That the baby is usually born through the vagina, but sometimes via caesarean birth.
- What condoms look like and not to pick them up.
- Appropriate people they can talk to when they have questions.

### **Year 3 & 4 Programme (7-8 year olds)**

Students will learn everything previous year levels have learned plus:

- That all families have different values and beliefs towards sexual activity.
- The basics about menstruation (periods) and nocturnal emissions (wet dreams) as clean and healthy processes.

### **Year 5 & 6 Programme (9-10 year olds)**

Students will learn everything previous year levels have learned plus:

- The different ways conception can happen and families are formed, and that all families (single parent, blended, divorced, gay, adoptive) are deserving of respect.
- That homophobic and sexist language, jokes, and attitudes are harmful.
- All about physical and emotional changes at puberty, and that it is all perfectly normal.
- How to recognise a healthy relationship and care for others.
- The responsibilities that come with the decisions to be in a sexual relationship.

My goal in doing what I did was to prevent this programme from being accepted into my children's school which we achieved - our school principal sent out an email the next day advising it would not go ahead due to the feedback received. However I was quite unprepared for the overwhelming response received as my Facebook note and the emails were shared and forwarded far beyond my local school community. I think the awareness raised has been of great value and I think every parent in NZ should have this organisation brought to their attention so it cannot "slip" into their school under the radar ... because based on the presentation alone that they gave, it just might have gotten into our school - the thought of which absolutely horrifies me.

I believe that it is inappropriate for the presentation of these topic matters to be done in a "one size fits all" approach at **primary** school, particularly to our 5, 6, 7 and 8 year olds - but rather should be introduced at home by parents at an age THEY determine appropriate for their individual children. We know our children best and this topic is a **parental right** to decide how and when, not a school or government one to force on children whether they're ready for it or not.

Please feel free to share this note to keep raising awareness in this regard.