

SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION NEEDS AND EXPERIENCES OF 2SLGBTQINA+ YOUTH IN CANADA

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BACKGROUND & OBJECTIVE

Sexual health education (SHE) is often provided within a cisgender, heterosexual context, excluding the experiences of 2SLGBTQINA+ youth. *The Canadian Guidelines for SHE⁽¹⁾* emphasize the right of youth to access inclusive SHE. We evaluated the SHE needs (e.g., desired topics and principles) and experiences (e.g., quality of SHE) of 2SLGBTQINA+ youth in Canada, comparing to cisgender, heterosexual youth where appropriate.

METHODS

- 925 2SLGBTQINA+ youth; 2,026 cisgender, heterosexual youth across Canada
- Online survey examining sexual health education needs & experiences

RESULTS

2SLGBTQINA+ youth want SHE that is aligned with the Core Principles of Comprehensive Sexual Health Education¹

CORE PRINCIPLES STATEMENTS	% AGREE/ STRONGLY AGREE
Access to age-appropriate SHE in schools is a basic right for all	88%
Sexual health education should....	88%
Be inclusive to all students	88%
Be scientifically accurate & use evidence-based teaching methods	83%
Promote gender equality and the prevention of gender-bsaed violence	87%
Reduce homophobia	86%
Reduce transphobia	86%
Incorporate a balanced approach	87%
Promote the right to autonomous decision making and respect for the rights of others	88%
Be relevant and responsive	88%
Be provided by educators who have sufficient knowledge and skills	88%
Address the broad range of factors that impact sexual health	87%

2SLGBTQINA+ youth want a variety of topics included and want to begin learning about most topics in the elementary/middle school grades.

TOPIC	% SUPPORTED	MEDIAN GRADE
Gender identity	97%	6-8
Sexual orientation	99%	6-8
Bodily autonomy	99%	1-3
Safer sex methods	99%	6-8
Sexual consent	99%	6-8
Sexual pleasure	96%	6-8
Sexual & reproductive rights	99%	6-8
Sexuality & communication technology	97%	6-8

KEY TOPICS 2SLGBTQINA+ YOUTH WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT:

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

GENDER IDENTITY & EXPRESSION

RELATIONSHIPS

2SLGBTQINA+ COMMUNITIES

PLEASURE

VIOLENCE PREVENTION

BODY SYSTEMS

DIVERSITY OF SEXUAL EXPERIENCES

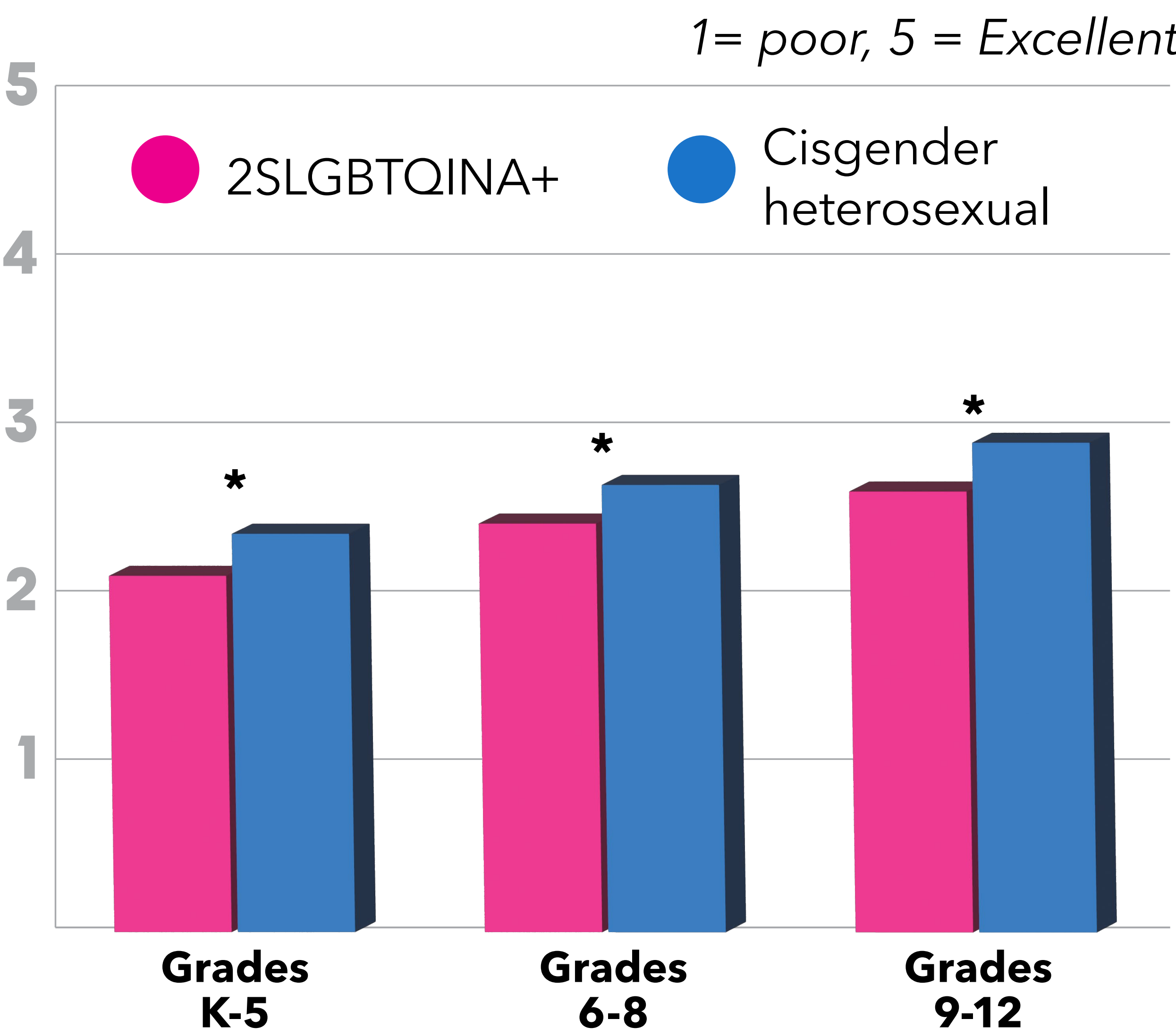
SAFER SEX

2SLGBTQINA+ YOUTH ARE SIGNIFICANTLY LESS LIKELY TO REPORT THAT SHE MEETS THEIR NEEDS.

The SHE I received/am receiving in high school...	2SLGBTQINA+ %agree/strongly agree	Cisgender heterosexual %agree/strongly agree
...met/meets my sexual health needs	39%*	58%
...was/is inclusive of my sexual orientation	38%*	74%
...was/is inclusive of my gender identity	51%*	72%

*p < .001

Quality of SHE in...



CONCLUSIONS

SHE is not currently meeting the needs of 2SLGBTQINA+ youth. To ensure that all youth in Canada have access to accurate information to make autonomous decisions about their sexual health, inclusive, relevant, and age-appropriate SHE that addresses the needs of 2SLGBTQINA+ youth is required.

REFERENCES

1. SIECCAN. (2019). *Canadian Guidelines for Sexual Health Education*. Toronto, ON: Sex Information & Education Council of Canada (SIECCAN).