

Dear Committee Members,

Hello, my name is Dan Buck and I work in the Education Equity dept of OutFront MN. I am here to advocate for sex education in MN's school system and for it to include our LGBTQ students. Formal sex education varies in content across schools, studies have demonstrated that comprehensive sexuality education programs reduce the rates of sexual activity, sexual risk behaviors, such as number of partners and unprotected intercourse, STIs, and adolescent pregnancy. The same study compared risk activity in students who received sex education vs students who received abstinence only showed no increase in at risk activities in students receiving comp sex education.

LGBTQ youth are negatively impacted as a result of many factors; for LGBTQ youth, social stigma about their sexual choices or identities can be particularly difficult. Stigma comes in many forms, such as discrimination, harassment, family disapproval, social rejection, and violence. This puts LGBTQ youth at increased risk for certain negative health outcomes. For example, disproportionately higher rates sexually transmitted diseases, lesbian and bisexual females are more likely to have ever been pregnant than their heterosexual peers; and transgender youth are more likely to have attempted suicide than their cisgender peers.

As a bisexual kid, I was left out of the conversation because adults were uncomfortable. This uncomfortable feeling by people who should have been watching out for us put me at risk. By leaving a population out of the conversation you leave them uninformed and at risk because they don't have access to information that can protect them. It creates stigma around their sexual health and leaves them afraid to ask questions. You cannot stop kids from having sex, what you need to do is give them information that allows safer decision making and should not be put in terms of who is having sex, male, female, transgender, but that it is happening and there are ways to be safer about it.

Thank you,

Dan Buck, Educational Equity Coordinator at OutFront MN

American College of Obstetrics and Obstetrics and Gynecologists

Center for Disease Control

For less than \$10 per student, CDC programs demonstrate improvements in behaviors and experiences that put students at risk for HIV, STD and pregnancy.

"Pregnancies more Common Among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Youths"

