

I consider myself extremely lucky to have had a thorough and inclusive sexuality education experience. This was not provided through my school, but my Unitarian Universalist church. As a transgender gay man, I have not once seen myself represented in my school's very lacking sex education curriculum. My mother had to go out of her way to drive me to class at my church every week so that I could learn about my options as a human being when it comes to healthy sexual decision making.

As a peer educator at Planned Parenthood, I have been asked countless questions by teens across Rhode Island that should have been common knowledge, but because of how lacking these students' sex education experiences were, they didn't know. This is especially true regarding those who identify within the LGBT community. I have had teens who did not know that queer people need to use protection because in school, many are taught that condoms are used for preventing pregnancy, not STIs. I have had students ask me if it is wrong for them to be gay because their household is unaccepting and they are not represented at school.

It is extremely unfair for many students, such as myself, to be left without the information we need to live safe and healthy lives. The voices and experiences of all students need to be represented in sex education so that every single student knows how to make the right decision for themselves when it comes to their sexuality.

5604  
3-3-2021