

Information for Parents about Safe Schools Coalition Australia

What parents have a right to know about the Government teaching radical gender theory to our children

What is Safe Schools?

“Under the guise of anti-bullying, the Safe Schools Coalition is promoting a radical view of gender and sexuality”.

Kevin Donnelly, Senior Research Fellow at the Australian Catholic University.

Safe Schools Coalition Australia has produced materials funded by the Federal Government and taught in more than 500 government schools across Australia. Many Catholic children attend government schools and their parents might not know if their child’s school is using the Safe Schools materials, given there is no requirement for parents to be consulted or informed by the school that Safe Schools is being implemented, and the Department of Education in Queensland and New South Wales do not provide a list of government schools participating in the program.

The Catholic Church has significant concerns about Safe Schools resources, particularly the **All Of Us** materials, because the lessons and resources actively promote controversial ‘gender theory’.

All Of Us outlines eight lesson plans about “gender diversity, sexual diversity and intersex topics”, which it says is “... to build safer and more inclusive environments for same-sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse students, teachers, and families.”¹

The Safe Schools Coalition actively promotes the use of the picture book **The Gender Fairy** to be read to children as young as 4 years old. This book includes the message that only the child knows if they are a boy or girl and that no one else can tell them their gender. <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org.au/is-the-gender-fairy-in-your-school-library-5>

The Safe Schools Coalition also promotes the obligatory inclusion of LGBTI issues into all subjects, providing the example of drafting a maths problem referring to “David and his boyfriend Tuan” as a way to present “inclusive” content. <http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org.au/making-your-classroom-safe-and-inclusive-for-lgbti-students-three-top-tips-1>

What is gender theory?

Gender theory teaches children their gender is not just what they are born with - male or female - but what they choose.² **All Of Us** student handouts state the “building blocks of identity” include “... the sex we were assigned at birth [the parts of your body], our gender identity [how you feel], and our sexual identity [who you like]”.³

¹ Safe Schools Coalition Australia, **All Of Us: Health and Physical Resource**. Understanding Gender Diversity, Sexual Diversity and Intersex Topics for Years 7 and 8, page 3. See: <http://safeschoolshub.edu.au/safe-schools-coalition-australia-resources> . All references to the **All Of Us** materials are references to this document.

² Tobin, B (2016) “A key issue in the current discussion of ‘transgenderism’”, **Bioethics Outlook**, Vol 27(2) June, pp8-10.

³ Safe Schools Coalition Australia, **All Of Us**. Pages 34, 38.

The Safe Schools Program aims to force children to change the way they understand gender and recognise the differences between boys and girls. As part of changing the thinking of children at school, the unit guide says students should:

- not ask new parents whether their child is a boy or a girl – that emphasises stereotypes⁴
- not ask boys if they have a girlfriend – instead ask if they have a girlfriend or a boyfriend⁵
- recognise at least 13 gender identities, including Trans Girl, Genderqueer and Brother Boy,⁶
- have access to unisex toilets, in addition to male/female toilets.⁷

A suggested activity requires students to declare their views on a number of these issues in front of other class members and encourages the teacher to ask them to explain or defend their view. Such an activity could risk a student who disagrees with gender theory being bullied or provide pressure on them to change their view to fit in with others.

What's wrong with gender theory?

Gender theory is highly contested and the concept of gender fluidity does not reflect common experience. There is a very small number of people who do have real difficulty identifying their biological sex. However, this is only a fraction of one percent of the population⁸. While, every effort must be made to support and love those who experience this difficulty, this is the exception rather than the rule.

Sexuality is a precious and enormously significant dimension of what it means to be human and one of the areas in which people are most vulnerable. Every care must be taken in approaching these issues responsibly, and adults have a responsibility to their children to not confuse them about this fundamental part of their identity.

The rights and responsibilities of parents in this area must not be undermined by Government enforced programs.

Nobody should be bullied

Nobody at school should be bullied or be the victim of violence for any reason. There should be, and there are already, good programs to stop bullying, abuse and violence. All people - regardless of whether they are lesbian, gay, transgender, intersex or heterosexual - have human dignity and are entitled to love and respect. But is it appropriate to teach students highly contested gender theory as fact?

What can you do?

Children can learn to treat each other with respect and compassion without being coerced to agree with radical gender theory. With this in mind, there are many important and simple actions you can take as a parent:

- Talk to other parents to raise awareness of this program and discuss your concerns with them
- Talk to your school principal – let them know you are concerned about the use of this program
- Raise your concerns with your local politician both in writing and also through face-to-face conversations.

Prepared by the Australian Catholic Marriage and Family Council www.acmfc.org.au

A Council of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

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4 Safe Schools Coalition Australia, *All Of Us*. Page 36.

5 Safe Schools Coalition Australia, *All Of Us*. Page 42.

6 Safe Schools Coalition Australia, *All Of Us*. Page 34.

7 Safe Schools Coalition Australia, *All Of Us*. Page 53.

8 Sarris, I. *Obstetrics and Gynaecology*, the essential curriculum. Oxford University Press, 2009. Pages 28 – 33.

See also <http://www.leonardsax.com/how-common-is-intersex-a-response-to-anne-fausto-sterling/>