

Senate Bill No. 695
Teaching Affirmative Consent in High School Health Education

Approved by CA Governor Jerry Brown
October 1, 2015

Summary

Legislation encouraging public high school health curriculum augmentation to educate adolescents on sexual assault prevention, affirmative consent, and the importance of developing positive, healthy relationships. This legislation builds upon the success of SB967 (also known as “Yes Means Yes”), which established the affirmative consent standard for university campuses.

Proposal

When the “Health Framework for California Public Schools” (health framework) is next revised after January 1, 2016, the commission shall consider including comprehensive information for grades 9 to 12, inclusive, on sexual harassment and violence that includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:

1. Information on different forms of sexual harassment and violence, including:
 - a. Instances that occur among peers and in a dating relationship.
 - b. A discussion of prevention strategies.
 - c. How students report sexual harassment and violence.
 - d. Potential resources victims can access.
2. Discussion of the affirmative consent standard and skills students use to establish boundaries in peer and dating relationships.
 - a. **Consent**- Affirmative, conscious, and voluntary agreement to engage in sexual activity.
(A “Yes” response)
3. Discussion of legal aspects of sexual harassment and violence under state and federal law.

Furthermore, if the commission includes comprehensive information on sexual harassment and violence in the health framework, the commission shall comply with both of the following:

1. Ensure information is research based and appropriate for students of all races, genders, sexual orientations, gender identities, and ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
 - a. This may include reviewing other states’ curricula.
2. Consult with secondary health teachers and experts in sexual harassment and violence curriculum.

Commentary

- CA is the 1st state to pass a law that makes affirmative consent central to school sexual assault policies at both the high school and college level.
- Between 1995 and 2013, women between 18-24 experienced the highest rate of rape and sexual assault. Of those attending college, 80% knew their assailants.

“These pieces of legislation have the potential to begin to help us change the culture we live in that allows violence to persist and introduces the concepts of healthy relationships before students arrive on a college campus. Affirmative consent is a mechanism to prevent sexual assault, sexual harassment, and dating/domestic violence by creating a safe space to teach our youth about respecting boundaries in healthy relationships.” –Shaina Brown, CalCASA Public Affairs and Communication Manager

“I firmly believe that by instilling in young minds the importance of affirmative consent and relationships built on love and respect, we can reduce the sexual violence inflicted on young women. Lessons taught today will result in safer campuses and communities tomorrow.” – Senator Kevin de Leon, CA State Senator and Sponsor of both SB695 and SB967