



Federación
de Planificación
Familiar Estatal

PRESS RELEASE

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Sexuality education is too important to be used as a weapon for political tension

There is a political and media debate about the Skolae program of the Department of Education of Navarra, which includes education on sexuality for girls and boys from 0 to 6 years old. This debate adds to certain public discourses of rejection of sexuality education, fortunately **minority** ones.

(...) We are talking about equipping all people, at any age, with the knowledge and tools that empower them so that they can enjoy **wellbeing, health and dignity**, so that they can take into account the wellbeing of the people with whom they are related, understand them and **act respecting them**.

(.....) In the WHO guide entitled "Sexual education standards for Europe. Framework for people responsible for formulating educational policies, responsible and health specialists" it is recalled that: " a boy or a girl is understood as a sexed human being from the beginning of their lives. In each age group and stage of development, specific questions and behaviors appear (...) to which one must react in a pedagogical way".

(....) With silence and concealment we teach girls and boys to settle in the "underground" when it comes to learning, and later the negative consequences come. Sexuality education does not take away their "innocence", but it helps them to **understand** what they are already asking. For example, to name the parts of their bodies, to make them see that their questions are normal, to show them that there are **limits** that must be **respected and expressed** ("you can say no, you can ask for help").

These contents are part of sexual education for the youngest children, and they are assigned a more conceptual title that serves as a guide for the educators. For example, "child erotic games", which refers to the curiosity and discovery that children experience with their bodies and with the bodies of those around them. This does not mean that the program intends to teach children certain practices, but that their behaviors are normal. Thinking about something else means interpreting these behaviors from the adult perspective. When we read headlines like "All children from 0 to 6 years will be forced to have sexual experiences through erotic games", we can only think that the journalism principle of 'asking to all parties' has not been put into practice or that it responds to political interests of harassment and demolition.

Sexuality education is a **shared task between professionals and families**. We do not know of any sexuality education manual that says that families should not be involved in it. Families have an essential role that no other instance can assume. They instill values and attitudes, and should offer affection, make their sons and daughters feel worthy of being loved and respected, nurturing their self-esteem.

The professionals on sexuality education contribute their knowledge that comes from the specialized training and from having worked with a multitude of situations and boys and girls and families (...) Because the objective of sexuality education is not only to act when there are

problems, but to help children, adolescents and young people to know each other, accept each other, respect each other, choose only those practices with which they feel comfortable and **that connect with their values** and, of course, **to prevent risks and protect health**.

If there is something that characterizes the people in charge of sexuality education is the respect for all experiences, and that is why we speak of sexualities in the plural. Sexuality is crossed by a diversity of values and personal beliefs. Sexuality education helps children and young people to find answers to their doubts and can **make more free and autonomous decisions according to their values, culture, beliefs**.

The Spanish Federation for Family Planning recalls, in short, that only knowledge and the ability to take charge of such a **fundamental aspect of life** as sexuality will make us more **free and happy**.

The Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe has warned European governments that they must act to provide "comprehensive sexual education on a mandatory basis". And we congratulate that some regional governments have launched their own educational programs, although in some cases these cause scandal among some sectors that continue to see from the taboo **what is really a deeply human and positive dimension**. Sexuality education must already be a reality throughout the Spanish State, so that **coexistence from and between the sexes generates more happiness and not pain**. At any age.

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The Spanish Federation for Family Planning – FPFE / Federación de Planificación Familiar Estatal (FPFE) is a non governmental organization integrated by associations and individuals who believe in the free exercise of sexual and reproductive health, sexual rights and reproductive rights. On these principles we work since 1987 offering education, healthcare and counselling, and promoting political and legislative actions.

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