

## Ophea Parent Opinion Survey: Summary of Findings

The following are the results of a survey of Ontario parents about sexual health education (as part of Ontario's Health and Physical Education curriculum), which was conducted by Environics Research Group on behalf of Ophea.

- **Almost all Ontario parents (93%) are calling for an updated sexual health component to the health and physical education curriculum** for elementary and secondary school students to replace the existing curriculum written 15 years ago.
- This reflects the **strong overall support for sexual health education in Ontario schools**, with the large majority of parents (87%) agreeing that this should be one component of overall health education. Only a very small proportion (2%) say this should not be taught in schools.
- **9 in 10 parents are comfortable with their child receiving information about sexual health from a school curriculum.** This is second only to parents themselves (96%) and health professionals (96%) as parents' preferred source for their children's sexual health information.
- Parents are **much less comfortable with the sexual health information available from other sources** such as their children's peers (14%), TV and movies (13%), the Internet (13%) and social media (6%).
- **The vast majority of Ontario parents think all 13 sexual health education topics presented on the survey should be addressed in schools.** This is particularly true for self-esteem, sexually transmitted infections and communication and decision-making skills, but also includes: physical, cognitive, social and emotional changes; puberty; skills for healthy relationships; contraception methods; correct names for body parts including genitalia; abstinence and delaying sexual activity; reproduction; sexual orientation; and, media literacy about sexual content.
- These results are similar across the province and among population segments. School board (public vs. separate; English vs. French) is not a differentiator.

### Methodology

The research involved an online survey conducted among 1,002 parents of children attending a publicly-funded elementary or secondary school in Ontario. Quotas were established for region to ensure the final sample was representative of the Ontario population. The survey was conducted from April 6 to 23, 2013 with qualifying members of online research panels. As Internet panels are non-probability samples, a margin of sampling error cannot be cited.