

NEWS RELEASE



MEDIA INQUIRIES:

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

One half approve of sex ed curriculum; one third do not

Three quarters think sex education should be taught both at home and school

TORONTO FEBRUARY 28th, 2015 - In a random sampling of public opinion taken by the Forum Poll™ among 996 Ontario voters, one half approve of the province's new sex education curriculum (49%) while one third disapprove (34%). Just fewer than one fifth have no opinion (17%). Disapproval of the curriculum is common to mid aged groups (44 to 54 - 46%), males (38%) rather than females (30%), the wealthier (\$80K to \$100K - 41%), in Northern Ontario (43%) but not in Toronto (25%), especially among PC supporters (61%), but hardly at all among Liberals (11%) or New Democrats (19%). Those with children under 18 are more likely to disapprove of the new curriculum (44%) than those without kids (29%) and disapproval is especially strong among the least educated (45%) and much less so amongst the best educated (post grad – 21% disapprove). Those who disapprove of Kathleen Wynne are more likely to disapprove of the curriculum (56%) than those who approve of the Premier (7%). Disapproval is highest among Evangelical Christians (69% - caution: small base size), lower among Catholics (44%) and Protestants (40%), but lowest of all among non-Christians (23%) and those with no religion (20%). There is little difference on this dimension between those who pay taxes to the public school system and those who support the separate school board.

Sex education should be taught both at home and in school; three quarters

Three quarters of Ontario voters say sex education should be taught both at home and at school (74%), and this view is most common to the youngest (79%), the least wealthy (79%), in Southwestern Ontario (78%), among Liberals and New Democrats (83% each) but not so much among Progressive Conservatives (65%), among mothers of children under 18 (76%) and those with no kids (77%), among those with a college degree (78%), among those who approve of Kathleen Wynne (85%), among Catholics (77%), other Christians (85%) and the non-religious (83%), but not among Evangelicals (37% - caution: small base size) and those who do not approve of the curriculum (53%). In total, just more than one tenth of voters think sex education should be taught "mostly at home" (12%), and this is especially the case among the oldest (17%), mid income groups (\$40K to \$60K - 17%), PC supporters (23%), those with some college (20%), who disapprove of Kathleen Wynne (20%), evangelicals (49% - caution: small base size), those who think Wynne should resign (24%) and those who disapprove of the curriculum (32%). Fewer think sex education should be taught mostly at school (7%) and very few think it should be taught only

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HIGHLIGHTS:

- One half approve of the province's new sex education curriculum (49%) while one third disapprove (34%).
- Three quarters of Ontario voters say sex education should be taught both at home and at school (74%).
- Almost half of Ontario voters think sex education should be taught to pupils between 8 and 12 years old (46%), while one quarter think this instruction should occur between 5 and 8 years of age (24%).

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HIGHLIGHTS:

- “While it is moderately popular, it doesn’t look like the new Health and Physical Education curriculum is the home run the Premier was hoping it was. It hasn’t distracted much from the Sudbury by-election controversy, and it and it hasn’t lifted the government in our polling. What may be more diagnostic of the issue is the high proportion who think sex education belongs in school, and the very small percentages who think it doesn’t belong in school or shouldn’t be taught at all. Where voters may have a problem is the age at which instruction begins. In our sample, voters think about nine or ten years old is appropriate, but many of the elements of this curriculum will be taught before that,” said Forum Research President, Dr. Lorne Bozinoff.

at school (2%), only at home (3%) or not at all (1%). There is no one who does not have an opinion on this issue.

Close to half think sex education should be taught between 8 and 12 years old

Almost half of Ontario voters think sex education should be taught to pupils between 8 and 12 years old (46%), while one quarter think this instruction should occur between 5 and 8 years of age (24%). Fewer than this think sex education should be delayed until after 12 years of age (16%). Few think it should be taught before children are five (7%), or that it should never be taught (3%). Once again, few have no opinion on this issue (3%). Thinking sex education should never be taught is commonest to the least wealthy (5%), PC supporters (5%), those with some college (5%), evangelicals (12% - caution: small base size), those who think the Premier should resign (5%) and those who disapprove of the curriculum (8%). On average, voters think children should be taught about sex at about nine and a half years of age.

“While it is moderately popular, it doesn’t look like the new Health and Physical Education curriculum is the home run the Premier was hoping it was. It hasn’t distracted much from the Sudbury by-election controversy, and it and it hasn’t lifted the government in our polling. What may be more diagnostic of the issue is the high proportion who think sex education belongs in school, and the very small percentages who think it doesn’t belong in school or shouldn’t be taught at all. Where voters may have a problem is the age at which instruction begins. In our sample, voters think about nine or ten years old is appropriate, but many of the elements of this curriculum will be taught before that,” said Forum Research President, Dr. Lorne Bozinoff.

Lorne Bozinoff, Ph.D. is the president and founder of Forum Research. He can be reached at lbozinoff@forumresearch.com or at (416) 960-9603.

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Methodology

The Forum Poll™ was conducted by Forum Research with the results based on an interactive voice response telephone survey of 996 randomly selected Ontarians 18 years of age and older. The poll was conducted on February 24 to 27th, 2015.

Results based on the total sample are considered accurate +/- 3%, 19 times out of 20. Subsample results will be less accurate. Margins of error for subsample (such as age, gender) results are available at www.forumresearch.com/samplestim.asp

Where appropriate, the data has been statistically weighted by age, region, and other variables to ensure that the sample reflects the actual population according to the latest Census data.

This research is not necessarily predictive of future outcomes, but rather, captures opinion at one point in time. Forum Research conducted this poll as a public service and to demonstrate our survey research capabilities. Forum houses its poll results in the Data Library of the Department of Political Science at the University of Toronto.

With offices across Canada and around the world, 100% Canadian-owned Forum Research is one of the country's leading survey research firms. This Forum Poll™ and other polls may be found at Forum's poll archive at www.forumresearch.com/polls.asp

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Approval of New Sex Ed Curriculum

‘Do you approve or disapprove of the provincial government's new sex education curriculum, announced Monday morning?’

[All Respondents]

Age / Gender

%	Total	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female
Sample	996	148	140	231	245	232	523	473
Approve	49	55	54	39	46	46	45	52
Disapprove	34	23	34	43	39	37	38	30
Don't know	17	22	12	18	15	17	17	18

Region

%	Total	E. Ont	416	905	GTA	SW. Ont	N. Ont
Sample	996	156	183	267	450	237	153
Approve	49	48	55	47	50	53	37
Disapprove	34	35	25	36	32	33	43
Don't know	17	18	20	17	18	14	21

Provincial Party Preference

%	Total	Conservative	Liberal	NDP	Green	Other
Sample	996	396	309	159	67	35
Approve	49	25	71	67	49	30
Disapprove	34	61	11	19	28	44
Don't know	17	14	18	13	23	26

Religion

%	Total	Protestant Christian	Catholic	Evangelical Christian	Other Christian	Other religion	No religion
Sample	996	312	260	55	73	80	216
Approve	49	40	46	22	53	52	64
Disapprove	34	43	34	69	33	23	20
Don't know	17	17	19	9	14	25	15

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Where Should Sex Ed be Taught?

‘Should sex education be taught only in schools, mostly in schools, both in schools and at home, mostly ta home or only at home?’

[All Respondents]

Age / Gender

%	Total	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female
Sample	996	148	140	231	245	232	523	473
Only at school	2	3	1	3	2	1	2	2
Mostly at school	7	7	9	8	7	4	9	6
Both at school and at home	74	79	75	70	72	73	70	78
Mostly at home	12	8	12	14	14	17	14	11
Only at home	3	2	2	3	3	3	4	2
Should not be taught at all	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0

Region

%	Total	E. Ont	416	905	GTA	SW. Ont	N. Ont
Sample	996	156	183	267	450	237	153
Only at school	2	2	3	1	2	1	7
Mostly at school	7	9	11	7	9	2	9
Both at school and at home	74	75	73	74	73	78	71
Mostly at home	12	10	7	15	12	16	11
Only at home	3	3	4	3	3	2	1
Should not be taught at all	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Provincial Party Preference

%	Total	Conservative	Liberal	NDP	Green	Other
Sample	996	396	309	159	67	35
Only at school	2	2	3	1	0	2
Mostly at school	7	4	9	9	9	11
Both at school and at home	74	65	83	83	78	51
Mostly at home	12	23	3	4	10	24
Only at home	3	6	0	1	0	7
Should not be taught at all	1	1	1	1	2	5
Don't know	0	0	0	0	1	0

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Religion

%	Total	Protestant Christian	Catholic	Evangelical Christian	Other Christian	Other religion	No religion
Sample	996	312	260	55	73	80	216
Only at school	2	3	2	0	1	4	1
Mostly at school	7	4	8	2	5	15	9
Both at school and at home	74	69	77	37	85	71	83
Mostly at home	12	18	11	49	8	7	4
Only at home	3	5	2	8	0	2	1
Should not be taught at all	1	1	0	4	1	1	1
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

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Appropriate Age to First Teach Sex Ex

'At what age should children first learn about sex in public school?'

[All Respondents]

Age / Gender

%	Total	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female
Sample	996	148	140	231	245	232	523	473
By five years old	7	6	8	8	5	8	7	7
Between five and eight years old	24	25	28	13	27	28	21	27
Between eight and twelve years old	46	47	42	53	46	40	45	47
Later than twelve years old	16	16	16	18	16	16	20	13
Never	3	3	3	4	2	3	3	3
Don't know	3	3	2	4	3	5	3	4

Region

%	Total	E. Ont	416	905	GTA	SW. Ont	N. Ont
Sample	996	156	183	267	450	237	153
By five years old	7	8	8	8	8	4	7
Between five and eight years old	24	33	27	17	20	24	28
Between eight and twelve years old	46	36	42	49	46	52	46
Later than twelve years old	16	19	19	18	18	14	13
Never	3	2	2	4	3	3	3
Don't know	3	4	2	5	4	2	3

Provincial Party Preference

%	Total	Conservative	Liberal	NDP	Green	Other
Sample	996	396	309	159	67	35
By five years old	7	4	9	8	11	14
Between five and eight years old	24	16	31	32	26	12
Between eight and twelve years old	46	49	45	42	46	39
Later than twelve years old	16	24	10	14	7	22
Never	3	5	1	1	5	9
Don't know	3	2	4	3	5	5

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Religion

%	Total	Protestant Christian	Catholic	Evangelical Christian	Other Christian	Other religion	No religion
Sample	996	312	260	55	73	80	216
By five years old	7	7	6	3	9	6	8
Between five and eight years old	24	21	18	12	23	20	38
Between eight and twelve years old	46	46	50	36	50	51	40
Later than twelve years old	16	17	19	31	16	18	9
Never	3	4	3	12	2	3	1
Don't know	3	4	4	6	0	2	4

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