

Make the right to education in emotional, relational and sexual life effective

1 MAKE EVARS A RIGHT FOR THE EMANCIPATION OF CHILDREN AND A MORE EGALITARIAN SOCIETY

→ **Why is this?** Children have rights, but this fact is often overlooked. To be effective, children's rights need to be recognised at the highest level of government and known by everyone, starting with the children themselves, their families and the people who look after and support them. Schools have a special role to play in this respect.

→ **How can this be done?** By displaying children's rights and prohibitions in all the places they frequent, and by including these rights in the job descriptions of professionals working with children. By setting up regular sessions on emotional, relational and sexual life in places frequented by young people, including schools, colleges, lycées and apprentice training centres ; By making EVARS part of compulsory teaching on psychosocial skills and equality at school, the annual timetable for which should be at least 30 hours from secondary school onwards.

2 SUPPORTING FAMILIES, KEY PLAYERS IN EVARS

→ **Why should we do this?** The family is the first place where children are socialised. Supporting parenthood means helping parents in their role as the primary educators of their children, by listening, advising and informing them.

→ **How can we do this?** By strengthening support for parenthood beyond the medical-social framework by systematically offering parents individual meetings to discuss their child's needs and rights (privacy, education, etc.) at several key stages in the child's life (birth, starting nursery school, starting secondary school).

3 RECOGNISE EVARS AS AN ESSENTIAL FORM OF EDUCATION IN ALL FACILITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

→ **Why is this?** All the places where young people socialise are places where they build their emotional, relational and sometimes sexual bonds. That's why EVARS needs to be the subject of coherent inter-ministerial public policies involving a large number of government departments, first and foremost the Ministry of Education and Youth.

→ **How can this be done?** By creating an EVARS training plan offering a single training course on the fundamental needs and rights of children, drawn up in consultation with all stakeholders; By creating a criminal offence to punish the obstruction of children's right to benefit from EVARS.

Educating people about emotional, relational and sexual life

CÉCILE GONDARD-LALANNE AND EVANNE JEANNE-ROSE



Gist of the opinion

Young people's emotional, relational and sexual lives unfold in all the places they frequent. First of all, in their families, then at school and finally in all third places (sports clubs, holiday camps, etc.).

In France, sex education was made compulsory in schools in 2001, with three sessions a year throughout the student's school career. But all the surveys, starting with the 2021 report by the General Inspectorate of Education, Sport and Research, show that **this obligation is not respected**. And yet young people want this education. Trying to 'protect' them from it, particularly at school, often means leaving them alone with their questions, knowing, for example, that they will be exposed to pornographic images on a mobile phone before the age of 10. It's vital to support them.

less than
15 %

of pupils receive sex education despite the legal obligation to do so (2001 law)

What is EVARS?

Sex education as defined by the Ministry of Education has three equally important components: **the emotional dimension, the relational dimension and the sexual dimension**.

- Emotional education focuses on developing the bond of trust between a person and their environment, generating self-confidence;
- Relationships education deals with interpersonal relationships, but also with equality between individuals, gender stereotypes and the prevention of sexual violence;
- Sex education encompasses various aspects of human sexuality and sexual health. This is why the ESEC has adopted the concept of education in emotional, relational and sexual life (EVARS).

THE RAPORTEURS

Cécile GONDARD-LALANNE

cecile.gondard-lalanne@lecese.fr • 01 44 43 64 05

Cécile Gondard-Lalanne represents Union syndicale Solidaires, of which she was national secretary. She sits on the ESEC's Social and Ecological Alternatives Group. She is a member of the Delegation for Women's Rights and Equality and the Labour and Employment Commission.

Evanne JEANNE-ROSE

evanne.jeanne-rose@lecese.fr • 01 44 43 64 41

Evanne Jeanne-Rose represents the Comité pour les relations nationales et internationales des associations de jeunesse et d'éducation populaire (Cnajep). He is vice-president of the Union Nationale pour l'Habitat des Jeunes. He sits on the ESEC's Student Organisations and Youth Movements Group. He is a member of the Delegation for Women's Rights and Equality and of the Labour and Employment and Environment Commissions.

EVARS: where children's rights meet women's rights and women's rights

EVARS is above all an education in equality that deconstructs stereotypes and unequal social norms between individuals. It is therefore a point of convergence between women's rights and children's rights, EVARS can deconstruct toxic patterns, help halt the rise in sexual violence, sexism and LGBTQIAphobia, and contribute to better prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV transmission, where young people's knowledge of these issues has been declining sharply for several years.

Children's rights enshrined in law, which must become effective

Our country is still steeped in the culture of infanticism, which refers to a set of discriminations and prejudices directed against children and teenagers solely because of their 'status as children'. This culture, which, **like sexism, permeates society as a whole**, needs to be critically examined in order to distance itself from it. Adopting a 'child's perspective' is necessary to start from their fundamental needs and build policies that are both protective and emancipatory...



With this in mind, public participation has enriched the thinking behind this opinion, through written contributions from organisations, associations, institutions and professionals working in the field of EVARS. In addition, questionnaires were put online for professionals working in and out of schools, and for young people under 25. A day of deliberation involving the main organisations involved was also organised, leading to a number of recommendations.

