



Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee

Inquiry: Inquiry into the state education system in Victoria

Hearing Date: 12 June 2024

Question[s] taken on notice

Directed to: Australian Christian Lobby

Received Date: 25 June 2024

1. **Michael GALEA, page 82**

Question Asked:

Sorry, are you saying that people who are gender or sexually diverse are exempt from bullying or abuse in schools? Is that what you are saying?

Jasmine YUEN: Well, let me continue with that.

Michael GALEA: I am limited with time, so I am very happy for you to provide that on notice to me if you are happy to do that.

Response:

I believe this question might arise from misunderstanding what I said, since I was interrupted from explaining an activity from the Respectful Relationships program called 'Labels are for jars, not for people' (Transcript Pg. 81) to illustrate how the program is using activist approach in teaching consent and respectful relationships.

However, I'm more than happy to answer this question: "are you saying that people who are gender or sexually diverse are exempt from bullying or abuse in schools?"

The answer is that all students should be exempted from bullying and abuse in schools. In other words, no one student should be subject to bullying and abuse.

Unfortunately, many students who disagree or feel uncomfortable with the LGBTIQ ideology are either being silenced or marginalized at schools. Those who hold the binary or biological view of man and woman, and support only heterosexual relationship due to religious and cultural beliefs are being labelled bigotry and homophobic. Whilst their intention is not bigotry nor discriminatory, but only being faithful to their religious and cultural beliefs, and sexual ethics, they are being sidelined and discriminated against due to their views. Whether this is considered bullying or abuse is subject to the emotional and psychological impact on the students.

All students reserve the rights to their life choices and views, and should not be bullied because they hold different views on matters that are important for them due to faith and culture.

Inclusivity means accepting people with respect, including those who hold different views and perspectives. “Equality is non-negotiable” must apply to all who disagree, yet come together with respect and for dialogue, so that equal opportunities and common good could be shared to ensure harmony in our society.

Unfortunately, “inclusivity” and “equality” now are one sided. Parents from different cultural backgrounds, including Christian and Muslim, have both expressed concerned about this one-sidedness that is unfair for their children at schools that causes anxiety, unease, stress and lack of belonging.

Therefore, the current Respectful Relationships program that is heavily driven by gender ideology and identity politics is not meeting its purpose, and need to be reviewed or replaced by something, such as Religious Education, that foster better respect and tolerance, and not activist approach that encourages aggressive behaviour and segregation.

Allow me to add additional note on consent education. Whilst consent education is important now as our young people are prematurely over sexualized, and to deal with rape culture, the best solution does not come from teaching consent education, but to replace the current Sexuality Education that teaches explicit sex education to young children, including sexual pleasure in Year 7.

Explicit sex education at such a young age will only arouse teenagers’ curiosity to explore pornography and sex further. Consent is not the best solution but the teaching on boundaries, self-control and abstinence are. Thus, Religious Education is in a better position to teach students about boundaries, self-control and abstinence, helping them to set a higher bar on purity and sexual ethics, as well as responsibility.

Consent education is a band-aid to the wound, religious education deals with the core problem.

Whilst I understand there could be inconsistencies in what and how different religions would deliver its teaching, and the current [Special Religious Instructions \(SRI\)](#) is not at its best effectiveness, I would suggest for the government to work with religious groups such as [Korus Connect](#) (already a registered provider), [PeaceWise](#), and other faith groups to create a better program replacing the current Respectful Relationships and Sexuality Education that better prepare our young people for various

responsibilities in life, including relationship matters, with good character and maturity.

The Australian Christian Lobby will be more than happy to be part of this initiative to help our young people, and to work along with the government and other faith groups to deal with social issues and improve our society.