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UNICEF: Attack on the World's Children

Evidence of UNICEF Promoting Comprehensive Sexuality Education, Gender Ideology, and Abortion

By C-Fam Staff

Introduction

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has a relatively uncontroversial mandate: to help children in need around the world. However, a closer look at their work, materials, and partnerships reveals troubling trends. While issues such as abortion, gender ideology, and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) remain highly controversial in the UN General Assembly and other parts of the UN that work based on consensus between member states, they have become widespread across the work of the UN's specialized agencies and funds, including UNICEF.

UNICEF also channels some of its controversial programs, including pro-abortion advocacy, CSE, and promotion of gender ideology, through the broader gender-based violence (GBV) programming. Different from the original and non-controversial term "violence against women and girls," GBV is understood by UN agencies as a broader social phenomenon extending beyond tangible acts of violence against women to the different levels of oppression one might experience based on real or perceived gender. Denial of CSE, abortion access, or special rights based on perceived gender identity are now framed by UN Agencies and funds as causes or forms of GBV.

To help ensure UNICEF remains accountable to its mandate, this report contains illustrative examples of UNICEF's recent overreach into these controversial areas.

UNICEF Promotion of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)

While the major UN agency promoting CSE is the UN Educational,

Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), its CSE guidelines are often developed in collaboration with other UN agencies, including UNICEF. UNICEF also authors and co-authors CSE materials in partnership with national governments and civil society organizations to be included in school curricula, non-traditional learning settings, and virtual platforms.

Despite UNICEF claiming it promotes "age-appropriate" CSE, the examples below demonstrate that UNICEF-sponsored CSE materials and programs encourage children to question their sexuality, embrace a non-binary understanding of gender, and expose them to information on sexual pleasure, including masturbation, foreplay, and sexual fantasies, among other concepts.

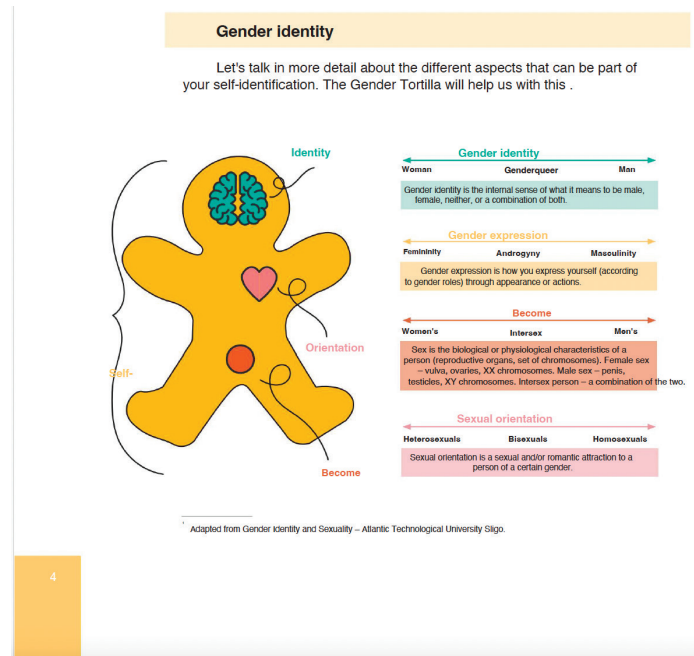
CSE materials and programs

Your Guide to Adulthood Without Secrets – In January 2024, UNICEF launched several CSE brochures¹ for children of various age groups in Ukraine. Instead of sharing information on human sexuality rooted in responsibility, respect, and neutral anatomical facts, these materials reflect and promote value judgments on controversial topics, including encouraging children to question their sexual orientation, develop a positive view of homosexuality, masturbation, and engage in sexual experimentation outside the context of marriage. The examples below represent the English translation of the materials originally published in Ukrainian.

UNICEF Brochure for Ages 15-18²:

"An important aspect of your sexuality is your sexual orientation, which is your romantic and/or sexual attraction to people of a certain gender. Some people are attracted to people of the opposite gender, and they are heterosexual. Some people are attracted to people of the same gender, and they are homosexual (gays and lesbians)." (Page 6)

"LGBTIQ+ is an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer, and the "+" sign means that the spectrum of sexuality and identity is constantly expanding. It is normal to feel sympathy or attraction to members of your own or the opposite sex, but it is also normal not to feel attraction." (Page 6)



Graphic from UNICEF brochure for Ages 15-18³ , gender identity section, page 4.



Graphic from UNICEF brochure for Ages 15-18, gender identity section, page 6.

"Masturbation is perfectly acceptable in relationships, both alone and with partners. It is part of healthy sexual behavior. Although the topic of masturbation may be surrounded by myths, it is actually a way to relieve stress, satisfy sexual arousal, and explore your body, sexuality, and desires." (Page 36)

The following excerpts encourage children to experiment sexual practices, reflect on their sexual preferences, and discuss those with their sexual partner outside the context of a committed relationship,

much less marriage:

"Only through experiments can you understand what really brings pleasure to you and your partner." (Page 35)

"Ask yourself which sexual practices you like and which you don't. Be sure to share your thoughts with your partner and ask him/her to tell you about his/her own preferences!" (Page 36)

Seeking to normalize homosexual activity, the excerpt below lists "anal sex" as just another type of sexual acts that children should be familiar with:

"sex happens.. oral – stimulation of the genitals with the tongue or lips, vaginal – involves penetration of the vagina with a penis, fingers, or sex toys; anal – during which the penis penetrates the anus, fingers or sex toys." (Page 36)

UNICEF Brochure for Ages 10-14⁴:

"Sexuality is your thoughts, on identity, sexual orientation, sex, intimacy fantasies, desires, values, behaviors, roles, and relationships." (Page 18)

"Some people are clear about their sexual orientation before they enter a relationship, while others come to terms with it over time. Sometimes you may not fully understand it until you are an adult." (Page 19)

"It is important to remember that sexual orientation cannot be a cause for humiliation, bullying or shame. And phrases like "traditional or non-traditional orientation" are incorrect. You cannot point out to people their "rightness" or "wrongness". All types of sexual orientation are natural." (Page 19)

The following excerpts encourage children to think about their preferred sexual practices and discuss those with their sexual partner outside the context of marriage, and develop a positive view of masturbation:

"Foreplay and caressing touch help you relax, feel comfortable, and increase sexual arousal. [...] In order to understand what caressing you and your partner like, you need to talk about it." (Page 28)

"Although the topic of masturbation may be surrounded by myths, in fact it is one of the ways to relieve stress, quench sexual arousal, explore one's own body, sexuality and desires." (Page 28)



Express yourself. Gender identity

Color the picture. How can boys and girls express themselves differently?



Graphic from UNICEF brochure for Ages 6-9⁶, gender identity section, page 20.

Laaha Program – Laaha⁷, created with the support of UNICEF, is an online platform that shares information on "sexual taboos" to combat "gender-based violence" and raise awareness about sexual and reproductive health. Laaha content is accessible for girls of any age and does not require parental oversight. The examples below showcase Laaha encouraging girls to touch their private body parts to learn about their body and encouraging them to think about foreplay. Sharing such sensitive information without age-appropriate safeguards and parental oversight could be misused by children and lead to psychological harm and the normalization of early sexual activity.



Source: Laaha website

1. Let's talk about it Podcast: Take a look - the mirror exercise⁸



Let's talk about it Podcast: Take a look - the mirror exercise

5mins

Source: Laaha website

"Spread your knees apart and hold the mirror in front of your vulva and vagina"

"Gently use your fingers to find where the most sensitive part of your vulva is. This is most likely your clitoris"

2. Common questions about having sex⁹

"Foreplay is the word for activities before sex, such as kissing and cuddling. Foreplay is important because it helps you relax. Think of it as a warm-up to the main event. If sex hurts, take a break and try again. If it really hurts, stop and make an appointment with your gynecologist."



Foreplay is the word for activities before sex, such as kissing and cuddling. **Foreplay** is important because it helps you relax. Think of it as a warm-up to the main event. If sex hurts, take a break and try again. If it really hurts, stop and make an appointment with your gynecologist.

Foreplay Tips:

- Cuddle and talk to your partner about the activities you want to engage in.
- Take a bath or a shower together.
- Take turns giving each other a massage.

Source: Laaha website

International Technical and Programmatic Guidance on Out-of-School Comprehensive Sexuality Education – Published in 2020 in collaboration with UNFPA, UNESCO, and WHO, among other UN Agencies, the guidance¹⁰ continues to inform and shape CSE curricula in non-traditional learning settings. By its own admission, the guidance includes controversial topics known not to be "acceptable in school settings," as well as a "rights-based approach" to teaching sexuality education. The rights-based approach is rooted in moral relativism, presenting all sexual behaviors or identities as equally valid personal choices. The target audience includes: "civil-society or community-based organizations, youth centres or youth clubs, health clinics, summer camps, religious institutions or faith-based organizations, at school after hours [...] jails, detention centres [...] [and] refugee camps or other shelters where people seek humanitarian support."¹¹

"Out-of-school CSE can also include challenging topics and promote a rights-based approach rooted in gender equality and empowerment in a way that may not always be feasible or acceptable in school settings." (Page 10)

"Sexual orientation should be seen as a continuum. A person's orientation is not necessarily fixed and may change over the course of a lifetime. Some people do not choose to label themselves in any particular category." (Page 32)

Section on "Young lesbian, gay and bisexual people, and other young men who have sex with men":

"Recruit facilitators with diverse identities: If the main facilitator is not a member of the LGBTQ+ community, it is strongly recommended to have a co-facilitator who is." (Page 33)

"Consult local or national groups for transgender people, including children and young people: Where such groups exist, they will be able to provide valuable input on the programme and the most appropriate ways of reaching young people who are transgender." (Page 35)

"When talking about sexual and reproductive anatomy, label diagrams inclusively: Diagrams should not be labelled as male and female, and body parts should not be assigned to one gender." (Page 35)

Section on Young People who sell sex:

"Integrate CSE for young people who sell sex into community empowerment approaches: This helps to address their stigmatization and marginalization, and is also an opportunity to foster collective empowerment." (Page 42)

International technical guidance on sexuality education – Authored by UNFPA and co-published by UNICEF, the guidance¹² continues to serve as one of the leading UN-system documents on CSE. It defines CSE as a

curriculum that moves beyond teaching young people about human anatomy and avoiding sexual diseases to "teaching and learning about the cognitive, emotional, physical and social aspects of sexuality." The guidance sets out several learning objectives for different age groups:

Ages 5-8: "Reflect on how they feel about their biological sex and gender (skill)." (Page 50)

Ages 9-12: "Explain how someone's gender identity may not match their biological sex (knowledge);" (Page 50)

"Describe ways that human beings feel pleasure from physical contact (e.g. kissing, touching, caressing, sexual contact) throughout their life (knowledge);" (Page 70)

"Acknowledge that masturbation does not cause physical or emotional harm but should be done in private (knowledge)." (Page 71)

Ages 12-15: "Recognize that puberty may be particularly challenging for some children, particularly those who are gender non-conforming, transgender or intersex (knowledge);" (Page 67)

Ages 15-18+: "Analyze social norms that contribute to homophobia and transphobia and their consequences (knowledge);" (Page 50)

What to teach for foundational education for health and well-being (2024) – This is a joint guidance developed by UNICEF and UNFPA to "support primary school-aged children to thrive through foundational education for health and well-being." The brief mentions CSE implementation in various countries and highlights "Quebec's primary school sexuality education [which] aims to foster a deeper self-awareness among learners, prompt reflection on gender roles and stereotypes." The guideline also mentioned "Ecuador's Ministry of Education, [which] in collaboration with UNFPA and UNESCO, developed a tool on Curricular Opportunities for Comprehensive Sexuality Education...For older primary school students, the programme expands on these topics and addresses how culture, religion and society influence understandings of sexuality."¹³

Review of Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Thailand - In 2016, UNICEF conducted a review¹⁴ of CSE in Thailand and shared the following findings:

"Many students hold attitudes that reject gender equality and sexual rights,"

"Although diverse topics are covered in the CSE curriculum, many institutions teach about sexuality from a point of view that emphasizes the negative consequences of sex and does not cover positive aspects or promote students' analytic and critical-thinking skills related to

sexuality. Topics related to the prevention of teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and HIV, as well as sexual anatomy and development are emphasized most, while topics related to gender, sexual rights and citizenship; sexual and gender diversity; gender inequality; safe abortion; safe sex for same-sex couples; and bullying are less often taught."

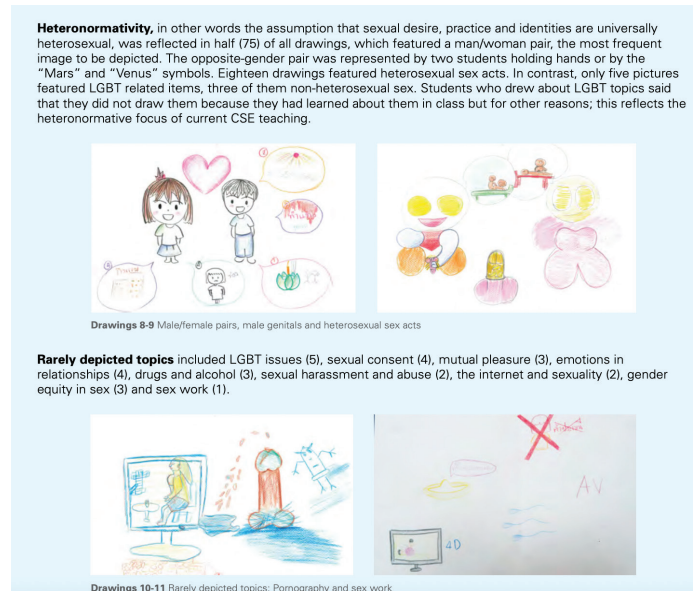


Image from UNICEF's Review of Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Thailand, page 15

Examples of UNICEF promoting CSE

What is foundational education for health and well-being? (2024) – "Foundational education for health and well-being (FEHW) refers to the building blocks of knowledge, attitudes and skills that enable younger learners to navigate their current and future health and well-being needs... covers a variety of existing education programmes promoting health and well-being at primary schools. Such programmes include life-skills education, social and emotional learning, comprehensive sexuality education..."¹⁵

Delivering With and For Adolescent Girls: Five game-changing priorities (2024) – "Evidence-based interventions that can save girls' lives, and promote their health and well-being, include [...] comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) linked to sexual reproductive and health rights services, using evidence-based curricula."¹⁶

2022 Global Annual Report - Sustaining the Gains in the Polycrisis Era (2023) – "Reaching the most marginalized adolescent girls through empowerment programmes: The Global Programme continued its efforts to empower the most marginalized adolescent girls through lifeskills, comprehensive sexuality education and asset-building programmes. This intensive support ensures that girls gain the skills, knowledge and assets needed to achieve bodily autonomy, decision-making power and safe transitions to adulthood."¹⁷

UNICEF Promotion of Gender Ideology



UNICEF X Post



UNICEF X post of UNICEF staff celebrating Pride



UNICEF LinkedIn Post

Recent debates on the use of the terms "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" within the United Nations in reference to individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) are often conducted with the assumption that these notions are clearly defined in science and law. In fact, there is no scientific consensus on how to define sexual orientation, very few countries treat individuals who identify as LGBT as a discrete class of persons, and many proscribe homosexual conduct because of moral and public health concerns.

International law does not recognize the notion of "sexual orientation and gender identity" (SOGI). There is no binding UN treaty that mentions sexual orientation and gender identity and no UN treaty can be fairly interpreted to include these notions. Nor is there a colorable argument that a customary international norm exists regarding these notions.¹⁸

Nevertheless, there is a widespread shift within the UN system to promote SOGI as categories of nondiscrimination and the basis for novel "human rights," independent of the lack of consensus that any such standards should exist.

UNICEF routinely promotes SOGI concepts despite the absence of a consensual mandate to do so and frequently cite each other and the work of human rights experts operating under the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Many of the publications issued on these topics come from multiple agencies, including UNAIDS, which is itself a collaboration between agencies.

This section features excerpts from UNICEF publications, guidelines, and programs that showcase promotion of gender ideology:

Guidelines for providing care and support to LGBTQI+ adolescents who have experienced GBV in mobility contexts (2024) – "Gender identity and sexual orientation can be conceptualized from different starting points" (see figure 1)¹⁹

Figure 1. Conceptualizing the gender binary and gender identity

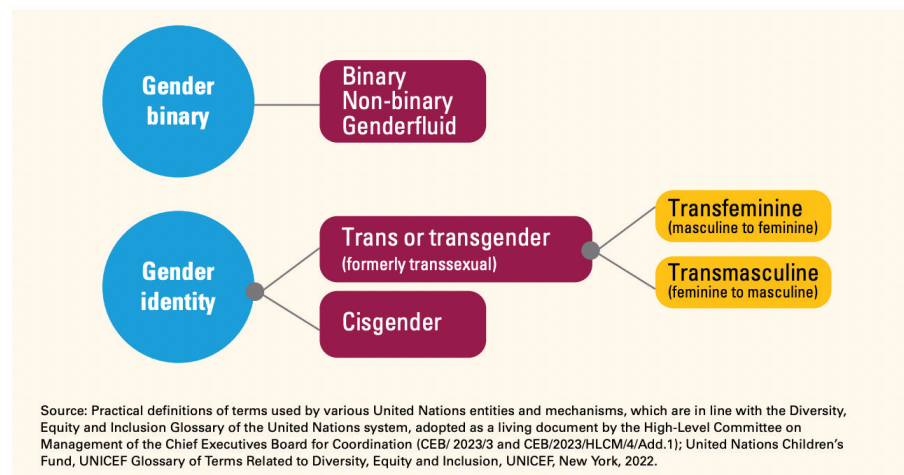


Figure 1 - Guidelines for providing care and support to LGBTQI+ adolescents who have experienced GBV in mobility contexts²⁰ , page 13

Constructing an identity during adolescence involves four milestones or objectives:²²

1. Letting go of being dependent on parental figures. It is important that LGBTIQ+ adolescents resolve possible conflicts arising from the rejection or non-acceptance of their sexual identity, sexual orientation and sex characteristics.
2. Overcoming concerns about body image in society, i.e. adopting a particular aesthetic.
3. Integrating into friendship groups. This is very important during early adolescence and will be less so at the end of adolescents' psychosocial development. It is very important to encourage LGBTIQ+ adolescents to join LGBTIQ+ groups, where they can be among their peers and develop a sense of belonging.
4. Constructing an identity. It is important to enable LGBTIQ+ adolescents to develop their sexual identity, sexual orientation or sex characteristics, as this will promote positive and healthy psychological development, while also helping to prevent possible mental health problems, such as anxiety, depression, eating disorders, unsafe sexual practices and negative self-esteem.

Excerpt from "Guidelines for providing care and support to LGBTQI+ adolescents who have experienced GBV in mobility contexts²¹", page 16

- There is very little legal recognition of transgender people, making it almost impossible for people to change their name and gender identity on official identification documents. Growing opposition to so-called 'gender ideology' aims to hinder and block the recognition of LGBTIQ+ people's rights.

Excerpt from "Guidelines for providing care and support to LGBTQI+ adolescents who have experienced GBV in mobility contexts²²", page 30

A statistical snapshot of the state of adolescent girls in Latin America and the Caribbean (2024) – "This includes data on Afro-descendant and indigenous girls, girls living with disabilities, and girls who may be marginalized due to sexual orientation or gender identity. Qualitative methodologies that place girls and women at the centre of the data production process are equally critical investments since girls know best the barriers they face."²³

Marketing & Gender Engagement Plan for Advertisers, Private Sector Companies and Policymakers (2024) – "The study found that the prevalence of gender stereotypes in advertisements is particularly concerning given the high rates of GBV in the Caribbean. Harmful gender norms continue to be represented, reproduced, and reinforced in television and digital media advertisements in the region. For example: there is an absence of LGBTQIA+ individuals, people living with disabilities, and adults over 50 years old."²⁴

Advancing Gender-Transformative Approaches in the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme for the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation: Exploring Gender, Power, and Agency (2024) – In collaboration with UNFPA, UNICEF put together a workshop facilitator guide to help gender rights advocates deliver an Integrated Gender-Transformative Accelerator and Values Clarification Workshop. The toolkit includes exercises such as

"Distribute blank sheets of paper to participants. Ask them to draw a flower with seven petals. Ask them to not put their names on their pages. Select 7 identities from the list below and ask participants to label each of their seven petals with a type of identity or characteristic:... [including] sexual orientation..."²⁵

Caring for Child Survivors of Sexual Abuse Guidelines Second Edition (2024) – "Specific considerations for working with child survivors who identify as LGBTQI: Caseworkers can: examine their own beliefs and bias towards people of diverse [sexual orientation/gender identity/expression/sex characteristics] SOGIESC people and address myths and harmful attitudes and beliefs they may hold about them, by answering questions such as: Do you know any members of the diverse SOGIESC community? How do you treat them? What perceptions or stereotypes do you have of them? What were you taught about people of diverse SOGIESC when you were a child? How does that inform your views now? Be aware of the legal status of people of diverse SOGIESC in the context and risks for reporting sexual abuse of these children; Engage in available training and capacity building offered by local LGBTQI organisations; seek to understand the different needs of transgender girls and transgender boys, which frequently differ from cis-gender girls and boys."²⁶

Values Clarification Workshop Facilitation Guide (2024) – "The original Abortion Values Clarification for Action and Transformation (VCAT) tool has been adapted to work with groups to clarify their values not only on abortion but also with regard to sexual orientation and gender identity, disability justice, and work with displaced and refugee communities."²⁷ This UNICEF guideline cites VCAT tools from the abortion activist group Ipas as a key inspiration.

Brief: Creating Safer Spaces to Support Meaningful Participation of LGBTIQ+ Young People (2023) – This brief promotes a radical gender ideology agenda, advocating for widespread promotion of LGBTQI+ symbols, events, and organizations. Several of the brief contributors are leading LGBTQI+ and queer advocates, including Krystod Stupka, named one of the 2024 Pride Life Global Pride Inclusion Advocates.²⁸



Image of Krystod Stupka, queer advocate and UNICEF brief contributor; source: LinkedIn

"Ensure visible positive symbols and images representing the LGBTIQ+ community. Encourage staff, volunteers, and young people to identify safe ways to physically or digitally commemorate LGBTIQ+ awareness events, such as LGBTQ Health Awareness Week (March), International Day of Transgender Visibility (31 March), UN International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (17 May), Pride Month (June), LGBT History Month (October), Coming Out Day (October 11), Intersex Awareness Day (October 26), Intersex Day of Remembrance/Intersex Solidarity Day (November 8), Transgender Awareness Week (November 13–19), and Transgender Day of Remembrance (November 20). [...] Consider using LGBTIQ+ inclusive images, such as a rainbow, trans, and intersex flags, in physical or digital environments (e.g., on social media or websites). These inclusive images typically indicate that staff and volunteers are supportive of LGBTIQ+ individuals and identities."

"Actively recruit staff and facilitation team members from diverse backgrounds, including LGBTIQ+ individuals, to enhance positive role modelling (while ensuring that LGBTIQ+ staff and volunteers understand they have no duty to disclose or discuss their personal attributes or relationships in the workplace)."

"Promote inclusion of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics in the school curriculum, using age-appropriate content to explore gender and social norms, gender identity, sexual orientation, stereotypes, and bias."

"Promote student-run organizations in schools and colleges, such as gender and sexuality alliances, that bring together LGBTIQ+ and cisgender young people to build safer and more supportive schools and communities."

"Identify and partner with LGBTIQ+ organizations, trans (youth) organisations, intersex, or LBTQI (girl's) groups; as well as LGBTIQ+ disability groups, BIPOC LGBTIQ+ groups, and others representing diverse perspectives. Ask their programme leaders or youth participants to share information or life experiences with your organization staff or programme participants"

"Ensure meeting or conference convenors and speakers avoid starting speeches with gendered language, such as 'ladies and gentleman'. Instead, ask them to use terms such as 'honoured guests' to enhance a feeling of inclusion. Ensure that all speakers, whether adults or young people, are introduced with their stated names and pronouns."

Rights denied: The impact of discrimination on children (2023) –

"Discrimination is complex and can take place based on multiple grounds. The concept of intersectionality in discrimination recognizes the ways in which social identities overlap and create compounding experiences of discrimination and concurrent forms of oppression based on two or more grounds such as gender identity or expression, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, caste, descent or inherited status, age, class, disability or health

status. It recognizes the diversity within groups or communities and the need to appreciate the unique experiences and needs of individuals affected by intersectional discrimination and oppression."²⁹

Prospects for Children in the Polycrisis A 2023 Global Outlook

(2023) – "At the same time, young people see many barriers to political engagement, particularly for women, which may contribute to more apathy. There is no clear path for youth to contribute to many civil society organizations. In addition, social and political polarization may make it more difficult for young people in some countries to explore issues such as women's and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex (LGBTQI) rights."³⁰

Gender Action Plan (2022–2025) – "UNICEF is committed to leaving no one behind and recognizes that gender intersects with multiple risks faced by the poorest and the most marginalized and excluded groups, including heightened risk of discrimination and neglect related to disability, racism, xenophobia, sexual orientation and gender identity, ethnicity, urbanization, migration and displacement, natural disasters and armed conflicts, or any other reason[...] UNICEF will update staffing benchmarks to ensure gender parity and the inclusion of diverse staff in all sectors and will prioritize regular review and redress of pay and hiring inequities based on gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, country of origin, disability or other personal characteristics."³¹

Dismantling stereotypes to drive equality (2022) – "Intersectionality is the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage."³²

Intersectionality is the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage



Graphic from UNICEF publication "Dismantling stereotypes to drive equality"³³ page 1

Gender inclusivity in advertising in the Caribbean. Call for action for Policymakers (2023) – "Advertisements in the Caribbean failed to capture the region's diversity, widely excluding nondominant groups [...] There was a near-total absence of LGBTQIA+ individuals, people living with disabilities, and adults over 50 years old."³⁴

UNICEF Promotion of Abortion

In 1994, at the International Conference on Population and Development, UN member states agreed that abortion was an issue to be addressed exclusively in national politics and legislation, and therefore not a human right or an issue on which international agencies should opine or interfere (A/CONF.171/13, paragraph 8.25). Despite this longstanding consensus reaffirmed again and again by UN member states, including in the 2030 Agenda (A/RES/70/1, SDG 5.6), the UN system has systematically promoted abortion for the past twenty-five years.

At times, UN abortion promotion is generalized through reports from UN agencies or the secretariat. At other times, it involves direct interference in the internal affairs of UN member states, as is most often the case with UN treaty bodies.

UN system abortion advocacy is illegal and cannot give rise to any new obligations that are contrary to what UN member states agreed in 1994 and have reaffirmed ever since. UN member states should review the actions of the UNICEF to promote abortion and take all necessary actions to hold UN agencies and the secretariat accountable, including withholding funds, as appropriate.

The Human Reproduction Programme (HRP) (2020 – Present) - The programme is a UNICEF, UNDP, WHO, and World Bank coalition that collaborates with "stakeholders committed to sexual and reproductive health and rights." The list includes leading abortion providers or pro-abortion advocacy organizations such as "DKT International, Ipas, International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), MSI Reproductive Choices, Pathfinder International, PSI, UNFPA and others, [that] demonstrate the power of knowledge sharing to safeguard access to safe and timely comprehensive abortion care (including post-abortion care) during and beyond the pandemic."³⁵

2Gether4SRHR - 2gether 4 SRHR³⁶ is a joint United Nations (UN) Regional Programme that brings together the combined efforts of UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO, to improve the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of all people in Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA). The 2gether 4 SRHR Knowledge Hub³⁷ has a section dedicated to sharing resources on "comprehensive abortion care"³⁸ where it casts doctors' conscientious objection to abortion services in a negative light³⁹ and features an Ipas publication for abortion advocacy⁴⁰, among other resources.

Girls' Pact of the Future (2024) – The Pact calls on member states to "[p]romote access to family planning services: ensure access to information on safe sex and to affordable or free contraception to protect adolescent girls from unintended pregnancies. Legalise or decriminalise abortion in all cases but most urgently for victims of rape. Provide safe and legal abortion services for girls in accordance with international human rights standards and comprehensive postabortion care and support services."⁴¹

Maternal and newborn health (2024) – "Severe bleeding, high blood pressure, pregnancy-related infections and complications from unsafe abortions are the leading causes of maternal deaths. These are all largely preventable with timely access to high-quality healthcare."⁴²

The following examples refer to sexual reproductive health (SRH) and sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR), which have never been accepted by the General Assembly but are broadly understood to include abortion:

In Pursuit of Happiness: Girls' striking optimism in a time of crisis (2024) – "Gender inequality significantly impedes the material well-being of girls and women around the world – from maternal mortality and anaemia, to access to sexual and reproductive health rights and food insecurity, to safety on the way to school and lifelong mental health; to wealth and the transition from learning to earning."⁴³

Adolescent girls and the SDGs: acting at the midpoint milestone (2024) – "There are examples to learn from. In Tanzania, adolescents aged 14–19 years living in households that receive support from the national social protection system are offered life skills training, a small grant, mentoring, and links to sexual and reproductive health services from the Ujana Salama programme."⁴⁴

Joint UN statement calling for sexual and reproductive health and rights for all (2024) – "We must also urgently support the increasing efforts of young people, women and communities to speak up about sexual and reproductive health concerns and to design and deliver solutions that respond to their needs and to the realities of a changing world, where climate change in particular, affects sexual and reproductive health and rights."⁴⁵

Empowering girls means upholding their rights to sexual and reproductive health (2024)⁴⁶ – In a joint statement on the International Day of the Girl Child, UNICEF said "the right support, resources, and opportunities, we have a seismic opportunity to address inequality in sexual and reproductive health and rights now, and empower girls for decades to come, and for the next generation."

Delivering With and For Adolescent Girls: Five game-changing priorities (2024) – "Investments in adolescent girl-focused health services, sexual and reproductive health rights SRHR and HIV testing, treatment and care."⁴⁷

UNFPA–UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage (Updated in 2024) – "The Global Programme holistically works to achieve gender transformative results for the most marginalized adolescent girls, by bringing together the sectors of education, child protection, social and behaviour change, gender, adolescents and youth, health – including sexual and reproductive health – and social protection, to provide multi-sectoral responses."⁴⁸

Press Release: Despite progress, adolescent girls continue to bear the brunt of the HIV epidemic with 98,000 new infections in 2022 (2023) – "It is unacceptable that adolescent girls, who should be planning their futures, continue to bear the heaviest burden of HIV infection," said UNICEF Associate Director of HIV/AIDS Anurita Bains. "We – the UN, communities, governments and organisations – must eradicate the obstacles that make HIV a threat to their health and wellbeing. This includes ensuring the sexual and reproductive health and rights of adolescent girls and young women are met."⁴⁹

2022 Global Annual Report - Sustaining the Gains in the Polycrisis Era (2023) – "Approaches that have shown positive and consistent results in preventing child marriage and improving outcomes for girls fall into three main intervention areas: income and economic strengthening; education; and sexual and reproductive health and rights."⁵⁰

Problematic UNICEF Partnerships

UNICEF has a history of partnering with groups with highly controversial agendas, including on the issues of abortion and comprehensive sexuality education.

International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) – UNICEF partnered with IPPF, the leading international abortion provider, for multiple UN side events. In 2025, UNICEF and IPPF co-hosted an event at the 58th Session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD) on prioritizing SRH in crisis response, which featured IPPF remarks on the importance of access to abortion in humanitarian contexts.⁵¹

Center for Reproductive Rights (CRR) – CRR is a global law firm that promotes abortion and sexual rights, including comprehensive sexuality education, homosexual/transgender policies, and other sexual rights issues. At the 68th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), UNICEF and CRR co-hosted an event entitled "Consultation with the UN Special Rapporteur on Toxics and Human Rights" on the intersection of "toxics and gender."⁵²

Plan International – UNICEF partnered with Plan International, a major international organization promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for adolescents, for various UN side events. In 2025, UNICEF and Plan International co-hosted an event at the 89th Session of the

Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) entitled "From Potential to Progress: Multisectoral Approaches to Empower Adolescents."⁵³ In 2024, UNICEF signed a Plan International statement⁵⁴ on the UN Summit of the Future and co-hosted an event with Plan International at the Harvard Club, "Advancing Transformative Actions for Adolescent Girls,"⁵⁵ which featured a section on SRHR. In 2023, UNICEF and Plan International co-hosted an event to celebrate the International Day of the Girl Child.⁵⁶

YSAFE – YSAFE⁵⁷ is a non-governmental network of young people in Europe and Central Asia, promoting "sex positivity" and online resources and information about sexuality. YSAFE has strong ties to International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). According to YSAFE, "YSAFE was officially formed by young members of IPPF in 2006 as the federation wanted to engage more young people" and "YSAFers are volunteers under the age of 25 who are active in IPPF Member Associations in Europe and Central Asia." In its 2018 annual report YSAFE shared that "YSAFE was approached by UNICEF to join the preparation an online toolkit to tackle the HIV epidemic with input from a variety of key stakeholders, including young people. The YSAFE chair contributed to the development of the toolkits on multi-sectorial approaches and equally provided feedback to the remainder of the toolkit, providing a needed youth perspective."⁵⁸

Endnotes

- 1 As of September 4, 2025, UNCIEF has removed this page from their website. C-Fam has archived the UNICEF brochures on our website. The archived brochures are referenced in endnotes 2–6 of this document: <https://www.unicef.org/ukraine/en/documents/sexuality-education>
- 2 As of September 4, 2025, UNICEF has removed the publication from their website. C-Fam has archived a copy on our website for reference: <https://c-fam.org/wp-content/uploads/UNICEF-CSE-in-Ukraine-Ages-15-18.pdf>
- 3 As of September 4, 2025, UNICEF has removed the publication from their website. C-Fam has archived a copy on our website for reference: <https://c-fam.org/wp-content/uploads/UNICEF-CSE-in-Ukraine-Ages-15-18.pdf>
- 4 As of September 4, 2025, UNICEF has removed the publication from their website. C-Fam has archived a copy on our website for reference: <https://c-fam.org/wp-content/uploads/UNICEF-CSE-Ukraine-Ages-10-14.pdf>
- 5 As of September 4, 2025, UNICEF has removed the publication from their website. C-Fam has archived a copy on our website for reference: <https://c-fam.org/wp-content/uploads/UNICEF-CSE-in-Ukraine-Ages-6-9-.pdf>
- 6 As of September 4, 2025, UNICEF has removed the publication from their website. C-Fam has archived a copy on our website for reference: <https://c-fam.org/wp-content/uploads/UNICEF-CSE-in-Ukraine-Ages-6-9-.pdf>
- 7 <https://www.laaha.org/en/home>
- 8 <https://www.laaha.org/en/lets-talk-about-it-podcast-take-look-mirror-exercise>
- 9 <https://www.laaha.org/en/common-questions-about-having-sex>
- 10 <https://www.unfpa.org/publications/international-technical-and-programmatic-guidance-out-school-comprehensive-sexuality>
- 11 <https://www.unfpa.org/publications/international-technical-and-programmatic-guidance-out-school-comprehensive-sexuality>
- 12 <https://www.unfpa.org/publications/international-technical-guidance-sexuality-education>
- 13 <https://www.unicef.org/media/158031/file/BSF2.%20What%20to%20Teach%20for%20Foundational%20Education%20for%20Health%20and%20Well-being.pdf.pdf>
- 14 As of September 4, 2025, UNICEF has removed the publication from their website. C-Fam has archived a copy on our website for reference: <https://c-fam.org/wp-content/uploads/Review-of-Comprehensive-Sexuality-Education-in-Thailand.pdf>
- 15 <https://www.unicef.org/media/158026/file/BSF1.%20What%20is%20Foundational%20Education%20for%20Health%20and%20Well-being.pdf.pdf>
- 16 <https://www.unicef.org/reports/delivering-and-adolescent-girls>
- 17 <https://www.unicef.org/reports/2022-global-annual-report-sustaining-gains-polycrisis-era>
- 18 The Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (VLCT) provides a canon to interpret inter- national treaties. According to the VLCT, interpretations must be made in "good faith" and on the basis of the "ordinary" meaning of the terms of the treaty and the overall "object and purpose" of the treaty at the time of its negotiation. No UN human rights treaty includes the terms "sexual orientation" or "gender identity" in any form, nor, as a discussion of the context and drafting histories for the respective treaties will show, could it be interpreted in good faith to convey or imply such a right. Furthermore, during the negotiation of human rights treaties, many states had laws restricting or outlawing sodomy. None had laws recognizing same-sex legal arrangements or recognizing "gender identity" other than biologically determined sex. In light of this, and the fact that multiple countries proscribe homosexual conduct, also no customary international law could exist supporting the notion that consensual sex between adults of the same sex is a protected right or freedom, or that states should promote social acceptance for homosexuality, nor that a person would be able to change their anatomy and legal identity to suit their subjective perception of "gender identity" or compel its recognition by others.
- 19 <https://www.unicef.org/lac/media/49196/file/UNICEF%20-%20Guidelines%20GBV%20in%20mobility%20contexts.pdf.pdf>
- 20 <https://www.unicef.org/lac/media/49196/file/UNICEF%20-%20Guidelines%20GBV%20in%20mobility%20contexts.pdf.pdf>
- 21 <https://www.unicef.org/lac/media/49196/file/UNICEF%20-%20Guidelines%20GBV%20in%20mobility%20contexts.pdf.pdf>

- 22 <https://www.unicef.org/lac/media/49196/file/UNICEF%20-%20Guidelines%20GBV%20in%20mobility%20contexts.pdf>
- 23 <https://data.unicef.org/resources/a-statistical-snapshot-of-the-state-of-adolescent-girls-in-latin-america-and-the-caribbean/>
- 24 <https://www.unicef.org/lac/media/45401/file/Marketing%20and%20Gender%20Engagement%20PlanV3.pdf>
- 25 https://www.unicef.org/media/156546/file/Integrated%20VCAT%20and%20GTA%20Facilitator's%20Guide_En.pdf
- 26 <https://www.unicef.org/reports/caring-child-survivors-sexual-abuse-resource-pack-age>
- 27 <https://www.unicef.org/media/156686/file/GTA%20Values%20Clarification%20Workshop%20Facilitation%20Guide.pdf>
- 28 <https://www.unicef.org/youthledaction/documents/brief-supporting-lgbtqi-youth>
- 29 <https://www.unicef.org/reports/rights-denied-discrimination-children>
- 30 <https://www.unicef.org/innocenti/reports/prospects-children-polycrisis-2023-global-outlook>
- 31 <https://www.unicef.org/gender-equality/gender-action-plan-2022-2025>
- 32 <https://www.unicef.org/documents/dismantling-gender-stereotypes-media-and-advertising>
- 33 <https://www.unicef.org/documents/dismantling-gender-stereotypes-media-and-advertising>
- 34 <https://www.unicef.org/lac/en/reports/gender-inclusivity-advertising-caribbean-call-action-policymakers>
- 35 <https://www.who.int/news/item/28-09-2021-safe-abortion-in-the-context-of-covid-19-partnership-dialogue-and-digital-innovation/>
- 36 <https://www.2gether4srhr.org/>
- 37 <https://www.2gether4srhr.org/>
- 38 <https://www.2gether4srhr.org/resources?resource-theme=8770>
- 39 <https://www.2gether4srhr.org/resources/addressing-the-supply-of-abortion-services-what-is-the-impact-of-conscientious-objection-on-women-girls-rights-to-safe-abortion>
- 40 <https://www.2gether4srhr.org/resources/advocacy-lens-2022-who-abortion-care-guideline>
- 41 <https://plan-international.org/publications/girls-pact/>
- 42 <https://www.unicef.org/health/maternal-and-newborn-health>
- 43 <https://data.unicef.org/resources/in-pursuit-of-happiness-girls-striking-optimism-in-a-time-of-crisis/>
- 44 [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanchi/article/PIIS2352-4642\(23\)00319-X/full-text](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanchi/article/PIIS2352-4642(23)00319-X/full-text)
- 45 <https://www.unicef.org/lac/en/press-releases/joint-un-statement-calling-sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-rights-all>
- 46 <https://www.unicef.org/esa/press-releases/empowering-girls-means-upholding-their-rights-sexual-and-reproductive-health>
- 47 <https://www.unicef.org/reports/delivering-and-adolescent-girls>
- 48 <https://www.unfpa.org/unfpa-unicef-global-programme-end-child-marriage>
- 49 <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/despite-progress-adolescent-girls-continue-bear-brunt-hiv-epidemic-98000-new>
- 50 <https://www.unicef.org/reports/2022-global-annual-report-sustaining-gains-polycrisis-era>
- 51 <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1p/k1pctcm2xg>
- 52 <https://reproductiverights.org/csw-68/>
- 53 <https://www.who.int/news-room/events/detail/2025/03/10/default-calendar/who-at-the-69th-commission-on-the-status-of-women>
- 54 <https://plan-international.org/news/2024/09/13/joint-statement-on-the-transformative-actions-by-girls-and-young-women/>
- 55 https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2024-10/O95_%20The%20Future%20Girls%20