

# College students say Utah's sex ed curriculum falls short

By **Eva Roach Barbosa** - April 5, 2021



*Current Utah law emphasizes the importance of abstinence before marriage in sex education curriculum for grades 8-12. (Wokandapix, Pixabay)*

Birth control, contraception and practicing safe sex were all things Salt Lake Community College education major Brenda Garcia said were a mystery during high school.

"I just had no idea about any of the important stuff," Garcia said, noting her formal sex education left her feeling dangerously uninformed about sexually transmitted diseases and protection.

Utah laws about what instruction is allowed in high school sex education courses are limited in what can be covered, according to the [Sex Education Collaborative](#). In accordance with the Utah Code of Law, [teachers are only permitted to promote abstinence](#) to prevent sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancy. They are banned from answering specific questions about intimacy, contraception, or any sexual activity outside of marriage.

"I remember some boys in my class asked more sexual questions, but the teachers just said, 'talk to your parents about it,'" said Alan Hinojos, a film tech major, recalling his sexual education from middle school in Park City.

However, Hinojos said many of his classmates also felt uncomfortable asking their parents questions about sex, leaving them without answers.

In late February of 2021, [the Utah State Legislature voted against a bill](#) that would expand the sexual education topics covered in school. The proposed bill would have required

teachers to instruct junior and high school students on boundaries, consent and how to recognize sexual manipulation. The bill failed 39-31 on its fourth attempt to pass in the House.

When students are not able to find the information they need from school, they will turn to older friends or siblings, Hinojos said.

Teenagers also turn to the internet for answers, where they can research any subject without perspective on unsafe or false information.

Local Planned Parenthood programs have stepped up to fill in the gap in education. Hinojos said he remembered students from his high school turning to Planned Parenthood for sexually transmitted disease testing, contraceptives, or birth control.

"I know for a lot of girls, it was a safe haven," said Hinojos.

Proponents of comprehensive sex education argue that education should go beyond biology and health and extend to sexual identity as well. In the United States, [15 states have laws requiring that sex ed for teenagers be medically accurate](#), and nine states require discussion of LGBTQ+ identities in school.

"I would have liked to learn more about same-sex relationships," said Garcia, of her high school education.

The [Utah Pride Center](#) is one organization currently providing programs to help LGBTQ+ youths find belonging and acceptance. The staff teaches informational seminars on a variety of subjects and provides opportunities for youth to connect with others like them and feel welcomed.

# Bruin Pantry food drive to benefit SLCC community

By **Cherise Peterson** - April 5, 2021



*The Thayne Center operates the Taylorsville Redwood Bruin Pantry, which carries a wide supply of canned and refrigerated goods for hungry students. (Allison Hutto)*

With the pandemic still looming, Salt Lake Community College's Bruin Pantry has been keeping the needs of its students, staff and faculty in mind.

The pantry, in association with the Utah Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, started a food drive April 1 at SLCC campuses. They are collecting non-perishable food items through April 15, and all donations benefit the Bruin Pantry.

White donation barrels are located at multiple campuses:

- Jordan Campus: One at the Jordan High Tech Center and one at the Jordan Health Sciences Building.
- South City Campus: One at the Student Services Desk.
- Taylorsville Redwood Campus: One at the Student Center "Start Here" Desk.
- Miller Campus: One in the Miller Free Enterprise Center, room 138.

Safety protocols for COVID-19 require patrons wear masks on campus.

High-demand items include diapers size 3-6, baby wipes, personal hygiene items, peanut butter, canned meats, jams and jellies, pasta sauces, and canned fruit in light syrup. However, the pantry will take all non-perishable donations.

For those in need or who would like to donate after April 15, please [visit the Bruin Pantry](#) to get the latest information about hours and locations. Students can also call 801-957-4693 or email [michael.braak@slcc.edu](mailto:michael.braak@slcc.edu).