

# UU FaithAction NJ

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January 13, 2023

Dear Friends,

You're receiving this letter because we have you listed as a UUFANJ contact for religious education at your congregation. Please let us know if there are others in your congregation who should receive this. We're also always eager to receive any updated contact information including email addresses, phone numbers and titles. You can email [admin@uufaithaction.org](mailto:admin@uufaithaction.org) with such information.

We are reaching out because we need your help. The State of New Jersey adopted updated standards for comprehensive sexuality education in 2020. Since that time right wing extremists have seized upon this issue, making false claims about the new standards, and promoting the idea that some teachers are using the new standards to "groom" and sexualize children, promote gender "confusion", etc.

These accusations are patently false, but have started to take hold around the state. Many of these efforts are supported and funded by organizations like Jersey Rising, Moms for Liberty & Garden State Families. This campaign is yet another case of mis/disinformation being used to create discord, advance extremist agendas and promote hate.

As Unitarian Universalists we have a long and proud history of leadership in promoting comprehensive sexuality education for people of all ages. Beginning with About Your Sexuality (AYS), and then with the development & implementation of the Our Whole Lives curriculum, our UU children and youth have benefited greatly from sexuality education that is fact based, non-judgemental, and life affirming. UUs, along with the United Church of Christ (our OWL partners), have deep experience and expertise in the area of comprehensive sex ed.

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Now we are called upon to bring that experience and expertise to support comprehensive sexuality education in our public schools statewide. We are uniquely positioned to support these new standards, and in addition to our expertise we can also speak from a faith-based perspective. A liberal religious perspective is often missing from the conversation, but you can be sure that religious conservatives are making their voices heard.

So here's our request:

We'd like your help in sharing this information with your congregation, particularly your OWL teams. Information is power, and we want to make sure that UU's around the state of NJ who have an interest in comprehensive sexuality education for all are aware of this issue.

We would also like to encourage interested UU's around the state to become aware of what is happening with their local school boards around the new state standards. Many districts are holding public information sessions, and these have been very well attended by the folks who oppose these new standards. We need to be in the room where these discussions are happening, and express our support for comprehensive sexuality education for all our young people.

Carol Loscalzo & Jami Thall

Co-Chairs Reproductive Justice Task Force

UU FaithAction NJ

[reprojustice@uufaithaction.org](mailto:reprojustice@uufaithaction.org)

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