



August 25, 2016

The Honorable Jerry Brown
Governor of California
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 1435 (Jackson) School curriculum: health framework: healthy relationships
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Governor Brown:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing 5,000 California pediatricians strongly supports SB 1435 (Jackson). This bill would require schools that provide health instruction for children in kindergarten through eighth grade to include coursework on the development of healthy relationships. It would also require the “Health Framework for California Public Schools” to include comprehensive information on the development of healthy relationships and be age and developmentally appropriate.

The study, “Longitudinal Associations Between Teen Dating Violence Victimization and Adverse Health Outcomes,” compared adolescents reporting no dating violence and teen girls who were victimized by a boyfriend. Those who suffered from unhealthy relationships in their youth were more likely to engage in smoking and heavy drinking, and to experience symptoms of depression and thoughts of suicide five years later.

In order to help students develop the social and emotional skills to develop and build healthy relationships with their peers, and to help reduce sexual harassment, assault and peer-to-peer violence, additional efforts are needed to provide age and developmentally appropriate learning opportunities in elementary and middle school.

This bill takes a reasonable and proactive approach by helping to provide educational instruction that is developmentally appropriate, to help our youth understand and learn how to treat one another respectfully and with dignity. Pediatricians, therefore, respectfully urge you to sign SB 1435 and thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and well-being of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Suzanne".

Susan Wu, M.D.
Senior Policy Analyst
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

CC: Stuart Cohen, AAP-CA Chair; Lydia Bourne, AAP-CA Legislative Advocate; AAP-CA Leadership