



TITLE IX COMMUNICATIONS GUIDE:

SUPPORTING PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS

A communications guide and toolkit for campus administrators & staff to support pregnant and parenting students through the lens of Title IX.



The
Pregnant
Scholar

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About Us

The Pregnant Scholar Initiative at the Center for WorkLife Law, University of California Hastings College of the Law is a legal resource center dedicated to advancing opportunities for pregnant and parenting students in higher education.

The Pregnant Scholar Initiative provides know-your-rights information to pregnant and parenting students, and technical assistance, training, and policy implementation coaching to campus change-makers. Most services are available free of charge.

For more information

Visit www.thepregnantscholar.org

[Contact us online](#) or call (415) 565-4640

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About this guide & how to use it

Many students and staff know that Title IX offers students protections related to sexual harassment and assault; few know that Title IX also offers protections for pregnant and parenting students. Similarly, many student parents report initially feeling as if Title IX coordinators are allies and/or a useful resource on their campus, although they often change their minds once they see their campus' Title IX website.

Communications that are timely and share information about students' rights are critical to student parent success. In fact, up-to-date communication is a cornerstone for educational equity. As a reminder, as a campus administrator or faculty member, it is your responsibility to support students in navigating resources and communicating as clearly and effectively as possible.

This communications guide contains reflection questions, posters and social media graphics, and a number of exemplars from campuses who are doing this work well. The guide is meant to support your communications practice and will help you think critically about your Title IX communication strategy. It will also help you engage in conversation and share best practice with other staff on your campus. *Be sure to share this guide with additional student affairs offices and supports so they have this information too!*

Under the 2022 [proposed Title IX regulations](#), all campus employees must report to their Title IX coordinator when a student is pregnant or experiencing related conditions. **This means the Title IX coordinator's contact information must be readily available and in a prominent place on all communication materials.** This guide will support Title IX coordinators and other administrators in ensuring all students and staff have access to the information that they need in a timely manner so that the new Title IX regulations can be seamlessly brought to life on your campus.

If you are a Title IX coordinator looking for additional resources and guidance regarding supporting pregnant and parenting students through Title IX, please review our [Guidance for Title IX coordinators](#). For assistance drafting communications tools for your campus, [contact the Pregnant Scholar Team](#).

Communication Materials

Reflection Tool

A great first step in ensuring student parents are well-supported on your campus is auditing your communication materials so that everyone (including students, faculty, and other administrators) knows that pregnant and parenting students are protected by and have rights under Title IX.

Below, find reflection questions to ask yourself, along with the rationale behind the questions, as you audit existing materials and create new ones.

You can [find a printable version of this reflection tool here](#).

| Reflection question | Rationale |
|---|---|
| Anywhere Title IX is mentioned, is it made clear that pregnant and parenting students have rights and are protected under Title IX? | This is an easy fix that raises awareness and lets students and staff know that pregnant and parenting students have rights under Title IX. It also serves as a commitment to students and staff that your campus will support student parents. This is the first step in holding institutions accountable to creating and enforcing policies that support pregnant and parenting students. |

Communication Materials

Reflection Tool

| Reflection question | Rationale |
|---|--|
| <p>Are your communication platforms being updated regularly and sharing the most up-to-date information so that student parents can stay informed?</p> | <p>While this is always best practice, pregnant students and student parents often have limited time due to navigating many responsibilities and may have a greater need for more varied resources and up-to-date information. Being a student parent demands excellent time management skills and spending time following up on a resource that no longer exists, for example, takes away from the valuable time needed to be both a student and a parent.</p> |
| <p>Do all of your Title IX materials include information that is specific to your campus? For example, you might name that Title IX covers pregnant and parenting students nationwide, but what does that look like on your campus? Who are the relevant points of contact and who is responsible for ensuring both follow-up and follow-through occurs? Is that information made clear to student parents?</p> | <p>Title IX implementation and supports may look different from campus to campus. It is important to outline resources and relevant points of contact on your campus so that students know where to turn and who to contact to get their needs met. It is also important that both administrators and students know who is responsible for following up with students and following through on any asks or requests for support. Like the point above, it is essential to be as clear and specific as possible so that student parents do not have to spend additional time or energy tracking down resources or following up on requests for support.</p> |

Communication Materials

Reflection Tool

| Reflection question | Rationale |
|--|---|
| <p>Are your materials inclusive and representative?</p> <p>Do they use gender neutral language where appropriate? Do they use language such as ‘caregiver’ or ‘family’ rather than ‘mother’ or ‘husband and wife?’ Similarly, are you using ‘pregnant students,’ ‘lactating students,’ or ‘birthing parent’ rather than ‘pregnant mothers’ or ‘birth mother?’</p> <p>Are all images representative of students of different races, genders, sexualities, and ability? Are different familial structures represented?</p> | <p>It is essential to use representative materials so that all student parents know that they are a part of your campus’ community and that they have rights under Title IX. Student parents are not a monolith and hold many identities. Similarly, families look many different ways. Using inclusive materials is one way to begin to acknowledge this complexity. It also supports constructing an environment rooted in belonging for all student parents, and it is a way to avoid legal issues.</p> <p>It is important to note that word choice can create barriers. For example, if supports and resources for pregnant and parenting students are housed within your campus’ ‘Women’s Center,’ or another office that is geared toward one segment of the student population, it must be made explicitly clear that all student parents are welcome, inclusive of all identities.</p> |

We also love this document that asks educators to reflect on the [seven forms of bias that exist in instructional materials](#) from Wellesley Public Schools. These points are also great to think about when creating communications materials.

Website

Many universities have a Title IX webpage that outlines protections against sexual harassment and sexual assault and shares contact information for Title IX coordinators. When thinking about pregnant and parenting students, there are a few additional steps you can take:

1. Clearly and explicitly mention that pregnant and parenting students have rights and are protected by Title IX.
2. Share relevant contact information (e.g. Title IX office, Student Services, Disability office, etc.) so that student parents know who to reach out to for support.
3. List other on-campus supports, such as a student parent advisory group, caregiver support groups, and/ or childcare resources. If these supports exist on campus, you will want to share information on what they do, and how to join or access help. Check out [Los Angeles Valley College's Student Parent Support page](#) for some inspiration!
4. You can also share community-based organizations and resources that may be of use to pregnant students and student parents. This includes 'basic needs' resources (the [University of Oregon webpage](#) is a great example).
5. Think about creating a webpage explicitly for student parents. Listing all resources, supports, and rights in one place supports navigation and saves student parents valuable time and energy. Having one page also makes it easier for staff to keep resources updated.

Other sample webpages for student parents:

- [California State University East Bay](#)
- [Cornell University](#)
- [University of Hawai'i](#)
- [Cal Poly](#)
- As always, please use and share information from The Pregnant Scholar's website: www.thepregnantscholar.org

Lactating Students

You're entitled to a clean and private lactation space, and the time to use it. We're here to support you!



For access to lactation space, contact:

Enter your contact info or website here

Social Media

Does your campus or student parent organization have a Twitter, Instagram or Facebook page? We highly recommend sharing the rights that pregnant, parenting, and lactating students hold under Title IX through your social media pages, as well as resources and best practices for faculty and administrators to best support student parents. Feel free to use the [Pregnant Scholar's social media graphics](#), and this ['Know Your Rights' webpage](#) is a great starting point to create your own social media posts.

Also feel free to Tweet us at [@PregnantScholar](#), and share our website: www.thepregnantscholar.org.

Posters and flyers

The Pregnant Scholar team is excited to share posters and flyers for college campuses sharing protections for pregnant and parenting students. These posters are editable so you may add resources or contact information for your campus.

[Access posters and flyers here.](#)

We also recommend using Canva or other similar platforms to create clear and brief flyers sharing 'Know Your Rights' information for pregnant and parenting students. Be sure to include relevant contact information, and make sure your materials are as inclusive and representative as possible. If you have additional needs, you can [contact us here.](#)

Where to post: The Pregnant Scholar team has heard from student parents that it is effective to post flyers and informational resources in restrooms, lactation rooms, student health centers, childcare facilities, and anywhere student parents may frequent.



**Pregnant?
You have rights!**

A nationwide law called Title IX bans discrimination and harassment against you because you are pregnant, were pregnant, or have a pregnancy-related condition.

We're committed to supporting your success and we follow Title IX's requirements to offer:

- Changes (such as breaks during exams or a larger desk) and supportive programming
- Time off—if you want it
- Private lactation space

To access these supports contact:

If you think you're being harassed or treated differently because of your pregnancy or a related condition, you can file a Title IX complaint.



**Are you a student parent?
You have rights!**

A nationwide law called Title IX bans discrimination and harassment against pregnant and parenting students on the basis of sex.

We're committed to supporting your success—you shouldn't have to choose between your family and your education.

For more information on support for student parents:

If you think you're being harassed or treated differently because of your pregnancy or a related condition, you can file a Title IX complaint.



**Are you a lactating student?
You have rights!**

A nationwide law called Title IX bans discrimination and harassment against you because you are pregnant, were pregnant, or have a pregnancy-related condition like lactation.

We're committed to supporting your success and will provide:

- A private and clean lactation space (Not a bathroom)
- Time to pump or nurse

To access these supports contact:

If you think you're being harassed or treated differently because of your pregnancy or a related condition, you can file a Title IX complaint.

Other written materials

Other written materials might include your campus' handbook, syllabi, brochures and more. Like your website, you will want to name that pregnant and parenting students are protected under Title IX and share any relevant contact information. It is important to share this information as widely as possible! It is also a great idea to include your student parent specific webpage and/ or social media handles on any printed materials.

Ten ideas (with links to campus examples):

1. **Handbook:** [University of Kansas virtual handbook](#). Consider sharing all family-responsive policies such as financial aid information (e.g. cost of living adjustment), childcare support and stipend information, and attendance information in one place. You can find additional family-responsive policy language in the [Back to Campus toolkit](#) (pp. 10- 11).
2. **Syllabus:** [Proposed syllabi insert from The Pregnant Scholar](#), as well as additional language found in the [Back to Campus Toolkit](#) (pp. 6 & 10).
3. **Welcome letter:** [Sample welcome letter from Generation Hope](#) and [Welcome video from UH Manoa](#)
4. **Beginning of year anti-discrimination statement:** Please visit <https://teaching.berkeley.edu/resources/campus-policies#parenting> --> 'Student Support' --> 'Parenting and Pregnancy.' This anti-discrimination statement is sent campus-wide to all UC Berkeley students by email.
5. **Orientation materials**, including any presentations and flyers. Check out <https://slidesgo.com/> to find presentation templates with inclusive images.
6. **Brochures** for incoming and current students

Other written materials

7. **Campus map**, detailing family-responsive facilities such as lactation rooms, changing stations and kid-friendly spaces: [Child-friendly sites map at the University of Hawaii Manoa](#)
8. **Toolkits** for faculty and staff exploring Title IX implementation, gender equity, and educational access: [Know Your IX Campus Organizing Toolkit](#) and [Back to Campus 2021 Toolkit](#)
9. **Posters** with information directing students to your resources and sharing Title IX information: [Healthy Teen Network](#) and [Know Your IX](#) both have great posters and shareable graphics. And don't forget to [check out our posters here!](#)
10. **Referral guide** and/or decision matrix for pregnant students in need of health or other accommodations. For example, if a student visits their advisor, it would be best practice for an advisor to have a list of contacts to make referrals and connect students across student support offices and campus departments. *Under the new Title IX regulations (2022) campus staff who learn a student is pregnant are required to provide them with information about Title IX.* [Learn more here](#). As a reminder, be sure to ask students what they need before making decisions or revealing personal information on their behalf!

Do you have sample materials you'd like to share with us and promote here?

[Please contact us!](#)



Questions or need additional resources?

Contact us: thepregnantscholar.org/contactus/

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