

What can YOU do to support lifelong healthy sexuality?



Sex Ed for Life supports effective, evidence-based sex education that can help delay the onset of sexual intercourse and reduce negative outcomes among those who are sexually involved.

Sex Ed for Life believes young people have the right to complete, medically accurate, and developmentally appropriate sexuality information and resources to help them make healthy choices.

Sex Ed for Life respects young people's capacity to make responsible decisions about their sexual health.

Sex Ed for Life believes abstinence is a key component of sex education and that young people deserve support and respect for postponing sexual activity.

Sex Ed for Life recognizes that comprehensive sexuality education respects the diverse backgrounds of all individuals.

Sex Ed for Life believes that comprehensive sexuality education can result in positive outcomes for the whole community when parents, caregivers, youth, and trained sexuality educators share the responsibility.

Sex Ed for Life believes that parents, caregivers and other trusted adults are the most important role models for their children regarding sexuality and that professionals can work in partnership to assist them to be their children's primary sexuality educators.

Support

Comprehensive Sex Education

Adolescent sexual health issues must be addressed with complex prevention efforts; including, comprehensive sexuality education that is developmentally appropriate for all ages throughout the educational experience.

Comprehensive sexuality education includes medically accurate and developmentally appropriate information on abstinence and contraception.

Comprehensive Sexuality Education Works

- Research shows that comprehensive sexuality education is effective in providing adolescents with the tools, the knowledge, the skills, the attitude and values to make responsible choices about their sexual health.¹
- Comprehensive sexuality education programs that discuss both abstinence and contraception, including condoms, do not increase sexual activity among teens; rather, such programs often delay first intercourse, reduce the frequency of sex, and reduce the number of sexual partners.¹
- Also in recent years, the decline of teen pregnancy rates has been attributed not only to an increase in abstinence among adolescents, but also to an increase in contraceptive use.²

Minnesotans Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

- 7 out of 10 Minnesota adults believe that sexuality education should include both abstinence and contraception.³
- 9 out of 10 Minnesotans support comprehensive sexuality education in high schools; 8 out of 10 support comprehensive sexuality education in junior high schools.³
- 8 out of 10 Minnesota parents reject the idea that teaching both abstinence and contraception encourages young people to have sex.³

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Education Does NOT Work

- Abstinence-only-until-marriage education offers abstinence as the only option, does not include any information on contraception or prevention of STIs, relies on scare tactics and overstates contraception failure rates, and does not provide young people with information they will need for healthy lives.
- The only research on abstinence-only-until-marriage education programs found an increased number of young people had sex and that fewer used contraception.⁴
- Abstinence-only-until-marriage education imposes only one set of values as morally correct regardless of family composition, cultural experience, religious beliefs, and sexual orientation.
- Abstinence-only-until-marriage education can shame and fail to address young people who have been sexually abused or sexually assaulted.
- Research from Texas Department of Health found abstinence-only sex education programs have had little impact on Texas teenagers' behavior.⁵

What can YOU do to support comprehensive sexuality education?

- Call, write or meet with your MN representative and senator and tell them you support comprehensive sexuality education.
- Educate adolescents, parents and other adults about comprehensive sexuality education and encourage them to contact their legislators.
- Join the Sex Ed for Life coalition and find out how you can become involved.

¹ Kirby D. Emerging answers: research findings on programs to reduce teen pregnancy. Washington, D.C.: National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. 2001.

² Darroch JE and Singh S. Why is teenage pregnancy declining? The roles of abstinence, sexual activity and contraceptive use. Occasional Report, New York: The Alan Guttmacher Institute. 1999;1.

³ Minnesota Sexuality Education Survey. MN Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy, Prevention, and Parenting, 2000.

⁴ Kirby D, Korpi M, Barth RP, Cagampang HH. Evaluation of Education Now and Babies Later (ENABL): Final Report. 1995

⁵ Kaiser Daily Reproductive Health Report. Abstinence-only sex education programs have little effect on Texas teenagers' behavior, study says. Texas Department of Health. 2005.



Sexuality Education for Life-Minnesota is a coalition of educational, religious, health, social service, and advocacy organizations, as well as concerned individuals that promotes lifelong healthy sexuality by advocating for policies on comprehensive sexuality education and access to confidential health care services.

Sexuality Education for Life-Minnesota is coordinated by the Minnesota AIDS Project (MAP) www.mnaimsproject.org and the Minnesota Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy, Prevention and Parenting (MOAPPP) www.moappp.org For more information on Sexuality Education for Life-Minnesota: www.SexEdforLife.org