



The Effect of Sexual Education on Sexual Assault Prevention

Beijing +20: Violence Against Women

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I. Introduction

One in five. That is the number of women who will be sexually assaulted in the United States.¹ Worldwide, a third of women will be sexually assaulted.² In the face of such an epidemic, we should be equipping adolescents with all the tools necessary to not only help them protect themselves, but also to demand bystander intervention and prevent adolescents from becoming future predators; yet, only 16% of the information adolescents receive about sexual assault comes from their parents or schools.³ The rest comes from the media, which often leads to distorted beliefs of the nature of sexual assault.

Sex-education in the United States has been a hotly contested issue for decades, but it wasn't until recently that the conversation steered towards including information about sexual consent and sexual assault. This paper will seek to argue that providing students with comprehensive sexual education – including information about sexual consent – can change the attitudes people hold toward sexual assault and its survivors, hopefully leading to a more educated society that is not tolerant of violence against women.

This paper seeks to examine sexual education and sexual assault in the context of Beijing +20, the twenty years since the Beijing Platform for Action was passed. In order to demonstrate the link between sexual assault and sexual education, the paper shall first cover the epidemic of sexual assault, followed by linking sexual assault attitudes to the media. Then the paper shall discuss the problems behind abstinence-only education. The rest of the paper shall be broken into three sections: 1) North Carolina, 2) National, 3) International, to examine sexual education policies at each level and to what extent they cover information about sexual assault. These sections shall also include information on best-practice organizations that work to provide students with comprehensive sexual education.

II. Sexual Education and Assault in the Context of Beijing +20

2015 marks the twenty-year anniversary of the historic conference during which over 45,000 participants flooded into Beijing in the name of gender equality. Their efforts culminated in the Beijing Platform for Action, which laid out “a decisive agenda for advancing women’s rights and empowerment,”⁴ as well as making specific recommendations for “lifting women out of poverty, promoting the education and training of women, improving women’s health, fighting violence against women, [and] safeguarding women’s rights in armed conflict.”⁵ The resolution was universally ratified and has served as a framework to eliminate gender discrimination.

¹ "Sexual Violence: Facts at a Glance," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/sv-datasheet-a.pdf>.

² "Worldwide Sexual Assault Statistics." National Sexual Violence Resource Center. 2005. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.nsvrc.org/publications/fact-sheets/worldwide-sexual-assault-statistics>.

³ Katz-Schiavone, Stacey; Levenson, Jill; and Alissa Ackerman. "Myths and Facts About Sexual Violence: Public Perceptions and Implications for Prevention." *Journal of Criminal Justice and Popular Culture* 15 (2008): 291–311.

⁴ "NGO Forum – Beijing 20 UNECE Regional Review." NGO Forum Beijing 20 UNECE Regional Review. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://beijing20.ngocsw-geneva.ch/sponsors/forum-concept/>.

⁵ "The Beijing Platform for Action Turns 20." Soroptimist International of Europe. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.soroptimisteurope.org/activities/news/the-beijing-platform-for-action-turns-20>.



The Beijing Platform for Action historically states, “Women’s rights are human rights,”⁶ and the UN will hold the 59th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in the spring of 2015 to examine the past twenty years’ progress on gender equality. Since this year’s conference marks a notable anniversary for the Beijing Platform for Action, it will pay special attention to the Platform’s Strategic Objectives and Actions.⁷

Two of the twelve Strategic Objectives and Actions⁸ are of particular interest to this paper: 1) Violence Against Women, and 2) Women in Power and Decision-Making. The first, Violence Against Women, vows to take “integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women,” which is defined as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women.”⁹ Since sexual assault fundamentally constitutes violence against women, and sexual education with the goal of preventing sexual assault can be taken as “integrated measures” of prevention, this part of the Beijing Platform for Action is particularly relevant to this paper.

The second of the Strategic Objectives and Actions of interest is Women in Power and Decision-Making, the goal of which is to “increase women’s capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership.” This Objective explains that the “socialization and negative stereotyping of women and men, including stereotyping through the media, reinforces the tendency for political decision-making to remain the domain of men,” in addition to the “power relations” that prevent women from attaining levels of leadership.¹⁰ Sexual education that works to examine the media’s role in creating our opinions of sexuality in an effort to advance women satisfies this Objective’s goal of increasing female leadership.

While the Education and Training of Women Objective may seem like an obvious objective to focus on in regards to sex education, the Objective does not mention anything about sexual education or the importance of sexual health.

III. Sexual Assault is an Epidemic

Sexual assault is an enormous problem, both in the U.S. and around the world. The U.S. Center for Disease Control notes that one in five women will be raped in their lives, and over forty percent of those women will be assaulted before they turn eighteen.¹¹

For women in college, rates of sexual assault increase. Studies estimate that one in four women will be sexually assaulted in college.¹² The profile of the average rapist differs from what most people anticipate; nearly ninety percent of the time the victim knew her perpetrator.¹³ Likely as a result of

⁶ “Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.” The Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, China, 1995.

⁷ “Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995.” UN Women. Accessed January 25, 2015.

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/>.

⁸ “Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995.”

⁹ “Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995: Violence against Women Diagnosis.” UN Women. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/violence.htm>.

¹⁰ “Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995: Women in Power and Decision-making Diagnosis.” UN Women. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/decision.htm>.

¹¹ “Sexual Violence: Facts at a Glance.”

¹² “Campus Sexual Violence Resource List.” National Sexual Violence Resource Center. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.nsvrc.org/saam/campus-resource-list#Stats>.

¹³ “Sexual Violence: Facts at a Glance.”



knowing the perpetrator, nearly fifty percent of women sexually assaulted believed that what happened to them was not rape, even though the attack meets the legal definition of rape.¹⁴

Whereas 68% of sexual assaults in the general population go unreported,¹⁵ that number skyrockets for college students, where it is estimated that 95% of sexual assaults go unreported.¹⁶ Many point to the statistic that only two out of every one hundred rapists will go to prison¹⁷ as evidence for why women do not report; they fear their perpetrator will not be punished.

The men responsible for acquaintance sexual assault most often escape punishment. Researcher David Lisak elaborates, "By attacking victims within their social networks ... and by refraining from the kind of violence likely to produce physical injuries in their victims, these rapists create 'cases' that victims are least likely to report, and that prosecutors are less likely to prosecute. A recent study of the factors associated with rape reporting found that only two factors could be isolated that increased the likelihood of victim reporting: physical injuries and the use of a weapon. It is probably not a coincidence that these are also among the factors that tend to make prosecutors look more favorably upon charging a case."¹⁸

The rape epidemic of course does not mean that the number of men raping is proportional to the number of women being assaulted. A small portion of men are committing these acts of violence – which is estimated to be around six percent on college campuses¹⁹ – but they are committing sexual assault numerous times, racking up a long list of survivors.

Lisak's research also demonstrated that rapists do not "confine their violence to the sexual realm." Many of the men "admitted to other acts of interpersonal violence, including battery, physical abuse and/or sexual abuse of children, and sexual assault short of rape or attempted rape." In one study, 120 rapists, in addition to their 483 acts of rape, "admitted to a total of 1,225 different acts of interpersonal violence."²⁰

If the number of rapists are so low, and the number of victims so high, why are more women not reporting? Multiple studies confirm the same result: women do not report sexual assault because of a fear that they will not be believed; the criminal justice system will blame them for the attack;²¹ "shame, guilt, embarrassment, not wanting friends and family to know; [and] concerns about confidentiality."²² Studies also note that women are more likely to report to the police, and to be believed, when the attacker was a stranger, which is a disproportionately low percentage.^{23,24,25}

¹⁴ "Sexual Assault and College Campuses - Statistics." Sarah Lawrence College. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.slc.edu/offices-services/security/assault/statistics.html>.

¹⁵ "Statistics." RAINN | Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network. Accessed January 25, 2015. <https://www.rainn.org/statistics>.

¹⁶ "Campus Sexual Violence Resource List."

¹⁷ "Reporting Rates." RAINN | Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network. Accessed January 25, 2015. <https://www.rainn.org/get-information/statistics/reporting-rates>.

¹⁸ Lisak, David, and Paul M. Miller. "Repeat Rape And Multiple Offending Among Undetected Rapists." *Violence and Victims* 17, no. 1 (2002). Accessed January 25, 2015. Page 81.

¹⁹ Lisak, "Repeat Rape And Multiple Offending Among Undetected Rapists," pg 73.

²⁰ Lisak pg 78.

²¹ Felson, Richard B., and Paul-Philippe Pare. "The Reporting Of Domestic Violence And Sexual Assault By Nonstrangers To The Police." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67, no. 3 (2005): 597-610. Accessed January 25, 2015.

²² Sable, Marjorie, Fran Danis, Denise Mauzy, and Sarah Gallagher. "Barriers To Reporting Sexual Assault For Women And Men: Perspectives Of College Students." *Journal of American College Health* 55, no. 3 (2006): 157-62.

²³ Fisher, Bonnie S., Leah E. Daigle, Francis T. Cullen, and Michael G. Turner. "Reporting Sexual Victimization To The Police And Others: Results From a National-Level Study of College Women." *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 30, no. 1 (2003): 6-38. Accessed January 25, 2015.



Many studies also point toward male's misunderstanding or disregard for sexual consent. A reenactment of an interview that Lisak conducted with a pre-law student named "Frank" describes a situation when he was in college and committed sexual assault. He explained in detail how he "staked" her out and ensured she drank to intoxication. He described how "she started getting plastered after a few minutes, so I started making my moves on her." After leading the disoriented and intoxicated girl to a room upstairs in his fraternity house, he recounted that though the woman said "I don't want to do this right away" or something like that, he "just kept working on her clothes. You know, and she started squirming, but that actually helped because her blouse came off easier." When Lisak asked what happened next, Frank replied, "I fucked her."²⁶ He placed his arm across the woman's windpipe to restrain her.²⁷

Other studies have revealed similarly alarming scenarios. A paper released in December 2014 found that nearly a third of college men admit that they would use force to get a woman to have sex with them, though the word "rape" wasn't used while asking the men. When the word "rape" was used, however only 13.6% admitted those intentions.²⁸ According to the study's researchers, "Men who indicate intentions to use force but deny intentions to rape exhibit ... high levels of callous sexual attitudes," leading the men "not to perceive his actions as rape and may even view the forced intercourse as an achievement." The researchers also described that these men may perceive a woman's "no" as "token resistance consistent with stereotypical gender norms."²⁹

As a result of the study, the researchers recommend that these men need "a strong educational component focused on clarifying different behaviors that all constitute sexual assault, but do not follow the stereotypically imagined scenarios related to rape." The researchers take that conclusion even farther; "If improper beliefs and attitudes were supplanted with acceptable ones, the potential for sexual assaults might be reduced."³⁰

The small percentage of sexual offenders are unlikely to be the only people affected by the cultural norms associated with callous sexual attitudes, which are defined as "attitudes that objectify women and expect men to exhibit sexual dominance;"³¹ these attitudes permeate society. As a result, "sexual aggression becomes an appropriate and accepted expression of masculinity."

The barriers around reporting have less to do with the actual victim and perpetrator and more to do with the people and society around the survivor. They create a culture of victim blaming: when people blame the victim for allowing the sexual assault to occur. The Huffington Post, in addition to many other sources, gives examples of victim blaming accusations that survivors of sexual assault often hear: "She was dressed provocatively." "She had a bad reputation." "She should have known better than to put herself in that situation."³² It is important to note again that nearly ninety percent of time the victim knew

²⁴ Felson, "The Reporting Of Domestic Violence And Sexual Assault By Nonstrangers To The Police."

²⁵ Sable, "Barriers To Reporting Sexual Assault For Women And Men: Perspectives Of College Students."

²⁶ Lisak, David. "The Undetected Rapist." YouTube. Flash video file <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KXez91uJkYM#t=11> (accessed January 25, 2015).

²⁷ Lisak, "The Undetected Rapist."

²⁸ Bekiempis, Victoria. "When Campus Rapists Don't Think They're Rapists." Newsweek. January 9, 2015. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.newsweek.com/campus-rapists-and-semantics-297463>.

²⁹ Edwards, Sarah, Kathryn Bradshaw, and Verlin Hinsz. "Denying Rape but Endorsing Forceful Intercourse: Exploring Differences Among Responders." *Violence and Gender* 1, no. 4 (2014): 188-93.

³⁰ Edwards, "Denying Rape but Endorsing Forceful Intercourse: Exploring Differences Among Responders."

³¹ Edwards.

³² Horzempa, Hayley. "Victim Blaming: An All-Too-Common Response to Sexual Assault." The Huffington Post. April 22, 2011. Accessed January 25, 2015. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/hayley-rose-horzempa/victim-blaming_b_847310.html.



her perpetrator,³³ though victim blaming often assumes otherwise: that somehow the victim ‘attracted’ the predator. According to Huffington Post writer and rape survivor Hayley Horzepa, “The scary monster in the alley is a convenient myth because the truth is much scarier.” the majority of rapists are friends, acquaintances, and even family members.

Human trafficking survivor Elizabeth Smart explained how the shame she felt from being assaulted kept her from running when she had the chance. She described an experience in which a high school teacher compared sex to chewing gum – each time a person has sex is like chewing that same gum. In Smart’s speech at a human trafficking forum, she remarked, “I thought, ‘Oh, my gosh, I’m that chewed up piece of gum, nobody re-chews a piece of gum, you throw it away.’ And that’s how easy it is to feel like you no longer have worth, you no longer have value,” Smart said. “Why would it even be worth screaming out? Why would it even make a difference if you are rescued? Your life still has no value.”³⁴

Studies have examined the sources by which adolescents receive information on sexual assault. According to one study, “most participants received their information from the popular media, including television (43%), newspapers (29%), magazines (10%), and radio (9%). The Internet was also a common source of information (38%). Participants also identified family (7%), friends (10%), and school (9%) as information resources.”³⁵ School-based education on sexual assault constituted *only nine percent*.

IV. Linking Media and Sexual Assault Attitudes

Children only get 16% of their information about sexual assault – and sex in many cases – from parents and schools.³⁶ The rest comes from friends and the media. Popular music contains lyrics about the “blurred lines” of sexual consent and reach nearly 360 million YouTube views.³⁷ One in five of young Internet users – those under the age of 18 – “received an unwanted sexual solicitation in the past year.”³⁸ Pornography grows increasingly violent; a 2010 study found “high levels of aggression in pornography in both verbal and physical forms,” with as many as 88% of pornographic scenes containing “physical aggression, principally spanking, gagging, and slapping.” Nearly 50% contained “verbal aggression, primarily name-calling.” However despite the harsh treatment, the mostly female targets of aggression “often showed pleasure or responded neutrally to the aggression.”³⁹

In as early as 1986, the *Report of the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography* posited, “substantial exposure to sexually violent materials as described here bears a causal relationship to antisocial acts of sexual violence and, for some subgroups, possibly to unlawful acts of sexual

³³ “Sexual Violence: Facts at a Glance.”

³⁴ “Elizabeth Smart Speaks at Johns Hopkins Human Trafficking Forum - WBFF Fox Baltimore - News - Raw News.” WBFF Fox Baltimore. August 2, 2013. Accessed January 25, 2015. http://foxbaltimore.com/news/features/raw-news/stories/elizabeth-smart-speaks-at-johns-hopkins-human-trafficking-forum-486.shtml#.VLiaBWTF_9u.

³⁵ Stacey Katz-Schiavone “Myths and Facts About Sexual Violence: Public Perceptions and Implications for Prevention.”

³⁶ Katz-Schiavone.

³⁷ Thicke, Robin. “Blurred Lines ft. T.I. Pharrell.” YouTube. Flash video file <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yyDUC1LUXSU> (accessed January 25, 2015).

³⁸ Finkelhor, David; Mitchell, Kimberly; and Janis Wolak “Highlights of the Youth Internet Safety Survey.” *U.S. Department of Justice*, no. 4 (2001).

³⁹ Bridges, A. J., R. Wosnitzer, E. Scharrer, C. Sun, and R. Liberman. “Aggression and Sexual Behavior in Best-Selling Pornography Videos: A Content Analysis Update.” *Violence Against Women* 16, no. 10 (2010): 1065-085. Accessed January 25, 2015.



violence.”⁴⁰ More recent studies⁴¹ agree that exposure to violent pornography increases amounts of real-life sexual violence.

Author, researcher, and activist Gail Dines firmly believes that there is indeed a link between violence against women in media, especially pornography, and violence against women in real life. She clarifies, "I am not saying that a man reads porn and goes out to rape, but what I do know is that porn gives permission to its consumers to treat women as they are treated in porn ... The more porn sexualises violence against women, the more it normalises and legitimises sexually abusive behaviour. Men learn about sex from porn, and in porn nothing is too painful or degrading for women."⁴² While pornography usage may not increase actual violence against women, it most certainly colors the way we view such violence. And that discoloration may create as many barriers for women trying to overcome violence as the violence itself.

One such example is Anita Sarkeesian. Sarkeesian created the popular website “Feminist Frequency,” where she examines the sexism and misogyny that many video games include, games like “Grand Theft Auto V” or “DayZ” in which “gamers are virtually raping the avatars controlled by other people playing online. They then post videos of their exploits on YouTube.”⁴³ As an avid gamer herself, she hoped to create a gaming community that did not support violence against women and that was also more inclusive to female gamers.

Many male gamers took offense to her videos, sending her numerous rape threats,⁴⁴ cyber attacking and vandalizing her website, and threatening to kill her during speaking events.⁴⁵ One gamer created a game, “Beat Up Anita Sarkeesian,” where players would “punch” Sarkeesian in the face by rapidly clicking on it. The resulting image was an increasingly bruised and bloodied Sarkeesian (see Appendix 1).⁴⁶

While these men may never commit physical violence in real life, they are still perpetrating violence in a very real way – through their online misogyny that culminates in threats. This is not to say that all male gamers who play violent games commit misogynistic acts. But the question remains: do the games, and other media, make people more accepting of that misogyny and, therefore, less willing to act to prevent violence and support survivors?

⁴⁰ "BOLD - Violence Against Women on the Internet -." BOLD - Violence Against Women on the Internet -. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/vaw02/mod2-6.htm>.

⁴¹Wiley.

⁴² Bindel, Julie. "The Truth about the Porn Industry." The Guardian. July 2, 2010. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2010/jul/02/gail-dines-pornography>.

⁴³ Grandoni, Dino. "The Disturbing New Trend In 'Grand Theft Auto' Is Virtual Rape." The Huffington Post. August 12, 2014. Accessed January 25, 2015. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/08/12/grand-theft-auto-rape_n_5671400.html.

⁴⁴ Sarkeesian, Anita "TEDxWomen 2012." YouTube. Flash video file <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZAxwsg9J9Q> (accessed January 25, 2015).

⁴⁵ McDonald, Soraya Nadia. "'Gamergate': Feminist Video Game Critic Anita Sarkeesian Cancels Utah Lecture after Threat." Washington Post. October 15, 2014. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2014/10/15/gamergate-feminist-video-game-critic-anita-sarkeesian-cancels-utah-lecture-after-threat-citing-police-inability-to-prevent-concealed-weapons-at-event/>.

⁴⁶ O'Meara, Sarah. "Internet Trolls Up Their Harassment Game With 'Beat Up Anita Sarkeesian'" The Huffington Post UK. June 7, 2012. Accessed January 25, 2015. http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2012/07/06/internet-trolls-online-beat-up-anita-sarkeesian-game_n_1653473.html.



V. The Effects of Abstinence-based Education

Proponents of abstinence-based or abstinence-only education claim that it is crucial in order to prevent adolescents from engaging in sexual activity before marriage. Non-profits such as Focus on the Family, as well as many other groups, lobby national and state legislators to keep abstinence-only standards in public school curricula, arguing that “premarital sex can cause long-term consequences,” including trouble “emotionally bonding” with future partners.⁴⁷ Furthermore, abstinence-only advocates fear that teaching comprehensive sexual education may encourage adolescent sexual activity.

The research, however, does not support this line of thinking. Multiple studies have come to the same conclusion: “there is little evidence that premarital sex ... is disastrous for later sexual functioning or sex guilt.”⁴⁸ Statistics show that abstinence-until-marriage programs are also completely ineffective; 95% of Americans engage in premarital sex.⁴⁹ As for fears that comprehensive sexual education would promote increased sexual activity, studies point to the contrary; one study found that comprehensive sexual education programs “do not hasten or increase sexual behavior” and may, instead, actually “delay or decrease sexual behaviors or increase condom or contraceptive usage.”⁵⁰ Other studies have come to the same conclusion.⁵¹ Furthermore, studies have found that “adolescents who received comprehensive sexual education had a lower risk of pregnancy” than those who had abstinence-only or no sexual education. One study concluded that abstinence-only education “may actually be contributing to the high teenage pregnancy rates in the U.S.”⁵²

Not only have studies found that abstinence-only programs are entirely ineffective, but that they are even harmful to adolescent attitudes and behavior, calling such programs a “biased and inaccurate approach to sexuality education” that can result in “propagating sexist, racist, and classist notions of society.”⁵³ Some studies found the effects of abstinence-only education to be so harmful that they concluded, “Abstinence-only programs threaten fundamental human rights to health, information, and life”⁵⁴ due to “medical inaccuracies, lack of effectiveness, and the withholding and distorting of health information.”⁵⁵

Studies have also found that abstinence-only or inadequate sexual education is particularly harmful to women. Researcher Michelle Fine concluded that for female students, especially for low-income students, abstinence-only education leads to “increased experiences of victimization, teenage

⁴⁷ “Abstinence Education.” Focus on the Family. Accessed January 27, 2015.

<http://www.focusonthefamily.com/socialissues/social-issues/abstinence-education/abstinence-education-issue>.

⁴⁸ Else - Quest, Nicole M., Janet Shibley Hyde, and John D. DeLamater. “Context Counts: Long - term Sequelae Of Premarital Intercourse Or Abstinence.” *Journal of Sex Research* 42, no. 2 (2005): 102-12.

⁴⁹ Finer, Lawrence. “Trends in Premarital Sex in the United States, 1954–2003.” *Public Health Report* 122, no. 1 (2007): 73-78.

⁵⁰ Kirby, D., B. Laris, and L. Roller. “Sex And HIV Education Programs: Their Impact On Sexual Behaviors Of Young People Throughout The World.” *Journal of Adolescent Health* 40, no. 3 (2007): 206-17.

⁵¹ Kirby, Douglas B. “The Impact Of Abstinence And Comprehensive Sex And STD/HIV Education Programs On Adolescent Sexual Behavior.” *Sexuality Research and Social Policy: Journal of NSRC* 5, no. 3 (2008): 18-27.

⁵² Stanger-Hall, Kathrin F., David W. Hall, and Virginia J. Vitzthum. “Abstinence-Only Education and Teen Pregnancy Rates: Why We Need Comprehensive Sex Education in the U.S.” *PLoS ONE* 6, no. 10 (2011): E24658.

⁵³ Bay-Cheng, Laina Y. “The Trouble Of Teen Sex: The Construction Of Adolescent Sexuality Through School-based Sexuality Education.” *Sex Education: Sexuality, Society and Learning* 3, no. 1 (2003): 61-74.

⁵⁴ Santelli, J., M. Ott, M. Lyon, J. Rogers, D. Summers, and R. Schleifer. “Abstinence And Abstinence-only Education: A Review Of U.S. Policies And Programs.” *Journal of Adolescent Health* 38, no. 1 (2006): 72-81.

⁵⁵ Ott, Mary A, and John S Santelli. “Abstinence And Abstinence-only Education.” *Current Opinion in Obstetrics and Gynecology* 19, no. 5 (2007): 446-52.



pregnancy, and increased dropout rates.”⁵⁶ Studies all point to the same conclusion: abstinence-only education is ineffective and harmful to adolescents.

VI. Sexual Education in North Carolina

In the midst of a national resurgence of conservative sex-education in schools, North Carolina in 1995 passed a bill that replaced its comprehensive sex-education curriculum in schools with abstinence-only education. Many school districts resisted that change, arguing that the abstinence-only curriculum not only “overstated the risks of sex and were based on fear,” but also “presented medical inaccuracies and false implications such as suggesting that students could get AIDS from French kissing and that the risk of using a condom was comparable to the risks of playing Russian roulette.”⁵⁷

As a result of heavy backlash and desire to have more educated teens in efforts to reduce pregnancy – North Carolina ranked 16th in highest national teen pregnancy rates in 2008⁵⁸ – and STD rates, North Carolina, in 2009, repealed their abstinence-only curriculum and replaced it with The Healthy Youth Act. The Healthy Youth Act requires that public schools provide students with “factually accurate” medical information, in addition to STD, HIV, and pregnancy prevention. The Healthy Youth Act also requires that sex-education should teach “awareness of sexual assault, sexual abuse, and risk reduction,” which includes discussing healthy relationships, what “constitutes sexual assault and sexual abuse, [and] the causes of those behaviors,” as well as “examine common misconceptions and stereotypes about sexual assault and sexual abuse.”⁵⁹

Though The Healthy Youth Act keeps North Carolina off the list of the worst states in the nation for comprehensive sex-education (only twenty states have comprehensive sex-education laws),⁶⁰ there are several areas where the Healthy Youth Act falls short. Though the Act recommends that students “receive a minimum of 80 hours of health education instruction ... each academic year” beginning in grade three, the Act doesn’t provide any enforcement mechanisms to ensure at least 80 hours of instruction time, giving schools the option to greatly limit the amount of time students are learning.⁶¹ A senior official of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), who asked that her name not be used, notes that there are no enforcement mechanisms to ensure that districts comply with sexual education laws. There are no required reports of sexual education programs and no repercussions for districts that fail to implement the law. The NCDPI official also laments that there are “some areas in North Carolina that are so conservative they are apprehensive” about including the provisions of the Healthy Youth Act

⁵⁶ Fine, Michelle. "Sexuality, Schooling, and Adolescent Females: The Missing Discourse of Desire." 1998.

⁵⁷ Bach, R. "The State of Sex Education in North Carolina: Is Abstinence-Only Education Working?" *Sociation Today*. 2006; 4(1).

⁵⁸ Kost, Kathryn, and Stanley Henshaw. *U.S. Teenage Pregnancies, Births and Abortions, 2008: State Trends by Age, Race and Ethnicity*. New York: Guttmacher Institute, 2013. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/USTPtrendsState08.pdf>, pg 7.

⁵⁹ *House Bill 88, ratified*. NC General Assembly, 2009.

⁶⁰ "State Policies on Sex Education in Schools." National Conference of State Legislatures. July 11, 2014. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.ncsl.org/research/health/state-policies-on-sex-education-in-schools.aspx>.

⁶¹ "Reproductive Health And Safety Education." Reproductive Health and Safety Education. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.nchealthyschools.org/rhse>.



that makes the curriculum comprehensive, such as information about STDs and contraceptives⁶² (though the law prohibits schools from providing students with contraceptives⁶³). Instead these schools focus on the part of the Act that mandates abstinence as the “expected standard” for students, in addition to recommending a married “mutually faithful monogamous heterosexual relationship.”

Additionally, in 2013 the North Carolina legislature passed Senate Bill 132, which added on the Healthy Youth Act by requiring that sex education teach about the “preventable risks for preterm birth” in pregnancies, “including induced abortion.”⁶⁴ While a small handful of studies note that there may, possibly, be a link between pregnancy termination on future reproduction,⁶⁵ other studies disagree and argue that there is no causal link between abortion and complications in future pregnancies.^{66,67,68} Proponents of the change, however, argued that the bill didn’t violate the Healthy Youth Act’s provision on providing medically accurate information because the bill’s language used the word ‘risk’ and not ‘cause.’⁶⁹ Despite this clarification, some studies argue that there may not be even any link between abortion and future pre-term births.⁷⁰

Senate Bill 132 also mandates that information on abortion as a risk factor be disseminated to “charter, nonpublic, and home school students,”⁷¹ even though the 2009 Healthy Youth Act levies no sexual education requirements whatsoever on charter, nonpublic, and home school students as they are not even mentioned in the language of the legislation.⁷²

The senior NCDPI official notes that since this legislation is “so new,” the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction does not know “how it’s being enforced.”⁷³ Like the lack of enforcement mechanisms built into the Healthy Youth Act, there is no review process to ensure schools are teaching that abortion is a risk factor in future preterm births. As a result, school districts or even individual teachers may decide which students will receive information on abortion as a risk factor.

The Healthy Youth Act is part of the greater Basic Education Program for North Carolina, which also includes information about alcohol and drug use, textbooks, mental health, and more. It also includes a provision entitled “Character Education,” instruction that “shall be incorporated into the standard curriculum.” It includes eight traits: 1) Courage, 2) Good judgment, 3) Integrity, 4) Kindness, 5)

⁶² Senior North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Official (name not disclosed due to request for anonymity). (2015, January 16). Telephone interview.

⁶³ *Subchapter IV Education Program, Article 8, Basic Education Program*. NC General Assembly, § 115C-81.

⁶⁴ *Session Law 2013-307, Senate Bill 132*. NC General Assembly, 2013.

⁶⁵ Brown, J S, T. Adera, and S W Masho. "Previous Abortion And The Risk Of Low Birth Weight And Preterm Births." *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health* 62, no. 1 (2008): 16-22. Accessed January 25, 2015.

⁶⁶ Virk, Jasveer, Jun Zhang, and Jørn Olsen. "Medical Abortion and the Risk of Subsequent Adverse Pregnancy Outcomes." *New England Journal of Medicine*, 2007, 648-53. Accessed January 25, 2015

⁶⁷ Daling, Janet, and Irvin Emanuel. "Induced Abortion and Subsequent Outcome of Pregnancy in a Series of American Women." *New England Journal of Medicine*, 29, no. 23 (1977). Available at <http://www.nejm.org/doi/pdf/10.1056/NEJM197712082972301>.

⁶⁸ Atrash, Hani K., and Carol J. Rowland Hogue. "11 The Effect of Pregnancy Termination on Future Reproduction." *Baillière's Clinical Obstetrics and Gynaecology* 4, no. 2 (1990): 391-405.

⁶⁹ Hoban, Rose. "Bill Will Require Middle-schoolers to Be Taught About Causes of Preterm Birth." North Carolina Health News. June 27, 2013. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.northcarolinahealthnews.org/2013/06/27/bill-will-require-middle-schoolers-to-be-taught-about-causes-of-pre-term-birth/>.

⁷⁰ Mandelson, M. Maden, C., and J. R. Daling. Low birth weight in relation to multiple induced abortions. *American Journal of Public Health* March 1992: Vol. 82, No. 3, pp. 391-394.

⁷¹ *Session Law 2013-307, Senate Bill 132*.

⁷² *House Bill 88, ratified*.

⁷³ Senior North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Official, telephone interview.



Perseverance, 6) Respect, 7) Responsibility, and 8) Self-Discipline. The Self-Discipline section of the law reads:

(8) Self-Discipline. - Demonstrating hard work and commitment to purpose; regulating yourself for improvement and restraining from inappropriate behaviors; being in proper control of your words, actions, impulses, and desires; choosing abstinence from premarital sex, drugs, alcohol, and other harmful substances and behaviors; and doing your best in all situations.⁷⁴

The law not only includes abstinence as a standard that students should follow, but also includes abstinence as a key component of the type of character North Carolina promotes. The implication is that students who do not choose abstinence are somehow lacking in character.

Despite the legislation that makes North Carolina a comprehensive sexual education state, North Carolina still receives significant grant money from the Title V State Abstinence Education Grant Program (AEGP). Under this program, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services allocates \$50 million of federal funds to be given to states for the purposes of abstinence-only sexual education. Though \$55 million is available through the federal Personal Responsibility Education Program⁷⁵, the abstinence-only grants constitute a large percentage of the money available.

States who choose to accept AEGP funding must comply with federal guidelines on sexual education, including adherence to the notion that “a mutually faithful monogamous relationship in the context of marriage is the expected standard of all human sexual activity” and that “sexual activity outside the context of marriage is likely to have harmful psychological and physical effects.” In order to receive funding, these state programs must demonstrate that promoting abstinence outside marriage is their “exclusive purpose.”⁷⁶ North Carolina qualifies for these federal funds because so much of its program is still focused on abstinence. Reliance on these grants to pay for sex education will, in the long run, make it harder to move away from abstinence-based education, and North Carolina has grown increasingly more reliant on the grants. AEGP awarded North Carolina over \$1.5 million in 2010, over \$1.6 million in 2011, and over \$1.7 million in 2012.⁷⁷

The senior NCDPI official is in charge of writing the federal application for the Title V grant as well as managing Title V programs in North Carolina. She noted that since Title V is very specific about abstinence being the main goal of sexual education programs, Title V funds awarded to North Carolina only go towards implementing programs for grades 4-6, which do not mention contraception, and most of the funds go to 19 districts where teen pregnancy rates are highest. The Healthy Youth Act applies to students from 7th through 12th grade. Districts do not receive funding through the Act because, as the senior NCDPI official notes, it is an unfunded mandate, meaning that the state does not provide funding to help school districts comply with the law.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ *Subchapter IV Education Program, Article 8, Basic Education Program.*

⁷⁵ "SIECUS Fact Sheet." SIECUS: Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States. 2011. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.siecus.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.ViewPage&PageID=1272>.

⁷⁶ "A Brief History of Federal Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding." SIECUS: Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.siecus.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.ViewPage&PageID=1158>.

⁷⁷ "2012 Title V State Abstinence Education Grant Program Awards." Family Youth and Services Bureau. June 20, 2014. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/resource/2012-title-v-awards>.

⁷⁸ Senior North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Official.



Since the language of the 2009 Healthy Youth Act is so broad, North Carolina created the Healthful Living Essential Standards, which is a model course of study “to establish competency goals and objectives for the teaching and learning of behaviors that contribute to a healthful lifestyle and improved quality of life for all students,”⁷⁹ though it is not required. The Healthful Living Standards provide guidelines specific to sex education for grades K-12, though the first mention of abstinence is in the grades 6-8 manual. Both the grades 6-8 and the grades 9-12 manuals describe sexual abstinence as a “positive choice for young people.”^{80,81} Although the manuals provide a long list of reasons to remain abstinent,⁸² there is no discussion of when or why teens choose to have sex.

In addition to the manuals, the Healthful Living Standards also includes sample lesson plans, many of which are abstinence-focused. One plan lists reasons for abstaining from sex, which include: “1) Abstinence is consistent with personal values of many youth; 2) Abstinence means less stress and fewer regrets; 3) Abstinence is a sign of maturity; [and] 4) Abstinence helps young people achieve their future goals.”⁸³ That same plan outlines an activity for the students participating: creating a “Grab Bag of Risks” of having sex, that include “disappointing parents and family members,” “unable to achieve or delay goals in life,” “ostracized by friends and peers,” and “feelings of regret later in life,” among many others (see Appendix 2).⁸⁴ Other plans ask students to read through scenarios of sexually responsible and consenting partners, and “create an alternative that would support abstinence (see Appendix 3 and 4).”^{85,86} Yet another plan includes “8 Questions for Teens Thinking about Having Sex,” with the last question, “Are you both absolutely sure that neither one of you has been with anyone else sexually in any way?”⁸⁷ The implications of these lesson plans imply that sex is shameful, and to present abstinence as the only honorable choice.

According to researcher Michelle Fine, “A genuine discourse of desire would invite adolescents to explore what feels good and bad, desirable and undesirable, grounded in experiences, needs, and limits. Such a discourse would release females from a position of receptivity, enable an analysis of the dialectics of victimization and pleasure, and would pose female adolescents as subjects of sexuality, initiators as well as negotiators.”⁸⁸

The senior NCDPI official notes that a number of lesson plans as part of the Healthful Living Standards were created by groups contracted with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, who develop the plans to comply with the law that is written. If the lesson plans did not include so much focus on abstinence, as the Healthy Youth Act stipulates, the senior NCDPI official fears that politicians

⁷⁹ “Standard Course Of Study.” Healthful Living Standard Course of Study. Accessed January 25, 2015.

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/healthfulliving/scos/>.

⁸⁰ “Instructional Support Tools.” *Sixth Grade Health*, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2011.

⁸¹ “Instructional Support Tools.” *High School Health*, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2011.

⁸² “Instructional Support Tools.” *Sixth Grade Health*.

⁸³ *Essential Standard 7.ICR.2: Clarifying Objective 7.ICR.2.2*. NC Association for the Advancement of Health Education, NC School Health Training Center.

⁸⁴ *Essential Standard 7.ICR.2: Clarifying Objective 7.ICR.2.2*.

⁸⁵ *Essential Standard 8.ICR.2: Clarifying Objective 8.ICR.2.1*. NC Association for the Advancement of Health Education, NC School Health Training Center.

⁸⁶ *Essential Standard 8.ICR.3: Clarifying Objective 8.ICR.3.1*. NC Association for the Advancement of Health Education, NC School Health Training Center.

⁸⁷ *Essential Standard 8.ICR.3: Clarifying Objective 8.ICR.3.3*. NC Association for the Advancement of Health Education, NC School Health Training Center.

⁸⁸ Fine, “Sexuality, Schooling, and Adolescent Females: The Missing Discourse of Desire,” pg 33.



may decide to “gut the bill and we [would] end up back at square one.” And, she says, it is “better for students to get some education than nothing at all.”⁸⁹

Though the senior NCDPI official agrees that “abstinence education is a part of comprehensive sexuality education,” she notes the provisions in the Healthy Youth Act regarding healthy relationships and sexual assault prevention may not receive enough attention. Where it is mentioned, she points out the heteronormativity in the ways people are told to avoid sexual assault; many of the tips ignore male survivors. And, she highlights, nowhere in the law’s language does it mention the word “consent.” The senior NCDPI official argues that young people do not understand the meaning of consent, which they “need to in order to lessen the incidents of sexual assault. She sees a lot of the confusion of consent stemming from societal norms, especially for men, which often objectify women and encourage male sexual conquests. She mentioned that North Carolina Department of Public Instruction is in the brainstorming phase of creating guidelines or programs that address “healthy masculinity” in order to do better in areas regarding sexual consent. The goal would be to “change the culture on what it means to be a man.”⁹⁰

Furthermore, the senior NCDPI official “definitely sees the connection” on the “very damaging” effects of carelessly-taught abstinence-only education on adolescent attitudes towards sex, especially among their peers. She stresses that “we need to be mindful of the way we provide that education” and that the “focus should not be on specific values; it’s our responsibility to teach fact.” She recognizes the history of abstinence-based education as resulting largely from religious practices, and argues that we should be teaching students from a values-neutral perspective.⁹¹

The senior NCDPI official also discusses many of the barriers that prevent North Carolina students from receiving truly comprehensive sexual education. By law, parents are allowed access to sexual education materials 60 days prior to instruction and, as a result, parents may pull their children from instruction or lobby the school to change the curriculum. The senior NCDPI official points to the example of condom demonstrations in classrooms: the few schools who do demonstrations may have experienced a difficult time getting approval because of the past efforts of a small but vocal minority. According to the senior NCDPI official, many schools bow to the pressure because they just “want to avoid the controversy.”⁹²

Another problem the senior NCDPI official points to is lack of teacher education in the sphere of sexual education. Since some “teachers don’t have the information themselves,” they may be afraid of being asked questions they do not know the answer to, leading many teachers to avoid teaching sexual education at all. And these teachers cannot increase their knowledge of sexuality without the proper training. According to the senior NCDPI official, the lack of funding, knowledge, and political barriers “makes the perfect storm” in impeding statewide progress on achieving truly comprehensive sexual education.⁹³

Despite the current situation of lacking standard across-the-board sexual education in North Carolina, several organizations are working to improve students’ access. Two particularly impressive groups are the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Center of North Carolina (APPCNC), and the Orange County Rape Crisis Center (OCRCC). Both organizations believe in not only giving students access to comprehensive sexual education, but also to ensure students learn about consent and healthy sexuality.

⁸⁹ Senior North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Official.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Senior North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Official.



APPCNC works to institutionalize comprehensive sexual education as a means for preventing adolescent pregnancy. APPCNC creates training programs and provides resources to educators to better teach them how to teach sexual education, as well as provide resources to students who may not be receiving sexual education within the classroom.

One of the programs that APPCNC works with is called the WISE Project – Working to Institutionalize Sex Education.⁹⁴ WISE is a national campaign that provides a toolkit for comprehensive sexual education, which it describes as teaching not only abstinence, but also “healthy relationships, contraception, and sexually transmitted infection (STI) prevention.”⁹⁵ Jenny Palmer, APPCNC’s School Engagement Specialist, describes the purpose of the WISE program as moving public opinion to both value and expect comprehensive sexual education.⁹⁶ Schools who partner with ACCPNC, through WISE, work to meet four objectives: making sure that the school programs “align with state requirements,” working to ensure a “shared understanding” and collaboration among school officials about the school district’s sexual education programs, developing curricula, and working to create a training plan for teachers so they feel comfortable with the material they are teaching.⁹⁷

According to the senior NCDPI official, many teachers choose simply not to teach sexual education because they feel uncomfortable doing so. An APPCNC workshop called “Awkward to Awesome” works to help teachers feel comfortable “answering the craziest question a 7th grader can muster.” APPCNC then works to make sure that the teachers feel supported by their principals, who in turn feel supported by their central offices, so that “no one feels the heartburn about getting students important health information.”⁹⁸

APPCNC also created “The Playbook: Your Guide to Safer, Sexier Choices,”⁹⁹ which is an interactive website designed for sexually active teens. It provides a detailed overview of contraceptive methods; advice on healthy relationships and how to navigate tough social situations; and tips on how to talk to peers, parents, teachers, mentors, and doctors about birth control and sexual activity. The website also sponsors a “find birth control” feature, as well as a health center finder and details as to what that center offers.¹⁰⁰ A section of the website is devoted specifically to educating adolescents about their legal rights in North Carolina, including advice on how to get contraception without parental consent. Teens can also watch videos of other teens talking about sex and other issues regarding adolescent sexuality, as well as ask any health professionals questions. The ask-questions feature is also available through text messaging in an effort to be more teen accessible, which APPCNC called the BrdsNBz text line.¹⁰¹

Furthermore, APPCNC makes a direct appeal to schools in an effort to encourage them to provide students with comprehensive sexual education. APPCNC tells schools, “Sexuality, sexualization, and sexual activity are a part of students’ lives – whether their experiences come first-hand or by way of the media and the culture that surrounds them.” APPCNC argues that strong, comprehensive sexual education

⁹⁴ “Working to Institutionalize Sex Education.” Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of NC. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.appcnc.org/projects-services/working-to-institutionalize-sex-education>.

⁹⁵ “WISEtoolkit.” GetWise. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://wisetoolkit.org/wisetoolkit>.

⁹⁶ Palmer, Jenny (2015, January 15). Telephone interview.

⁹⁷ “Working to Institutionalize Sex Education.” Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of NC.

⁹⁸ “Back to School = Back to Sex Ed?” Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of NC. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.appcnc.org/spotlight-story/back-to-school-back-to-sex-ed>.

⁹⁹ “Home - The Playbook.” The Playbook. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.teenplaybook.org/>.

¹⁰⁰ “The Playbook.” Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of NC. Accessed January 25, 2015.

<http://www.appcnc.org/projects-services/the-playbook>.

¹⁰¹ “BrdsNBz North Carolina Text Line.” Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of NC. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.appcnc.org/projects-services/brdsnbz-text-message-warm-line>.



will help students to “understand and resist outside influences” by providing them with “strong decision making skills.”¹⁰²

APPCNC also strongly believes in addressing the “many intersections” between pregnancy prevention and sexual assault prevention. According to APPCNC, “Young people need education and practice to develop a healthy respect for others and boundaries,” as well as “the ability to grant and understand consent.” Ignoring this need for education leads to “cultural trends that diminish sexual health in our communities,” such as “rape culture” and “stigma around sex and sexual health.”¹⁰³

Jenny Palmer, APPCNC’s School Engagement Specialist, does note that the Healthy Youth Act has a sexual violence prevention piece, but regrettably both APPCNC and schools “aren’t doing much with it.” She described many barriers to advancing the piece of sexual education focusing on sexual violence prevention, including a lack of funding for this type of work and a general misconception of the concept of victim blaming.¹⁰⁴ Additionally, there are virtually no requirements for the people teaching sexual education, resulting in many who aren’t well versed in sexual health. And due to the Healthy Youth Act mandates, teachers are overwhelmed, not respected by legislators, and are overworked and underpaid, which translates to slashing teachers’ assistants or forcing teachers to work additional jobs. Another powerful barrier to more comprehensive sexual education, Palmer notes, are parents. North Carolina law stipulates that parents must be able to view any sexual education materials 60 days prior to the lesson, allowing many parents to either opt their children out of the programs, or lobby school systems to remove the offending material. Despite these barriers, Palmer expressed hope that APPCNC would begin moving toward promoting healthy adolescent sexuality in conjunction with sexual assault prevention through consent education.¹⁰⁵

Another notable organization, the Orange County Rape Crisis Center, works with groups like APPCNC to “stop sexual violence and its impact through support, education, and advocacy.”¹⁰⁶ Since the OCRCC is a rape crisis center, they provide many of the services that other rape crisis centers provide, such as a 24-hour help line, support groups, workshops, and therapy referrals.¹⁰⁷ The OCRCC provides resources for survivors of sexual assault as well as for the friends and family members of that survivor. In addition to these more traditional services, the OCRCC has been a leader in offering education programs, which are often taught within schools, to raise awareness of sexual violence and to teach prevention skills, especially to students.

The OCRCC breaks its education programs into three targeted age groups: “Safe Touch” is meant for pre K through 4th grade. Safe Touch works to teach both children and mentors how to recognize the signs of child abuse. For children, the program teaches “the difference between good and bad touches,” and what to do if children experience a bad or uncomfortable touch. “Sexual Bullying” is for students 5th-8th grade, which teaches children to recognize sexual bullying and understand its consequences, as well as trains children to be effective by-standers. “Dating and Healthy Relationships” targets students in high school through college, and “recommends tips for preventing violence and creating healthy relationships.”

¹⁰² “Resources for Schools.” Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of NC. Accessed January 25, 2015.

<http://www.appcnc.org/resources/for-schools>.

¹⁰³ “Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of NC.” Is April the Ultimate Sexual Health Awareness Month? April 1, 2014. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.appcnc.org/news-and-publications/blog/is-april-the-ultimate-sexual-health-awareness-month>.

¹⁰⁴ Palmer, telephone interview.

¹⁰⁵ Palmer

¹⁰⁶ “About.” Orange County Rape Crisis Center. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://ocrcc.org/about/>.

¹⁰⁷ “About.” Orange County Rape Crisis Center.



The program discusses date and acquaintance rape, as well as myths surrounding those who suffer gender violence.¹⁰⁸

The programs for middle and high school students combine the “Start Strong” program with the goal of preventing “peer-to-peer perpetration of violence among adolescents.” Start Strong believes that many current “cultural norms related to consent, flirting, sexual misconduct, and bystander intervention,” need to be changed in order to better serve survivors of sexual assault and prevent future assaults.¹⁰⁹

Rachel Valentine, the OCRCC’s Rape Prevention Education Coordinator, explains that the Start Strong program is meant to supplement schools’ existing sexual education programs, though some students who participate in OCRCC programs have not because of a lack of oversight. For many, the OCRCC programs constitute the majority of, if not the only sexual education students receive.¹¹⁰

Valentine also noted that OCRCC programs increasingly discuss the intersection of media and peer influences on perceptions of sexual assault, something that is largely absent in school-taught sexual education. Though 6th grade students focus a lot on bullying and bystander prevention, Valentine marks 7th grade as when students really learn about how the media and perceived gender roles leads to sexual harassment, especially sexualized name-calling, usually with four days of education. 8th grade students receive two days on healthy dating. 9th grade students talk about “redefining consent.” Valentine describes the program as trying to shift students’ attitudes on sexual assault from a no-based system to a yes-based system, meaning that the lack of a verbal “no” does not qualify sexual consent; rather, an enthusiastic “yes” is needed. 9th grade students also talk about victim blaming – blaming the victim in his or her own assault – as well as debunking rape myths. Valentine also described how some high school students were motivated as a result of OCRCC’s programs to create their own “Students Against Rape Culture” to continue peer education.¹¹¹

Because the OCRCC has such wonderful and high-demand resources, their needs are constantly growing. In the last three years the center has seen a 60% increase in the number of clients seeking assistance for more traditional rape crisis center resources.¹¹² The OCRCC has also experienced growing demand for their Safe Touch and Start Strong programs. The OCRCC now has a program in every elementary school in Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools as well as in Orange County Schools, and their success has led charter and private schools to increasingly request OCRCC programs.¹¹³

The OCRCC also conducts studies to determine the effectiveness of their programs and goals. Though the OCRCC aimed to reach 10,750 community members through educational programs in the 2012-2013 fiscal year, they exceeded that goal by reaching 12,142. Another goal was to ensure that at least 90% of school teachers and counselors who receive OCRCC training and programs would “report an increase in the student awareness of personal safety and protection against sexual violence.” The OCRCC exceeded that goal as well, with 100% of counselors and 94% of teachers reporting an increase.¹¹⁴

Despite the increasing success and demand for OCRCC programs, they are experiencing funding cuts. The OCRCC gets about half of their funding from the state and federal government, but that funding is “experiencing substantial and alarming cuts.” In the 2013-2014 fiscal year, the OCRCC lost about

¹⁰⁸ “Community Education.” Orange County Rape Crisis Center. Accessed January 25, 2015.

<http://ocrcc.org/services/programs/>.

¹⁰⁹ “Community Educators.” Orange County Rape Crisis Center. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://ocrcc.org/volunteer/ce/>.

¹¹⁰ Valentine, Rachel (2015, January 15). Telephone interview.

¹¹¹ Valentine, telephone interview.

¹¹² *Outside Agency Funding Application*. Orange County Rape Crisis Center, 2013. Accessed January 25, 2015.

<http://orangecountync.gov/health/documents/OCRapeCrisisCenterBinder1.pdf>. pg 3.

¹¹³ *Outside Agency Funding Application*. Orange County Rape Crisis Center, pg 5.

¹¹⁴ Ibid 11.



\$60,000 in state and federal funding, a significant amount in their \$550,000 yearly budget, and they expect further substantial future cuts. As a result, the OCRCC will have to increasingly rely on the generosity of community donations.¹¹⁵

VII. Sexual Education in the United States

Though sexual education in the U.S. began largely in the 1920s, resistance to sexual education in schools did not fully emerge until the late '60s and early '70s, when "religious conservatives began using sex ed[ucation] to their political advantage." Though the AIDS epidemic did lead many states to pass mandates for AIDS education, "conservatives helped add provisions for abstinence education to the 1996 Welfare Reform Act, and the Federal government directed tens of millions of dollars to abstinence-education programs for the first time."¹¹⁶

The result has been lacking sexual education, especially in regards to sexual assault prevention, on the national stage. Despite the fact that, nationally, over ninety percent of parents believe that it is "very or somewhat important to have sexuality education as part of the school curriculum,"¹¹⁷ only 22 states and the District of Columbia require that public schools teach sexual education. Only 33 have any requirement that students learn about HIV/AIDS. Even more surprisingly, only 19 states require that sexual education must be "medically, factually, or technically accurate."¹¹⁸

Texas is an example of a state with poor sexual education. In 2010, Texas received nearly \$5.5 million from the federal government for abstinence until marriage programs.¹¹⁹ Not only does Texas not require sexual education to be taught in schools, but Texas also doesn't require any HIV/AIDS education. If schools do chose to provide sexual education, Texas doesn't mandate the information provided is medically accurate, and discourages any teaching about contraception. Texas is also one of three states where sexual education, if provided, must only include information that disapproves of same-sex relationships.¹²⁰

Texas also has many restrictive laws regarding minors' access to services; minors need parental permission for access to both oral contraceptives and to abortions. Additionally, any medical appointments minors make are not guaranteed to be confidential; medical providers can legally tell minors' parents about the services the minor requested or received.¹²¹

Several reports recount instances of shaming sexual behavior as part of school-taught abstinence-based programs, including one that found a worksheet apparently given to teachers as training on how to teach sexual education. Part of the sheet read: "Encourage students to stay like a new toothbrush, wrapped

¹¹⁵ Ibid 5.

¹¹⁶ Cornblatt, Johannah. "A Brief History of Sex Ed in America." Newsweek. September 27, 2009. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.newsweek.com/brief-history-sex-ed-america-81001>.

¹¹⁷ "On Our Side: Public Support for Comprehensive Sexuality Education." SIECUS: Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States. Accessed January 25, 2015.

<http://www.siecus.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.ViewPage&PageID=1197>.

¹¹⁸ "State Policies on Sex Education in Schools." National Conference of State Legislatures.

¹¹⁹ "Sex in the States: Texas." Sex, Etc. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://sexetc.org/states/texas/>.

¹²⁰ Klein, Rebecca. "These Maps Show Where Kids In America Get Terrifying Sex Ed." The Huffington Post. April 8, 2014. Accessed January 25, 2015. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/04/08/sex-education-requirement-maps_n_5111835.html.

¹²¹ "Sex in the States: Texas." Sex, Etc.



up and unused. People want to marry a virgin, just like they want a virgin toothbrush or stick of gum,”¹²² wording eerily similar to the situation Elizabeth Smart also experienced.

Texas is not the only state with problematic sexual education policies. A Mississippi parent, Marie Barnard, reported that the students in her sons’ sexual education classes were “instructed to unwrap a Peppermint Pattie chocolate, pass it around and take note of how it soiled. According to Barnard, the lesson was designed ‘to show that a girl is no longer clean or valuable after she’s had sex -- that she’s been used.’”¹²³ However, statistics show that shame-based education programs do not work; 76% of Mississippi high school students report having sex before they graduate. Mississippi also has one of the highest teen pregnancy rates in the country, with a “third of all babies born in Mississippi are to teenage mothers,”¹²⁴ which is problematic since teen mothers often make significantly less money than they would as adults, increasing the likelihood that their children will live in poverty.

Despite large challenges to comprehensive sexual education in the United States, some states have relatively good systems and programs, such as Washington, where abstinence-only education is illegal.¹²⁵ In addition to solid law on sexual education, Washington also has numerous organizations working to ensure the sexual education is even more comprehensive and beneficial for students. One such organization is the Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs (WCSAP), which works to educate communities about sexual assault and prevention.¹²⁶

WCSAP has many different levels of involvement. At the state and national level, WCSAP works to “introduce, track, and respond to bills that affect survivors and communities.” WCSAP consistently sends representatives to Washington, D.C. to lobby Congress on national legislation. WCSAP also works to unite “state and federal agencies, policy makers, allied organizations, and other interested individuals” on how to support survivors and end sexual violence. WCSAP also provides training opportunities on sexual violence, many of which are offered free online.¹²⁷

In addition to online resources, WCSAP also provides reports detailing strategies that schools can use in sexual education programs. Much of the report discusses misperceptions of sexual assault, including myths about why sexual violence occurs. People grow up believing that “rape is about short skirts, or lack of access to sexual partners instead of abuse and power.”¹²⁸ Working to eradicate these myths will help students better understand their sexual rights and respect others’ rights.

¹²² Klein, Rebecca. "Texas School District Sex Education Compares Non-Virgins To Chewed Gum." The Huffington Post. November 8, 2013. Accessed January 25, 2015. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/08/texas-virgins-chewed-gum_n_4241610.html.

¹²³ Klein, Rebecca. "Mississippi Sex Education Lesson Reportedly Compares Non-Virgins To Dirty Chocolate (UPDATE)." The Huffington Post. April 4, 2014. Accessed January 25, 2015. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/04/04/mississippi-sex-education-peppermint-pattie_n_5092866.html.

¹²⁴ Semuels, Alana. "Sex Education Stumbles in Mississippi." Los Angeles Times. April 2, 2014. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-ms-teen-pregnancy-20140403-story.html#axzz2xnMH2DV3&page=1>.

¹²⁵ "Sex Education :: NARAL Pro-Choice Washington." NARAL Pro-Choice Washington. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.prochoicewashington.org/what-is-choice/sex-education/>.

¹²⁶ "About Us." WCSAP: Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.wcsap.org/about.htm>.

¹²⁷ "About Us." WCSAP: Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs.

¹²⁸ Ortiz, Lydia Guy. "Synergies: Strategies for Enhancing the Capacity of Organizations, Communities and Individuals to Prevent Sexual Violence in Washington State." Washington State Sexual Violence Prevention Plan, Washington, 2009. Accessed January 25, 2015. Pg 18.



Healthy sexuality is one of the key components that WCSAP pushes for in comprehensive sexual education, hosting both webinars and providing an online course to educate people.¹²⁹ The healthy sexuality online course, which is free to the public, includes components on sexual assault. One part of the online course gives examples of statements students may make while learning about sexual assault, and then provides instructors with ways to reshape the conversation. For instance, one possible student statement reads, “Slutty looking girls might not deserve to be raped, but they are partially to blame for anything bad that happens to them...I mean look at how they’re dressed...”¹³⁰ The educator may reply by asking questions to make the student examine his or her beliefs, such as, “Let’s talk for a bit about ‘sluts’ and ‘players.’ How do you define each? What kind of judgment goes along with each? Why is a boy who actively seeks out sex considered ‘good’ or ‘normal’ while a girl who does the same thing is considered ‘bad’ or ‘slutty?’ Why should people be allowed to choose who they will and won’t have sex with?”¹³¹

Other examples delve more into sexual consent in connect with assault. For instance, a student may state, “I get that I’m supposed to feel sorry for the girl – and I do. But I also kind of empathize with the guy. What was he supposed to do? Ask her at every step of the hook-up if she was OK? Most girls I know would hate that, and besides it would ruin the mood. I mean how can you do that without it being totally awkward?” The online course again directs the teacher, “Why do you think it’s so hard to talk openly about sex with another person? What would make it easier? What would be good about everyone being able to talk openly about what they do and don’t want sexually? What are specific things you could say to ask a person you’re attracted to if they want to have sex with you?”¹³²

The course also works to help change the mindset of participants to help them understand the connection between societal influences and sexual violence. The course argues that society causes us to detach from our sexuality and “keep it stored in a pouch that we each carry in our pocket, hidden from public view.” The course highlights the often-visible double-standard: that “men are free to open the pouch as much as they’d like,” whereas “women are sometimes told they’re not even supposed to know the pouch exists, lest they be shamed.” According to the course, “this false detachment of sexuality from personhood is at the root of sexual violence.”¹³³

According to WCSAP, a healthy relationship is one with “a connection between people that increases well-being, is mutually enjoyable, and enhances or maintains each individual’s positive self-concept,” and these “positive attributes ... naturally create a buffer against violence and abuse.”¹³⁴

WCSAP’s online course also focuses largely on men’s role in sexual violence and views on sexuality. The course argues, “Many men learn that their sexuality is supposed to 1) be heterosexual and 2) emphasize action, control, and achievement.” For men, “sexuality becomes a ‘game’ where a man’s worth is judged according to his ability to play this game against other men for the chance to then play against a female,” causing men to view sex as a game with winners and losers. Some strategies that men may use to win in the “get some game” may include “physical isolation, the use of alcohol and other drugs to incapacitate, emotional manipulation, threats and intimidation, or force.” Since men view all of these as simply “part of the game ... these strategies can pass for standard behavior, camouflaged by the

¹²⁹ “Sex Positive Violence Prevention.” WCSAP: Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.wcsap.org/sex-positive-prevention-tip>.

¹³⁰ “WCSAP.” WCSAP. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://learn.wcsap.org/>.

¹³¹ “WCSAP.” WCSAP

¹³² “WCSAP.”

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.



‘boys will be boys’ expectations of male sexuality.” Women, by contrast, are taught to view sexuality in more rigid terms, which “also reinforce ‘the game.’”¹³⁵

WSCAP also provides webinars that touch on many of the issues highlighted in the online course. One, called “Doin’ It Well: Approaching Sexual Violence Prevention from a Sex Positive Framework,” stresses that in order to prevent sexual violence, we must endorse healthy sexual connections.¹³⁶ The webinar leads participants through a powerpoint that discusses the components of good sex; combat “messages that sex should be shameful, bad, or violent;” addressing media portrayals of sex, and much more. The webinar notes the difficulties in trying to “integrate concrete info[rmation] with[in] a ‘rape culture’ framework in ways the audience can grasp,” which is why many programs ignore talking about “rape culture” entirely. However, WSCAP is firm in the statement that “we need to challenge ingrained rape culture in ways that are not sex shaming” because everyone deserves a “happy, healthy sex life.”¹³⁷

VIII. Sexual Education Internationally

Sexual education and sexual assault prevention are also issues of immense concern on the international level. Though the Beijing Platform for Action neglected to mention anything in regard to sexual education under the Education Objective, other international bodies have stressed both the importance and need for comprehensive sexual education. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) highlights that sexual education “provides opportunities to explore one’s own values and attitudes and to build decision-making, communication and risk reduction skills about many aspects of sexuality,” which are people’s right.¹³⁸ The World Health Organization (WHO) argues that we need more educational resources to help prevent intimate partner and sexual violence, including policies that “address discrimination against women” and “promote gender equality.”¹³⁹ The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) stresses the need for comprehensive sexual education because many people lack the knowledge about their sexual and reproductive health, “leaving them vulnerable to coercion, sexually transmitted infections and unintended pregnancy.”¹⁴⁰

These international organizations all agree that worldwide gender violence is a significant problem; some studies show that one in three women worldwide will be survivors of sexual assault.¹⁴¹ Sexual violence is an epidemic in many countries; 71% of Ethiopian women will experience physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence. International studies reveal that around 20% of women and 5-10% of men will be survivors of child sexual violence.¹⁴²

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ “Doin’ It Well: Approaching Sexual Violence Prevention from a Sex Positive Framework.” WSCAP: Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.wcsap.org/doin-it-well-approaching-sexual-violence-prevention-sex-positive-framework>.

¹³⁷ Rice, Kim and Ross Wantland. “Doin’ It Well: Approaching Sexual Violence Prevention from a Sex Positive Framework.” Doin’ It Well: Approaching Sexual Violence Prevention from a Sex Positive Framework Webinar. June 15, 2010.

¹³⁸ “Sexuality Education.” United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/hiv-and-aids/our-priorities-in-hiv/sexuality-education/>.

¹³⁹ “Violence against Women.” WHO: World Health Organization. November 2014. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs239/en>.

¹⁴⁰ “About Us.” UNFPA: United Nations Population Fund. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.unfpa.org/about-us>.

¹⁴¹ “Worldwide Sexual Assault Statistics.”

¹⁴² Violence against Women.” WHO: World Health Organization.



Since low levels of education correlate with the perpetration of sexual violence,¹⁴³ many developing countries with poor education structures, such as India, have particularly severe problems with sexual assault. Though the government in recent years has taken steps to combat sexual assault, sexual violence is a daily part of life in India. On average, 92 women are raped daily in India.¹⁴⁴ In response to such high rates, an entrepreneur created an app that helps connect Indian women to police using chat features, as well as to take pictures to document the crime. Though reports indicate that this app helped track down an Uber-driver rapist, critics see the app as merely adding to a long list of anti-rape devices designed for women to protect themselves.¹⁴⁵ Writer Ximena Ramirez eloquently discusses the app's role in preventing sexual assault:

Wouldn't we all be better served by educating men on not assaulting women? Sure an app in hand might help women feel safer and certainly might help find perpetrators after assaults have been committed, but whether or not an assault occurs is ultimately not up to the victim. It's up to the person intending to commit the crime... Where's the app that teaches users that rape is a brutal, horrible and unjust crime? Until we change cultural assumptions that make people believe it's OK to commit such crimes, women will never truly be safe.¹⁴⁶

India is not the only country experiencing sexual assault and lacking education; China presents its own challenges. In China, many view talking about sex as taboo; one study found that 72% of parents "never provided any knowledge about sex to their children."¹⁴⁷ Shame and ignorance about sex harms a particularly vulnerable group within China: the left-behind children. Rapid industrialization in China has led many parents to migrate to cities to find work – some two million of them – while their children are forced to remain behind in their rural homes because of Chinese laws which state that children can only attend public schools in their home town. As a result, more than 61 million children, 28 million of whom are girls – are left behind.¹⁴⁸

Without proper guardians or education, these children face high levels of sexual abuse. In Huazhou, a city in the Guangdong province, 94% of sexual assault cases involved left-behind children.¹⁴⁹ With 37% of rural children categorized as "left-behind," the All China Women's Federation states, "sexual abuse is a major threat."¹⁵⁰

Despite so many problems regarding sexual education and sexual assault prevention around the world, some countries are leaders in these fields, proving that success is not out of reach. Comprehensive sexual education in Sweden has been offered in schools since 1900, and the State Commission on Sex Education recommends that teachers teach students to "acquire a knowledge . . . [which] will equip them to experience sexual life as a source of happiness and joy in fellowship with other [people]." While

¹⁴³ Violence against Women."

¹⁴⁴ "Statistics: 92 Women Raped in India Every Day, 4 in Delhi." India Today. September 4, 2014. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/india-rape-92-women-every-day-4-delhi-statistics/1/380956.html>.

¹⁴⁵ Ramirez, Ximena. "Can an App Protect Women in India From Sexual Violence?" Care 2. January 3, 2015. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.care2.com/causes/can-an-app-protect-women-in-india-from-sexual-violence.html>.

¹⁴⁶ Ramirez, Ximena. "Can an App Protect Women in India From Sexual Violence?"

¹⁴⁷ Xin, Yang. "Sex Ed Still a Blank Space After 50 Years." *Beijing Today*, January 22, 2015. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://beijingtoday.com.cn/2015/01/sex-ed-still-blank-space-50-years/>.

¹⁴⁸ "China's 'left-behind Girls' Learn Self-protection." UN Women. July 30, 2014. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/7/left-behind-girls-learn-self-protection-in-china>.

¹⁴⁹ Ma, April. "China Raises a Generation of 'left-behind' Children." CNN. February 5, 2014. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.cnn.com/2014/02/04/world/asia/china-children-left-behind/>.

¹⁵⁰ Wu, Yuwen. "The Abuse of China's 'left-behind' Children." BBC News. August 12, 2013. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-23628090>.



handbooks for Swedish teachers notes that many students want to wait before engaging in sexual activity, teachers should ensure that “those who have had early sexual relations should experience, in class, [the feeling] that they are understood and accepted.”¹⁵¹ Interestingly, Sweden ranks among the highest on world happiness scales.¹⁵²

Sexual education is also quite progressive in the Netherlands, where it’s estimated, as of 1999, that nine out of ten adolescents receive sexual education in school.¹⁵³ Teachers talk openly about homosexuality and masturbation, as well as advocate the importance of communication with sexual partners.¹⁵⁴ Despite what many abstinence-only advocates would describe as overly liberal sexual education, the Netherlands has one of the lowest teen pregnancy rates in the world, 5.1 per 1,000 women.¹⁵⁵ The U.S. teen pregnancy rate is 29.4 per 1,000 women.¹⁵⁶

Other countries are also working toward talking about sexual assault prevention – in a sex positive way – in sexual education. France gives newly elected parliament members information packets about the importance of providing adolescents with comprehensive sexual education. In Ontario, Canada, two eighth-grade girls are working on a proposal to add teachings on consensual sex to the Ontario Health Curriculum, which currently focuses largely on abstinence.¹⁵⁷ The girls state it well: “To end rape culture, we must create a consent culture.”¹⁵⁸ Their hard work paid off: the Ministry of Education is now incorporating consent into the new sexual education curriculum.¹⁵⁹

IX. Conclusion

Though we have accomplished a lot over the past 20 years in the sphere of sexual assault prevention and sexual education, we still have a long way to go. Violence is still being perpetrated en masse against large percentages of women around the world. Sexual education programs still shame

¹⁵¹ Fine

¹⁵² McCafferty, Georgia. "World's Happiest Nations Are... - CNN.com." CNN. September 9, 2013. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/09/09/business/earth-institute-world-happiness-rankings/>.

¹⁵³ Berne, L. and B. Huberman. "Sexuality Education: European Approaches to Adolescent Sexual Behavior and Responsibility: Executive Summary & Call to Action." Advocates for Youth. Washington, D.C.: 1999. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/398-sexuality-education>.

¹⁵⁴ Berne, "Sexuality Education: European Approaches to Adolescent Sexual Behavior and Responsibility: Executive Summary & Call to Action."

¹⁵⁵ "Fact and Figures." Youth Policy in the Netherlands. November 2, 2012. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.youthpolicy.nl/yp/Youth-Policy/Youth-Policy-subjects/Sexual-Health/Fact-and-figures>.

¹⁵⁶ "About Teen Pregnancy." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. June 9, 2014. Accessed January 25, 2015. <http://www.cdc.gov/teenpregnancy/aboutteenpreg.htm>.

¹⁵⁷ Ferreras, Jesse. "Grade 8 Students Push To Include Consent In Ontario Sex Ed Classes." The Huffington Post. January 9, 2015. Accessed January 25, 2015. http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/01/09/ontario-sex-education-curriculum-petition_n_6446146.html.

¹⁵⁸ "Facebook Logo: We Give Consent." Facebook. Accessed January 25, 2015. <https://www.facebook.com/WeGiveConsent/photos/pb.790048231069248.-2207520000.1421556695./794518917288846/?type=3&theater>.

¹⁵⁹ Rushowy, Kristin. "Ontario Sex-education Curriculum Will Include Consent, Premier Wynne Says | Toronto Star." Toronto Star. January 7, 2015. Accessed January 25, 2015. http://www.thestar.com/yourtoronto/education/2015/01/07/ontario_sexeducation_curriculum_will_include_consent_premier_wynne_says.html.

students for their sexual choices. Sexual assault survivors still overwhelmingly do not report the crimes committed against them. Media still glorifies violence against women.

Research shows that comprehensive sexual education not only has positive benefits of lowering teen pregnancy and STD transmission, but that teens also learn how to manage their healthy sexualities. Groups such as APPCNC, OCRCC, and WCSAP have demonstrated their success in creating a culture that values, expects, and demands sexual consent. It is time that the rest of the country, and the world, follow their example.

Appendix

Appendix 1



WomenNC

North Carolina Committee for CEDAW/CSW

A 501(c)(3) Organization - <http://www.womennc.org>



Appendix 2

GRAB BAG OF RISKS

Laminate, cut apart, and place in grab bag.



<i>Stress caused by behavior not consistent with personal values</i>	<i>Getting HIV which can lead to AIDS which may shorten your life</i>
<i>STD caused by a bacteria and having to get treatment</i>	<i>A more hurtful break-up when relationship is over</i>
<i>Disappointing parents and family members</i>	<i>Unintended pregnancy</i>
<i>Sexting</i>	<i>Compromising religious beliefs</i>
<i>Unable to achieve or delay goals in life</i>	<i>Feelings of regret later in life</i>
<i>STD caused by a virus: treatable, but not curable</i>	<i>Worry that partner will brag or tell others</i>
<i>Worry that partner is being exploitive and doesn't care as much</i>	<i>Having to drop out of school and get a job to pay for a baby</i>
<i>Embarrassment</i>	<i>Financial Burden</i>
<i>Ostracized by friends and peers</i>	<i>Setting a bad example for younger siblings</i>

Appendix 3

Choosing Abstinence

Highlight decisions that support the choice to remain abstinent. ~~Strikethrough~~ decisions that might compromise their choice to remain abstinent. Explain why this could be a potentially risky choice and create an alternative that would support abstinence.

Steph and Sean were introduced by mutual friends who thought they might have a lot in common. After meeting for the first time, they decided to talk on the phone and send messages for a few weeks, just getting to know each other before going on their first date. They talked about their future goals, likes and dislikes, families, friends, and shared interests. Through their conversations, they discovered that they had both been in relationships before that had not gone well and that each had already made a decision not to have sex until they were married.

After several weeks of phone calls, texts, and messages, Steph and Sean decided it was time to go out on their first date. Several friends were going to see the new action movie playing at the local theater but Steph and Sean decided to go to a neighbor's party instead. When they arrived at the party they learned that the neighbor's parents were away for the weekend. Steph quickly realized that if they left right now, they could still catch the movie, but they were so excited to see each other, they decided to stay. Sean was sharing a story about a recent football game and Steph was having a hard time hearing him because the music was loud and people kept interrupting their conversation. They decided to go to the basement where they could hear each other.



Steph and Sean sat on the couch downstairs and started talking again, this time without interruption because no one else was in the basement with them. They realized that they had so much in common and they are perfect for each other. Sean leans over to kiss Steph and they both think they have a real "connection." They start to talk about the future and they definitely see themselves together for a long time. They have plans for college and graduate school and think their relationship is so strong that they will stay together even if they choose to go to different schools. They feel incredibly close to each other and their commitment to one another is so strong right now. The choice to remain abstinent (that was discussed several weeks ago on the phone) seems to be a distant memory now that they realize how much they care for each other. Sean says that he has heard that oral sex is a way they can express their love for one another and not have to worry about getting pregnant or diseases. Steph feels a strong connection with Sean and wants him to know she cares for him but keeps thinking about the decision that she made to remain abstinent. She wonders (if she has oral sex) if she is keeping her promise to remain abstinent.



Appendix 4

Scenario 2: Jackie and Casey have been friends since they were babies. Their families are close friends, and they have been going to the same camp ground together every summer since they can remember. Recently, they have talked a lot about sex and what it would be like. They are both curious, and decide that when they are both ready, they want to try it together to see what it is like. One day, they try fooling around, and before they know it things are getting really serious.

Tips:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



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