



Comprehensive Sex Education: The Issue in Sonoma County

Comprehensive Sex Education vs. Abstinence-Only Education

- At a time when **one in four teenage girls has a sexually transmitted disease** and many young people, lack access to reproductive health services and information, **it is imperative that schools provide the medically accurate, comprehensive education that young people need and that is required by California law.**
- Parents want to be the primary communicators with our children about sexual health. Yet many of us don't have the comfort level or the current information to provide our kids with all the information they need. We also want schools to provide our children with reliable comprehensive sexual health education in order to support and maintain their health.
- Research increasingly shows that comprehensive sexual health education, which teaches about both abstinence and contraception, is more effective than abstinence-only sex education in preventing unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. For example:
 - A study published in the April 2008 *Journal of Adolescent Health* shows that **students who received comprehensive sex education were half as likely to become pregnant as compared to students who received abstinence-only sex education.**
 - An exhaustive 2006 analysis of comprehensive sex education curricula found that 65% had a significant impact on one or more sexual behaviors, such as delaying the initiation of sex, increasing condom use, and reducing sexual risk-taking.
 - The Congressionally mandated evaluation of the federal abstinence program, released in 2007, found that the abstinence-only education had no effect at all on students' sexual behavior.

Free to Be in Sonoma County:

- **Recipients of federal abstinence-only-until-marriage grants are prohibited from California public schools.** *Free to Be*, an abstinence-only education program and recipient of these federal grants which presents in schools throughout Sonoma County, is prohibited from presenting in public schools in Sonoma County.
- As a condition for receiving federal abstinence-only funds, *Free to Be* is restricted to teaching about abstinence in its presentations and materials - **it is not allowed to discuss condoms or contraception except to refer to their failure rates which is medically inaccurate.**
- *Free to Be's* curriculum includes medical inaccuracies and biased information about condoms, contraception, marriage, abstinence, and abortion. It exaggerates the failure rate of condoms and only mentions condoms and contraception in an effort to dissuade students from using them.

- Abstinence is an important part of a balanced comprehensive sex education curriculum. Denying kids accurate information about all the options deprives them of the ability to make healthy choices.

[I want to help make sure that Sonoma County students receive only comprehensive & accurate sex education](#)

[I want more information](#)

[List of Sonoma County schools Free To Be claims to have given presentations](#)

[Why Free to Be's instruction violates the California Education Code](#)