
Argumentative Essay on Sex Education in Schools

The purpose of this report presents the findings of that sex education should be implemented in schools due to its many benefits to teenagers. The implementation of sex education in schools will provide teenagers with the correct information to enable them to make the right choices in life. On the other hand, some have claimed that implementing sex education in schools actually promotes the risk of sex and is ineffective. However, based on various research findings, it is shown that sex education is effective by reducing the rate of teen pregnancy, providing correct information and also decreasing the number of HIV, AIDS and STDs cases among teenagers. Hence, sex education encourages healthy teen sexuality.

Introduction

“This is the real world, and in the real world, you need protection,” – Cherie Richards, a freshman in the College of Arts and Sciences. (Antonuk, 2006)

In the simplest form, sex education is basically education about sexuality, contraceptive methods (condoms, drugs or surgery), how to prevent sexually transmitted diseases, the importance of protection and last but not least, attitudes and principles about sex. There are also two kinds of sex education which are abstinence-only programs and comprehensive education. However, both of them also teach about the process of sex education which can lead to teenagers understanding about how to make their choices and making them right. Teenagers need information and the right sources to help and protect themselves. This is because when they have no knowledge or whatsoever, they turned to media or even sometimes pornography to get information as their parents are not open enough about sex.

Take this for example, at present time in the United States; the rate of teen birth and abortions is the highest among other western countries with teenagers over a number of one million going through pregnancy every year. The highest number of those having sexually transmitted diseases is also proven in past surveys and reports with teenagers being the apparent source. Meanwhile, Sub-Saharan Africa also has the highest number of teen pregnancy in the world. In Asian countries however, Thailand has reported that a noteworthy sum of unmarried teenagers are sexually active with 25% of students admitted to hospitals to undergo abortions. And even though the rate of teen marriage and pregnancy has dwindled in Malaysia and Indonesia, it doesn't change the fact that it is still considered quite high compared to the others. For more developed countries like Japan and South Korea, their teen pregnancy rates are at 4.6 and 2.9 respectively, which are the lowest in the world. (UNICEF, 2005)

And therefore, the question is – should sex education be implemented in schools?

Most definitely, sex education should be implemented in schools because sex education can reduce teen pregnancy, it's better for the teenagers to get information about sex and sexual protection methods from right sources (schools) rather than from the media and sex education in schools can also protect children and teenagers.

This report will show convincing and undeniable evidence of why sex education should be

implemented in schools. The majority of these research findings will be limited to the United States of America, because the rate of teen sex and pregnancy is found to be the highest in this region.

Reduce rate of teenage pregnancy

Some had claimed that sex education does not have any effect on the rate of teen pregnancy. They said that those who took up the virginity pledges denied the oaths five years later and had had sex during that time. They argued that those who did take the pledges and those who didn't did not have much difference in not having sex. They felt that the information provided from the education was unable to help the teenagers and could not prevent teen pregnancy. (Ostrow & Randall, 2008).

However, it is indeed proven to be true that sex education can reduce teen pregnancy and teen births. Firstly, sex education has caused a plunge in the United States' teen birth rate based on a report done in California and Ventura County. The recently released statistics showed that the birth rate went from 36.2 to 34.1 per 1,000 births to adolescent mothers. (Ventura County Star, 2010). According to the California Department of Public Health, the rate of teen births which was previously 37.1 in the year 2007 decreased by 1.9 per 1000 in 2008. Secondly, an epidemiologist with the CDC – Trisha Mueller, found that sex education does work and it also delays teen having sex which inevitably leads to teen pregnancy being reduced. Based on a national survey of 2,019 teens aged 15 to 19 in 2002, her team found that teen boys were three times more likely to use contraceptive methods compared to those who did not go through sex education. (Vann, 2007). Thirdly, for teenage girls who took sex education, the risk of having sex before the age of 15 is reduced 59% while for boys' it is 71%, compared to those who didn't take sex education. (Doheny, 2007).

The evidences collected have pointed out that sex education indeed can reduce teen pregnancy. Therefore, in conclusion, again it is emphasized that sex education should be implemented in schools.

Information about sex from the right sources

Nowadays, sex scenes are heavily portrayed in some movies and TV shows which teenagers are watching. Even on the Internet, when one clicks on a certain link to a website, adverts containing sexual messages and pictures are posted to the side of the pages as if they were normal. Teenagers could have strayed easily to such websites and unknowingly received incorrect information about sex. In movies and TV shows however, though there is a limit to underage children, the older teenagers are accessible to demonstration of sex scenes in this media. Sex scenes in the media are portrayed as casual and harmless and seemed to bring no serious consequences, causing the teenagers to view such media to be fooled by the producers who are using sex to promote their production. (Why Do Teens Have Sex n.d) It should be noted that without truly knowing about it, sex can be dangerous. Parents' discomfort about discussing sex related issues with their children drives them to the Internet and other unreliable media sources to find out more about the topic, as they have no other means to get more information. Hence, it is important that sex education is implemented in schools so that teenagers can receive the information they need from the right sources; namely, teachers who are well informed about the topic.

On the other hand, some claimed that sex education is ineffective and does not give out the right information to help teenagers in making the right decisions for their sexuality. (Parents, teachers still embarrassed about sex, 2010). A survey made showed that 26.4 percent of the students complained that the sex education taught was not enough and the teachers who were responsible hardly discussed about sex at all.

However, research has proven that sex education does indeed provide the much needed information and reduces sexual activity as teenagers received correct information from the classes. Firstly, there is much difference between those who took sex education and those who did not. (Moore, Furstenberg & Peterson, n.d). Figure 1 below (National Survey of Children) shows the difference in percentage between teenagers who are exposed to sex education and those who are not.

This is because when teenagers are exposed to the lie that sex is harmless, their sexual activity increases as they have not covered sex education yet.

Secondly, getting the right information about sex can also reduce the number of HIV, AIDS, and STDs cases among the teens. Teenagers can learn that one of the major causes of STDs is through sexual activity. Even oral sex can be a pathway for the transmission of such diseases. (Williams, 2010) Sex education teaches teenagers about the prevention of HIV/AIDS and that one should get their partner tested for sexual transmitted diseases before undergoing any sexual activity with them. Sex and AIDS education have been proven by research done that they delay sexual activity as well as they teach students who are more sexually active to have safer sex. (School Health Education to Prevent AIDS and STD, 1994)

Protecting children and teenagers

There are many sexually abused children who did not come to light or the attention of government authority on what have been cruelly done to them. The wrongly placed shame, the guilt and the fear of being blamed on have shied them away from confessions to parents or authority figures. This is mainly because the victims' incomprehension of 'sexual abuse' and their rights to reject such treatment. Sex education has only recently become important in these past few years but child sexual abuse has existed throughout human history. Thus, implementing sex education into schools can decrease the rate of child sexual abuse and thus providing a way out for children and teenagers. (Carroll, 2010) Besides that, the availability of sex education can also offer help and guidance to children with learning disabilities as they go through puberty.

Child sexual abuse is defined as any form of sexual activity forced onto a child whether by a person younger or older than the child. (Munro, 2000) Munro claimed that children and teenagers are vulnerable and often can be exposed to sexual abuse without anyone knowing. And as they did not receive any counseling or teaching, they do not have full understanding of being taken advantage of. It also leaves them in a defenseless situation which they might be preyed on again. In America, there are 39 million of survivors from child sexual abuse at present. By their 18th celebration, one in four females and one in six males are sexually abused. (Mish, cited in Mail Tribune) But sex education gives children and teenagers information about how to prevent sex abuse, that sexual abuse do not occur to every child and that they must seek help if they were victimized. It teaches children and teenagers to be well

aware of sexual abuse. There's also have been one program that was organized in classes of sex education in which students learned to say "NO" to such inappropriate acts committed by the other. (Carroll, 2010)

It can be concluded that in order to decrease the rate of child sexual abuse, the implementation of sex education in schools is practical as children and teenagers would learn about child abusers and sex abuse and they could reject such offences upon them. Children and teenagers would be more aware of the current situation in this modern society and they would know the actions to be taken if necessary. Not only that, the victimized would be able to understand that they are not alone and many are willing to lend a hand to their plight.

A child with learning disabilities received and processed data and information with a slower speed due to some difficulties in the brain as well as the nervous system. (Kemp, Segal, & Cutter, 2010) Still, teenagers with learning disabilities may be different from their counterparts but they still go through growth and puberty. As they need help when studying or paying closer attention to lessons, these children also need help in controlling their sex drives when they reach puberty in their teenage years. However, the topic of sex and children with learning disabilities always seemed to be swept under the carpet, ignored for fear that it would promote sex risks. According to Stephen Simpson (cited in "Teaching sex education to children with learning disabilities", 2007), those that have learning difficulties are at a higher risk of getting sexually abused. Besides that, there is also evidence proving that the implementation of sex education is desperately needed for children and teenagers with learning disabilities. In reference to Leeds' youth offending team, the 40% who committed any sexual offence are teens with learning disorders. (Teaching sex education to children with learning disabilities, 2007)

For John who is a teenager with learning disability, he managed to control his inappropriate actions in public and it decreased gradually. (NursingTimes, 2007) Obviously, this proves that as long as a person with learning disorder obtained proper education about sex, he can reign in his sex drives based on his surroundings and what he had been taught. It can be concluded then that sex education can help teenagers with learning disabilities to control themselves as well as preventing others for abusing them sexually. They can also understand better about sexual relationships and their body.

Thus, this shows that sex education is capable of preventing children and teenagers from becoming victims of sexual abuse as well as being the perpetrator. Therefore, it can be concluded that sex education aids teenagers in their sexuality and related issues at present and in the future.

Conclusion

Children and teenagers need good and correct information from the right sources about sex, sexual relationships and various other related issues in order to make a right decision for their present and future. They need to understand about what can happen if there are misconceptions about sex, it in turn becomes dangerous. After all, "information is power, and in this current, risky world, they would need all the necessary information they could get. For they will be our future pillars for the next generation and the next. The implementation of sex education in schools will be able to prepare them properly. Not only that, based on the

evidences and research done as well as collected carefully, it proves that sex education brings many benefits by reducing the rate of teen pregnancy, providing teenagers with accurate and helpful information, and also protecting them from harm.

Recommendation

Looking into the creditability of the evidences and research done on this topic, it is safe to say that sex education in schools is heavily encouraged on. However, it should be tested whether abstinence-only or comprehensive sex education works better for the students. The collected results from the selected schools will then only be analyzed and then implemented into schools. Not only that, parents should also be encouraged to meet with the educators responsible so that they may know of the contents of sex education and will be able to discuss easier about sex with their teenagers. The meetings can consist of teachers explaining what they will be covering on with the students in schools. By accomplishing this, parents would no longer be standing on the opposing side of implementing sex education into the school curriculum.

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