

A BIBLICAL VIEW ON

Sex Education



Kerby Anderson



Sex Education



Thousands of teenagers lose their virginity every day. In the process, many will become pregnant, and many more will contract a sexually transmitted disease (STD). In fact, 1 in 4 teens contract an STD every year.

Not all teenagers are sexually active, but the significant number that are sexually involved have been the justification for sex education programs in the schools. Many of these programs have been

promoted by groups like SIECUS and Planned Parenthood. These programs would lower students' natural modesty and open their minds to the possibility of having "safe sex" because of the discussion of condoms and contraception.

Now these existing sex education programs have been expanded due to the influence of LGBTQ activists. They opened the door initially arguing that it was crucial that alternative sexual orientations be taught to prevent bullying of gay students. The legalization of same-sex marriage (Supreme Court, Obergefell decision) then justified teaching even more explicit sex education which has led to criticisms about "the sexualization of children."

Failure of Sex Education Programs

For the last half-century, proponents of comprehensive sex education have argued that giving sexual information to young children and adolescents will reduce the number of unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. In that effort, billions of dol-

lars have been spent on federal family planning services, yet the number of teenage pregnancies and abortions continued to rise.

One of the most devastating critiques of comprehensive sex education came from Barbara Dafoe Whitehead (who has appeared on *Point of View*). Her article, "The Failure of Sex Education," demonstrated that sex education neither reduced pregnancy nor slowed the spread of STDs. She argued that most sex education programs rest on questionable assumptions.

The first assumption is that children are "sexual from birth." Sex educators reject the classic notion of a latency period until approximately age twelve. Another assumption is that children are sexually miseducated. Parents, to put it simply, have not done their job, so we need "professionals" to do it right. Parents try to protect their children, fail to affirm their sexuality, and even discuss sexuality in a context of moralizing. The media, they say, is also guilty of provid-

ing sexual misinformation.

Finally, if miseducation is the problem, then sex education in the schools is the solution. Parents are failing miserably at the task, so “it is time to turn the job over to the schools.”

Another frequent *Point of View* guest has been Dr. Meg Meeker. Her book, *Epidemic: How Teen Sex Is Killing Our Kids*, lays out the dangers of casual sex and sex education classes in the public schools. She talks about the reliance on condoms when professionals know that they provide little protection, especially for skin-to-skin transfer. She also reminds us that a teenage girl’s reproductive anatomy is much more vulnerable to viruses than that of an adult body.

She explains that most students receive little (and often wrong) information about STDs in school sex education programs. They usually promote sexual freedom rather than disease control. Most young people don’t even consider oral sex or anything other than intercourse to be “real sex.” And she laments that

the average American child is assaulted with 14,000 sexual messages each year from television and other media.

We have also learned so much more from brain studies about the impact that sex has on our brains. Dr. Joe McIlhaney and Dr. Freda McKissic Bush published a groundbreaking book twenty years ago (and have recently added additional information in the last few years) with the title, *Hooked: The Brain Science on How Casual Sex Affects Human Development*.

Sexual activity releases chemicals in the brain, creating emotional bonds between partners and can become addictive. Breaking those bonds is difficult and causes depression. It also makes it more difficult to bond with someone else in the future. Also, the human brain is not fully developed until a person reaches their mid-twenties, thus making it harder to make wise relationship decisions.

Abstinence is the Answer

Abstinence programs have been implemented in many schools, but they have

faced significant criticism. Considering the latest data, we can see the wisdom of an abstinence program. Here is a short list of the benefits of abstinence:

First, teenagers want to learn about abstinence. Contrary to the often-repeated teenage claim, not “everyone’s doing it.” And the latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows a reversal in teenage sexual behavior.

Second, abstinence prevents pregnancy and prevents STDs. After more than half a century, the sexual revolution has taken many prisoners. Before 1960, doctors were concerned about only two STDs: syphilis and gonorrhea. Today there are more than thirty significant STDs, ranging from the relatively harmless to the fatal. Abstinence prevents the spread of STDs, whereas safe sex programs do not. Condoms are not always effective even when used correctly and consistently, and most sexually active people do not even use them correctly and consistently.

Third, abstinence prevents emotional

scars. Abstinence speakers relate numerous stories of young people who wish they had postponed sex until marriage. Sexually active girls (14-17) have rates of depression that are three times higher than those who have not been sexually active. Sexually active boys are more than twice as likely to be depressed as those who are not sexually active.

Fourth, abstinence not only prevents pregnancy, STDs, and emotional scars; it also strengthens marriages. Premarital sex and cohabitation do not provide a strong foundation for marriage. My booklet *A Biblical View on Cohabitation* documents the numerous studies that found that “cohabiting unions are much less stable than [unions] that begin as marriages.” And other studies found that abstinence before marriage leads to better sex within marriage.

What Should Be Taught?

While we might wish biblical values would be taught in the public school, that will not happen. But we still can insist that any sex education program be

based on the best scientific and medical facts. We are told to “trust the science.” Fortunately, the best science affirms what we have been discussing.

One resource I recommend is written by physicians with the Medical Institute for Sexual Health. They have produced “K-12 Standards for Optimal Sexual Development” that is endorsed by a significant number of doctors (Christian and non-Christian).

Four Key Topics are: Positive Character, Healthy Relationships, Optimal Sexual Development, and Sexual Risks. It also includes four grade-level groupings: Early Elementary, Late Elementary, Middle School, and High School. The detailed plans illustrate what students will be able to do at each level.

The material points to the research by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that states, “Healthy students are better learners” and “Schools play an important role in promoting health and safety of children and adolescents by helping them establish

lifelong health patterns.”

These educational standards also remind educators that though rates of teenage sexual activity and abortion have fallen in the last two decades, the rates of STDs have not fallen. Also, emotional and mental health crises have risen during that same period. Media and social media are full of misinformation and even encourage unhealthy behavior. This is why these standards should be implemented in your local school district. If the schools are going to teach sex education, they should teach it correctly based on the best scientific and medical research.

Sex and the Bible

The best sex education should begin in the home and be reinforced in the church. Here are a few key principles we should teach our children and grandchildren.

God created us male and female and therefore made us as sexual beings (Genesis 1:28). God designed sexual intimacy

to occur exclusively within the sacred commitment of marriage (Genesis 2:21-24). This is repeated in the New Testament by Jesus who quoted this passage and added, "They are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate" (Matthew 19:5-6).

As we have already documented, sexual intercourse outside of marriage has dire consequences. Writing to the church in Corinth, Paul said that when a man joins himself to a prostitute, he becomes one body with her (1 Corinthians 6:16). In 1 Corinthians 6:18 he says we are to flee sexual immorality.

Sexual immorality is condemned in about 25 passages in the New Testament. The Greek word is *porneia*, a word which includes all forms of illicit sexual intercourse. Paul taught in 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5: "It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and

honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God.”

The best sex and the safest sex can be found in the biblical principles God provides for us in His Word. We should teach them to our children and grandchildren.

Additional Resources

Kerby Anderson, *A Biblical View on Sex and Culture*, POV booklet, 2023.

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Marlin Maddoux, *Public Education Against America*, New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 2006.

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Meg Meeker, *Epidemic: How Teen Sex Is Killing Our Kids*, Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 2002.



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