



Boston Students Want More Sex Ed

Sex ed has been in Boston public schools for as long as we can remember. But apparently, a group of students are not satisfied with just being given condoms. They want to know more about sexually-transmitted diseases. According to the Boston Globe of February 16, the Boston Public Health Commission reports that 54 percent of city high school students have had sex, and half of them have had sex with more than three partners. Thus, the likelihood of these students getting a sexually transmitted disease is high.



In 2007, 1,383 students between the ages 15 and 19 were diagnosed with chlamydia — a disease that can cause infertility in women — a 70 percent increase since 1999. Apparently there hasn't been enough discussion about the dangers of promiscuous, recreational sex. Many students are only dimly aware of the health risks such sexual dalliance can lead to.

So hundreds of teenagers packed Boston's City Council chambers carrying signs saying "Sex Education Now." They want the city to make condoms more readily available. Of course, any student can go to a drugstore and buy as many condoms as he wants. But they want the taxpayers of Boston to pay for their promiscuity. And they want the schools to tell them more about the consequences of sexual activity, as if there is nothing they can learn from their parents or from the many books available about sex. And apparently, abstinence is not considered a realistic option by these students, although it's obvious that many students do practice abstinence out of good common sense and religious beliefs.

A representative of the Catholic Action League of Massachusetts told the councilors that distributing condoms sends the wrong message to students. And of course promiscuous, premarital sex leads to more problems than just physical diseases. There is the emotional component which is not discussed. Some students develop unhealthy emotional attachments to sexual partners whom they would never want to marry. Such attachments often lead to physical abuse. But there is no such thing as "Love ed." It is obvious that when teenage girls permit themselves to be used as sex objects, their self-esteem falls into the gutter.

One high-school senior told the *Globe* reporter, "I feel like they are focusing on 'Don't have sex or don't get pregnant.' There's more to it than that. It was like 'This is a condom. This is what males use to prevent pregnancy.' We didn't really talk about sexually transmitted diseases."

So what do the students want? A female high-school sophomore opined: "Sex education is important to me because sexual identity is part of our lives. And when we don't talk about it, people learn the wrong things about it or nothing at all." She said that sex education among teens is like a "fairy tale" shared from one teen to another with little or no factual information. Many of her peers have sex in order to fit in and don't fully understand the consequences of their actions. "What they need to learn about sex," she said, "is that it's something you don't want to rush into. It seems a shame that we aren't learning what we need to."



Written by [Sam Blumenfeld](#) on February 16, 2011

The gist of the students' complaints is that the kind of sex education they are getting in the public schools is totally inadequate and does not deal with the subject realistically.

And what was the response of the school authorities? Barbara Huscher-Cohen, health education program director for the school system, said the district is creating new health education frameworks that will include sex education. It will include an inventory of the district's health education efforts, create a task force to review condom access, establish comprehensive health education benchmarks, and train staffs to implement them.

Anyone familiar with public-education bureaucratese will see exactly what the program director wants: a bigger budget for the task force to review condom access and to train staffs on how to implement all of the new programs. Apparently, the school authorities as well as the liberal city councilors believe that taxpayers should be forced to pay for students' access to free condoms.

How large a task force is needed to review condom access? Why don't they just ask a couple of boys what they must go through in order to get free condoms? The task force will write a report, and a new system of condom distribution will be implemented, at additional cost to the taxpayer who has not been consulted in this extra-curricular aspect of public education.

Why does anyone expect schools that can't teach reading properly to be able to teach sex education properly? Is there a proper way to teach about sex? And hasn't SEICUS provided all of the sex educators of America with their guidelines? SEICUS is the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States. Its 2009 report provided the following information on student sexual activity: 46.0 percent of students reported ever having had sexual intercourse (47.8 percent in 2007); 5.9 percent of students reported having had sexual intercourse before age 13 (7.1 percent in 2007); 13.8 percent of students reported having had sex sexual intercourse with four or more sexual partners in their lifetime (14.9 percent in 2007); 34.2 percent of students reported being currently sexually active, defined as having had sexual intercourse in the three months prior to the survey (35.0 percent in 2007); 61.1 percent of sexually active students reported that either they or their partner had used a condom during their last sex (62.5 percent in 2007); and 87.0 percent of students reported having been taught about AIDS or HIV in school (89.5 percent in 2007).

In other words, in 2009, students were slightly less promiscuous than in 2007. But fewer students reported knowing about AIDS and HIV in 2009 than in 2007. It is obvious that sex education has nothing to do with education but a lot to do with sex.

In the days before sex ed people managed to fall in love, get married, and have families. Some lived happily ever after, many did not. But how did the human race manage to deal with sex before it became a classroom subject? Through the kinds of cultural institutions that generally dealt with such matters. Yes, there was titillating secrecy about the subject, but there were always ways of finding out what you wanted to know. It wasn't a perfect world, but neither is our sex-saturated world where students complain that their schools are not doing enough to strip from sex any mystery or awe.

I guess the students want sex to be taught like geology or anthropology, with a textbook listing all of the facets of sexual behavior. But isn't that what Dr. Kinsey gave us back in the 1950s, which opened the floodgates to sexual freedom à la *Playboy* magazine? With more than enough information on the Internet, you would think that students could find out anything they wanted about sex on their computers. But they would rather someone else do the research for them at taxpayer expense.



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