

Sample essay on sexual health education

[Family](#), [Parents](#)



Introduction

Sex health education is a very vital topic that should be discussed but it has been avoided due to various reasons such as religious differences and cultural differences. Over the years the number of teenagers and youth below the age of twenty five who experience early pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections has increased drastically especially in the United States of America. This has led to the creation of comprehensive sex education programmes and sessions in schools so as to help the young people to adapt to healthy sexual behaviours and to make healthy and clear decisions about sex. Sex health education is a psychological problem because society has adapted to cultures that are ignorant of sexual matters and this has been carried on to the young generation who are not educated about sex causing them to make poor decisions. Society has also different religious beliefs that condemn sex and reject the need of the younger people who have already involved themselves in the act and they need to be guided.

Parents are supposed to play a major role in educating the young people about sex but they have buried their heads in the sand and assumed that the school has programmes that will educate their children. Research has proven that young people who are educated by their parents, especially between a daughter and mother, about sex make wise decisions and do not involve themselves in the act early in life. Most parents have a false belief that communicating with the children about sex makes them very curious and thus encourages them to have early and unprotected sexual activities at a young age. Parents also fear being part of sex health education to the

young ones because they are not proud of their past life and activities and would not be a good example to their children. However, most who believe in sex health education encourage the schools to start the programmes from the primary level where most topics should be first introduced and they play an active role in ensuring the children are well educated.

Many of the studies that have been published show that parents do not want to be involved with sex health education especially when it involves teaching the use of contraceptives. Even the parents that support the mandate teaching of sex health education in school become passive. In order to attract the parents involvement, the school psychologist has to talk to them, when the programmes for sex health education are being created, the consent of the parents should be sought so as to avoid the parents being resistant. The community around should also be in favour of the programme and this can happen when the experts that developing the programme also consider the culture of the community.

Young ones are not the only ones who need programmes on sex health education but also the adults. There are some countries such as Mexico, some years back, that family planning is illegal due to the cultural practices of the people. The society gives men the power to decide about the sexual activities in marriage and ignores the rights of women. This has led to the rapid spread of HIV and unwanted pregnancies in marriage. Most women are not educated about the use of contraceptives and family planning, cervical cancer, nutrition, ecological protection, gender equality and stopping domestic violence. Psychologists have started programmes that bring enable women and men to talk about sex in marriage with even the pharmacists,

doctors and nurses. Through this programmes, some cultures have been eliminated slowly such as talking about sex openly is a taboo and it has led to the economic empowerment of women.

Most if not all religions preach abstinence. The question that society should be asking is if abstinence is the best message for young people. Programmes that talk of only abstinence usually have strong religious beliefs and they assume that talking openly about sex to the young people will encourage them to indulge in sexual activities at an early age. The reality is that most of the young people have already indulged themselves in sexual activities because of influence from technology and their peers. The society should shift its focus from educating abstinence only to educating the young people about the use of contraceptives and making wise decisions about sex. This will help to reduce the number of young people with unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases and infections.

Governments of various countries should come up with legislatures that mandate the teaching of sex health education in public schools. In most schools, the sex health classes are squeezed at the end of the timetable and thus little time is allocated to them. This because there are no exams for the sex health education classes and thus they are assumed to be less important. The adolescents should be taught about sex so that they cannot tease and joke with each other because they are anxious about sex. The more informed they are, the more relaxed and confident they will feel and this will help them not to take out their anxiety on other people thus reducing the interest and risk of indulging in sexual activities. During sex health classes, the people are attentive to grasp any new information that

they do not know so as to make them less anxious. When sex health education is not taught in school or discussed by the parents to their children, it makes the children to turn to their peers and pornography so that they can obtain information. This leads to misinformation and confusion and thus makes the adolescents to incline more towards involving themselves with sexual activities to learn more since it is said experience is the best teacher.

In order to develop, create and implement a curriculum for sexual education programme, there should be experts who have the knowledge about what sex education contains. Therefore, the government has been unable to come up with a sex health education law that is accepted in all states. This is because, there are some states that want to mandate sex health education in public schools, some want only abstinence to be taught in the programmes, some states do not want sex health education to be taught in schools while some want sex health education to be medically accurate before it is mandated in public schools. This has caused it to be difficult for the government to come up with a programme that is suitable and accepted by most states.

The school psychologist plays a major role in sex health education in schools. In school-based sex health education, there are three major considerations that help in knowing the involvement of the school psychologist. First, the area of expertise is considered. School psychologists are mostly trained in family systems so as to help them talk to the parents about educating the children on sex education and thus making the parents to actively participate. Secondly is through consultation. This makes the school

psychologists to be indirectly involved in sex education programmes in schools. They can be consulted by the teachers who take sex health education classes and also by professionals so as to help them to come up with an effective curriculum. Thirdly, general health education is within a public health perspective that mainly focuses on prevention at the primary level.

Since there is, a lot of controversy about programmes that teach abstinence only, this problem can be solved in two ways. One is to ensure the implementation of comprehensive sex education, that is, a programme that educates the adolescents that they can say no to unwanted sex and at the same time provides adequate information on contraception, pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases and infections. This ensures that the adolescents can refuse to involve themselves in unwanted and early sex and at the same time they are aware of ways to protect themselves. This prevents the case of adolescents first involving themselves in sexual activities and then talking about contraceptives later. This method is most commonly used in programmes.

Another approach is the teaching of abstinence only in sex health education programmes. The main aim of such programmes is to encourage the young adults to avoid sexual activities until they are married and this is to help prevent unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases and infections. Most of these programmes are usually motivated, funded, encouraged and supported by various religions. The results obtained from this programme vary and these programmes are less funded compared to comprehensive sex education programmes.

Experts have pointed out the most important characteristics of a sex health education programme that effectively prevents sexually transmitted diseases and infections and unwanted pregnancies. Such programmes: rely on teaching methods that are participatory and implemented by educators that are trained, offer culturally and age appropriate sex health education in an environment where participants feel safe, responds to the needs of the community and community values are respected, the target members of the community, especially the young people, are involved in its development, deals with protective factors and psychological risk with activities to change each target risk, help the youth to clarify their community, family and individual values, present accurate medical information about both contraception and abstinence, aim at health behaviours that are specifically related to the goals and the messages about these behaviours should be clear, help the young adults to develop skills in negotiation, refusal and communication and finally, the goals for preventing other sexually transmitted diseases and infections, HIV and unwanted and teen pregnancies should be clear.

A pregnant adolescent faces a lot of stigmatisation from the people around her and she becomes stressed which later translated to psychological problems such as depression. However, the child of an adolescent is the one that faces most significant effects. The children of adolescent mothers are at a higher risk of developing social and psychological problems because of being raised in a poor environment and lack of the mother's attention which is important during child development pg. 363. It has been highlighted that significant development of a child takes place during infancy and if during

this time the child receives little or no attention from the parent, negative implications may occur. The increase in the number of infected adolescents with sexually transmitted diseases and infections cost the government a lot of money and thus an increase in taxes. The adolescents that become mothers at an early age do not graduate and therefore they contribute to the country's poverty level and unemployment.

Conclusion

The rate of unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases is increasing at an alarming rate and society is trying to curb it through sex education programmes in schools. Despite the effort of addressing the issue of young adults' sexual behaviour on various levels, the solutions seem to be a lot more difficult. This is because of the difference in cultural and religious practices. The society still views psychologists as clinical personals who inform you why you are behaving in a certain manner but psychologists can help the society to develop healthy behaviours from day to day life.

References

- Campogni, C. (2011, June 16th). A psychological approach to sex education: Is abstinence the answer? Examiner. com.
- Clay, R. A. (2001, April). Revolutionary sex education: psychologist spread the word about healthy sexuality around the world. American Psychological Association, 32(4), 58.
- Eisenberg, M. E. (2008). Support for comprehensive sexuality education: perspectives from parents of school-age youth. Journal of Adolescent Health, 42, 352-359.

Luxmoore, N. (2013, June 14th). The problem with sex education: Pornography begins where sex education ends. Psychology today.

Mcclung, A. A. (n. d.). Sexual Health Education: social and scientific perspectives and how school psychologists can be involved. Communique', 40(6).

Meyers, J. M. (2004). Prevention through consultation: A model to guide future developments in the field of school psychology. Journal of Education and Psychological consultation, 15, 257-276.

Steinberg, L. (2011). Adolescence (9th ed.). New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies.