

Free research paper on is abstinence-only sex education morally justifiable

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The decision concerning the type of sexuality education that should be presented to teenagers and at times the youth poses mainstay challenges. In such a context, conflict often arises on whether to choose abstinence-only sex education or the comprehensive sex education. The proponents of abstinence-only sex education have widely voiced their belief, and so have those for the comprehensive sex education (Planned Parenthood, 1).

Whereas abstinence-only sex education is focused on preventing teens from indulging in any sexual activity, the comprehensive tact also includes other broader information such as contraception (Kim & Rector). Despite the fuzzy conflict surrounding its practice, abstinence-only education is morally justifiable. It should therefore be widely advocated for in a bid to promote a better society.

Arguably, the practicability and effectiveness of abstinence-only education has moral concerns that may be addressed by comprehensive sex education. It is very difficult to achieve the goals of abstinence-only education in the society. Even with the most advanced abstinence-only education, there are likely tendencies of the targets to engage in sexual activity against the goals of such education. This behavior would put involved parties in potentially risky conditions. Such risks include the possibility of pregnancy or contracting sexually transmitted diseases or HIV among other mishaps. In a society where absolute abstinence can be likened to a dream that can hardly be real, it would not be morally justifiable to advocate for abstinence-only sex education. The related consequences may be more damaging in a scenario where abstinence-only education is practiced than in the alternative scenario. One would therefore question the validity of the former education

from a moral perspective, hence the need for the broader approach to sexual morality in the society.

Even so, abstinence-only education has morally acceptable aspects that promote the society's well being in general. Educating teens on sexuality from the comprehensive approach may have serious repercussions. Early education on contraception and other similar elements of sexuality is likely to encourage the target to engage in early sexual activities. On the one hand, this form of sexual education is prone to lower the tendency to abstain among teens. On the other hand, abstinence-only education addresses this issue as well as religious demands of the society, which persistently call for this type of education. The institution of abstinence-only education minimizes the incentives among the teens of engaging in early sexual activities. With minimal knowledge of additional information beyond abstinence such as contraception, it is less likely that teens will engage in sexual activity. Contraception should be tact employed in adulthood and hence morally justifiable in relation to sexuality in adulthood because promotion of knowledge of such information exposes teens to more than they ought to know. As a result, abstinence-only sex education remains morally acceptable.

Past studies have shown that abstinence-only education significantly reduces the number of teens who engage in early sexual activities. In a research done by Kim and Rector (2), it was observed that a study conducted in 2010 by the American Medical Association found that an "abstinence-only intervention reduced sexual initiation" among the sample to a great extent. In the said research, a group of African American adolescents were subjected

to a two year study in which a control sample that used general sexual education was used to evaluate the effectiveness of abstinence-only education on participants. In the same research, two other groups were observed that according to Kim and Rector (2010), one of which was subjected to education that focused solely on contraception while the other focused on education with both abstinence and contraception content. In the first case, it was concluded that abstinence-only education had significantly reduced sexual activity among participants than general education. It was also found that neither the contraception-only education nor the abstinence and contraception education reduced these activities (Debra 3). Apparently, abstinence-only sex education is more beneficial.

Abstinence-only sex education may be deficient and as a result would not completely address the moral issue regarding early sexual activity in teens. This kind of sex education fails to capture the long-term contribution of the broader comprehensive programs. According to Pittman & Gahungu, contraceptives play a significant role in addressing issues related to early sex. Research findings on the use of condoms have concluded that if used correctly, failure to curb disease control or pregnancy among teens to be less than 2% (Pittman & Gahungu, 65). These two are some of the major objectives of fighting early sexual activity among teens. Since the results above largely promote the common interest of the public as regards the consequences of engaging in such behavior, then it is morally not justified to advocate for abstinence-only sex. A failure to pass any information to teens on contraception might be detrimental to a society. Pittman & Gahungu (66) argued that laboratory studies have proved non-defective condoms to be up

to 100% effective in preventing passage of HIV and other STD infections. Such a positive contribution of comprehensive education to a society's good life is absent in abstinence-only education.

Sex-related education is crucial and should be in the interest of the entire society. Abstinence-only sex education is morally justifiable because it leads to increased levels of abstinence in the target audience, in particular the teenagers. It however presents drawbacks that are addressed in a more comprehensive sex education, including information on contraception. On the affirmative, studies have found that abstinence-only education significantly reduces cases of early engagement in sexual activity. Otherwise the consequences, which include physical and psycho-emotional well-being of the youths and the society at large, would be far reaching. From a utilitarian perspective, abstinence-only education is morally justifiable because it promotes a common good of the entire society.

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