

Characteristics of an EFFECTIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION PROGRAM

Research shows that effective sexuality education programs share a number of common characteristics. These curriculum-based programs:

- 1) focus on small numbers of sexual behaviors
- 2) are based on theories that have been effective in reducing other risky behaviors
- 3) give a clear message about abstaining from sexual activity as well as using contraception when sexually active
- 4) provide basic accurate information
- 5) include activities that address peer and social pressures related to sex
- 6) allow students to practice communication, negotiation and refusal skills
- 7) use a variety of teaching methods
- 8) are tailored to the age, culture, and experience of students
- 9) last a sufficient length of time
- 10) are led by teachers who are genuinely interested in the topic and who receive adequate training

Adapted from: *Emerging Answers*, Douglas Kirby, 2001 and *Science Says*, Number 4, Sept. 2003, National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.

Young People Benefit from Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Many parents and caregivers worry that teaching about sex is an invitation to their teens to have sex. However, scientific evaluations of sexuality education, HIV prevention education, and adolescent pregnancy prevention programs have consistently found that these programs can help delay intercourse, reduce the number of sexual partners, and increase condom and contraceptive use among teens who are sexually active.

These programs allow students to obtain the information and develop the skills they need to make healthy, responsible decisions about their sexuality throughout their lifetime.

What is Sexuality Education?

An opportunity for individuals to develop the knowledge, motivation, skills and critical awareness needed to enhance health and avoid problems.

Source: SIECUS.org