

## Pros and Cons of Sex Education in School Children: Review

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### ABSTRACT

Sex education, also known as sexuality education or sex and relationships education, is a process of giving knowledge and forming attitudes and beliefs about sex, sexual identity, relationships and intimacy. It is a broad term that describes education on human anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexual intercourse, reproductive health, emotional relations, reproductive rights and responsibilities, abstinence, contraception and other aspects of human sexual behavior. In this article, we review major impact of sex education in school and ways it benefits the society. Though Sex education taught in one school is not the same as that taught in the other, it is pertinent to consider it as a recreational course rather than a serious subject in school.

Keywords: Sex education, human anatomy, recreational course.

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### INTRODUCTION

Content of school-based sex education continue, but in some fundamental sense they have been matched by perhaps even overtaken by other pressing realities. For example, there are increasing demands that school resources be dedicated to teaching the basics of reading, writing, and math and to upgrading the attention given to science education [1]. Many communities find that meeting these legitimate demands places substantial pressure on school hours and budgets, often at the expense of such areas as art and physical education as well as health education, which often includes sex education. Moreover, limited budgets can also decrease the amount of training made available to sex education teachers [2]. Sex education is the instruction of issues relating to human sexuality, including emotional relations and responsibilities, human sexual anatomy, sexual activity, sexual reproduction, age of consent, reproductive health, reproductive rights, safe sex, birth control and sexual abstinence. According to the WHO, sex education should be imparted on the children who are 12 years and above [3]. It is estimated that 34 percent

of the HIV infected persons are in the age group of 12 to 19. Sex education that covers all of these aspects is known as comprehensive sex education [4]. Common avenues for sex education are parents or caregivers, formal school programs, and public health campaigns. Sex education is basically conducted to help youngsters and elders prevent themselves against abuse, exploitation, unintended pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV and AIDS [5]. Ideally, it should be given to kids before they reach puberty and before they have developed established patterns of behavior. Sex education forms the basic foundation on the basis of which more complex knowledge can be build up over time. Apart from offering various pros, sex education has its list of cons as well.

#### **Positive Impact of Sex Education**

Sex education is commonly taught in high school health classes or guidance programs. Education on sexuality is controversial because some parents and educators believe it's up to parents to teach kids on this subject. Additionally, debate around sex education centers on the approaches to teaching including

[www.idosr.org](http://www.idosr.org)

abstinence-only, preventative or health-centered coaching [6]. Studies have shown that abstinence-only education programs are not effective in delaying sexual activity or reducing pregnancies. Despite criticisms, the positive effects of sex education are often shown in areas like STD and body awareness, reduced sexual activity, safe sex practices, consent and reduced teen pregnancy rates.

#### **STD and Anatomy Awareness**

Sex-ed programs often include significant coverage of various types of sexually transmitted diseases. For many students, this is the first time they go through a thorough review of causes and results of STDs. In the same health classes, many sex education teachers also promote anatomy awareness about the biological side of sex so students are more aware of their own bodies [7]. Regardless of the overall teaching philosophy, STD awareness can either help motivate student abstinence through the sheer fear of catching an STD. Students that still have sex receive information about taking precautions when engaging in sexual behavior to prevent the transmitted diseases.

#### **Reduced Sexual Activity**

For people who believe teenagers should not be sexually active, data compiled by the CDC revealed positive news. In a U.S Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) study in 2015, the CDC found the percentage of self-reporting high school students who had never had sexual intercourse dropped from 47 percent (2005) to 41 percent in (2015) [8]. Additionally, other studies show that 30 percent noted that while they engaged in sexual activity, they either reduced frequency or stopped after their experience in a sexual education program.

#### **Safe Sex Protection**

High school students who continued or intended to continue sexual activity at least seem to get the message that protection is important. The Advocates for Youth site also indicated that 60 percent of sex-education program participants stopped or reduced the amount of unprotected sex they were having [9]. Many sex-ed programs include

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discussion of various types of contraception including condoms used to prevent STDs and offer lower pregnancy risks.

#### **Consent**

Including an explanation and coaching about consent in sexual behavior is an important part of sex education programs. Teaching empowerment and body control can begin well before high school. In sex education classes, students can be taught that consent means no one is allowed to touch their bodies without their permission [9]. The idea of consent also can help students report any sexual assault.

#### **Reduced Teen Pregnancy Rates**

Teen pregnancy is a major concern in high schools and homes across America. A correlation often exists between the amount of education and the rate of teen pregnancy. A study from the National Survey of Family Growth showed that students are half as likely to get pregnant between the ages of 15 and 19 after going through a sex-education class [5]. The Advocates for Youth site pointed out that programs that teach prevention techniques tend to have the most success in this area.

#### **Advantages of Sex Education**

Teaching children about sex can be difficult and uncomfortable, but most people feel that it's necessary and essential [10].

- Sex education goes a long way in teaching students the correct knowledge about their bodies, human reproductive system, sexually transmitted diseases, birth contraceptives and pregnancy prevention techniques.
- Appropriate sex education in schools has a great impact on preventing sexual problems in adulthood [12]. Also, it teaches students on what is right and what is wrong.
- Through sex education, young people are able to communicate, listen, negotiate with others, ask for and identify sources of help and advice when it comes to sexual relationships.

### Disadvantages of Sex Education

- It is believed that little knowledge is a dangerous thing. Most sex education provided to students is during physical education or health classes. This brief interlude is not enough to teach students serious materials [11].
- Sexual education, in many cases, goes against an individual's morals and beliefs. Also, most schools do not teach 'abstinence'. Instead, they focus on having safe intercourse, which many religions and family values object before marriage.

Sex education taught in one school is not the same as that taught in the other. The attitudes of parents, educators or religious leaders in different communities lead to variations in the subject matter being taught in different countries, states and even schools. While sex education usually takes place in single-sex

### CONCLUSION

classrooms, students still suffer from embarrassment or can get excited by the topic discussions. This can result in out-of-control classrooms with students taking to giggling and making inappropriate remarks. Often, sex education in schools is considered as a recreational course rather than a serious subject.

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