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YOUR PLANNED PARENTHOOD® ARIZONA NEWSLETTER **SPECIAL REPORT ON SEX EDUCATION**

Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Research shows it will help pave the way for healthier Arizona teens

“If we talk about contraceptives and sexually transmitted diseases, are we giving our daughters and sons permission to have sex?” “Are we promoting promiscuity?” “Are they really mature enough to learn about this stuff?”

When it comes to comprehensive sexuality education, parents are asking the right questions and seeking truthful, informative answers. The stakes are high. With approximately 100 teen pregnancies occurring each day, Arizona has the sixth highest teen pregnancy rate in the country. Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) among Arizona youth are approximately five times higher than the overall state rate and rising. Almost 11 percent of Arizona high school students report being forced to have sex when they don't want to. Despite these deeply troubling statistics, distortion and misinformation continue to contribute to a multitude of problems linked to teen pregnancy, including higher dropout rates, increased health risks and diminished future opportunities.

Of the few Arizona schools offering sex education, most provide abstinence-only programs. But what about comprehensive sexuality education? Are such programs more or less effective? Do they harm or help

our youth? To answer important questions like these, the nonpartisan National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy commissioned a rigorous, comprehensive review of the scientific studies assessing the impact of sex education programs. And you may – or may not – be surprised by the answers.

As it turns out, not a single comprehensive sexuality program hastened the onset or frequency of sex. In fact, many comprehensive programs result in young people delaying sexual initiation, reducing the number of partners and frequency of sex (including opting for abstinence), or increasing the likelihood of using contraception if they have sex. No abstinence-only program was found to positively impact teen sexual behavior. Numerous studies reach the same conclusions: comprehensive sexuality education does not promote promiscuity. Rather, such programs more effectively reduce risky sexual behavior.

The truth is that comprehensive sexuality education is about stressing abstinence while teaching about contraception for the prevention of pregnancy and STDs. It's about helping young people and parents talk about sensitive topics like sex, risky behavior and consequences, as well as family values. It's

about providing medically accurate, age-appropriate information.

According to the Office of the Surgeon General, comprehensive sexuality education provides youth with the resources and skills to make informed, responsible decisions. That's why Planned Parenthood Arizona



Teachers from Creighton School District are trained to provide comprehensive sexuality education to their students.

is working hard to inform school districts throughout the state about the facts. As the largest sexual health organization in Arizona, we are committed to reducing teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, to helping youth build the skills and confidence to make healthy decisions. Many of us working at PPAZ are parents and like you, we want the very best for our daughters and sons. Each and every young person in Arizona deserves the opportunity to have a bright future. That's why we do what we do – **No Matter What.**

To find more about the National Sexuality Education Standards, please visit: www.futureofsexed.org.

Our Mission Planned Parenthood Arizona promotes and protects every person's freedom and right to enjoy sexual health and well-being, to make reproductive choices, and build healthy, strong families.

What is the SHARE Initiative?

SHARE (Sexual Health And Responsible Education) is an initiative of Planned Parenthood Arizona to provide support for educators to join the sexual health conversation young people are already having today. With

age-appropriate and medically accurate information, schools can create a brighter future for Arizona's youth.

The initiative works with school districts, their school boards

and administrators to adopt a standard of comprehensive sexuality education to benefit its students. The education curriculum we endorse through this initiative is FLASH (Family Life And Sexual Health). We

offer training for teachers and other education services to support districts that adopt a comprehensive sexuality education curriculum like FLASH.



“The Bidstrup Foundation is pleased to support Planned Parenthood’s Sexual Health and Responsible Education (SHARE) Initiative because we understand the importance of providing medically accurate, developmentally and age-appropriate sexuality education to Arizona’s youth.”

– Regina Bidstrup, President, The Bidstrup Foundation

What are the National Sexuality Education Standards?

You may have heard of these standards when comprehensive sexuality education is explained. Here is a little insight on what they are:

In 2011, the Future of Sex Education Initiative, in partnership with the American School Health Association, the American Association for

Health Education, the National Education Association-Health Information Network, and the Society of State Leaders of Health and Physical Education, published the *National Sexuality Education Standards: Core Content and Skills, K-12*. These standards are designed to provide clear and consistent guidance for schools to

implement sexuality education that is evidence-informed, age-appropriate, theory-driven, and part of a comprehensive school health education approach that presents sexual development as a normal, natural and healthy part of human development. These standards are heavily influenced by the *National Health Education Standards*;

existing state and international educational standards that include sexual health content. The standards can be used by school districts to help ensure that sexuality education is being implemented with their students using consistent performance standards across grade levels.

“We support PPAZ’s education program because Planned Parenthood supports Arizona families and schools in providing accurate information and thoughtful educational experiences that encourage healthy communication about the responsibilities that come with sexual activity.”

– From a foundation that supports innovative educational programs

“Our foundation is proud to be a partner in the SHARE education initiative. We believe young adults need to be armed with information to make healthy choices and navigate adolescence in a safe and healthy manner. Information is power. Teenagers deserve accurate information in order to stay safe, plan for their future and realize their dreams.”

– Marianne Cracchiolo Mago, President, The Steele Foundation



Growth of the Education Program

Introducing Our Community Sexuality Educator



PPAZ welcomed Kate Thomas in February as our new Community

Sexuality Educator thanks to a generous foundation grant. While Kate is new to her role as Community Sexuality Educator,

she has a long history with Planned Parenthood that goes back to her teens.

Kate's passion and commitment to sexuality education blossomed when she started as a Peer Educator with Planned Parenthood's teen theatre troupe, The Positive Force Players. While a student at Smith College, she was a Coordinator of the Peer Sexuality Educators. While in graduate school at the University of Arizona, she worked as a Program

Assistant with the Teen Advocacy Group, and has been a valued member of our Speakers Bureau Program for more than six years.

Her work at PPAZ will take her statewide, supporting the SHARE initiative, and working closely with our Regional Health Coordinators to bring our education programs to the communities of Yuma and Yavapai counties. Kate graduated from the University of Arizona with a Master of Public Health degree. She has worked at Primavera

Foundation and, in her most recent position she was Project Coordinator at the Southwest Interdisciplinary Research Center at ASU.

"I am extremely excited to be working at an organization that is committed to reproductive rights and sexual health. This is my dream job – helping people of all ages feel comfortable enough to be advocates for their own health and wellbeing," says Kate.

Make Your Voice Heard... VOTE

This year is a unique year that has the potential to set up Arizona for a better future. It is an election year. As a supporter of reproductive health rights and care, it is so important that you let your voice be heard by voting.

So, if you aren't registered to vote, this is the year to register. It is easy to register, go to www.servicearizona.com and click on "Voter Registration."

If you are a registered voter and want to make it even easier to vote, you can put yourself on the permanent early voter ballot list to receive your ballot in the mail.

Visit, www.azsos.gov/election/county. Find the county in which you live, go to your Recorder's site and look for elections information to sign up.



Stronger Together

PPAZ, the national Planned Parenthood Federation of America, and four other Planned Parenthood affiliates came together in 2011 to pilot a ground-breaking merger of fundraising operations. This pilot continues for another year, as we evaluate its success and decide how we will move forward.

By communicating together we hope this organized combination of local and national information will be more interesting and

useful and, at the same time, we'll reduce wasteful duplication in fundraising costs. Even more of your support will go to serving women, young people and families through programs like SHARE.

So now, when you send your check to Planned Parenthood, your donation benefits our work here in Arizona, as well as nationally*.

**Planned Parenthood continues to honor donor intent and restrictions, and complies with all applicable laws and regulations.*

Contact Us

Health Care – 855.207.PLAN (7526)
Planned Parenthood Arizona (PPAZ) is committed to providing high quality, confidential health care services. Our trained staff are experts at answering your sexual health and primary care questions.

Fundraising – donate@ppaz.org
Your generous donations allow PPAZ to continue providing medically accurate sexuality education programs, expert medical services, and public policy to defend access to reproductive health care and information. We welcome gifts of cash, check, credit/debit cards, monthly recurring gifts, stocks and securities, workplace gifts and planned gifts and bequests.

Education – education@ppaz.org
PPAZ's education staff partners with parents, school and community agencies to create the healthiest generation of young people by providing education on sexual health topics in a variety of community settings. Our programming promotes and embraces sexuality as an essential lifelong aspect of being human, and empowers individuals to make healthy choices.

Public Policy – advocate@ppaz.org
PPAZ advocates for the rights of all individuals to have access to the full spectrum of sexual health care and comprehensive sexuality education.



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Care. No matter what.



Planned Parenthood is Going the Distance in Yuma and Yavapai Counties

In December, PPAZ launched a new and innovative initiative, **Going the Distance**, in Yavapai and Yuma County. Going the Distance improves the way we deliver our mission in rural Arizona by focusing on education, community outreach and activism, bringing our unique nonjudgmental values, vision and mission as the state's leading health care expert.

We replaced our traditional clinic-centered model with a community-centered model that puts Planned Parenthood in the community so we can touch more lives, be more visible and more engaged. Better health care access alone does not address the underlying issues that shape society's values, knowledge and behaviors regarding sexual health. Only by addressing these can we even hope to decrease the alarmingly high pregnancy and STD rates among Arizona youth.

Two new full-time Regional Health Care Coordinators, one working in each county, will expand access to comprehensive and accurate sexual health information, facilitate access to hard-to-find health

care services, refer individuals to local providers for common services, and identify, organize and mobilize community activists and supporters who want to move Planned Parenthood's vision forward.

PPAZ is the only mainstream statewide organization committed to addressing sexual and reproductive health, and building healthy relationships by embracing difference, and promoting self-knowledge and responsible decision-

making. At a time when so many organizations are working to reduce reproductive health information and access, Planned Parenthood Arizona is instead going the distance with this community-focused effort so that access to information and care can grow.

We are excited to introduce our Yuma Regional Health Coordinator, Flor Castanon. Flor can be reached at fcastanon@ppaz.org or (928) 287-3749. We hope to introduce our Yavapai Regional Health Coordinator soon!

Rock 'n' Roe Yuma - Pictured: Board Member Ann Walker, Senator Lynne Pancrazi and Regional Health Coordinator Flor Castanon

