

**Memphis Regional
Planned Parenthood®**

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NEWS & VIEWS

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Abstinence-Only Education Fails Students

Memphis Regional Planned Parenthood sponsored an essay competition with the following topic:

The teen pregnancy rate in Memphis is 60% higher than in the United States. Describe why abstinence-only education is failing students.

The following is an excerpt from first-place winner **Jennafer Stonecipher's** essay:

Many organizations are saying, "Wait to have sex." However, with one out of every four girls getting pregnant before the age of 20, it is easy to see that teenagers are not buying into it. It would be naive to think an abstinence-only foundational approach would effectively survive in an environment where over half of the students are sexually active. Four-fifths of Americans participate in sexual intercourse before marriage. Is this nation, under God, composed of hypocritical values?

Our schools should be stressing the importance and effectiveness of abstinence while also providing students with information on how to respect and protect themselves through various contraceptive options. Regardless of parental opinion, sexual activity is a choice that young adults will eventually make. We need to prepare them for it.

We cannot ignore questions of young adults, refuse the decisions they make and deny them access to safety and protection. It is obvious that our country's sex education agenda needs mending. Our government, through financial funding, is directly supporting a program that demands unrealistic standards for the majority of young adults. By only illustrating contraceptives and preventatives as ineffective, they are leaving teenagers who are already sexually active at a disadvantage.

It is much easier to scare a young teenager about the dangers of AIDS, pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases than to allow them to reason themselves. Scaring students into abstinence is inadequate when aiming for long-term influence.

Your kids have questions. Stop setting them up for failure and feed them the truth.

The following is an excerpt from second-place winner **April Hibler's** essay:

When soldiers go off to war, they are not sent empty-handed or without the proper training to survive. We should hold ourselves in the same regard for the sake of our young people by speaking openly and truthfully with them. There will be some who chose to abstain, but there will be many others who won't.

We need to provide open forums, seminars or demonstrations of protective measures, in the event individuals decide one day to transition from abstaining to becoming sexually active so they will have the chance to be safe in the decisions they make. Giving young people the benefit of the doubt, the chance to make choices, builds character and allows them the opportunity to exhibit responsibility. Abstinence-only education is perfect in utopia, but has no depth in the world we really live in.

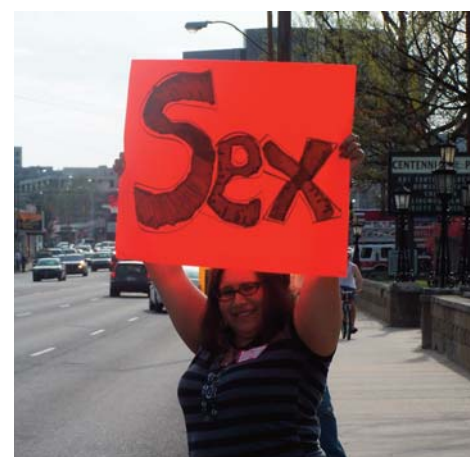
Tennessee Students Learn About Direct Action Organizing At Live Action Camp

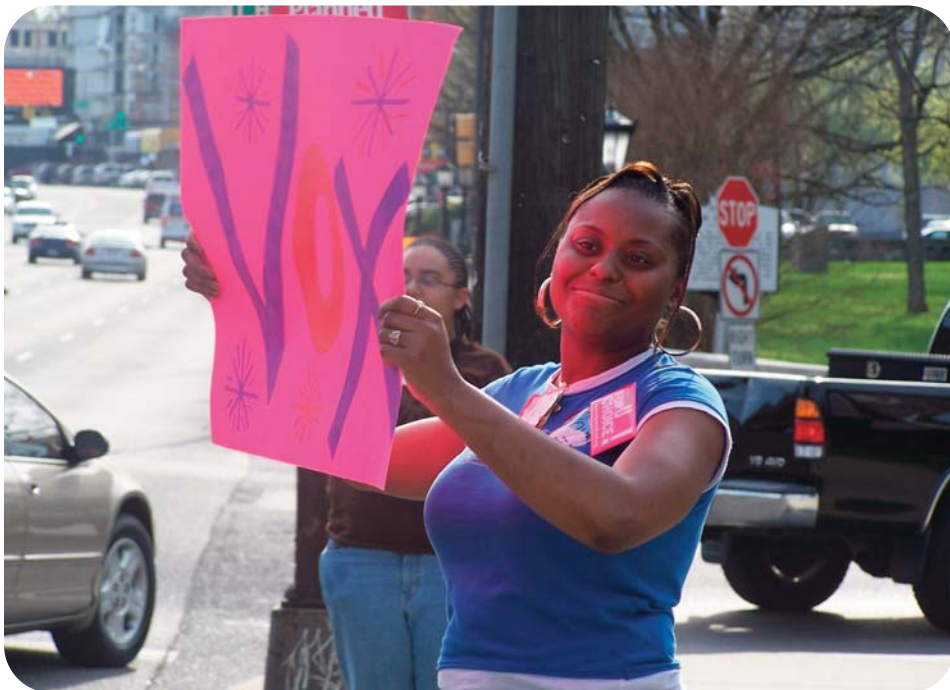
Vox®: Voices for Planned Parenthood students from the University of Memphis, Rhodes College, Vanderbilt University and Middle Tennessee State University convened in Nashville March 24 for the state's first Live Action Camp.

Memphis Regional Planned Parenthood collaborated with Planned Parenthood of Middle and East Tennessee to build excitement about direct action organizing while providing college students with the skills, knowledge, power and confidence to implement activities on their campuses.

Students selected morning workshops related to media, event planning, fundraising, coalition building and recruitment, among other topics. After lunch, students were treated to a private, guided tour of the state Capitol (below). Skills developed in morning workshops were practiced in an afternoon Burma Shave demonstration (right) on a busy downtown street.

The Live Action Camp prepared students to increase their Vox chapters' visibility and activism on campus, while enhancing support of their local Planned Parenthood affiliates.





Supreme Court Decision Q & A

What happened?

In *Gonzales v. Planned Parenthood*, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a nationwide ban, signed into law by President Bush in 2003, on a rare medical procedure that opponents call “partial-birth abortion.” (The correct medical language is “intact dilation and extraction.”) This is the first-ever federal law banning abortion.

What does it mean?

The Supreme Court arrogantly determined that Congress is better equipped to make medical decisions than women and their physicians. The ban contains no exception for cases in which the health of the mother is threatened. This is part of a larger agenda to criminalize all forms of abortion.

What can I do?

Contact your elected officials to let them know that you will not tolerate such blatant disrespect for women.

Invite MRPP to Speak at Your Event!

Knowledgeable speakers are available to give presentations on a range of topics, including comprehensive sexuality education and the new HPV vaccine. Ask us to visit your church group, book club, neighborhood association, dinner social, or other gathering. Be informed!

In Brief

- MRPP welcomes finance manager Jo Kendrick and health educator Elokin CaPece!
- Congratulations to Rhodes College’s new Vox chapter! At their first meeting, students discussed such initiatives as improving access to emergency contraception on campus and setting up condom vending machines.
- Congratulations to Rhodes intern Rachel Frantz and University of Memphis intern Lindsay Eason on their recent graduation. We wish them the best of luck in future endeavors.
- MRPP highlighted its pregnancy prevention message March 20 by offering free emergency contraception in recognition of the sixth annual Back Up Your Birth Control Day.
- Barry Chase and Elokin CaPece were featured on WUMR U92 FM as experts on teen pregnancy in Memphis. They spoke about the failure of abstinence education and the need for greater access to contraception for young adults.

New Patient Feature Available: Online Appointment Requests

Patients accustomed to calling for appointments at MRPP’s health center now have another option.

A new online patient appointment system allows individuals to submit their request, along with day and time preferences, directly to health center staff with just the click of a mouse. Clinic staff process the appointment request and confirm the details in a return email to the client.

In addition, clients are provided all of the necessary forms to fill out ahead of time, cutting down on their wait. Any questions or concerns can be ironed out via email, alleviating much of the phone call volume. Patients who call for appointments will be directed to MRPP’s website to download forms.

Visit www.plannedparenthood.org/memphis to access the appointment request system or download patient forms.

New patient management software has also just launched, streamlining patient information and processes, and allowing MRPP to better serve its clients.

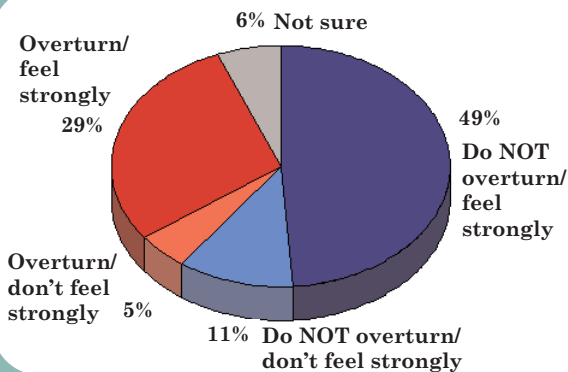
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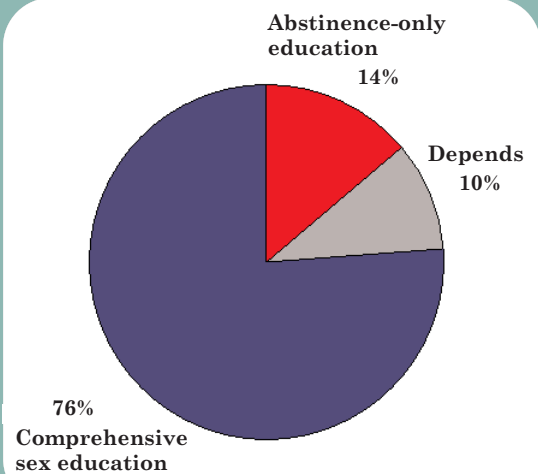
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Would you like to see the Supreme Court overturn its *Roe v. Wade* decision?

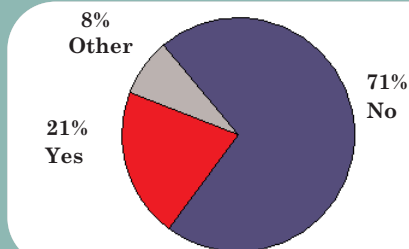


Source: Research undertaken by Hart Research Associates, National Women's Law Center and Planned Parenthood Federation of America. April 2007.

Which do you prefer public schools to teach?



Should pharmacists be allowed to refuse to fill prescriptions?



Check us out on the web—www.plannedparenthood.org/memphis