

## Facing Facts: Sex and America's Teens

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Nearly half of ALL pregnancies in the United States are unplanned.   | T | F |
| 2. The pregnancy rate for females ages 15-19 is lower today than it was in the 1990s.   | T | F |
| 3. Teen girls who have a history of sexual abuse are three times as likely to become pregnant before age 18 as are girls who have not been abused.  | T | F |
| 4. Even if every high school male abstained from intercourse or used a condom perfectly, 75% of all births among teenage females would still occur.   | T | F |
| 5. The current teen pregnancy, birth and abortion rate could be cut in HALF if all teens were educated about emergency contraception and had access to it.  | T | F |
| 6. One in five Americans is infected with the genital herpes virus.   | T | F |
| 7. If a person has an STI, it is easier for them to become infected with HIV if exposed.  | T | F |
| 8. One in four new HIV infections occur in people under the age of 22.  | T | F |
| 9. 97% of high school students have heard homophobic language used in their school and 53% of students have heard <b>teachers</b> use such language.  | T | F |
| 10. Teens who identify as lesbian or are questioning their sexual orientation have higher unintended pregnancy rates than teens who identify as heterosexual.   | T | F |
| 11. By 12 <sup>th</sup> grade, 47% of US adolescents have engaged in sexual intercourse.  | T | F |
| 12. If a female teenager has contraceptive education the same year that she initiates intercourse, the chance she will use contraception increases by 70-80%.   | T | F |
| 13. Less than 10% of NJ parents with school-age children want public schools to solely Focus on abstinence in health classes.   | T | F |
| 14. Education about sexuality and/or HIV/AIDS does not result in increased sexual activity.   | T | F |
| 15. Research shows that sexuality education programs that teach abstinence and contraception are successful at helping teens postpone sexual intercourse where as abstinence-only programs have not shown to be successful in impacting behavior. | T | F |

Adapted from Planned Parenthood of Greater Northern New Jersey

## Advice for Sexuality Educators from the *SEX, ETC.* Editorial Board

### **Create and open and comfortable environment**

- Keep an open mind and open floor. Let teens know right off the bat that anything is open for discussion, nothing is taboo.
- Develop a comfort zone, so teens will feel comfortable to ask anything.
- Use an anonymous question box.
- When a teen says, “I don’t wanna talk about it,” then you asked the wrong question to make them talk. Try a different method to get us talking.
- Fishbowl sessions where teens answer questions in a circle and asking anonymous questions are two great ways of seeing what kids know and want to know.
- Asking people what myths they’ve heard concerning a certain topic and then dispelling them is another good method.

### **Make It Fun**

- Use games that teach about the perils of STDs and careless sexual activity, like Weakest Link, Jeopardy, and Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?
- Come up with good icebreakers to become familiar and comfortable using the correct terminology.

### **Remain Honest and Non-Judgmental**

- Adults should never judge teens by past behavior, but help them if they need it, and give support.
- Adults need to be honest with teens and provide them with the information they need.

### **Use Speakers and “Real” Examples**

- Real life examples are key. If a young person comes in who is gay, or who has a baby, or who has AIDS and talks to a class, they will have more of an impact than a textbook.
- Don’t use statistics. They suck. Use real life examples.
- Realize that things aren’t the way they were back then. Face reality.
- Don’t hold back on saying certain words. We can tell when you’re uncomfortable.

### **Don’t Preach**

- Telling people not to do something is less impressive than asking them to think about what they are doing before they do it.
- Don’t use scare tactics. Acting like a parent doesn't always hit home.

## Teen Sexual Health Resources

### Web sites:

<a href="http://www.sexetc.org">www.sexetc.org</a>	Sexual health information written by teens, for teens
<a href="http://www.scarleteen.com">www.scarleteen.com</a>	Sexual health information on a wide range of topics
<a href="http://www.youthresource.com">www.youthresource.com</a>	Sexual health information for gay, lesbian and bisexual teens
<a href="http://www.iwannaknow.org">www.iwannaknow.org</a>	Sexually transmitted disease information
<a href="http://www.teenwire.org">www.teenwire.org</a>	Information to find Planned Parenthood in your community
<a href="http://www.itsyoursexlife.org">www.itsyoursexlife.org</a>	Sexual health information including birth control and STDs

### Hotlines:

1-800-230-PLAN	Locate the nearest Planned Parenthood health center
1-800-656-HOPE	Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network
1-800-342-2437	National HIV/AIDS Hotline
1-800-227-8922	National Sexually Transmitted Infection Hotline
1-800-662-HELP	National Drug and Alcohol Treatment Hotline
1-800-HIT-HOME	National Youth Crisis Hotline
1-800-877-6736	Independent Adoption Center