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Danger of STDs is real for young people

By Margaret Graham

SOAPBOX

This is in regard to Peggy Loonan's article Feb 25: "Sex information program is fear based."

Peggy is in denial. How naïve of her not to believe facts that could save her child's life. Does she think Alpha Center makes up all these statistics and facts?

It is easier to keep one's head in the sand and not believe that one in four young people will contract a sexually transmitted disease that could maim or kill them.

And Brian Olver, Poudre School District health sciences coordinator? What is he doing for teens? Letting them believe that condoms are protecting them? He certainly needs to get some training about sexually transmitted diseases. While you are reading this, approximately 18,000 teens will become infected with some type of sexually transmitted disease that could leave them sterile or kill them, and they might not even know it.

I challenge Olver and Loonan to

view Pam Stenzal's video, "Sex Has a Price Tag." She counseled young people for nine years. Many knew they could get pregnant, but few of them knew how many STDs they were in danger of contracting. They did not have the facts. It is not coming from parents or educators who themselves did not know. It certainly did not come from the media! They know sex sells!

Pregnancy is not a disease, and yet the teens Pam counseled were only concerned about the pregnancy test and if it was negative. They did not know of the real dangers of sex outside marriage.

When some found out they instead had an incurable STD, they couldn't believe they didn't have any symptoms, and the boy had used a condom! What went wrong?

It saddened Pam when she heard their mournful reply, "I didn't know, no one ever told me!"

She now travels all over the country, speaking to more than 350,000 teens and parents every year.

So Loonan does not want her teen fearful. What option does that leave?

Will her daughter be the one saying, "I didn't know, why didn't someone tell me?"

A young man I know recently told me one of the boys at school was bragging he had genital warts and was going to give it to as many (expletives) as he could.

I challenge all who think you know what is really happening to view Pam's video. Call (800) 786-8283. The Web site is www.time.linemgt.cc.

Margaret Graham lives in Fort Collins.
