

Sex education effective

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy (May 2001) said teen pregnancy, abortion, and birth rates began to decrease about 1991 and have continued to decline every year since, making Jeff Stout's July 21 comment, "Society has tried to educate teens about sex and has failed," untrue and irresponsible.

The study concluded that abstinence-based comprehensive sex education, which includes education on birth control, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV, delayed the onset of sex, reduced its frequency and reduced the number of sexual partners. The study also noted that programs that combined comprehensive sex education with helping teens develop skills, confidence, focus on education, and take advantage of job opportunities, helped them create reasons to make responsible decisions about sex.

The study found that none of the abstinence-only programs reviewed showed an overall positive effect on sexual behavior, nor did they affect contraceptive use among sexually active participants.

Yes, it's a parent's responsibility to inform their children about sex within their religion and moral teachings but Stout must know from his own peers about how many parents don't talk at all with their kids, or who may have the basic "birds and bees" talk with their child but are too embarrassed to speak further or just say "it's a sin," none helpful to teens facing peer pressure, raging hormones, a need to be accepted, who has problems with school work or no extra curricular activities to take pride in and who may be without future dreams to work toward.

**Peggy Loonan,
Life and Liberty for Women,
Fort Collins**