Mammas, Don’t Let Your Babies Grow Up to Get Chlamydia (or HIV)

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By Jennifer Morton (Managing Editor, POZ/AIDSmeds/Hep)

This morning I came across two stories on the topic of sex education. The first was a Huffington Post article about a recent outbreak of chlamydia at a high school in the Crane Independent School District (CISD) in Texas. Sex education is not part of the high school’s curriculum, but each fall it offers a three-day course that emphasizes abstinence. According to the CISD student handbook:

> State law requires that any instruction related to human sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, or human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immune deficiency syndrome must:
>
> - Present abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice of behavior in relationship to all sexual activity for unmarried persons of school age;
> - Devote more attention to abstinence from sexual activity than to any other behavior;
> - Emphasize that abstinence is the only method that is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and the emotional trauma associated either [sic] adolescent sexual activity;

- Direct adolescents to a standard of behavior in which abstinence from sexual activity before marriage is the most effective way to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases; and

- If included in the content of the curriculum, each contraception and condom use in terms of human use reality rates instead of theoretical laboratory rates.

The second story was about a post on IMGUR by Jordan Fridman, a young woman in Montreal, which read: “Two years ago today, my then 14-year-old sister got suspended for submitting these answers for her sex-ed class. I’m so proud of her.”

Here are her sister’s creative responses to the sex-ed questionnaire called “Objections to Condoms”:

While it is unclear if her sister, Mariah, was actually suspended (her Facebook page suggests otherwise and any punishment was likely due to the use of explicit language), it’s refreshing to see a school asking students to tackle these types of real-life scenarios.

Sex is fun and pleasurable, and many kids are choosing to have it. Instead of pushing abstinence-only sex education in our schools, let’s instead empower students with the ability to make their own decisions and provide them with the fact-based knowledge to help them navigate their choices. Just like Mariah Fridman.

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