

S. 1697

REAL EDUCATION AND ACCESS FOR HEALTHY YOUTH ACT OF 2023

PURPOSE

The purpose of this act is to provide comprehensive sex education and sexual health services to young people. This bill hopes to promote and uphold the rights of the youth to information and services and focuses on inclusivity.

VOTE YES!!!

This bill will majorly impact the well-being of young people, reduce sexual health disparities, and create more informed and developed communities.

DATA

- Young people aged 15 through 25 contract half of the 19 million sexually transmitted infections each year, despite making up only a quarter of the sexually active population
- Sex education that includes information beyond abstinence has been found to delay sexual intercourse, increase condom or contraceptive use, reduce the number of partners among young people, and decrease physical aggression with intimate partners
- Young people who received sex education are 50 percent less likely to experience an unintended pregnancy, 31 percent less likely to contract a sexually transmitted infection, and more likely to delay sexual activity and use contraception upon becoming sexually active
- No highly effective sex education or HIV prevention education program is eligible for federal funding because mandates prohibit educating youth about the benefits of condoms and contraception

SEXUAL HEALTH DISPARITIES

Sexually transmitted infections pose a distinct challenge for minority groups, women, and adolescents. In 2015, African Americans represented 45% of newly reported HIV cases. Black women experienced a chlamydia infection rate that was 5.4 times higher than that of white women, while the gonorrhea rate among Black people was 9.6 times higher than among their white counterparts.

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STRENGTHS

- The bill proposes a comprehensive and inclusive approach
- The bill recognizes the importance of cultural responsiveness
- The bill acknowledges and addresses historical inequities
- The bill proposes grant programs to support sex education

LIMITATIONS

- The grants have a five-year duration.
- Ensuring cultural sensitivity in sex education programs can be difficult
- The bill may face resistance from those who believe that sex education should be a matter of parental choice rather than a mandatory requirement in schools
- There is a lack of specific implementation ideas
- There could be controversy surrounding gender and sexuality

RECOMENDATIONS

- Clear implementation guidelines
- Apply resources for community engagement
- Provide training for teachers and healthcare providers

‘SEX EDUCATION IS ESSENTIAL TO CREATE HEALTHY SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND RECONCILIATION, HEALTHY CONVERSATION AND UNDERSTANDING, HEALTHY MIND-SETS AND LIFESTYLES.’

-FATIMA MOHAMMED

American Academy of pediatrics. (2023, July 14). The importance of access to comprehensive sex education. Home. <https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/adolescent-sexual-health/equitable-access-to-sexual-and-reproductive-health-care-for-all-youth/the-importance-of-access-to-comprehensive-sex-education>

RESOURCES

Parenthood, P. (n.d.). Goals of sex education for teenagers: Youth Health Services. Planned Parenthood. <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/for-educators/what-are-goals-sex-education-youth>

Mckee, B. (2006). Effective sex education - advocates for Youth. Advocates for Youth. <https://www.advocatesforyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/storage//advfy/documents/fssexcur.pdf>