

SOCW608 Advanced Policy-Discussion Post 3

Benefits of Comprehensive Sexual Education Among Adolescents: An Annotated Bibliography

Policy Issue: The policy issue we are addressing this semester is on providing a more comprehensive sexual health education to high schoolers in the state of Tennessee. As of right now, the state of Tennessee does not require any type of sexual health education (abstinence or comprehensive) unless the pregnancy rate of a county surpasses a specific number. Then, a “family life education program” that does not allow the teaching of comprehensive or preventative measures, just abstinence only is implemented in the county schools. Students are also able to opt out of the program with a parent’s consent. Through research and personal experience, our group has come to know that abstinence only education programs are not beneficial at lowering the number of adolescents from engaging in sexual activity, lowering unwanted pregnancies, and lowering the risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections (STI). We recognize that there are certain populations who are more at risk: low-income families, specific racial groups, as well as individuals with disabilities. Our goal is to advocate for change to the Tennessee legislature to include preventative education in the school systems, especially those with high risk youth. This can look like teaching sexual assertiveness (saying no to unwanted sexual advances), learning about contraceptives, as well as how to have safe sex. The literature and research prove that abstinence only programs do not work, and we would like to see this reflected in our state policy.

Sex Education Issue - Abstinence Only Does Not Work

Finer, L. B., & Kost, K. (2011). Unintended Pregnancy Rates at the State Level. *Perspectives on Sexual & Reproductive Health*, 43(2), 78–87. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.southern.edu/10.1363/4307811>

- The rates of unintended pregnancies were highest in the South and Soutwestern areas of the United States as well as areas with large urban population. There was not a single state from 2002 to 2006 in which a consistent decline in unintended pregnancies was demonstrated.
- This article consists of Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) of each state with response rates of 70% or more for accuracy. PRAMS serves as a tool for the CDC to note each states’ demographic information on maternal attitudes before and after birth. Some states have similar programs in place of PRAMS. There are issues of representativeness of data collection including intendeness of pregnancies and underported gaps to research.
- Using the national survey of PRAMS can inform the public on the issue of unintended pregnancy policies and practices of each state. It is imperative to include sex education and use governmental funding for distribution of contraceptive services for both teenagers and adults. This inclusion will aid in increasing the decline of unintended pregnancies throughout the United States.

Fox, A. M., Himmelstein, G., Khalid, H., & Howell, E. A. (2019). Funding for Abstinence-Only Education and Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention: Does State Ideology Affect Outcomes? *American Journal of Public Health*, 109(3), 497–504.

- In this study researchers compiled a state database that covered information on funding for abstinence only education, birth rates among adolescents. The study focused on how the state ideology impacted its role in how students are not only taught, but influence their choices.

- Teaching abstinence only in schools had little to no effect on reducing the pregnancy rates in several states versus education programs that supported both abstinence and introduced safer sex interventions. The findings of the study indicated that conservative states had higher birth rates where they promoted abstinence only education. It was further shown that having even a small part of funding towards prevention programs that did teach about safe sex practices reduced births among teens.
- Having research that observes states who receive funds for their educational programs, and how ideology impacts those decisions, gives our group a better understanding on what our policy is founded on as well as who would oppose our views. The article helps us understand how, even a small part of education being put towards safe sex practices, can make a difference in the number of teenage pregnancies and other issues such as STI's.

Hall, W. J., Jones, B. L. H., Witkemper, K. D., Collins, T. L., & Rodgers, G. K. (2019). State Policy on School-based Sex Education: A Content Analysis Focused on Sexual Behaviors, Relationships, and Identities. *American Journal of Health Behavior*, 43(3), 506–519.
<https://doi-org.ezproxy.southern.edu/10.5993/AJHB.43.3.6>

- Adolescents have many issues they undergo as they transition to high school. Their bodies are changing and they begin to have questions regarding their own bodies, their sexuality, health concerns, and on many of these issues, they do not have someone teaching them what to do. The purpose of this study was to analyze the policies in place and their effectiveness in addressing the issues teenagers have.
- Many states emphasize an abstinence centered program and do not require educating students on safe sex practice or on how to prevent pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections. There were many states that did address relationships but did not require to talk about consent and some states made an effort to discuss sexual orientation. In the study, students were interviewed and it was found they had experienced violence in a relationship where they did not practice safe sex and were more vulnerable to contracting an STI.
- Finding the gaps in how students are being taught, and what they actually need, will help our group discuss the fact that students are not being taught how to address the issues they are having. This article is an example for us on how the abstinence only path does not allow students to have their questions answered and where there is a lack of assistance.

Kulik, K., Brewer, H., & Hileman, H. (2016). Teaching Comprehensive Sex Education through Student-Centered Learning Activities. *TAHPERD Journal*, 84(1), 8–13. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.southern.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=s3h&AN=117823395&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

- This peer reviewed article goes over the importance of teaching comprehensive sex education versus abstinence only. This articles states that comprehensive sex education should be taught in a social studies/science classroom to review the importance of ethics, behavior, and decision-making, including planning for the future. The science portion will focus on the reproductive biology and the biology of STI's, including pregnancy and STI prevention (Kulik, 2016, pg. 9).
- This article mainly provides evidence based factors to support teaching comprehensive sex education in classrooms and there are three goals to support this. The first goal is to provide students with the correct skills to promote their health and well-being as they mature into sexually

healthy adults. The second goal is to reinforce the idea that abstinence is the most effective method to prevent unwanted pregnancies and STI's. The third goal is to increase the awareness and education on having safe sex. This includes how to use contraceptives, being educated on the different STI's and STD's and the consequences of having these diseases and illnesses. The last goal is to have specialized training for teachers so they teach medically approved information to students. There are also five activities that go over condoms, barrier methods, prescription birth control methods, abstinence game, and self-examination. These teaching materials include the activities for the students, the National Health Education Standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, directions and materials, handouts, and critical thinking questions to go along with the learning (Kulik, 2016 pg. 9-12).

- In this article, Kuplik (2016) supports our goal in changing this policy because it states that there is a clear and strong evidence that abstinence only education does not work (pg. 8). Although it does appear that abstinence delays sexual activity in teenagers, it does state that teenagers lack the knowledge of STI's and having safe sex.

Pariera, K. L. (2016). Barriers and Prompts to Parent-Child Sexual Communication. *Journal of Family Communication, 16*(3), 277–283.
<https://doi-org.ezproxy.southern.edu/10.1080/15267431.2016.1181068>

- The study in this article was conducted to find what prevents parents from having conversations with children regarding sexual health. Most of the parents in this study reported thinking child was too young to communicate regardless of their child's age. Researchers sought to evaluate self-efficacy and parents value in sexual communication for promoting parent-child sex communication.
- The article found that gender did not influence prompts to parent-child sex communication. It was also found that parents negative view of child age influenced a barrier in communication concerning sexual behaviors. Although, roughly a third of teens by the ninth grade have had sex (CDC, 2013).
- Parents in this study revealed thinking child has become old enough to understand sexual behaviors. Parents held the belief that their responsibility was to work towards having a single conversation with child regarding sex or having "the talk." However, research has shown that an ongoing repetitive conversation regarding sexual health is more beneficial for the child.

Rabbitte, M., & Enriquez, M. (2019). The Role of Policy on Sexual Health Education in Schools: Review. *Journal of School Nursing, 35*(1), 27–38. Retrieved from
<http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.southern.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ1203709&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

- This review looked into the differences between abstinence only education and comprehensive sexual education and the rate of teen pregnancy. The review found that having comprehensive sexual education programs leads to lower pregnancy rates in their schools.
- This article looks at the role of policy on sexual health education. The article breaks down the numbers of states that have policies requiring various levels of sexual education programs. Two out of three states that teach abstinence only education resulted in higher pregnancy and abortion

rates compared to states that allowed comprehensive sex education or discussions about sexual health.

- This article would be very beneficial for our group assignment because of the fact that it shows the benefits of comprehensive sexual education. The statistics and facts from this article discuss how talking about sexual health and teaching more than just abstinence only allow students to be educated and have safer sex.

Santelli, J. S., Grilo, S. A., Choo, T. H., Diaz, G., Walsh, K., Wall, M., ... Mellins, C. A. (2018). Does Sex Education Before College Protect Students from Sexual Assault in College?. *PLoS one*, 13(11), e0205951. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0205951

- This is a cross-sectional study with a qualitative survey that surveyed undergraduate students in 2016. This study sought to establish that educating adolescents on sexual health before they enter college, helped lower the risk of penetrative sexual abuse (PSA).
- The results from this study showed that abstinence only education did not aid in the prevention of PSA but taking an educational course about “saying no” and sexual assertiveness before the age of 18 did. College students reported that the sexual education they had received before college was very poor and was not delivered properly. The researchers concluded that receiving sexual education (even just educating on refusing unwanted sex and saying “no”) is an effective strategy for preventing sexual assault in college. The article discusses how the earlier sexual education is taught, the better and more beneficial it is later on for individuals.
- Teaching more than just “abstinence only” is crucial in today’s society. This article brings to light the need to educate adolescents on refusing unwanted sexual activity and saying no. Learning this early on can lessen the risk of sexual assault later in life.

Stanger-Hall, K. F., & Hall, D. W. (2011). Abstinence-Only Education and Teen Pregnancy Rates: Why We Need Comprehensive Sex Education in the U.S. *PLoS ONE*, 6(10), 1–11. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.southern.edu/10.1371/journal.pone.0024658>

- Among the 48 states of the article analysis 21 states stress abstinence-only education, 7 states emphasized abstinence education, and 11 states covered abstinence within the framework of comprehensive sex education. There were four factors that were evaluated including socio-economic, educational attainment and ethnic composition. All in which contribute to high teenage pregnancy rates in the United States.
- Schools that provide comprehensive sex education have lower teen pregnancy rates. However in comparison to Europe there is still a higher amount of teen pregnancies. The United States comprehensive sex education does not require STD education be taught but is provided as an option for school boards to include such material.
- One of the main points for maintaining abstinence only sex education include addressing social values of the families and communities in each state. There is a cultural shift concerning sex education in public schools and creating age appropriate interventions for reducing teen pregnancies rates within at risk states.

History of Sex Education

Brown, V. W. I., Verena. brown@vanderbilt. ed., Lamb, S. M. ., Perkins, A. M. ., Naim, D. W. ., & Starling, S. P. . (2014). Knowledge Regarding Hymens and the Sex Education of Parents. *Journal*

of child sexual abuse, 23(6), 674–689.

<https://doi-org.ezproxy.southern.edu/10.1080/10538712.2014.928399>

- This article begins by stating how 20-25% of females and 8-12% of males experience sexual abuse before the age of 18. There are teenagers who have a fear of disclosing such information but if they were taught safe sex at home, they would be more willing to disclose such sensitive information (Brown, 2014, pg. 674). Throughout this article, the researcher speaks on pediatricians and parents and how they feel about talking to their children/patients about sex.
- One of the goals of the study was to analyze the knowledge that parents and pediatricians have on the hymen and what this means for females. Understanding the anatomy of the female body is crucial to being able to teach females on sex. The study was also to find how comfortable parents felt about speaking to their children about sex. 69% of parents feel comfortable talking to their children about sex and the majority of these parents feel that this talk should be taught from ages 7-10 years old. 48% of parents felt that parents, pediatricians and schools have equal responsibility teaching teenagers about sex. 54% of parents felt comfortable with pediatricians teaching this and 86% of parents felt great with the pediatricians teaching the parents so the parents could educate their children at home (Brown, 2014, pg. 680). A percent of 86 means that parents feel comfortable when the information comes from a “trusted resource”, therefore, equipping schools with the correct resources can benefit schools (pg. 675).
- According to this article, studies show that when sexuality is talked about openly in the home, teenagers are more willing to disclose information and there are better outcomes of safe sex. Therefore, educating young adolescents on safe sex can bring positive results such as a decrease in teenage pregnancies. This result supports our policy topic because we want to increase the number of positive, healthy results in teenagers. Also, with the majority of parents in this study feeling comfortable with professionals teaching this information, having medically trained professionals teach in school will support our policy topic.

Dowden, A. R., Gray, K., White, N., Ethridge, G., Spencer, N., & Boston, Q. (2018). A Phenomenological Analysis of the Impact of Teen Pregnancy on Education Attainment: Implications for School Counselors. *Journal of School Counseling*, 16(8). Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.southern.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ1184922&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

- Sex and drugs are two important issues that society believe are morally-charged behaviors. In the late 19th and early 20th century, public health and social reforms advocates turned the schools into the appropriate places to advance their progressive projects (Dowden, 2018, pg. 116). But in the 20th century, these two topics changed drastically. At one point in time, these issues were left to be taught in schools but soon transformed to moral issues that parents were anxious about.
- The article spoke on an important reason as to why some parents prefer to teach their children about abstinence only. There is anxiety that parents get when their children are being taught about sex because they believe that they engage in sexual activities. In the 1920's and 1930's, there were initiatives that progressives took to educate students on sexual education. Then, during the First World War, there were a number of soldiers with venereal disease and the government decided to push for sex education in schools to decrease the spreading of this disease (Dowden, 2018, pg. 120). During the 1960's, there was a change that was happening in the United States where there was more freedom within adolescents. This is when conservatives and liberals began to form cultural wars. Conservatives believed that teaching about sexual education in schools would influence teenagers to engage in sexual activities and the government finally decided to

ensure that abstinence-only approaches remained dominant through federal laws and funding allocations (pg. 122).

- This topic is important because it gives us an understanding as to how progressivism was created and how it affects social issues, such as sexual education today. In the past, there were debates between conservatives and progressives about sexual education and how to teach these in schools, but there will always be pros and cons to abstinence only and comprehensive sex education.

Dudley, J., Crowder, A., & Montgomery, T. R. (2014). Back to basics: how young mothers learn about sex and sexuality. *Sex Education*, 14(3), 272–285. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.southern.edu/10.1080/14681811.2013.878693>

- This was a qualitative study that studied 32 teenage mothers and discussed how they learned about sex, birth control, and the mother's views on this.
- This study examined the 32 mothers ages 13 to 18 to see how they learned about sex. The findings from this study show that these mothers received little to no accurate sexual health education from schools or in the home. There was a wide view among these mothers on birth control that was not 100% accurate. The study's findings go to show the importance of having comprehensive sexual education programs for adolescents.
- We believe that this article is helpful to our case in the sense that these are actual teenage mothers stating that they wished they had more education on the topics of sexual health and education. This article helps to further our point that abstinence only education does not work among our youth.

Rubenstein, R. (2017). Sex Education: Funding Facts, Not Fear. *Health Matrix: Journal of Law-Medicine*, 27, 525–554. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.southern.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=123359297&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

- Students are receiving wrong information on contraceptives, sexual activity, STI's, STD's and students cannot make informed decisions based on wrong information. For example, in the movie *Mean Girls*, there is a scene where the Coach spells chlamydia wrong and then says the following. "Don't have sex, because you will get pregnant and die. Don't have sex in the missionary position. Don't have sex standing up. Just don't do it, okay? Promise? At your age, you're going to have a lot of urges. You're going to want to take off your clothes and touch each other. But if you do touch each other, you will get chlamydia and die" (Rubenstein, 2017).
- This note disagrees on the federal government funding abstinence only and to fund comprehensive sex education. Abstinence only is not the reality of society and there is a high number of teenagers who are having premarital sex. Part I of this article explains a high need to focus on safe sexual activity amongst teenagers. Part II of this note discusses the existing funds, including Abstinence Education Grant Program (AEGP) and the Obama Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs (TPP), which are ineffective (Rubenstein, 2017, pg. 5). Part III of this note discusses the different ways to teach sex education and advocates for federal government to fund comprehensive sex education. They realize the high need for medically accurate education and diverse student needs. Part IV includes the recommendations of omitting the AEGP and creating a new federal program that resembles the California Healthy Youth Act. The California Healthy Youth Act was enacted in October of 2015. This act was amended to make sure that minority groups were being educated on sex education. It also states that students should be taught that sex is normal and part of human nature and therefore, teach students skills to make healthy choices.

This act also requires that students are taught medically accurate information. In essence, the educational information must come from published peer-reviewed journals and must be accepted by professional medicals and researchers, such as federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Public Health Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (pg. 9).

- This article is helpful to understand why comprehensive sex education is so important. It is not just about a political view but about the health of teenagers and how to prevent high numbers of pregnancies, STIs in young adolescents and more.

Affected Populations

Aparicio, E. M., Vanidestine, T., Zhou, K., & Pecukonis, E. V. (2016). Teenage pregnancy in Latino communities: Young adult experiences and perspectives of sociocultural factors. *Families In Society, 97*(1), 50-57

- This article interviews Hispanic teenagers to understand their mindset regarding teen pregnancy, sexual expectations, how they learn about sex and pregnancy, peer influences, how their social class contributes and other influencing factors. Research will also allow us to understand topics such as gender expectations and religious beliefs that influence as well.
- This article interviewed teenagers who spoke about how the lower economic state made them more susceptible to pregnancy. Since these homes usually have lower income parents who are working multiple jobs, the supervision on teenagers is very minimal. Also, many teenagers noted that since all their peers would become pregnant, it was the norm and did not appear to be a big issue to them. Although they know that Latinos have a high pregnancy rate, it felt normal to become sexually active.
- This study will help us understand what Hispanic teens grow up learning about. This article gives us an insight on the different views on females versus males, as there are completely different expectations for both. Furthermore, how we are able to approach prevention will greatly be improved by what is learned.

Guarini, T. ., Marks, A. 2. akmarks@suffolk. ed., Patton, F., & Coll, C. (2011). The Immigrant Paradox in Sexual Risk Behavior Among Latino Adolescents: Impact of Immigrant Generation and Gender. *Applied Developmental Science, 15*(4), 201–209.
<https://doi-org.ezproxy.southern.edu/10.1080/10888691.2011.618100>

- The research discussed in the article uses a cumulative risk approach to address risky sexual behaviors among Latino adolescents. Specifically, addressing the gender difference of sexually risky behavior between Latino boys and Latina girls. The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health found that immigrant generation, ethnicity, age of pubertal onset, parent education and income, and age influence adolescent sexual behaviors.
- The study found that first generation Latino adolescents were less likely to have a sex risk pattern from early adolescence until emerging adulthood compared to their third generation counterparts. Third generation Latino adolescents were at the highest risk of engaging in sexual behavior.
- This article is important towards our topic as research showed that behaviors were learned and maintained due to reinforcers to new culture. Thus, acculturating to Western society may

influence sexual behaviors within Latinx adolescents, increasing the likelihood of sexual involvement.

McDaniels, B. W., & Fleming, A. R. (2018). Sexual Health Education: A Missing Piece in Transition Services for Youth with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities? *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 84(3), 28–38. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.southern.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ccm&AN=131658826&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

- An overview was provided on addressing sexual health and practices among young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Having access to sexual education allows students with intellectual and developmental disabilities the opportunity to protect themselves, as well as the possibility of having sexual relationships, without the fear that an unwanted pregnancy occurs or contracting an STI. In teaching them how to engage in responsible behaviors, it will allow for them to transition into adulthood knowing how and what is safe sex and the rights they have regarding their sexuality.
- The purpose of the article aligns with our objective on teaching students safe sex practices and how they can protect themselves to have safe sex. The article discusses the lack of education this population has, and this is an issue we want to address so all students feel informed on their decisions they make.

Meschke, L. L. 1. Llm. ed., & Peter, C. R. . (2014). Hmong American Parents' Views on Promoting Adolescent Sexual Health. *American Journal of Sexuality Education*, 9(3), 308–328. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.southern.edu/10.1080/15546128.2014.936638>

- The purpose of the article was to assess Hmong American parents' views on promoting adolescent sexual health versus non-immigrant families. Researchers sought to gain data concerning the ethnic group originally from China and Southeast Asia. The barriers preventing adolescents from gaining sexual health education included socioeconomic cultural taboos, fear, embarrassment and language needs.
- A survey conducted on parents of Hmong American adolescents demonstrated that 80% agreed community leaders involvement in preventing teen pregnancy should be promoted. This population was accepting of sex education being conducted in grades 7-12. Hmong parents selected were twice as concerned with the consequences of teen pregnancy than its benefits.
- The purpose of this article was to illuminate the fact that Hmong American parents were not as invested in discussing sexual health for the prevention of adolescent pregnancy. Parental engagement for addressing adolescent sexual health is paramount in contributing to teen pregnancy prevention within this ethnic population. There are limitations towards serving this population which include their cultural views on sexual behaviors.

Velazquez, E., Corona, R., Easter, R., Barinas, J., Elshaer, L., & Halfond, R. W. (2017). Cultural values, mother–adolescent discussions about sex, and Latina/o adolescents' condom use attitudes and intentions. *Journal Of Latina/O Psychology*, 5(3), 213-226.

- Surveys were completed to assess cultural values among Latina/o adolescences regarding discussions with parents about sexual topics, safe sex practice and intentions. Latina/o adolescents have high rates of sexually transmitted infections and teenage pregnancies. The intention of this study was to better understand how cultural plays a factor, alongside education on what students choose to do.
- Latino tradition holds gender roles that prompt the attitudes and intentions among teenagers, as they are taught familial values that promote early sexual activity as young teenagers. Approaching the subject of sexual activity and safe practices is a taboo topic among the culture, which makes it difficult for students to ask questions without feeling uncomfortable.
- Understanding the extent of culture in this subject gives us the ability to find out how to incorporate these values into our policy. We are able to respect the culture values teenagers may have, while effectively teaching them how to make safer choices.

2019 Sex Ed State Legislative Guide. (2013). Retrieved from <https://siecus.org/resources/2019-sex-ed-state-legislative-guide/>

- Tennessee law requires local education agencies in counties whose pregnancy rate exceeds 19.5 pregnancies per 1,000 females ages 11–18 to develop and implement a family life education program. These programs must promote “sexual risk avoidance” as their primary goal, and instruction that promotes “gateway sexual activity” or instruction from an individual or organization that promotes “gateway sexual activity” is prohibited. (2019 Sex Ed State Legislative Guide, 2013)
- This non-profit organization touched on statistics about Tennessee on sexual education. The Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS) document contained a list of financial facts on sex education in Tennessee. These numbers are from 2010-2013 and includes different programs and grants that educate on comprehensive sex education and this affects the amount of money they receive. For example, Centerstone is a large organization that has 63 facilities throughout Middle Tennessee, where they receive funds from Abstinence Only Until Marriage (AOUM), but they have to teach abstinence only education. There are also comprehensive sex education programs such as Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) that fund to educate on comprehensive sex education. Department of Children's Services received \$988,670 in Fiscal Year 2013. There are many program funds that want to educate students through the comprehensive sex education method and will fund programs to educate this way.
- This document is helpful to our topic because it touches on the policy we are researching. There is a percentage that needs to be reached before educating students, but even then, abstinence only is not effective.

Future Direction

Secor-Turner, M. M. S. ed., Randall, B. A. ., Christensen, K., Jacobson, A., & Loyola Meléndez, M. (2017). Implementing community-based comprehensive sexuality education with high-risk youth in a conservative environment: lessons learned. *Sex Education*, 17(5), 544–554. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.southern.edu/10.1080/14681811.2017.1318273>

- The community with conservative political views, partnered up with a university to build a community program that taught comprehensive sexual education to high risk children. The study purposively recruited 386 young individuals with diverse backgrounds to partake in this study.

- This article recognizes that abstinence only education does not work when working with high risk adolescent populations. The researchers sought to bring community involvement by having the community educate these youth with a specific program developed by community members and the university. This was done in a community of high conservative political standpoints, meaning, abstinence only was the only thing taught. By tailoring evidence-based practices, the community believes that they can improve sexual health and relationships among their at-risk youth, therefore improving the sexual health of young people.
- This article works well with our topic because they identified at risk youth in need of sexual health education. This article shows us the high rates of unwanted pregnancies among high risk youth and the importance of educating them earlier rather than later. Involving the community and building an effective program is a good twist and leads to stronger relationships as well as higher sexual health education.

Widman, L. lmwidman@ncsu. ed., Golin, C. E., Kamke, K., Burnette, J. L., & Prinstein, M. J. (2018). Sexual Assertiveness Skills and Sexual Decision-Making in Adolescent Girls: Randomized Controlled Trial of an Online Program. *American Journal of Public Health*, 108(1), 96–102. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.southern.edu/10.2105/AJPH.2017.304106>

- This article discussed a randomized, controlled trial of an online sexual assertiveness and education class for adolescent girls. 222 female tenth-graders were split into two groups: the control group and the group receiving the online class. The results found that the group that received the online program were more assertive in sexual situations, more educated about HIV and STD's, as well as having safer sex norms and attitudes.
- Throughout the article, the author informs the reader that adolescent girls, especially those from low-income homes and minorities, are at a higher risk for STIs and unwanted pregnancies. At pre-test (right before the trial), both groups shared similar understandings and knowledge about sexual assertiveness and education. Immediately at post-test, there was a significant difference where the girls who took the class felt more confident and knowledgeable about this topic. Four months after the trial, the students who took the online course continued to report being assertive in sexual situations and knowing what to do and what to look out for.
- This article portrays an online program for adolescent females that will benefit in lowering the rate of STDs and unwanted pregnancies. Besides lowering these rates, this program teaches young girls about being assertive in sexual situations, which helps our point of opening up discussions about sexual health and having a program for adolescents to educate them on topics related to sexual health.