

Anaya Holland

ENG 1121

Prof. Garcia

5/2/22

Opinion Essay: Teaching Sex Education All Across the United States

Sexual Health Education is basic knowledge that should be provided to students in schools at some point in time, whether it's middle school or high school. Learning about safe and healthy practices not only for yourself but for the safety of others should be common knowledge for young, growing adults. However, if it isn't an in depth course of the rights and wrongs of sexual intercourse and healthy hygiene, it should at least be proper prevention care, STI, and STD informational sessions.

Numerous articles, studies, and interviews have repeatedly proven or voiced the important of sexual health education inside and outside of school for any individuals who have never received it before or would simply like to know more. According to Advocates of Youth, in their article, *Sexuality Education*, "As they grow up, young people face important decisions about relationships, sexuality, and sexual behavior. The decisions they make can impact their health and well-being for the rest of their lives. Young people have the right to lead healthy lives, and society has the responsibility to prepare youth by providing them with comprehensive sexual health education that gives them the tools they need to make healthy decisions." Not only do young people face difficult and important decisions pertaining to sexual behavior and

relationships, but they also could potentially make choices that could hurt themselves and others if not properly educated on what is happening to themselves and other people around them. Relationships alone are daunting, if not complex situations that, if not handled accordingly, could make or break a young person mentally, emotionally, and physically. Without the aid of sexual education in the mix, the damage could be far worse if not life threatening. Sexual education isn't simply about yourself or people you may know. As stated, "young people have the right to lead healthy lives, and society has the responsibility to prepare youth by providing them with comprehensive sexual health education that gives them the tools they need to make healthy decisions," this does not exclude the people that come and go through their lives however. A single poorly educated or ill advised choice could cost a young person their life or even someone else's. If the best is wanted for our young people and children, why not give them best education that especially covers how important it is to take care of yourself once sexual curiosity and tendencies hit the corner?

Advocating for sexual education doesn't only focus exclusively on these young people, but, the communities and environments around them as well. According to the same article, sexual education is said to cover a range of topics throughout a students' grade levels. However, this would include the help and support from parents and the community by avoiding negative consequences. "Each year in the United States about 750,000 teens become pregnant, with up to 82 percent of those pregnancies being unintended," by implementing some kind of sexual education course into the academic curriculum of students would decrease that number and percentage drastically. Along with the unintended pregnancies is the chance of also spreading sexually transmitted diseases and/or infections. If there isn't the presence of sexual education, then, nine times out of ten, there is no presence of HIV prevention courses either. Sexual

education isn't simply about the intercourse that takes place either. Sexual education would discuss bodily autonomy, recognizing healthy and unhealthy relationships, protecting academic success, and showing respect or understanding of those with different sexual identities, backgrounds, and orientations.

According to The Daily Star, considering the fact that times now are drastically different from when our parents and grandparents were growing up, learning about this topic is more important now than ever. Not only should it be basic and common knowledge, but, "Sex education is (also) an essential tool to help them learn about a broad range of topics related to biological, psychological and sociocultural perspectives of individual beings," much more can be taken out of sexual education than the misunderstanding that sex education will simply "teach my child how to engage in sex and unsafe sexual activities." The education isn't meant to encourage or inspire young adults to take part in sexual intercourse, but, to instead clear away any misconceptions and broaden the horizons of growing, uneducated individuals.

It can be understood as to why most parents and guardians are unsure of or against teaching such a topic in schools. However, research and studies have proven that, as a whole, young adults need this kind of knowledge in order to move forward in a world that is constantly changing and consists of so many diverse individuals.

[Sexuality Education](#) Advocates for Youth (No designated Date or Author)

[The Daily Star](#), “Why sex education is important, now more than ever” Jinat Jahan Khan, May 18th, 2022