



## **“Healthy Youth Act” Would Put Adolescents & Teens At Risk**

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Applicable Bills: **House Bill 88, Senate Bill 221**

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***WARNING: The following examples contain sexually explicit information that some readers may find offensive!***

***HB 88 and SB 221 would establish a new “abstinence-based comprehensive sexuality education program,” but despite the name, this program is likely to focus very little on an authentic abstinence message. We should teach our students and expect them to demonstrate the healthiest, wisest, and most responsible behavior, which is to abstain from sexual activity outside of a “mutually faithful monogamous heterosexual relationship within the context of marriage,” as provided in current law. Promoting high risk sexual behaviors and the notion that condoms and contraceptives will protect our adolescents and teens from unplanned pregnancies, HIV, and other STDs, as well as the other harms that come with premarital sexual behavior simply sells our kids short.***

### **ANALYSIS:**

The following are excerpts from some of the most popular comprehensive and abstinence-based comprehensive sex education programs that are used in North Carolina and around the country.

***Reducing the Risk: Building Skills to Prevent Pregnancy, STD and HIV*** is a CSE program taught in Chapel Hill-Carrboro City high schools in North Carolina. According to a 2007 review of CSE curricula by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), *Reducing the Risk* mentions “protection” 254 times, “condoms” 183 times, while only mentioning “abstinence” 90 times, and marriage four times.<sup>1</sup> Following are examples from *Reducing the Risk*:

- (Truth or Myth) “Teenagers can obtain birth control pills from family planning clinics and doctors without permission from a parent. TRUTH. You do not need a parent’s permission to get birth control at a clinic. No one needs to know that you are going to a clinic” (p. 137).<sup>2</sup>
- “For teenagers, abstinence from sex and needle use are the best choices. The second best choice is to use condoms. The third best choice is to avoid having multiple partners” (p. 29).<sup>3</sup>
- Students are instructed to act out the following scenario: “Tony and Dylan have been to a party and then go to Tony’s home to be alone. They start to kiss and undress each other. Dylan reaches into his jacket pocket, and realizes that he doesn’t have the condom he planned to use. He says, “I think somebody stole the rubber I had.” What can Tony and Dylan do to avoid unprotected sex?”<sup>4</sup>

***Stepping Stones to Better Living: Responsible Decisions*** is a locally developed “abstinence-based” sex education program that is used in New Hanover County schools, where parents are offered the choice of an abstinence-only program or Stepping Stones. Following are examples from the Stepping Stones curriculum for 7th grade students<sup>5</sup>:

- “Teacher will display contraceptive products” and “categorize [contraceptive] products (those products purchased over the counter and those which need a doctor’s prescription.” (pg. 30)
- Students “will identify methods of contraception,” including birth control pills, condoms, Norplant, IUD, and cervical caps, and “which methods of contraception can be purchased for over-the-counter, prescribed by a doctor, or are forms of sterilization.” (pg. 28)
- Abstinence is defined as “the choice of *doing without*” (emphasis added).
- In the 8th grade, the teacher shows the *co-ed* class how to use various contraceptives, such as condoms, which she rolls out on her fingers.<sup>6</sup>

***The popular CSE curriculum, Be Proud! Be Responsible!*** describes itself as “abstinence-plus” and is aimed at 13 to 19-year-olds. According to the DHHS review, it contains 77 references to abstinence (or 100 percent effective activities), compared to 495 references to condoms.<sup>7</sup> Examples from *Be Proud! Be Responsible!* include the following:

- “Showering together” is a “green light” (no risk) activity (p. 60).<sup>8</sup>
- “Use condoms as a method of foreplay...Use different colors and types/textures (some have ribs on them)... Think up a sexual fantasy using condoms... Tell your partner how using a condom can make a man last longer... Act sexy/sensual when putting condoms on... Have a sense of humor—be silly—make jokes...Hide them on your body and ask your partner to find it...Wrap them as a present and give them to your partner before a romantic dinner... Tease each other manually while putting on the condom... Have fun putting them on your partner—pretend you are different people or in different situations” (p. 81).<sup>9</sup>
- “Although some guys may be uncomfortable with a young woman who is very assertive, most guys get very turned on if their partner touches them, especially if she touches his penis and strokes it. Applying lubrication directly on his penis will probably make him very excited. Then she can roll the condom on with a lot of lubrication inside and out. During this entire time, her own arousal level also will increase, preparing her vagina for a comfortable penetration” (p. 128).<sup>10</sup>
- Teachers are advised: “These questions [concerning condom use] are geared toward heterosexual partners. Encourage participants to discuss these issues in the context of same-sex partners.”<sup>11</sup>

**Another CSE curriculum, *Focus on Kids*, includes the following examples:**

- “When discussing ‘Don’t have sex,’ be sure to help youth identify other options, such as finding fun ways to be together that don’t involve sex, or finding different ways to please a partner without sex (e.g., kissing, rubbing, mutual masturbation).”<sup>12</sup>
- Teachers are told to: “State that there are other ways to be close to a person without having sexual intercourse. Ask youth to brainstorm ways to be close. The list may include...body massage, bathing together, masturbation, sensuous feeding, fantasizing, watching erotic movies, reading erotic books and magazines....”<sup>13</sup>
- Group leaders are told: “You may need to describe anal intercourse. (When a man puts his penis into another person’s rectum or asshole. The person can be male or female).”<sup>14</sup>

***ACTION: Please OPPOSE House Bill 88 and Senate Bill 221, because these bills will put our children at risk.***

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Administration for Children and Families, DHHS, “Review of Comprehensive Sex Education Curricula,” May 2007, pg. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. pg. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> *Reducing the Risk*, pg. 149, cited in: Martin, Shannon, et. al., *Comprehensive Sex Education vs. Authentic Abstinence: A Study of Competing Curriculum*, The Heritage Foundation, 2004, pg. 28.

<sup>5</sup> *Stepping Stones to Better Living: Responsible Decisions*, Grade 7, New Hanover County Schools, Family Life Education.

<sup>6</sup> Phone conversation with former *Stepping Stones* teacher.

<sup>7</sup> Op. Cit. U.S. DHHS Review of CSE Curricula, pg. 16.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. pg. 17.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. pg. 17.

<sup>11</sup> *Be Proud! Be Responsible!*, pg. 84, as found in Heritage Foundation study, pg. 42.

<sup>12</sup> *Focus on Kids*, pg. 83, as found in Heritage Foundation study, pg. 40.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pg. 137, as found in Heritage Foundation study, pg. 35.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pg. 55, as found in Heritage Foundation study, pg. 41.