

South Carolina Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

Faith Initiative



Why Should Faith Leaders
Play a Role in Preventing
Teen Pregnancy?

Top Ten Tips to Help Faith Communities Address Teen Pregnancy

1. Address the need teens have for spiritual fulfillment and offer them answers to the many challenging problems they face.
2. Encourage parents to talk with their children about sex and morality within the context of their faith tradition.
3. Make sure children and teenagers in your faith community understand what your faith tradition says about sex, love, and marriage in general and teen pregnancy, in particular. Use clear and easy to understand language.
4. Learn about contemporary youth culture—what your young people are reading, listening to, watching, and doing.
5. Reach out to teenagers who are not involved in any faith community.
6. Provide an environment where sexuality, intimacy, and relationships are discussed openly and honestly with trained youth leaders.
7. Provide age-appropriate and accurate information about sexuality, including its spiritual dimensions, from your particular faith tradition.
8. Recognize the diversity of adolescents in your congregations: those who are heterosexual and those who are sexual minorities, those who are abstinent and those who have had sexual relationships, and those who have experienced abuse.
9. Implement policies to protect young people from abuse, harassment, exploitation, and violence, both within the congregation and in the community.
10. Model positive, healthy, and joyful attitudes about human sexuality and relationships.

References listed on back panel.

A majority of teens (71%) and adults (65%) believe that religious leaders and groups should be doing more to help prevent teen pregnancy.¹

Besides public schools, religious institutions serve more teens than any other organization in the community. Participating in religious affairs prepares young people to resist the temptations of risky sexual behaviors. Religious leaders today have a special responsibility to move beyond silence about sexuality. Young people pay a high price when those in religious communities ignore their obligation to help them understand and embrace their moral, spiritual, and sexual health.¹

About the South Carolina Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

The Campaign is a private, non-profit organization committed to reducing the incidence of teen pregnancy in South Carolina through the provision of education, technical assistance, public awareness, advocacy, and research.

About the South Carolina Campaign's Faith Initiative

In 2003, in response to faith leaders' request for assistance in addressing teen pregnancy in their congregations and/or communities, the South Carolina Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy formed the Faith Initiative. Teen pregnancy is a very complex issue and it takes a village of committed individuals (schools, faith community, medical profession, media, agencies, government, parents – and even TEENS) to make the impact necessary to reducing teen pregnancy.

Purpose of the South Carolina Campaign's Faith Initiative

The faith initiative's mission is to provide education and technical assistance to faith community members that will enhance understanding of and build capacity to address the issues of teen pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, and sexuality education, with congregants and others within the context of their religious precepts in their faith community.

Denominational Support for Sexuality Education

Evangelical Lutheran Church in American

“Sexuality is a mysterious life-long aspect of human relationships... Human sexuality was created good for the purposes of expressing love and generating life, for mutual companionship and pleasure.” (1996)

Reform Judaism

“Sexuality and sexual statement are integral and powerful elements in the potential wholeness of human beings... Every Jew should seek to conduct his/her sexual life in a manner that elicits the intrinsic holiness within the person and the relationship.” (1998)

Reformed Presbyterian Church

“Sexuality begins with a belief in a God of love who has created us as sexual beings to relate to one another in love. We believe in educating young people so they can learn about all aspects of sexuality, including the physical aspects, the emotional aspects, the beliefs and values we hold that inform our sexuality, and the appropriate ways to make decisions about our sexuality.” (1980)

The United Methodist Church

“We recognize the continuing need for full, positive, age-appropriate and factual sex education opportunities for children, young people, and adults. The Church offers a unique opportunity to give quality guidance and education in this area...” (1996)

The Episcopal Church

“The Episcopal Church strongly urge dioceses and congregations to provide a safe, hospitable environment for frank conversation with youth and young adults about human sexuality, to share and teach accurate information, and to promote dialogue, within the context of the Baptismal Covenant.” (2001)

Call to Action:

Using the Power of the Pulpit to Address Sexuality Issues

Special times during the year provide an opportunity for addressing sexuality topics.

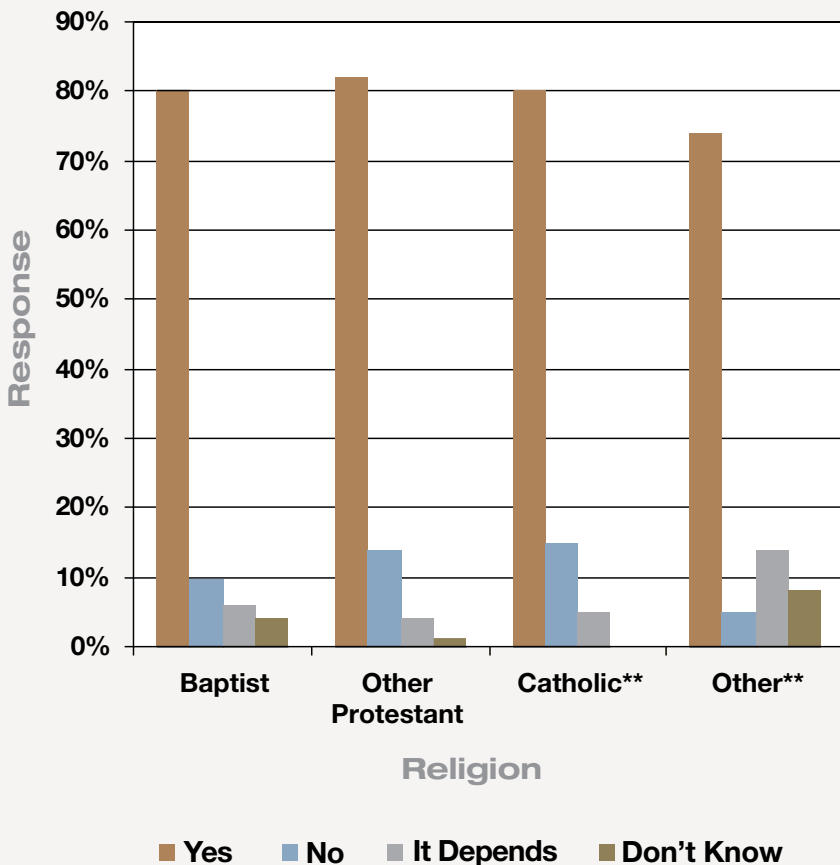
February 14 Valentine’s Day	Mother’s Day 3 rd Sunday in May
March Women’s History Month	Father’s Day 3 rd Sunday in June
April Child Abuse Prevention Month	October National “Let’s Talk” Month (Parents talk to kids about sex and sexuality)
May National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month	December 1 World AIDS Day

Support for Comprehensive Sex Education in the Faith Community

A 2004 survey of South Carolina's registered voters showed overwhelming support for comprehensive sex education in South Carolina's public schools. In that survey, eight-one percent (81%) of South Carolina registered voters expressed the belief that "sex education which emphasizes abstinence, but also teaches youth about the benefits and importance of using contraception should be taught in SC public schools."⁴

When the results of the 2004 survey are broken down by religious affiliation it is clear to see that this support is unwavering and equally strong from the faith community! Eighty percent (80%) of South Carolina Baptists, eighty percent (80%) of South Carolina Catholics and eighty-two percent (82%) of South Carolina's "other Protestant" congregants favor comprehensive sexuality education.

Support of Sex Education by Various Demographic Characteristics



Support of Various Topics as a Part of Sexuality Education

Not only do members of the faith community support comprehensive sex education generically, they also support specific topics such as reproductive anatomy and contraception (82%).

Topic	Support of Baptists	Support of Other Protestants
SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES	94%	93%
ABSTINENCE	91%	90%
CONTRACEPTION	82%	81%
REPRODUCTIVE ANATOMY	81%	80%
RESPONSIBLE RELATIONSHIPS	74%	80%
SEXUAL ABUSE / STATUTORY RAPE	92%	81%

** Sample size is less than 100 respondents (results should be interpreted with caution).

Note: For the purposes of this fact sheet, "Other Protestant" includes the following religions: Presbyterian, Lutheran, Nazarene, and Christian Holiness among others.

Partial List of Biblical Teachings on Sexuality

Genesis 1:28	Genesis 39:1-21	Number 25:1-3
Genesis 2:24	Exodus 22:16	Deuteronomy 22:13-29
Genesis 4:1	Leviticus 15:16-28	Deuteronomy 27:20-23
Genesis 16:1-6	Leviticus 18:6-30	Judges 16:1-20
Genesis 19:1-35	Leviticus 19:20	Judges 19:16-30
Genesis 29:21-30	Leviticus 19:29	Ruth 3-4
Genesis 30:1-24	Leviticus 20:10-21	I Samuel 2:22
Genesis 34:1-30	Number 5:11-31	II Samuel 11:2-5
Genesis 38:1-30		

ion

There is high support for a variety of topics included within sex education including abstinence (91%)

Support of Protestants	Support of Catholics**	Support of "Other"***
93%	98%	92%
94%	91%	89%
85%	80%	81%
89%	91%	90%
86%	82%	92%
88%	93%	87%

utheran, Methodist, Episcopalian, Southern Baptist. And, "Other" includes Jewish, Mormon, Pentecostal,

II Samuel 11:11

II Samuel 12:11

II Samuel 12:24

II Samuel 13:1-22

II Samuel 16:20-22

Proverbs 2; 11-19

Proverbs 5:1-20

Proverbs 6:20-35

Proverbs 7:1-27

Proverbs 23:26-28

Song of Solomon

Jeremiah 3:1-20

Ezekiel 16:1-24

Ezekiel 23:1-49

Hosea 1:2

Hosea 2:2-15

Hosea 3:1-3

Hosea 4:10-19

Hosea 8:9

Hosea 9:1

Matthew 5:27-30

Matthew 15:19

Matthew 19:5

Matthew 19:9

Mark 7:21

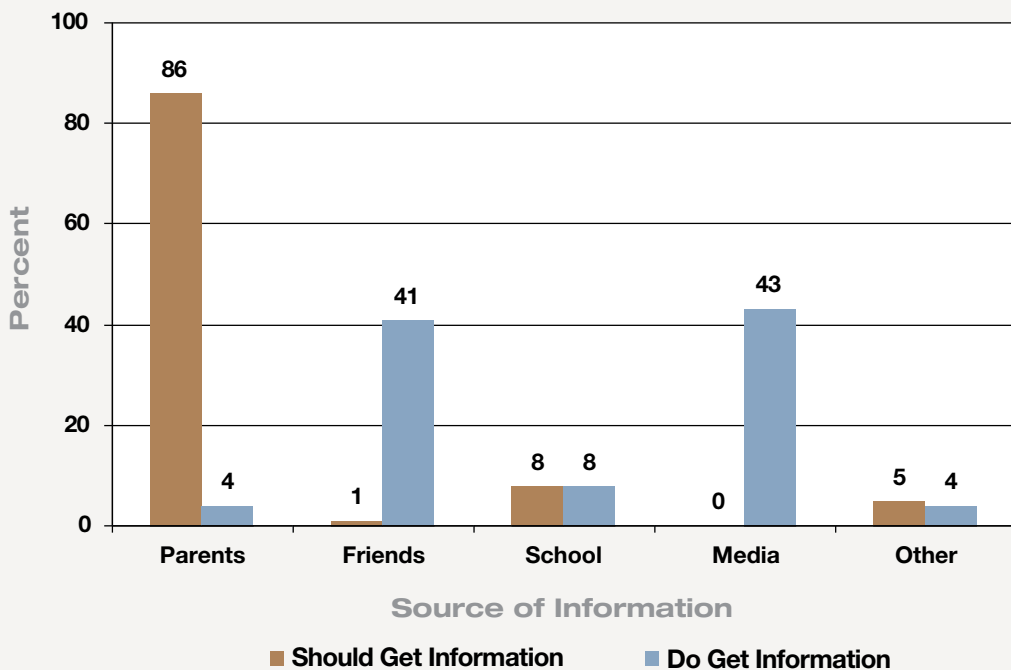
John 8:3-11

Acts 15:20, 29

Acts 21:25

Frightening Disconnect Among Parents and Teens

The faith community can play a major role in helping parents talk to their children about sexuality. Eighty-six percent of survey respondents felt that young people **SHOULD** be getting information about sexuality from their parents, but only four percent of respondents think they currently are.⁴



Less than 3 in 4 South Carolina parents have had a discussion with their child about sexuality and relationships. Even more alarming, just over half (55%) of parents say they have educated their children about pregnancy and STD/HIV.⁴

Romans 1:24-27

Romans 13:13-14

I Corinthians 5:1-2

I Corinthians 6:9-10

I Corinthians 6:12-20

I Corinthians 7:2-5

I Corinthians 7:9

I Corinthians 10:8

II Corinthians 12:21

Galatians 5:19-21

Ephesians 5:3

Ephesians 5:31

I Thessalonians 4:3-5

James 1:13-15

Revelations 2:14

Revelation 2:20-22

Revelation 9:21

Revelation 17:1-2

Revelation 18:2-3, 9

Revelation 19:1-2

Revelation 21:8

Revelation 22:15

References

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