



Abstinence-Only Education Harms LGBT Youth

Many lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students face a hostile environment at school everyday. Abstinence-only education programs further marginalize LGBT youth and teens with LGBT family members by stigmatizing homosexuality and reinforcing gender stereotypes.

What are abstinence-only-until-marriage curricula teaching about sexual orientation and gender identity?

- ☑ The federal guidelines governing these programs state that they should teach that a **“mutually faithful monogamous relationship in [the] context of marriage is the expected standard of human sexual activity.”** In a society that generally prohibits same-sex couples from marrying, such a message rejects the idea of sexual intimacy for LGBT individuals.

“Homosexual activity involves an especially high risk for HIV transmission.”
- *Sex Respect* (Teacher’s Manual, pg. 68)
- ☑ Many abstinence-only curricula **omit information about homosexuality and gender identity entirely.**

“The word sex is frequently used to refer to the physical and personal act of male and female genital union, sexual intercourse.”
--*Sex Respect* (Student Workbook, pg 6)
- ☑ A recent review of the leading abstinence-only curricula found that **most address same-sex behavior only within the context of promiscuity and disease.**
- ☑ Students are often taught that **homosexuality is “unnatural.”**
- ☑ **Several curricula are overtly hostile to LGBT people.** In its parent-teacher guide, *Facing Reality* instructs educators to teach students that homosexuals with HIV/AIDS are suffering for the “choices” they made regarding their sexual orientation.

“Finally, AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), the STD most common among homosexual, bisexuals and IV drug users, has now made its way into heterosexual circles.”

- *Sex Respect* (Student Workbook, p. 54)

“What do guys talk about in the locker room? (Girls) What do girls talk about at sleepover parties? (Guys).”

- *Choosing the Best LIFE* (Leader Guide, p. 47)