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#10516

TALES FROM A TEEN CLINIC

PYRAMID MEDIA, 2004

Grade Level: 7-12

28 Minutes



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GUIDE FOR TALES FROM A TEEN CLINIC

Subject: Sex education, STD prevention, health

Grade levels: High School

Length: 28 minutes

Content

Adolescence is a difficult period for almost everyone; the discovery of one's own sexuality often complicates the matter further. One approach toward sex education that many health clinics have adopted is the enlistment of teenaged counselors to work with their sexually active peers; the hope is that teenagers will pay more attention to health care workers with whom they can relate more easily on a personal level. In this video, several of these counselors and their patients discuss their sexual experiences and their attitudes toward sexuality in our modern age. The main messages that emerge from these various perspectives are the necessity to make considered choices at crucial moments, to not give in to pressure or spontaneous impulses that they will later regret, and to seek out help if they do find themselves in trouble.

Objectives

After viewing, students should be able to:

- Understand the significance of their choices when it comes to becoming sexually active or not.
- Foresee the possible consequences of hasty, ill-informed decisions
- Recognize all options, including abstinence, the necessity of sex education and the proper use of contraceptives.
- Describe the importance of seeking out guidance from health clinics regarding matters of sexuality, even if teenaged counselors are not available.

Discussion Topics

Before viewing:

- Take a poll of the class to find out if anyone knows a peer who has contracted a sexually transmitted disease, gotten pregnant or impregnated someone (Be sure NOT to identify these individuals.) Ask how those acquaintances chose to deal with their situations – did they seek out help at a clinic? Did they go to friends or family? What happened to them in the end, and what could they have done differently to resolve their dilemma? Explain that the following video will shed light on the process of making difficult decisions, and demonstrate how viewers can avoid creating similar problems in their own lives.

After viewing:

- What kinds of problems do kids face today that earlier generations of teenagers didn't have to face, especially when it comes to matters of sexuality?
- How has the concern for contracting an STD influence teenagers' romantic relationships?
- Several teenagers in the video discuss their choice of abstinence. Why would someone choose this option? (To save themselves for someone special, or to get to know the person they are involved with without having sex complicate things.) Are there ways to show affection other than sex? (Yes – kissing, holding hands, sharing feelings.)
- Lauren says she got a bad reputation in 7th grade for fooling around. Now she regrets her early sexual experience and thinks she was too young. What prompts children at that age to begin “fooling around”? Is it a result of hormones, peer pressure, or images from the media? (A combination of all three, in many cases.)
- Is love necessary in a sexual relationship? How long should a monogamous couple wait before “going all the way”? Should they discuss it beforehand?
- Fernando, a counselor at the East Valley Health Center, says that when teenagers come to see him at the clinic, he tries to talk to them on their level – i.e., slipping into slang if they talk in slang. Why does he do this? (To put them at ease.) Do you think this is an effective strategy?
- 17-year-old Tai must raise her son on her own, without the help of the boy's father. No matter what she does, she now has to think of her son first. When Tai initially had sex without protection, do you think she considered the possibility of her current situation? (Probably not.)
- Reann says that her ignorance about sex and her own body led to her pregnancy and contraction of an STD. What could she have done to avoid this? (Using protection, doing her research before agreeing to have sex, refusing to give in to peer pressure.)
- Many STDs are actually easily treatable, but sometimes infected individuals will ignore the symptoms, causing permanent damage to their bodies even if the obvious signs of infection disappear. Why don't people like this seek out treatment or advice? (Shame, ignorance.)

Group Activities

Role play some situations in which your students need to make important decisions regarding sex:

- A previously abstinent adolescent couple has begun to talk about the possibility of having sex. Set up a situation with a teen counselor who discusses with them the risks associated with sexual activity and the need for precautions.
- A teenager has been having unprotected sex, and now he (or she) believes that they may have contracted an STD. Set up a situation with a teen counselor to discuss the matter.
- A girl comes in to talk to a teen counselor because she has just learned she is pregnant; in the case of a male student, he has just discovered that his girlfriend is pregnant. What are their options?