



## CWA of California Action Alert

May 19, 2008

### Help Save Abstinence Funding

*These programs work – and they are in jeopardy*

**Action:** Please help ensure that vital and effective abstinence funds will continue to be available. Please take a moment today or tomorrow to call, fax or e-mail your representative and urge him or her to fully reauthorize Title V Abstinence Education which is set to expire on June 30.

You can say, "A study in the American Journal of Health Behavior indicates that students in abstinence programs are 50 percent less likely to engage in sex. In contrast, the longstanding comprehensive sex education program that prevails in most public schools was studied by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services last year and found to have no impact on teens' behavior. We need to equip our teens with education in this sensitive area that works and protects them from disease and emotional harm."



#### **Contact information:**

Our CWA [Project 535](#) lobby team will be in Washington, D.C. visiting the Capitol on Wednesday, May 21. Please help ensure that our California representatives will have heard from constituents on this important issue prior to the time our citizen lobby teams visit their offices.

If you are unsure who your representative is, visit [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) to search by zip code. Call any member of Congress at (202) 224-3121. Send an e-mail by clicking "[Write Your Representative](#)."

**Pray** that the very real concerns our team express will fall on ears that will hear the truth. May the staff members they meet understand the importance of this funding as it relates to the physical and emotional health of our young people.

#### **Background:**

Despite increasing evidence of recent studies showing the effectiveness of abstinence education programs, some members of Congress are resolved to eliminate abstinence education funding, yet 80 percent of parents want schools to teach their children to abstain from sexual activity until marriage and teens want to hear an abstinence message.

Opponents of abstinence education champion and promote "comprehensive sex" education programs over abstinence, asserting that it is inevitable that all teens will succumb to peer pressure and become sexually active. Congress needs to know that we expect better for our youth and they deserve better instruction.

Given the recent CDC statistics which states that one in four teen girls has an STD, it is incomprehensible why some would still continue to promote a message of "safe sex" instead of abstinence.

The National Abstinence Education Association notes:

- Only true abstinence education discourages casual sex among teens and champions abstinence as a worthy and attainable goal.
- The overall message delivered to students in comprehensive sex education is one that dangerously states or infers that sex can be made safe and without consequences as long as a condom is used.
- Abstinence programs are permitted to discuss contraception, but within the context of promoting abstinence as the healthiest choice. Fortunately, when given skills and encouragement, most teens today are choosing to be abstinent and many who are sexually experienced are choosing to discontinue sexual activity.

- Comprehensive sex education programs repeatedly inform teens that they can acquire birth control and reproductive services *without* their parent's knowledge or consent. While this information may be true, it is inappropriate to tacitly encourage youth to circumvent parental awareness when going to "family" planning clinics.

For more on this topic, read "[Tell Congress to Fund Programs That Work](#)"

***Thank you for making a difference!***

Visit our California website: <http://ca.cwfa.org> for information on current state legislation. Click "[Targeted Bills 2008](#)" for action you can take today!

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