

Our Teens Deserve the Real Facts of Life

An article by Dr. Nadine Nyhus, presented by PAFE (Parents As First Educators)

Dr. Nadine Nyhus is a psychiatrist who presented to the Waterloo board in support of Trustee Cindy Watson's recent motion asking for presentations on the s/x ed curriculum to be made to parents in September. Dr. Nyhus strongly criticized the curriculum's failure to present the harms of early teen sexual activity and its numerous distortions or omissions of scientific fact. In addition to presenting to the board and contacting her MPP, Dr. Nyhus wrote an article for the [Kitchener Record](#) which we strongly encourage you to read. It is copied below. Please "Share" the article on your Facebook, Twitter and other social media!

PS Although school is out, the battle for our children's education is still on!

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[Opinion: Sex ed curriculum inadequate and should be withdrawn, doctor says](#)

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By Nadine Nyhus

As a medical doctor and psychiatrist, I am struck by the lack of accurate information in the province of Ontario's new sexual education curriculum.

Ethical practice of medicine requires that risks and benefits be communicated. I believe the same should be true for talking to our teens about sex.

1. Our teens have a right to know the truth about sexually transmitted infections:

the human papillomavirus (HPV) is the main cause of cervical, anal and esophageal cancer;

our HPV vaccine only protects against four types of the virus (30 per cent of cancers are not protected against);

you can contract HPV at your first experience of intercourse while using a condom;

anal intercourse carries the greatest risk of sexually transmitted infections;

silent chlamydia infection can cause infertility.

The curriculum is silent on all this.

The curriculum is misleading about HIV (the human immunodeficiency virus), saying "with treatment, the damage that HIV does to the body's immune system can be slowed or prevented," and that with early treatment, people with HIV "have the opportunity to live a near-to-normal lifespan."

2. Our teens have a right to know that if you are infected with HIV:

you should never have intercourse without a condom for the rest of your life;

you may have to adopt children;

if female, you will not be able to breast feed;

your ability to live in other countries will be restricted;

you will have to take strong medications (two to four at a time) for the rest of your life;

missed doses can result in treatment failure (viral resistant) so your life will be regimented;

the medication can damage organs.

This curriculum significantly minimizes the reality of HIV infection. This kind of vaguely optimistic information is perhaps part of the reason for some evidence that condom use is down and the HIV infection rate is rising again among teens.

3. Our teens have a right to know the research on the value of delaying sex:

the risk of depression and suicide attempts go up three times in teens who are sexually active;

skin of the cervix is more vulnerable to infection in teens (so there's a greater risk of sexually transmitted infections);

70 per cent of teens aged 15 to 17 are not sexually active (so not everyone is doing it);

oxytocin released with sex establishes an intense bonding that will impair one's ability to make a rational decision about whether a person is a healthy partner.

4. Our teens have a right to know about the risks of pornography. It is associated with:

increased sexual aggression/offences and acceptance of rape myths (for instance, that females like or cause rape);

decreased condom use and increased number of sexual partners.

We need to be aware that pornography in 2015 is different than it was 20 or even 10 years ago - it is more aggressive and degrading to women. I would hope that the "experts" writing a

curriculum for our children would be more concerned about children than about supporting the image that pornography is fine.

5. Our teens have a right to know that an October 2013 RCMP assessment of sex trafficking reports:

the vast majority of trafficked victims are Canadian citizens, from all walks of life;

girls from age 14 to 22 are at greatest risk of being trafficked (so this information should be started at Grade 7).

The curriculum, which is supposed to be all about safety, does not mention this risk.

The research is clear that trafficking increases where prostitution is legal.

Premier Kathleen Wynne says she has concerns about the new federal anti-prostitution law, and she has asked Ontario's attorney general to review it.

6. Our teens have a right to be exposed to different world views.

They need to understand that this curriculum is written from a worldview that seems to present purpose as irrelevant and pleasure as primary. Our teens need to consider that many

hold a teleological worldview, one which understands things to have a purpose. For example, the scientific documentation of oxytocin release with sexual intercourse would have the purpose of enhancing bonding in a partnership that will increase the stability of the basic family unit so children have a safe place to grow up.

A new curriculum requires transparency and true collaboration. The government needs to be honest about the complete inadequacy of this curriculum and withdraw it. Nadine Nyhus, of Cambridge, has been a medical doctor and psychiatrist for 20 years and is a mother of two.