The Right to Sexual Education
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Introduction
Sexual education, according to Cervantes (n.d.), "gives adolescents the education to make safe and healthy choices about being sexually active. Sexual education gives adolescents knowledge about the resources that are available to them such as: how to obtain birth control, how to use a condom, and how to communicate with sexual partners." Sexual education is an issue of justice because reproductive justice, according to Ross (n.d.), is "the complete physical, mental, spiritual, political, social, and economic wellbeing of women and men." Sexual education gives individuals the mental knowledge to be safe and how to prevent oneself from getting sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). With the knowledge of preventing STDs, sexual education also protects their physical well-being.

Abstinence v. Comprehensive
People who believe in abstinence believe in being sexually intimate once marriage occurs. People who are abstinent teach people about the effects of having sex outside of marriage and the effects of having kids outside of marriage.

On the other hand, people who believe in comprehensive sexual education believe that people should have safe sex, whether or not one is married or not. Comprehensive sex is also fairly informative about how sex can be pleasurable between partners. Studies have shown that abstinence proves no more effective than comprehensive sexual education.

The Trenholm study has shown that people who were abstinent had some knowledge gaps on STIs. Comprehensive sexual education encourages both abstinence and condom use as shown significant positive impacts on delaying sex, reducing the frequency of sex or number of partners, as well as increasing the use of condoms.

Comprehensive sexual education allows youth to clarify their individual, family and community values.

Comprehensive sexual education assists youth in developing skills in communication, refusal, and negotiation.

Survey
Ages 18-20

Statistics

Laws/Policies
• In 1996 the Welfare Reform Act only gave federal funding to abstinence-only programs.
• Recently the Obama Administration reduced the federal dollars allocated for abstinence-only programs and reallocated the funding into comprehensive sexual education (2010).
• Planned Parenthood is the largest provider of abortion services. And Illinois and Colorado are both pushing and waiting for a bill to pass so that comprehensive sex education can be taught thoroughly and to everyone.
• Montana parents need to opt into comprehensive sexual education classes for students.
• North Dakota cut federal funding for comprehensive sex education, dismissing the chance for thousands of teens to get sexual education from the University of North Dakota, as the 1.3 million dollar grant was frozen.

Personally it is an issue to us because we want to be safe when we are sexually intimate. We do not want to catch diseases that will harm our well-being. We also want to have a planned pregnancy rather than having an unplanned pregnancy. It is a major impact to adolescents who need to be taught about the precautions measures that should be taken when being sexually active, especially since adolescents are going through puberty, a time of sexual maturity.

What We Can Do!
• We can get people to join groups which would inform them about the benefits of sexual education, such as Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS) and the National Coalition to Support Sexuality Education (NCSS)
• Let people who never had sexual education tell their stories to the youth.
• Inform people about the diseases that are out in the world that can be caught through unprotected sex.
• Lobby political officials for the rights of sexual education among the youth.

Conclusion
At the end of the day there’s always a choice. You have the option to become abstinent, or you could have comprehensive sexual education which also gives you information on abstinence. We need sexual education to help prevent adolescents and anyone else from getting any STDS or unplanned pregnancies. Sexual education also informs people on the resources they have, such as the clinics that are available to them. With sexual education, people are using contraceptives and making smart choices. Without sexual education, adolescents and others would have no idea what is out in the world and are more prone to contracting STDs as well as unplanned pregnancies.

References