



MEDIA RELEASE

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Research Confirms Effectiveness of Abstinence Education

Family First NZ is welcoming research which shows that abstinence-only education can help teens delay sex, and also explodes the myth that abstinence education reduces condom use amongst those who do become sexually active.

“NZ parents have long supported their children being taught abstinence, self control and good choices rather than the flawed ‘we don’t want you to but here’s how anyway’ method currently short-selling our young people,” says Bob McCoskrie, National Director of Family First NZ.

The study from the University of Pennsylvania involving 600 students and published in the journal *Archives of Paediatrics and Adolescent Medicine* found that half of the group taught sex education reported they had sexual intercourse over the next two years compared to one third of the group given the abstinence lessons.

The researchers said ‘*Abstinence-only interventions may have an important role in delaying sexual activity until a time later in life when the adolescent is more prepared to handle to consequences of sex. This can reduce undesirable consequences of sex, including pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections like HIV and Aids.*’

Mr McCoskrie says “With NZ having one of the highest teen pregnancy rates in the OECD, it’s time we acknowledged the importance of giving our teens the real facts of life – that postponing sexual involvement is in their very best interests. This is further evidence that abstinence-only intervention can help teenagers delay sexual activity.”

According to Auckland University’s National Secondary School Youth Health Survey which covered 114 schools and almost 10,000 students, only 16% - 25% of a typical class up to year 10 (4th form) are sexually active. For year 11, it is a third, and even for senior students, over half are not sexually active.

The clear majority are choosing not to be sexually active.

“The current sex education curriculum is failing to meet national standards, parental expectations, and is based on a false assumption that everyone is doing it – which they’re not. It’s time the current approach was ditched.”

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For More Information and Media Interviews, contact Family First:

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