



There's No Place Like Home... For Sexuality Education

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A publication for families on sexuality education edited by the staff of the Education and Training Department.

Planned Parenthood strives to ensure that sexuality is understood as an essential lifelong aspect of being human, and that it is celebrated with respect, openness, and mutuality.

A sexually literate person has an accurate, well-informed, age-appropriate understanding of all aspects of sexuality (biological, cultural, social, and ethical), possesses a strong sense of his/her personal values about sexuality and sexual health, and demonstrates respect for the values of others.

Planned Parenthood®
of Greater Indiana, Inc.
Education & Training
3209 North Meridian Street
Indianapolis, IN 46208
317-927-3644 ext.142
800-421-3731 ext.142
betsy@ppcsi.org
www.ppin.org

Kids, TV & Sex: What can you do?

Incorporating open communication and sexuality

Recently, on the Music Video Awards, Madonna, Brittany Spears and Christina Aguilera all kissed. This was a highly publicized moment and reactions varied from individual to individual. There are a variety of other, less publicized, TV moments that leave children with questions, especially when it comes to watching shows with sexual content.

For answers to their questions about sexuality many kids will look to the media. The media, especially television, are becoming more and more sexually explicit. The Kaiser Family Foundation's *Sex on TV* study reveals that 68% of all TV shows, other than news, sports and kids shows, include some sexual content. With the increasing amount of television that young people view today, this statistic illustrates the

powerful role that television plays in sexuality education.

Media, especially television and the internet, are main sources of sexuality information for children and teens. But is television portraying the information that you want your children to have?

Shows often present a distorted view of sexuality complete with the unobtainable 'perfect' bodies and no communication, just action. Today's popular culture frames sex in terms of "the 'invisible' three Cs: no commitment, no contraception, and no consequences" (APPCNC, 2003). It can be embarrassing for a young person to ask an adult questions about the sexual content of a show that they have seen on television. It's much easier for them to look for more messages in the media. It's the *continued on page 2*

Reclaiming Stolen Lives: Healing Survivors of Sexual Abuse.

Saturday, November 15 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm
All Souls Unitarian Church 5805 E. 56th St.

Through music, art, dramatic presentation and small group and panel discussions, this *Spirit & Place* event, presented by Planned Parenthood of Greater Indiana, focuses on the suffering of those who experienced sexual abuse as children and the compassion they now need from others.

What Do Kids Think?

A number of kids responded to the question about what shows have positive or negative messages about sex.

Shows with positive messages

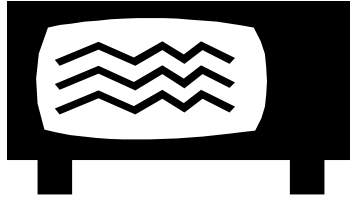
- The Cosby Show –Darlene, age 13
- Friends –Asia, age 11
- Dharma & Greg –Charles, age 12
- Eve –Simone, age 13
- Parkers –Sarah, age 11
- Buffy –Amanda, age 11

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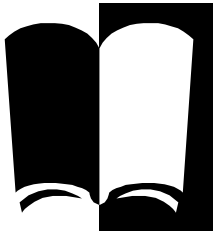
- Real World –Sierra, age 13
- Jerry Springer –Antonio, age 11
- Paradise Hotel –Marquil, age 11
- Shipmates –Deanna, age 13

What are your kids watching?

Shows with negative mes-



Truth For Youth!



Do you know what's being taught in your child's school? Get involved and help support comprehensive sexuality education! Check out our website, www.ppin.org, to find out how.

Teens, TV & Sex...

Continued from Page 1

responsibility of the parents and caregivers to begin a dialogue about sex with the children.

This dialogue will allow for an opportunity to discuss how TV images are constructed in terms of setting and characters, and can include what the cast looks like (age, race, ethnicity, gender, etc.) and what is missing (gay people, older individuals, people of color, etc.) and why they are missing (Schroeder, 2003). It will also allow for the kids to ask you questions about what they have been seeing on TV. Using the

television can make starting these conversations a little easier.

It is up to you, as parents and caregivers, to initiate the conversations; this will allow you to teach your children your values instead of them defining themselves based on what they see on television.

So when your kids turn on the TV, sit down with them and start talking!!!

TV Talking Tips...

Bringing up sexuality-related topics with your kids can be extremely difficult. Using issues discussed on television shows can be a good way to break the ice and talk about issues in a non-threatening man-

Watch the first time without offering any opinions.

This will make your children feel more comfortable with the activity and want to watch with you again.

Watch TV with your children and watch what they watch.

This will give you a better understanding of the information they are hearing and allows you to discuss issues that

Use commercial time to talk...but don't forget the ads. Take the time to communicate your beliefs during the break in the show, but some of the most sexualized images come from adds so discussing them is important. But be careful not to critique every one!

Remember that "bad" shows can provoke discussions, too. It can give you the opportunity to discuss the appropriateness of the behaviors of certain characters.

When you watch together, TALK OUT LOUD.

Ask your child's opinion about something that happened on the show. "How do you feel about...?" or "What do you think about...?" This can help them start to view the show more critically.

Be sensitive.

Try this as a private activity... your children may be embarrassed to have conversations about sexuality with their peers

Share your opinions and values in a positive way. Discuss your thoughts and opinions. Your children need to understand your values and beliefs as they develop their own.

Have fun!

Try to keep the talks informal and avoid lectures. Your children will put up barriers against criticism.

Watch for 'teachable moments'.

Use the opportunities that arise during a show to discuss a subject.

Source:
Advo-

cates for Youth and SEICUS.

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Be An Askable Parent

JUST SAY KNOW

**October is National Family
Sexuality Education Month**

During October parents and caregivers can pick up a free **Let's Talk** parent packet from any of PPGI's 38 locations throughout Indiana, or access it online at www.ppin.org. The packet contains useful information on how to talk to your children about sex.

TV Talking Online Resources...

Planned Parenthood of Greater Indiana
www.ppin.org

Sexuality Information and Education
Council of the United States (SIECUS)
www.siecus.org

Advocates For Youth
www.advocatesforyouth.org

Kaiser Family Foundation www.kff.org

Center for Media Literacy
www.medialit.com

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We're on the Internet! www.ppin.org. Check us out!