

Minnesota Sexuality Education Survey

The debate over sexuality education in Minnesota schools has been going on for years. Now, for the first time in the state's history, Minnesotans – both parents and non-parents – have been asked what type of sexuality education they think should be taught in the schools.

The following is a summary of some of the results of this landmark survey. More complete copy of the survey can be found online at www.moapp.org or by calling MOAPPP, 651-644-1447 or 800-657-3697 toll-free in Greater MN.

Summary of Findings

- 91% of Minnesotans support sexuality education in high schools; 84% support sexuality education in junior high; and 53.4% support sexuality education for children 9 to 11.
- Most Minnesota residents (77%) believe that sexuality education should include both abstinence and contraception. Support for this type of “comprehensive sexuality education” extends to all demographic groups, including individuals that identify themselves as religious.
- 91% of Minnesotans agree that sexuality education gives kids the information they need to make responsible choices. Minnesotans disagree with the claims that combining messages of abstinence and contraception sends mixed messages (67%) or encourages kids to have sex (80%).
- Parents with children under the age of 18 are highly supportive of in-school sexuality education programs. 93% of MN parents agree that “comprehensive sexuality education” gives kids the information they need to make responsible choices (89% of nonparents agree with this statement). Parents disagree with the claim that combining messages of abstinence and contraception sends mixed messages (78% of parents; 61% of nonparents).
- 75% of Minnesotans want schools to be involved in referring sexually active young people to clinics that treat and prevent sexually transmitted diseases. 68% want sexually active young people referred to family planning clinics. 55% want school personnel to make condoms and other forms of birth control accessible to sexually active students.
- Nearly six in ten residents (58%) oppose the provision of state and/or federal funds for education promoting abstinence-only-until-marriage that prohibits teaching about the use of condoms and contraception for the prevention of unintended pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and STDs.

APCO Insight, a public opinion research firm located in Washington, DC conducted this survey of MN residents for the Minnesota Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy, Prevention, and Parenting. The survey was conducted among 612 randomly selected adults in the state of Minnesota, including an oversample of 105 non-Caucasian residents. Interviews were conducted over the telephone between April 8-10, 2000. The margin of error for most questions is +/- 4.0%. The confidence interval is 95%.

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A similar national survey conducted in 1999 by Advocates for Youth and the Sexuality Information and Education Coalition of the US (SIECUS) received similar results. According to this poll, 93% of Americans support sexuality in high school and 84% in junior high school. And, 7 out of 10 Americans oppose the provision of federal funds for abstinence-only-until-marriage sexuality education.

