

Minnesota Sexuality Education Resource Review Panel

Summary of Panel Review

Review Date: March 2006

Reality Matters: Sex & STDs (2005)

Video (30 minutes)

Target Audience: 6-12th grade

Cost: \$59.95- Available DVD or VHS

Distributor: Discovery Education

P.O. Box 2284 South Burlington, VT 05407-2284 • 1-888-892-3484 • <http://store.discoveryeducation.com>

The Minnesota Sexuality Education Resource Review Panel **Does not recommend** the use of this video for the following reasons and with the following reservations:

Review Summary:

Reality Matters: Sex and STDs is a video about the pressures teenagers face from peers, hormones and the media, to have sex. It addresses the potential consequences of sex, specifically STDs and HIV. It is intended as an informational video on how teenagers can protect themselves through abstinence and safe sex.

Although the video format is appealing, the panel finds that the content may be harmful to teenagers. The video makes broad generalizations, portrays bad stereotypes of “how teenagers are,” and includes inaccurate information. It contains erroneous statistics and overly dramatized statements about HIV transmission. The video solely focuses on the negative consequences of sex, without stating that sex can be healthy within the context of a committed relationship. Too much information is given in a small amount of time and that information has a very narrow perspective; abstinence is the main prevention strategy with very little time spent on other forms of prevention, i.e., contraception and condoms. The video does not teach communication skills or sexual decision-making strategies.

The panel is concerned about the video’s portrayal of sex as a scary, dangerous activity. The negative tone of the video will not be well received by any age audience. There is no discussion guide and a good facilitator would be needed to alleviate fears raised by this video.

The panel **does not recommend** this video as a teaching tool about sexual behavior in teenagers. Although it is an up-to-date video with good presentation style, the panel believes it would do more damage than good.

Reality Matters: Sex & STDs (2005)

Assessment Criteria	Mean Score	Comments
Accuracy of Information - Provides basic, accurate information about teen sexual health, e.g., risks of teen sexual activity, ways to avoid intercourse or use methods of protection against pregnancy and STDs, human growth and development, relationships, etc.	1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has bad stereotypes about “how teenagers are”. ▪ Made sweeping generalizations. ▪ Some inaccurate statistics/misinformation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>HIV through oral sex-statistics.</i> • <i>Blood transfusions no longer major means of transmission.</i> • <i>Statement that HIV is the “deadliest” disease is unclear, non-scientific language.</i>
Focus - Focuses on ways to promote sexual health e.g., reducing one or more sexual behaviors that lead to unintended pregnancy or HIV/STD infection; understanding healthy physical/emotional development; developing healthy relationships, etc.	1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Too many dramatic, overwhelming statements & too many different topics addressed. ▪ Narrow perspective on prevention strategies – mainly abstinence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condoms mentioned once-no information on how to use, etc. ▪ No positive messages or how to decide when you are ready. Focuses on shame and “mistake” of having sex.
Messages - Delivers and consistently reinforces a clear message, e.g., states message multiple times in multiple ways.	1.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sex is only portrayed in a negative light, in numerous ways – harmful message <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Scary – mentions suicidal thoughts, dangerous, shameful, “a mistake,” consequences are the “end of one’s world”</i> ▪ Assumptions about teen behavior/attitudes were very patronizing-not all teens are as ignorant as those shown in the video
Addresses Social Pressures – Video demonstrates social pressures that influence sexual behavior. Guide includes activities that address social pressures that influence sexual behavior.	1.5	
Communication Skills – Video provides examples of being assertive, using negotiation and refusal skills, making decisions, etc. Guide includes activities to practice assertive skills, negotiation and refusal skills, decision-making skills, etc.	1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No demonstration of good communication, (or any communication!)
Teaching Methods - Engages participants and helps them personalize information	1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Negative, alienating and shaming tone ▪ Switched topics too quickly and randomly between subjects ▪ Personal stories were used, but they were sad and shameful
Appropriateness for Audience - Incorporates behavioral goals, teaching methods, and materials that are appropriate to the age, sexual experience, and culture of the students (as stated by publisher.)	1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not appropriate for any audience - condescending to any audience
Multicultural Perspective – This resource is most appropriate for the following audiences.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inaccurate and harmful portrayal of minorities having babies ▪ Did not address GLBT issues ▪ Showed mainly white upper/middle class students
Teacher-Friendly - Is well organized with clear, thorough instructions or discussion guide. Minimal assembly or preparation time required.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No discussion guide ▪ Disjointed sections without conclusion
Facilitation Skills Required - How knowledgeable and skilled must the facilitator be to use this resource effectively?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strong content knowledge/group skills ▪ If shown –teach should be prepared to address fears/shows that may arise
Presentation Quality – How appealing is the product (e.g. visual quality, sound quality, graphics, etc.) ?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good presentation-poor content ▪ Authoritative male narrator was not helpful ▪ Very current, fresh looking
Overall Recommendation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Highly Recommend - 0 ▪ Recommend - 0 ▪ Reject - 11