

Senators Wiger, Tomassoni and Kelley introduced--  
S.F. No. 772: Referred to the Committee on Education.

1                                   A bill for an act

2       relating to education; establishing a student support  
3       services advisory committee; requiring school  
4       districts to adopt a student support services plan;  
5       amending Minnesota Statutes 2004, section 122A.15, by  
6       adding a subdivision.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

8       Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2004, section 122A.15, is  
9       amended by adding a subdivision to read:

10       Subd. 3. [STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE;  
11       DISTRICT PLAN.] (a) A student support services advisory  
12       committee composed of eight members selected by the commissioner  
13       is established under section 15.059. The commissioner must  
14       select one committee member from each of the following  
15       organizations:

16               (1) the Minnesota Department of Education;  
17               (2) the Minnesota School Boards Association;  
18               (3) the Board of School Administrators;  
19               (4) the Minnesota School Social Work Association;  
20               (5) the School Nurse Organization of Minnesota;  
21               (6) the Minnesota School Psychologists Association;  
22               (7) the Minnesota School Counselors Association; and  
23               (8) the Minnesota Association of Resources for Recovery and  
24       Chemical Health.

25       (b) The committee must:

26               (1) identify alternatives for integrating student support

1 services into public schools;

2 (2) recommend support staff to student ratios and best  
3 practices for providing student support services premised on  
4 valid, widely recognized research;

5 (3) identify the substance and extent of the work that  
6 student support services staff provide and the characteristics  
7 of the student populations they serve;

8 (4) recommend how school districts can most appropriately  
9 integrate student support services into the education program;  
10 and

11 (5) recommend public and nonpublic revenue sources that  
12 school districts can use to fund student support services  
13 including, among other sources, medical assistance  
14 reimbursements, local collaborative time study funds, federal  
15 funds, public health funds, and specifically designated funds  
16 such as school safety levies and district general funds, among  
17 other funds.

18 (c) The committee must consider the oral and written  
19 testimony of school district personnel and parents and students  
20 in complying with paragraph (b). The committee must submit  
21 periodic recommendations about student support services to the  
22 commissioner and to the committees of the legislature having  
23 jurisdiction over kindergarten through grade 12 education policy  
24 and budget issues. The commissioner must consider the  
25 committee's recommendations in developing and maintaining a  
26 model district plan for student support services, which the  
27 commissioner must transmit to school districts.

28 (d) School districts must adopt and maintain a plan for  
29 providing student support services and must submit the plan to  
30 the commissioner by October 1 in each even-numbered year.

31 (e) Notwithstanding section 15.059, subdivision 5, the  
32 committee expires on June 30, 2016.

33 [EFFECTIVE DATE.] This section is effective the day  
34 following final enactment and applies to the 2006-2007 school  
35 year and later.

1 Senator ..... moves to amend S.F. No. 772 as follows:

2 Page 1, line 3, delete "requiring school"

3 Page 1, line 4, delete "districts" and insert "considering

4 whether"

5 Page 1, line 12, delete "eight" and insert "ten"

6 Page 1, line 18, delete "Board" and insert "Minnesota

7 Association"

8 Page 1, line 22, delete "and"

9 Page 1, line 24, after "Health" insert ";

10 (9) the Minnesota Administrators for Special Education; and

11 (10) the Minnesota Parent Teachers Association"

12 Page 1, line 26, after "(1)" insert "establish a method for

13 identifying student needs that are barriers to learning;

14 (2)"

15 Page 2, line 2, delete "(2)" and insert "(3)"

16 Page 2, line 4, delete "valid, widely recognized research"

17 and insert "evidence-based practice"

18 Page 2, line 5, delete "(3)" and insert "(4)"

19 Page 2, line 6, after "staff" insert "are trained and

20 licensed to"

21 Page 2, line 8, delete "(4)" and insert "(5)"

22 Page 2, line 11, delete "(5)" and insert "(6)"

23 Page 2, line 14, after "reimbursements," insert "private

24 health insurance,"

25 Page 2, line 23, delete "kindergarten through grade 12" and

26 insert "birth to age 21"

27 Page 2, line 25, delete "developing and maintaining" and

28 insert "in deciding whether to develop and maintain"

29 Page 2, line 26, delete ", which the" and insert ". If the

30 commissioner develops and maintains a model plan, the

31 commissioner also must decide whether to transmit the plan to

32 school districts, whether to require the districts to adopt and

33 maintain a district plan for providing student support services

34 that meets the criteria recommended by the advisory committee,

35 and whether to require the districts to submit the plan for

36 biennial review."

- 1 Page 2, delete lines 27 to 30
- 2 Page 2, line 31, delete "(e)" and insert "(d)"

Senators Chaudhary and Kelley introduced--

S.F. No. 40: Referred to the Committee on Education.

1 A bill for an act  
2 relating to education; providing for a model policy  
3 prohibiting intimidation or bullying; proposing coding  
4 for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 121A.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

6 Section 1. [121A.0695] [SCHOOL BOARD POLICY; PROHIBITING  
7 INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING.]

8 Subdivision 1. [INTIMIDATION OR BULLYING  
9 DEFINED.] "Intimidation or bullying" means an intentional  
10 gesture or a written, oral, or physical act or threat that a  
11 reasonable person under the circumstances knows or should know  
12 has the effect of:

- 13 (1) harming a student;
- 14 (2) damaging a student's property;
- 15 (3) placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the  
16 student's person;
- 17 (4) placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to the  
18 student's property; or
- 19 (5) creating a severe or persistent environment of  
20 intimidation or abuse.

21 Subd. 2. [MODEL POLICY.] The commissioner of education  
22 shall maintain and make available to school boards and other  
23 schools a model policy prohibiting intimidation and bullying  
24 that addresses the requirements of subdivision 3.

25 Subd. 3. [SCHOOL BOARD POLICY.] Each school board shall

1 adopt a written policy prohibiting intimidation and bullying of  
2 any student. The policy must describe the behavior expected of  
3 each student and state the consequences for and the appropriate  
4 remedial action to be taken against the person acting to  
5 intimidate or bully. The policy must include reporting  
6 procedures, including, at a minimum, requiring school personnel  
7 to report student intimidation or bullying incidents and  
8 allowing persons to report incidents anonymously. Each district  
9 must integrate into its violence prevention program under  
10 section 120B.22, if applicable, behavior and expectations  
11 established under this section. Each school must include the  
12 policy in the student handbook on school policies.

13 [EFFECTIVE DATE.] This section is effective for the  
14 2005-2006 school year and later.

15 Sec. 2. [MODEL POLICY.]

16 The commissioner of education shall work with the Minnesota  
17 School Boards Association to develop a model policy that  
18 prohibits intimidating and bullying as required in section 1,  
19 subdivision 2.

# Minnesota Department of Education

## Bullying

Nancy Riestenberg  
Prevention Specialist

### Talking Points

- ◆ Bullying is harmful, and not an acceptable childhood experience. It is not “a right of passage,” “character building” or a “stage” kids go through. If you see it happen or know of it, you should take action to try and stop it.
- ◆ Schools can effectively reduce bullying through ensuring a positive climate that involves all adults and all the students in the school community.
- ◆ When bullying is identified—the earlier the better—
  - Pay attention to teasing and when the line is crossed into hurtful, harmful behavior;
  - Attend to the needs of the victim;
  - Help the bully to make amends;
  - Ask bystanders what they can do to help stop it;
  - Kids should tell adults, but adults need to respond;
  - Adults should take action to ensure the safety of children/youth,
  - All adults should be clear that hurtful behavior is not acceptable in this school, neighborhood and/or workplace.

### Bullying Background Information

- ◆ Bullying is repeated actions that includes a range of behaviors
  - Emotional – exclusion, stalking
  - Physical—pushing, shoving, hitting beating
  - Sexual—remarks about sexual preference, body, activities, spreading rumors, or hitting, grabbing, pulling or punching body parts or clothes.
  - Words—racial and sexual slurs, remarks about body, mind, name, glasses, family, language, religion, socioeconomic status, etc.
- ◆ Bullying is repeated behavior directed at one person or group of people by one or more people
  - Adults may have different ideas about what constitutes bullying, and they need to talk about their perceptions with each other.
  - A very common form of bullying is to tease or harass a kid about being gay – both boys and girls.
  - If it feels bad to the receiver, it is not ok.
- ◆ Bullying can happen at any age and in any place— child, youth or adult; in the family, neighborhood or workplace. It is very common; it is not a new problem. It is reinforced by films, TV shows and video games that often present bullying and disrespectful behavior as funny, cool and acceptable.
- ◆ A recent student by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) found that children who bully other children appear to be at risk for engaging in more serious violent behaviors, such as fighting or carrying a gun. Moreover, victims of bullying also are at risk for engaging in these kinds of violent behaviors.

- ◆ The question may come up, 'Is bullying illegal?'
  - Bullying may be listed as such in the school rules, or it may be broken down into smaller acts, such as name calling, pushing and shoving, or hitting.
  - Other individual behaviors that may be part of bullying behavior may appear in state statutes as racial or sexual harassment, hate crimes, extortion (taking lunch money), fifth degree assault, or terroristic threats.
- ◆ Intervention and Prevention Research shows that bullying:
  - Is debilitating to the victim;
  - Adversely affects bystanders;
  - Can become chronic and lead to criminal behavior if there is not an effective intervention;
  - Challenge all students' ability to learn, as it creates an intimidating environment.

## Components of Anti-bullying Programs

Anti-bullying programs must be comprehensive and school-wide, not just a curriculum. Key elements include:

- ◆ Surveying the problem with parents, students and staff.
- ◆ Providing training to all staff: bus drivers, cooks, teachers, para-professionals, administrators, and volunteers.
- ◆ Identifying target behaviors throughout the school that you WANT to see, and publicize them.
- ◆ Teaching pro-social skills.
- ◆ Teaching adults how to effectively intervene in an effective manner that does not escalate the problem: you can't bully a bully out of bullying.
- ◆ Developing a school-wide media campaign:
  - ◆ Posters, announcements, curricula, classroom climate work interactive lessons that go home to parent/guardians.
- ◆ Posting messages about bullying:
  - We do not bully other students.
  - We help students who are bullied.
  - We include students who are left out.
  - We tell an adult at school and an adult at home when somebody is being bullied.

(From *Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Can Do* by Dan Olweus, 1993)
- ◆ Intervention
  - ◆ Using restorative process as much as possible because it is a respectful way to include victims, offenders and bystanders, as well as parents and other affected parties.
- ◆ Adults must clearly show by their behavior non-tolerance for bullying.

### Resources

Hoover & Oliver, *The Bullying Prevention Handbook*, National Educational Service, 1252 Loesch Rd, Bloomington, IN, 47404, 888-763-9045, 1996; [www.nesonline.com](http://www.nesonline.com)

Olweus, D *Bully/Victim Problems in School Children: Basic Facts and Effects of School-Based Intervention Programme*. In K. Rubin & D. Pepler (editors), 1984.

Ibid. *Bullying at school: What we know and what we can do*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, Inc.1993.

[www.bullying.org/help.html](http://www.bullying.org/help.html)





March 29, 2005

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee:

The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Minnesota champions justice, dignity, and respect for all children and adults affected by mental illness (biological brain disorders). NAMI-MN is strongly supporting SF 40 which would require school districts to develop a policy that addresses the issue of bullying in our schools.

Bullying is a huge problem in our schools. Surveys indicate that half of all children are bullied at some time during their school years and at least 10% are bullied on a regular basis. Bullying takes its toll on its victims. One study found that 22% of 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> graders reported academic difficulties due to peer abuse. And yet another 7% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders said that they have stayed home because of bullying; 14% of students experience severe reactions to bullying that may have lifeline psychiatric consequences. And bullying affects the aggressor as well. By age 24, 60% of children who bully will have had a criminal conviction.

Bullying has many characteristics – hitting, kicking, pushing, choking, calling names, threatening, taunting, malicious teasing, spreading nasty rumors, making faces, obscene gestures, and exclusion from a group. Boys tend to bully alone, girls bully in groups. It often happens in secret which makes it more difficult to address. Bullying is behavior intended to harm or disturb someone, the behavior occurs repeatedly over time and there is an imbalance of power.

Bullies have more power due to being older, physically larger, better athletically or higher up on the social ladder. Bullies are actually more likely to be popular – one of the cool kids. They are not likely to be suffering from low self-esteem.

Often the victims of bullying have a disability – learning disabilities, Aspergers, Tourettes, serious emotional disturbance, depression – disabilities that separate you in some way from your classmates, but not severe enough to keep you more closely monitored or protected from school staff. Often victims have depression, social anxiety and are lonely.

In the past, adults just believed that bullying was a part of growing up. Ignore it, get over it – it will eventually be over. But now many adults believe that it is unconscionable to allow our children to be physically or emotionally abused by other students. School should be a supportive environment. Adults know now that by intervening, everyone benefits.

Children who are victims clearly benefit by being able to attend school without living in fear, children who do the bullying learn more appropriate behaviors, and the children who are bystanders benefit as well because it eliminates the fear that it could happen to them.

Member



Community Solutions Fund

**NAMI-MN National Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Minnesota**

800 Transfer Road, Suite 7A, St. Paul, MN 55114 Tel: 651-645-2948 or 1-888-473-0237 Fax 651-645-7379

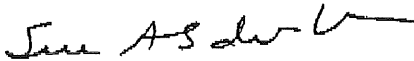
Bullying has a real affect on children and adolescents. It can affect their emotional development, school performance and some children even attempt suicide as a way to escape bullying. Truancy has been linked to bullying with students skipping school to avoid being harassed. Bullies may also need help in that they may be experiencing abuse or bullying themselves or may have depression, or be angry or upset about events in their life. One longitudinal study found that children who are bullies grow up to have more arrests for drunken driving, spouse abuse and child abuse.

Either way – victim or aggressor – we, as an adult community, need to pay attention. There are numerous bullying prevention programs available – ones that have been implemented in this country and around the world that have shown promising results. This bill is an important first step to creating schools that welcome all children.

I realize that we ask schools to do a lot – but children and adolescents cannot be educated in environments that are hostile and mean. In 2001, the StarTribune interviewed a fifth grader, Timothy, who had been taunted, pushed, slammed against a bus window, had paint poured on his clothes, been forced to eat sand and more. He hated his life and wished he could die. His wish was that the bullies of the world would know that it's not cool to pick on kids. Timmy shouldn't have to wish for safe environment, he shouldn't have to go public with his story in order to attend school without being teased.

I urge you to support this bill, for children like Timothy, who suffer needlessly every day.

Sincerely,



Sue Abderholden  
Executive Director

SF 40

This ran in the International Falls Daily Journal last week:

## **Editorial: A community approach needed to deal with bullying**

Wednesday, November 24, 2004

**By**

The problem of bullying in area schools isn't just an issue for school districts, it's something of which the whole community needs to be aware.

Bullying and harassment were listed as problems recently during a meeting of the Youth Risk Coalition. These problems aren't unique to Borderland. And this isn't the first time we've heard of them.

According to the National Parent Teacher Association, hundreds of thousands of young people across the country are the victims of bullying. It can take many forms -- from physical harassment to name-calling and other forms of verbal intimidation to spreading rumors. Generally, though, bullying is characterized by an imbalance of power, such that the victims of bullying have difficulty defending themselves. Bullies are aware of the distress caused by their actions and take pleasure in the victim's reaction. They hurt others to feel strong and powerful themselves.

We agree with education officials who note that the problem of bullying is something that should concern the entire community. It isn't simply a matter for the schools. Often times adults witness bullying. When that occurs they need to speak up to let the bully know that such behavior won't be tolerated in our community.

And, let's put to rest the notion that bullying is simply "boys being boys" or a rite of childhood.

Recent studies on the problem have shown the psychological damage such behavior can take on victims. The National PTA says that victims report greater fear and anxiety, can score lower on academic achievement. Worse, they can often turn their anger inward which can lead to depression and even suicide.

The National PTA also notes that bullies themselves suffer consequences for their actions. Often they fail to learn how to manage their emotions and communicate effectively. They can even suffer stunted emotional growth and fail to develop empathy toward others.

Bullying exists in many schools across the nation. Let's make an effort as a community to reduce its prevalence here in Borderland.

*St Paul Press Pioneer* MINNESOTA EDU DN 11-18-04

# Every school district needs anti-bullying policy

Some truisms about schoolyard bullies linger in Minnesota, like this one: Middle school kids are mean. Everyone knows that. So what?

- Or this: Roll with the punches!
- Or this: Boys will be boys.

Every school day in Minnesota, children prey on other children perceived as weak. Many school boards across the state have adopted policies to address these incidents. That's good but not good enough. Every school district needs a policy in place to address the intimidation and bullying between students, and if it takes a law to do that, pass the law. With the last legislative session, the Minnesota Senate approved a measure requiring school boards to adopt written policies prohibiting bullying, including remedial action against the bully, reporting procedures and a system under which bullying incidents may be reported anonymously. The Minnesota House passed a skeletal version of this bill. Of course, the issue was left in limbo with just about everything else last session.

We don't think the protection of kids is a partisan matter, and neither should any legislators.

That's especially true because the issue is growing in intensity. Kids now have access to multiple ways of harassing and hurting other children, from a stream of inappropriate voice mail messages left on the home phone to a barrage of inappropriate and mean-spirited e-mails. Life becomes a pure hell for the victim of these actions. Their grades slip. They become depressed and anxious and act out in ways that are puzzling to parents and teachers.

The National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center reports that almost 30 percent of U.S. teens are involved in bullying, either as victims or perpetrators.

State Sen. Satveer Chaudhary, DFL-Fridley, led the anti-bullying initiative last session. Opponents claim that a one-size-fits-all law is inappropriate. Observe the behavior of bullying predators, however, and you'll see a remarkable consistency.

Chaudhary's proposal is a common-sense attempt to deal with a problem that is all too common and too often tolerated with a shrug of the shoulders or an averted gaze.

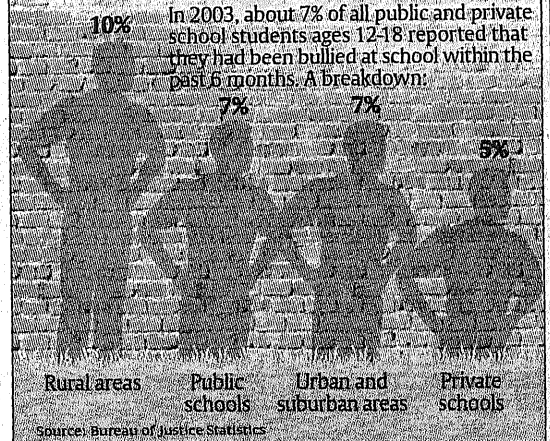
**USEFUL LINK**

**National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center:** [www.safeyouth.org/scripts/teens/bullying.asp](http://www.safeyouth.org/scripts/teens/bullying.asp)

Get breaking news updated 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at [www.usatoday.com](http://www.usatoday.com)

## USA TODAY Snapshots™

### More students bullied in rural areas



By Shannon Reilly and Marcy E. Mullins, USA TODAY

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|                   |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| Crossword         | 6D     |
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1-12-05

"The Bully Phenomenon"

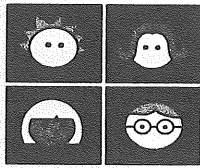
FACT SHEET

- \* The United States is the only civilized country in the world that does not have a required education program to teach children the serious, and sometimes fatal, results of severe bullying that happens at school.
- \* 60% of kids considered a "bully" in grades 6-9 will have at least one criminal conviction by age 24. Of this group, 40% will have at least three convictions by age 24.
- \* It is a myth that children are picked on because of some "visual" difference-any child can be a victim. However, most bullies are stronger, either physically or mentally, than their victims.
- \* Bullying can be done by an individual or by a group.
- \* Children can be both-the bully and the victim, at the same time or at different times.
- \* Children are most afraid of using the bathroom/locker room as these are usually less supervised. But a lot of bullying goes on right in the classroom.
- \* Most students surveyed have admitted to staying home from school to avoid the bully.
- \* Over 35% of the victims have admitted to thinking about or actually taking a weapon to school for their own safety.
- \* There have been several bully-related suicides among students who were the repeat victim of bullying. Sometimes the victim also kills the bully.
- \* 25% of the educators in the U.S. see nothing wrong with bullying.
- \* The bully at school is often a victim at home.
- \* Schools that implement a bully program have a reduction of bully/victim problems by 50% or more.
- \* The program also caused a "considerable drop in antisocial behavior such as vandalism, theft, drunkenness, and truancy".
- \* More than 15% of the school population in primary and junior high schools are involved, either as bullies or victims.
- \* Children are afraid to speak up when they see someone being bullied; that is because they have already been a victim or they are afraid they will become the next one.
- \* Most schools will not admit there is a problem, even after parents complain.
- \* All children in the classroom are affected by the bully, either directly or indirectly.
- \* If even one child could be driven to suicide because of being bullied, then we as a community must work to prevent this. There often is incidents of "suicide copycating" because the other child feels that they could have done something to prevent the first one.

For more information, or to help implement a support group for victims, please contact:

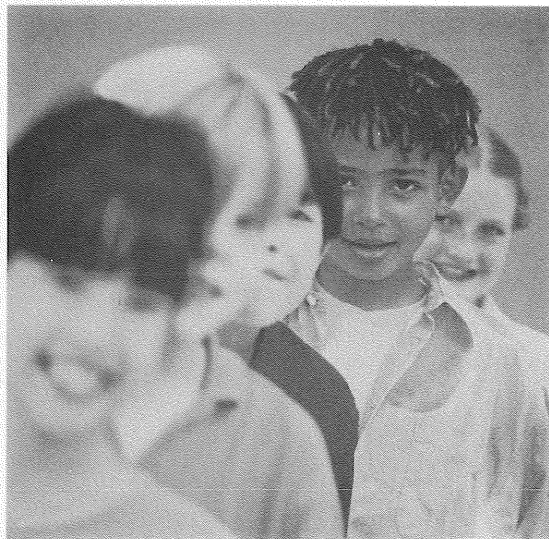
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SF40



**TOLERANCE  
MINNESOTA**

# **TOLERANCE MINNESOTA ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVE**



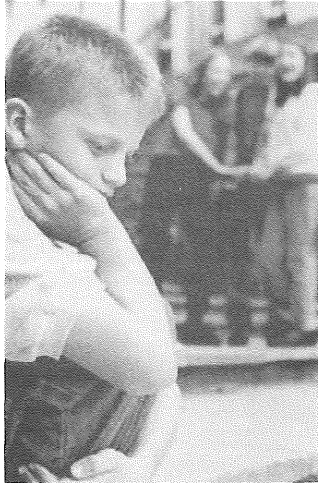
## **What can I do to prevent bullying? Information for parents and guardians**

**Tolerance Minnesota  
Confronting Prejudice. Respecting Diversity.**

**12 North 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 480  
Minneapolis, MN 55403  
612-338-7816  
[www.ToleranceMinnesota.org](http://www.ToleranceMinnesota.org)**

Bullying is harmful, and not an acceptable childhood experience. It is not a positive “right of passage,” “character building” or a “stage” kids go through. If you see it happen or know of it, you should take action to try to stop it.

## What is Bullying?



Bullying is the result of repetitive actions that include a wide range of behaviors:

- **Emotional** – exclusion, stalking
- **Physical**—pushing, shoving, hitting, beating
- **Sexual**—remarks about sexual preference, body, activities, spreading rumors, or hitting, grabbing, pulling or punching body, parts or clothes
- **Verbal**—racial and sexual slurs remarks about body, mind, name, family, language, religion, socioeconomic status.

Bullying can happen at any age and in any place to children, youth or adults. Bullying occurs in the family, neighborhood or workplace. It is very common; it is not a new problem.

## Warning signs of bullying include:

- Child comes home from school with torn clothing or unexplained injuries; feels anxious, distressed, unhappy, depressed, or is tearful when returning from school
- Child does not bring friends home after school, does not spend time at friends' homes, or seems isolated from other kids
- Child appears to be fearful about attending school, walking to and from school, or riding the bus
- Child has trouble sleeping, poor appetite, headaches and stomachaches, especially before school
- Child asks for or takes extra money from family members
- Child exhibits unexpected mood shifts, irritability, or sudden outbursts of temper
- Child loses interest in schoolwork and shows a decline in academic performance
- Child talks about or attempts suicide

## What can parents and guardians do?

### Improve Your Child's Self Esteem

Praise your child for their accomplishments and the qualities that make them unique. Identify talents that can be developed in your child. Help your child make friends by encouraging him or her to participate in sports or physical activity. Try to improve your child's social skills. Talk to your child about strategies to prevent bullying.

### If you believe bullying is occurring

- Encourage your child to share their problems with you and assure them that this is not tattling
- Listen attentively and reassure them that they will not have to face the problem alone
- If the bullying is happening on the way to and from school, accompany your child or arrange for different transportation
- Work with other parents to ensure that the children in your neighborhood are supervised closely
- Maintain contact with your child's school
- Request a conference with school administrators and the bully's parents
- Keep a detailed record of bullying episodes and related communication with the school
- Seek help from a mental health professional

### Is your child a bully?

#### Typical bullying behavior includes:

- Frequently hits kicks, pushes or chokes others
- Has been observed verbally attacking other children
- Intentionally excludes others or manipulates friendships
- Makes faces or obscene gestures



#### General characteristics of bullies:

- Bullies are physically bigger than the kids that they bully. They have a strong need to dominate and control their peers. They are hot tempered, easily angered, impulsive, and have difficulty tolerating frustration
- Bullies have difficulty conforming to rules and are defiant and aggressive towards adults and authority figures



- Bullies are good at talking themselves out of situations
- Bullies tend to have average or better than average self-esteem
- Bullies are more likely to engage in other anti-social behaviors and are less likely to be popular
- Bullies are more likely to have negative attitudes toward school and get lower grades.

### **What can parents and guardians do if their child is exhibiting bullying behavior?**

- Make it clear to your child that you take bullying seriously and that you will not tolerate such behavior in the future
- Develop a consistent family rules system. When they follow the rules, use praise and positive reinforcement. When your child breaks the rules, then implement consistent, non-hostile, negative consequences
- Set a good example for your child
- Monitor and supervise your child's activities. Know your child's friends, where they spend their free time, and what they do with that free time
- Maintain contact with your child's school. Support the school's efforts to modify your child's behavior. Frequent communication with teachers and administrators is important to find out how your child is doing in changing their behavior
- Seek help from a mental health professional
- **Take bullying seriously.** Children who bully increase their risk for engaging in other forms of anti-social behavior, such as juvenile delinquency, criminality, and substance abuse. Bullying behavior should be taken seriously.

For more information about bullying please contact  
 Jodi Elowitz, Director of Education  
 Phone: 612-338-7816, E-mail [Jodi@MinnDakJCRC.org](mailto:Jodi@MinnDakJCRC.org)

Tolerance Minnesota  
 Confronting Prejudice. Respecting Diversity.  
[www.ToleranceMinnesota.org](http://www.ToleranceMinnesota.org)

#### **Tolerance Minnesota Council of Advisors**

The Minneapolis Chapter of the NAACP, Organization of Chinese Americans, Japanese American Citizens League -Twin Cities Chapter, Native Academy, Hmong Cultural Center, La Oportunidad, Confederation of Somali Community in Minnesota, Minnesota AIDS Project, India Association of Minnesota, Islamic Resource Group, African American Relief & Development Initiatives (ARADI), Tibetan American Foundation of Minnesota, Vietnamese Social Services of Minnesota, Outfront Minnesota and Special Olympics Minnesota.

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 514

Orig. 2003

Revised: \_\_\_\_\_

Rev. 2004

**514 BULLYING PROHIBITION POLICY**

**I. PURPOSE**

A safe and civil environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. Bullying, like other violent or disruptive behavior, is conduct that interferes with students' ability to learn and teachers' ability to educate students in a safe environment. The school district cannot monitor the activities of students at all times and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students, particularly when students are not under the direct supervision of school personnel. However, to the extent such conduct affects the educational environment of the school district and the rights and welfare of its students and is within the control of the school district in its normal operations, it is the school district's intent to prevent bullying and to take action to investigate, respond, remediate, and discipline those acts of bullying which have not been successfully prevented. The purpose of this policy is to assist the school district in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, and other similar disruptive behavior.

**II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

- A. An act of bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, is expressly prohibited on school district property or at school-related functions. This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in an act of bullying but also to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student's act of bullying. This policy also applies to any student whose conduct at any time or in any place constitutes bullying that interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the school district or the safety or welfare of the student, other students, or employees.
- B. No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district shall permit, condone, or tolerate bullying.
- C. Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.
- D. Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited.
- E. False accusations or reports of bullying against another student are prohibited.

F. A person who engages in an act of bullying, reprisal, or false reporting of bullying or permits, condones, or tolerates bullying shall be subject to discipline for that act in accordance with school district's policies and procedures. The school district may take into account the following factors:

1. The developmental and maturity levels of the parties involved;
2. The levels of harm, surrounding circumstances, and nature of the behavior;
3. Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior;
4. The relationship between the parties involved; and
5. The context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

Consequences for students who commit prohibited acts of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. Consequences for employees who permit, condone, or tolerate bullying or engage in an act of reprisal or intentional false reporting of bullying may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or discharge. Consequences for other individuals engaging in prohibited acts of bullying may include, but not be limited to, exclusion from school district property and events and/or termination of services and/or contracts.

G. The school district will act to investigate all complaints of bullying and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district who is found to have violated this policy.

*[Note: As the purpose of the policy is to ensure the safety and well-being of students, school districts should review those individuals in their district who may have responsibility for its students, whether formal or informal, to ensure that this purpose is met. Accordingly, school districts may wish to exclude or add certain individuals as being subject to its policy. For example, if a school district is providing visitors with extensive contact with students, the school district may wish to include visitors as individuals subject to the policy to ensure the access the school district has permitted is not being abused. Alternatively, a school district may wish to remove contractors from the policy if the individuals with whom it contracts have little or no contact with students to avoid unnecessary application of the policy.]*

### III. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy, the definitions included in this section apply.

- A. “Bullying” means any written or verbal expression, physical act or gesture, or pattern thereof, by a student that is intended to cause or is perceived as causing distress to one or more students and which substantially interferes with another student’s or students’ educational benefits, opportunities, or performance. Bullying includes, but is not limited to, conduct by a student against another student that a reasonable person under the circumstances knows or should know has the effect of:
1. harming a student;
  2. damaging a student’s property;
  3. placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or property;  
or
  4. creating a hostile educational environment for a student.
- B. “Immediately” means as soon as possible but in no event longer than 24 hours.
- C. “On school district property or at school-related functions” means all school district buildings, school grounds, and school property or property immediately adjacent to school grounds, school bus stops, school buses, school vehicles, school contracted vehicles, or any other vehicles approved for school district purposes, the area of entrance or departure from school grounds, premises, or events, and all school-related functions, school-sponsored activities, events, or trips. School district property also may mean a student’s walking route to or from school for purposes of attending school or school-related functions, activities, or events. While prohibiting bullying at these locations and events, the school district does not represent that it will provide supervision or assume liability at these locations and events.

#### **IV. REPORTING PROCEDURE**

- A. Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of bullying or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school district official designated by this policy. A student may report bullying anonymously. However, the school district’s ability to take action against an alleged perpetrator based solely on an anonymous report may be limited.
- B. The school district encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the report form available from the principal of each building or available from the school district office, but oral reports shall be considered complaints as well.
- C. The building principal or the principal’s designee or the building supervisor is the person responsible for receiving reports of bullying at the building level. Any person

may report bullying directly to a school district human rights officer or the superintendent.

- D. A teacher, school administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other school employee shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events that might include bullying. Any such person who receives a report of, observes, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying shall inform the building principal immediately.
- E. Reports of bullying are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or confidential investigative data and will not be disclosed except as permitted by law.
- F. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying will not affect the complainant's or reporter's future employment, grades, or work assignments, or educational or work environment.
- G. The school district will respect the privacy of the complainant(s), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the school district's obligation to investigate, take appropriate action, and comply with any legal disclosure obligations.

## **V. SCHOOL DISTRICT ACTION**

- A. Upon receipt of a complaint or report of bullying, the school district shall undertake or authorize an investigation by school district officials or a third party designated by the school district.
- B. The school district may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the complainant, reporter, students, or others pending completion of an investigation of bullying, consistent with applicable law.
- C. Upon completion of the investigation, the school district will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, remediation, termination, or discharge. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to try to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited behavior. School district action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with the requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements; applicable statutory authority, including the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act; school district policies; and regulations.
- D. The school district is not authorized to disclose to a victim private educational or personnel data regarding an alleged perpetrator who is a student or employee of the school district. School officials will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of students involved in a bullying incident and the remedial action taken, to the extent permitted by law, based on a confirmed report.

## **VI. REPRISAL**

The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district who retaliates against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged bullying or against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, or against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such bullying. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, harassment, or intentional disparate treatment.

## **VII. TRAINING AND EDUCATION**

- A. The school district annually will provide information and any applicable training to school district staff regarding this policy.
- B. The school district annually will provide education and information to students regarding bullying, including information regarding this school district policy prohibiting bullying, the harmful effects of bullying, and other applicable initiatives to prevent bullying.
- C. The administration of the school district is directed to implement programs and other initiatives to prevent bullying, to respond to bullying in a manner that does not stigmatize the victim, and to make resources or referrals to resources available to victims of bullying.

## **VIII. NOTICE**

The school district will give annual notice of this policy to students, parents or guardians, and staff, and this policy shall appear in the student handbook.

**Legal References:** Minn. Stat. § 121A.03 (Sexual, Religious and Racial Harassment and Violence)  
Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40-121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)  
Minn. Stat. § 121A.69 (Hazing Policy)

**Cross References:** MSBA/MASA Model Policy 403 (Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of School District Employees)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 413 (Harassment and Violence)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 414 (Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect or Physical or Sexual Abuse)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 415 (Mandated Reporting of Maltreatment of Vulnerable Adults)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 423 (Employee-Student Relationships)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 501 (School Weapons Policy)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 507 (Corporal Punishment)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 515 (Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 521 (Student Disability Nondiscrimination)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 522 (Student Sex Nondiscrimination)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 525 (Violence Prevention)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 526 (Hazing Prohibition)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 529 (Staff Notification of Violent Behavior by Students)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 709 (Student Transportation Safety Policy)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 711 (Videotaping on School Buses)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 712 (Video Surveillance Other Than on Buses)

## The Facts

- ⇒ 160,000 children skip school every day because they fear being attacked or intimidated by other students.
- ⇒ The U.S. Department of Justice reports that 37% of all students don't feel safe at school.
- ⇒ The National Institute of Health reports that one-third of all students in 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grades nationwide experienced some kind of bullying.
- ⇒ 90% of 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> graders report being victims of bullying behavior.
- ⇒ Six in ten children who bully will have a criminal record before age 24.
- ⇒ Although much bullying happens where adults cannot see or hear it, it also happens when adults are present. Often adults don't do anything to stop the bullying. Students reported that 71% of the teachers or other adults in the classroom ignored bullying incidents.
- ⇒ Bullying takes lots of forms and bullies keep bullying as long as it works – as long as it makes them feel more powerful.
- ⇒ Many children and teens are bullies or victims of bullies, but the largest number of children and teens are bystanders – witnesses to bullying.
- ⇒ Girls can be bullies too, although bullying by girls is more likely to show up as spreading rumors, leaving people out of social events, teasing about clothes or boyfriends, or threatening to withdraw a friendship.
- ⇒ Bullying begins in elementary school, peaks in middle school, and falls off in high school. It does not, however, disappear altogether.
- ⇒ When asked, students uniformly expressed the desire that teachers intervene rather than ignore teasing and bullying.

## Resources

The information in this handout was derived from the following sources. More in-depth content and resources can be found on these websites:

[www.co.dakota.mn.us/public\\_health](http://www.co.dakota.mn.us/public_health)  
[www.antibullying.net](http://www.antibullying.net)  
[www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)  
[www.bullybeware.com](http://www.bullybeware.com)  
[www.bullying.org](http://www.bullying.org)  
[www.colorado.edu](http://www.colorado.edu)  
[www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying)  
[www.education-world.com](http://www.education-world.com)  
[www.findarticles.com](http://www.findarticles.com)  
[www.mcgruff.org/tpbully](http://www.mcgruff.org/tpbully)  
[www.moralintelligence.com](http://www.moralintelligence.com)  
[www.operationrespect.org](http://www.operationrespect.org)  
[www.naesp.org](http://www.naesp.org)  
[www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org)  
[www.nobully.org](http://www.nobully.org)  
[www.nssc1.org](http://www.nssc1.org)  
[www.scre.ac.uk/bully](http://www.scre.ac.uk/bully)  
[www.successunlimited.co.uk/bullycide](http://www.successunlimited.co.uk/bullycide)  
[www.k12.wa.us/safetycenter](http://www.k12.wa.us/safetycenter)  
[www.dontlaugh.org](http://www.dontlaugh.org)  
[www.co.dakota.mn.us/attorney](http://www.co.dakota.mn.us/attorney)  
[www.climb.org](http://www.climb.org)

Office of Dakota County Attorney  
James C. Backstrom  
County Attorney

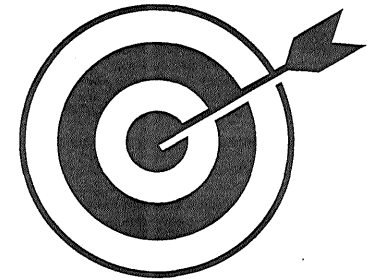


Dakota County Judicial Center  
1560 Highway 55  
Hastings, Minnesota 55033-2392  
Telephone: 651-438-4438

Our thanks to the Monmouth County Prosecutors Office, New Jersey for their contributions to the content of this brochure

Bullying and Harassment...  
A serious problem for kids!

# Schools GET



# ON TARGET

...Working together to keep  
kids safe!

Offered by:

James C. Backstrom  
Dakota County Attorney  
1560 Highway 55  
Hastings, MN 55033  
Phone: 651-438-4438

[www.co.dakota.mn.us/attorney](http://www.co.dakota.mn.us/attorney)

SE 10



## In the Bully's Eye

Bullying behavior may seem rather insignificant compared to kids bringing guns to school and getting involved with drugs. Bullying is often dismissed as part of growing up. But it's actually an early form of aggressive, violent behavior.

Bullies don't go away when elementary school ends; bullying actually peaks in middle school and continues into high school. It can lead to serious problems and dangerous situations for both the victim and the bully. Statistics show that bullies later have more court convictions, alcoholism and more mental health issues.

Although bullies have many faces, all bullies have certain characteristics in common. Bullies:

- are concerned with their own pleasure rather than thinking about anyone else
- want power
- are willing to use other people to get what they want
- feel hurt inside
- find it difficult to see things from someone else's perspective

Bullies can be categorized as two types: extrovert and introvert.

⇒ The **EXTROVERT** bully may be outgoing, aggressive, active, and expressive; more interested in things outside themselves than their own thoughts and feelings; rebels; rough-and-tough, angry and mean on the surface; get their way by brute force or openly harassing someone; may feel inferior, insecure and unsure of themselves; reject rules and regulations.

⇒ The **INTROVERT** bully may not want to be recognized; reluctant to rebel; conforms to society; controls by smooth-talking, says the "right" thing at the "right" time, misleading, lies, says/does whatever they think the other person wants to hear; deceive others into thinking they mean well; work on becoming "teacher's pet"; get power through cunning, manipulation, and deception.

## The Eye of the Target = Victim

Although anyone can be the target of bullying behavior, the victim is usually singled out because of his or her psychological or physical traits.

A typical victim is likely to be shy, sensitive, perhaps anxious or insecure. Some children are picked on for physical reasons such as being overweight or physically small, wearing different or "weird" clothing, having a disability, or belonging to a different race or religious faith. In other words, victims are identified as "different" in the bully's point of view.

## The Impact of Bullying

Bullying can have lasting effects on everyone involved – bullies, victims and bystanders. Students who are bullied often develop low self-esteem. They frequently feel isolated – a feeling they carry into adulthood. Grades may suffer because the victim's attention is not on learning. With continued bullying, even "good" students may turn to violence, such as starting fights or bringing weapons to school in efforts to protect themselves or to seek revenge on their tormentors.

Bystanders who witness bullying – both children and adults – are also affected. They often must deal with the lowered self-esteem and loss of control that accompany feeling unsafe and unable to take action. Children and adults may turn the other way when someone else is being hurt because they feel powerless to do anything about it. They, too, are scared.

## Ratting vs. Reporting

Ratting occurs when a student tells about an inappropriate act with the idea of getting another student into trouble with school administration.

Reporting happens when a student reports an inappropriate act to protect their own safety or the safety of another student.

## What School Staff Can Do

No one solution works well in every situation, but there are a variety of strategies schools can use:

- Do not tolerate bullying behavior.
- Enforce school policies that seek to reduce violence. Develop and implement a *Safe School Plan*.
- Foster an atmosphere of kindness and concern toward others.
- Use every opportunity to build self-esteem.
- Encourage students to report crimes or activities that make them suspicious.
- Encourage children to be part of the solution.
- Teach simple social skills to give children tools to develop positive relationships with others.
- Let students know that you are available to discuss problems or concerns privately.
- Discuss the topic of bullies with students occasionally.
- Teach cooperation by having students work in groups.
- Involve parents – invite them to talk with you about their child's progress and concerns.
- Learn how to recognize the warning signs that a child might be headed for violence.
- Alert school counselors or administrators to any problems so they can refer students to appropriate services if necessary.
- Teach children what to do if they are bullied or see someone being bullied:
  - Hang out with friends - there is safety in numbers.
  - Say "no" to a bully's demands from the start. If the bully makes threats with a weapon, give in to the demands and immediately tell an adult.
  - Tell the bully assertively to stop threatening ("Get a life – leave me alone.").
  - Do not physically fight back: experience shows that this actually increases the likelihood of continued victimization.
  - Seek immediate help from an adult.
  - Report bullying to school personnel and your parents.
  - If you are assaulted or threatened with a weapon or have your personal belongings stolen, report the crime to the police.
  - Avoid or ignore the bully.
  - If safety is at stake, walk away or run if needed.



**Statement of Walter B. Roberts, Jr.  
Testimony in Support of SF 40/41  
Legislation to Increase Antibullying Protection for K-12 Schools**

My name is Walter Roberts, Jr. I am a Professor of Counselor Education at Minnesota State University, Mankato, whose research and consulting focus is in the area of bullying and harassment prevention in schools. I will give a brief statement now and be available to answer questions during the hearing.

School safety is of paramount importance for everyone. It knows no political party. During the last two school years, Minnesota—and the nation—have had the misfortune to witness some of the ugly brutality of schoolyard bullying. We are seeing first-hand how such abuse can sometimes drive those who receive it over the edge. Some turn inward with their despair; others explode. The behaviors of those who are bullied do not develop in a single day. They are often the consequence of years of intimidation and taunting which occurs in the one place where we can most likely do something to prevent it—our schools.

The victims of school-based intimidation are at risk for a number of long-term physical and psychological consequences. First and foremost, however, is the educational impact. Quite bluntly, children who do not feel safe in school cannot learn to the best of their potential. And—again to be quite blunt—while schools cannot prevent every act that might negatively impact a child, there is absolutely no excuse for schools to not have policies in place which address the problem of peer-on-peer intimidation in all its forms, and, even more importantly, taking action based upon those policies.

Lip service does children little good when it comes to stopping bullying within our schools. Currently, schools are not required to have in place policies which address generic bullying within the K-12 student body. Minnesota statutes cover some instances of bullying, but not others. Some school districts have acted responsibly and proactively to take it upon themselves to adopt policies addressing this shortcoming. I applaud those districts which have done so and—more importantly—taken the steps to enforce their policies.

The legislation proposed today will help close a loophole in the protection of our state's children in all the school districts in Minnesota. I have reviewed the Minnesota School Boards Association's recommended comprehensive antibullying policy. It is my belief that this proposed bill and the MSBA recommendation fit hand-in-glove. The MSBA has recognized the problem of bullying in schools and has recommended a sound policy to school districts. ***We have a chance to put in play a win-win-win situation for Minnesota:*** The kids win through being better protected by stronger policies against intimidation; MSBA wins through offering its model policy; and the Legislature wins by responding to the public's desire to close the loophole in existing antibullying policies and keeping our schools safe.

School safety is a nonpartisan issue. Comprehensive, statewide bullying prevention policy is long overdue and is a proposal that all Minnesotans can support.

Thank you for the consideration of this viewpoint.

Senators Pappas, Kelley and Skoglund introduced--  
S.F. No. 1314: Referred to the Committee on Education.

A bill for an act

relating to education; authorizing negotiation of  
additional probationary period upon promotion from  
assistant principal to principal in schools in cities  
of the first class; amending Minnesota Statutes 2004,  
section 122A.41, subdivision 5a.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2004, section 122A.41,  
subdivision 5a, is amended to read:

Subd. 5a. [PROBATIONARY PERIOD FOR PRINCIPALS HIRED  
INTERNALLY.] A board and the exclusive representative of the  
school principals in the district may negotiate a plan for a  
probationary period of up to two school years for licensed  
teachers employed by the board who are subsequently employed by  
the board as a licensed school principal or assistant principal  
and an additional probationary period of up to two years for  
licensed assistant principals employed by the board who are  
subsequently employed by the board as a licensed school  
principal.

[EFFECTIVE DATE.] This section is effective August 1, 2005.

**Senate Counsel, Research,  
and Fiscal Analysis**

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JO ANNE ZOFF SELLNER  
DIRECTOR

# Senate

State of Minnesota

## **S.F. No. 878 -Comprehensive Family Life and Sexuality Education Programs**

**Author:** Senator Sandra Pappas

**Prepared by:** Shelby Winiiecki, Senate Research (651/296-5259)



**Date:** March 29, 2005

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### **Section 1. [Comprehensive family life and sexuality education programs.]**

**Subdivision 1. [Definitions.]** defines “comprehensive family life and sexuality education” as education in grades seven through 12 that includes abstinence, use of protection, and contraception.

**Subdivision 2. [Curriculum requirements.]** allows for a school district to independently establish their policy and curriculum.

**Subdivision 3. [Notice and parental options.]** requires districts to establish procedures on providing parents or guardians with reasonable notice regarding the comprehensive family life and sexuality education program and the opportunity to inspect any educational materials. If the parent chooses not to have their child participate, the district must reasonably restrict that child’s access to the material.

**Subdivision 4. [Assistance to school districts.]** indicates that the Department of Education may establish regional training sites to provide training, technical assistance, issue management and policy development, and funding for grants for school-based programs.

**Section 2. [Repealer.]** repeals Minnesota Statutes 2004, section 121A.23 [Programs to prevent and reduce the risks of sexually transmitted infections and diseases].

SW:vs

Senators Pappas, Langseth, Kiscaden, Senjem and Kubly introduced—

S. F. No. 878 Referred to the Committee on Education

1 A bill for an act  
2 relating to education; providing for comprehensive  
3 family life and sexuality education programs;  
4 proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes,  
5 chapter 121A; repealing Minnesota Statutes 2004,  
6 section 121A.23.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

8 Section 1. [121A.231] [COMPREHENSIVE FAMILY LIFE AND  
9 SEXUALITY EDUCATION PROGRAMS.]

10 Subdivision 1. [DEFINITIONS.] (a) "Comprehensive family  
11 life and sexuality education" means education in grades 7  
12 through 12 that:

13 (1) respects community values and encourages family  
14 communication;

15 (2) develops skills in communication, decision making, and  
16 conflict resolution;

17 (3) contributes to healthy relations;

18 (4) provides human development and sexuality education that  
19 is age appropriate and medically accurate;

20 (5) promotes responsible sexual behavior, including  
21 abstinence, use of protection, and contraception; and

22 (6) promotes individual responsibility.

23 (b) "Age appropriate" refers to topics, messages, and  
24 teaching methods suitable to particular ages or age groups of  
25 children and adolescents, based on developing cognitive,  
26 emotional, and behavioral capacity typical for the age or age

1 group.

2 (c) "Medically accurate" means verified or supported by  
3 research conducted in compliance with scientific methods and  
4 published in peer-reviewed journals, where appropriate, and  
5 recognized as accurate and objective by professional  
6 organizations and agencies in the relevant field, such as the  
7 federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American  
8 Public Health Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics,  
9 or the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

10 Subd. 2. [CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS.] (a) A school district  
11 may offer and may independently establish policies, procedures,  
12 curriculum, and services for providing comprehensive family life  
13 and sexuality education that is age appropriate and medically  
14 accurate for kindergarten through grade 6.

15 (b) A school district must offer and may independently  
16 establish policies, procedures, curriculum, and services for  
17 providing comprehensive family life and sexuality education that  
18 is age appropriate and medically accurate for grades 7 through  
19 12.

20 Subd. 3. [NOTICE AND PARENTAL OPTIONS.] (a) It is the  
21 legislature's intent to encourage pupils to communicate with  
22 their parents or guardians about human sexuality and to respect  
23 rights of parents or guardians to supervise their children's  
24 education on these subjects.

25 (b) Parents or guardians may excuse their children from all  
26 or part of a comprehensive family life and sexuality education  
27 program.

28 (c) A school district must establish policies and  
29 procedures for providing parents or guardians reasonable notice  
30 with the following information:

31 (1) if the district is offering a comprehensive family life  
32 and sexuality education program to the parents' or guardians'  
33 child during the course of the year;

34 (2) how the parents or guardians may inspect the written  
35 and audio/visual educational materials used in the program and  
36 the process for inspection;

1 (3) if the program is presented by school district  
2 personnel or outside consultants, and if outside consultants are  
3 used, who they may be; and

4 (4) parents' or guardians' right to choose not to have  
5 their child participate in the program and the procedure for  
6 exercising that right.

7 (d) A school district must establish policies and  
8 procedures for reasonably restricting the availability of  
9 written and audio/visual educational materials from public view  
10 of students who have been excused from all or part of a  
11 comprehensive family life and sexuality education program at the  
12 request of a parent or guardian.

13 Subd. 4. [ASSISTANCE TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS.] (a) The  
14 Department of Education may offer services to school districts  
15 to help them implement effective comprehensive family life and  
16 sexuality education programs. In providing these services, the  
17 department may contract with a school district, or a school  
18 district in partnership with a local health agency or a  
19 nonprofit organization, to establish up to eight regional  
20 training sites, taking into account geographical balance, to  
21 provide:

22 (1) training for teachers, parents, and community members  
23 in the development of comprehensive family life and sexuality  
24 education curriculum or services and in planning for monitoring  
25 and evaluation activities;

26 (2) resource staff persons to provide expert training,  
27 curriculum development and implementation, and evaluation  
28 services;

29 (3) technical assistance to promote and coordinate  
30 community, parent, and youth forums in communities identified as  
31 having high needs for comprehensive family life and sexuality  
32 education;

33 (4) technical assistance for issue management and policy  
34 development training for school boards, superintendents,  
35 principals, and administrators across the state; and

36 (5) funding for grants to school-based comprehensive family

1 life and sexuality education programs to promote innovation and  
2 to recognize outstanding performance and promote replication of  
3 demonstrably effective strategies.

4 (b) Technical assistance provided by the department to  
5 school districts or regional training sites may:

6 (1) promote instruction and use of materials that are age  
7 appropriate;

8 (2) provide information that is medically accurate and  
9 objective;

10 (3) provide instruction and promote use of materials that  
11 are respectful of marriage and commitments in relationships;

12 (4) provide instruction and promote use of materials that  
13 are appropriate for use with pupils and family experiences based  
14 on race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic and cultural  
15 background, and appropriately accommodate alternative learning  
16 based on language or disability;

17 (5) provide instruction and promote use of materials that  
18 encourage pupils to communicate with their parents or guardians  
19 about human sexuality;

20 (6) provide instruction and promote use of age-appropriate  
21 materials that teach abstinence from sexual intercourse as the  
22 only certain way to prevent unintended pregnancy or sexually  
23 transmitted infections, including HIV, and provide information  
24 about the role and value of abstinence while also providing  
25 medically accurate information on other methods of preventing  
26 and reducing risk for unintended pregnancy and sexually  
27 transmitted infections;

28 (7) provide instruction and promote use of age-appropriate  
29 materials that are medically accurate in explaining transmission  
30 modes, risks, symptoms, and treatments for sexually transmitted  
31 infections, including HIV;

32 (8) provide instruction and promote use of age-appropriate  
33 materials that address varied societal views on sexuality,  
34 sexual behaviors, pregnancy, and sexually transmitted  
35 infections, including HIV, in an age-appropriate manner;

36 (9) provide instruction and promote use of age-appropriate



1 materials that provide information about the effectiveness and  
2 safety of all FDA-approved methods for preventing and reducing  
3 risk for unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted  
4 infections, including HIV;

5 (10) provide instruction and promote use of age-appropriate  
6 materials that provide instruction in skills for making and  
7 implementing responsible decisions about sexuality;

8 (11) provide instruction and promote use of age-appropriate  
9 materials that provide instruction in skills for making and  
10 implementing responsible decisions about finding and using  
11 health services; and

12 (12) provide instruction and promote use of age-appropriate  
13 materials that do not teach or promote religious doctrine nor  
14 reflect or promote bias against any person on the basis of any  
15 category protected under the Minnesota Human Rights Act, chapter  
16 363A.

17 Sec. 2. [REPEALER.]

18 Minnesota Statutes 2004, section 121A.23, is repealed.

APPENDIX  
Repealed Minnesota Statutes for 05-0953

**121A.23 PROGRAMS TO PREVENT AND REDUCE THE RISKS OF SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS AND DISEASES.**

Subdivision 1. Sexually transmitted infections and diseases program. The commissioner of education, in consultation with the commissioner of health, shall assist districts in developing and implementing a program to prevent and reduce the risk of sexually transmitted infections and diseases, including but not exclusive to human immune deficiency virus and human papilloma virus. Each district must have a program that includes at least:

(1) planning materials, guidelines, and other technically accurate and updated information;

(2) a comprehensive, technically accurate, and updated curriculum that includes helping students to abstain from sexual activity until marriage;

(3) cooperation and coordination among districts and SCs;

(4) a targeting of adolescents, especially those who may be at high risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections and diseases, for prevention efforts;

(5) involvement of parents and other community members;

(6) in-service training for appropriate district staff and school board members;

(7) collaboration with state agencies and organizations having a sexually transmitted infection and disease prevention or sexually transmitted infection and disease risk reduction program;

(8) collaboration with local community health services, agencies and organizations having a sexually transmitted infection and disease prevention or sexually transmitted infection and disease risk reduction program; and

(9) participation by state and local student organizations.

The department may provide assistance at a neutral site to a nonpublic school participating in a district's program. District programs must not conflict with the health and wellness curriculum developed under Laws 1987, chapter 398, article 5, section 2, subdivision 7.

If a district fails to develop and implement a program to prevent and reduce the risk of sexually transmitted infection and disease, the department must assist the service cooperative in the region serving that district to develop or implement the program.

Subd. 2. Funding sources. Districts may accept funds for sexually transmitted infection and disease prevention programs developed and implemented under this section from public and private sources including public health funds and foundations, department professional development funds, federal block grants or other federal or state grants.

**Senate Counsel, Research,  
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**Senate**  

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**State of Minnesota**

**S.F. No. 1262 -Comprehensive Family Life and Sex Education  
Programs**

**Author:** Senator Bob Kierlin

**Prepared by:** Shelby Winiecki, Senate Research (651/296-5259) 

**Date:** March 29, 2005

---

**Section 1. [Comprehensive family life and sex education programs.]**

**Subdivision 1. [Definitions.]** defines “comprehensive family life and sex education” as education in grades seven through 12 that includes an abstinence-first approach to delaying initiation of sexual activity and the use of protection and contraception.

**Subdivision 2. [Curriculum requirements.]** allows for a school district to independently establish their policy and curriculum.

**Subdivision 3. [Notice and parental options.]** requires districts to establish procedures on providing parents or guardians with reasonable notice regarding the comprehensive family life and sex education program and the opportunity to inspect any educational materials. If the parent chooses not to have their child participate, the district must reasonably restrict that child’s access to the material.

**Subdivision 4. [Assistance to school districts.]** indicates that the Department of Education may establish regional training sites to provide training, technical assistance, issue management and policy development, and funding for grants for school-based programs.

**Section 2. [Repealer.]** repeals Minnesota Statutes 2004, section 121A.23 [Programs to prevent and reduce the risks of sexually transmitted infections and diseases].

SW:vs

Senators Kierlin, Koering, Kiscaden, Pappas and Dille introduced--  
S.F. No. 1262: Referred to the Committee on Education.

1 A bill for an act

2 relating to education; providing for comprehensive  
3 family life and sex education programs; proposing  
4 coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter  
5 121A; repealing Minnesota Statutes 2004, section  
6 121A.23.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

8 Section 1. [121A.231] [COMPREHENSIVE FAMILY LIFE AND SEX  
9 EDUCATION PROGRAMS.]

10 Subdivision 1. [DEFINITIONS.] (a) "Comprehensive family  
11 life and sex education" means education in grades 7 through 12  
12 that:

13 (1) respects community values and encourages family  
14 communication;

15 (2) develops skills in communication, decision making, and  
16 conflict resolution;

17 (3) contributes to healthy relations;

18 (4) provides human development and sex education that is  
19 age appropriate and medically accurate;

20 (5) includes an abstinence-first approach to delaying  
21 initiation of sexual activity that emphasizes abstinence while  
22 also including education about the use of protection and  
23 contraception;

24 (6) promotes responsible sexual behavior; and

25 (7) promotes individual responsibility.

26 (b) "Age appropriate" refers to topics, messages, and

1 teaching methods suitable to particular ages or age groups of  
2 children and adolescents, based on developing cognitive,  
3 emotional, and behavioral capacity typical for the age or age  
4 group.

5 (c) "Medically accurate" means verified or supported by  
6 research conducted in compliance with scientific methods and  
7 published in peer-reviewed journals, where appropriate, and  
8 recognized as accurate and objective by professional  
9 organizations and agencies in the relevant field, such as the  
10 federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American  
11 Public Health Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics,  
12 or the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

13 Subd. 2. [CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS.] (a) A school district  
14 may offer and may independently establish policies, procedures,  
15 curriculum, and services for providing comprehensive family life  
16 and sex education that is age appropriate and medically accurate  
17 for kindergarten through grade 6.

18 (b) A school district must offer and may independently  
19 establish policies, procedures, curriculum, and services for  
20 providing comprehensive family life and sex education that is  
21 age appropriate and medically accurate for grades 7 through 12.

22 Subd. 3. [NOTICE AND PARENTAL OPTIONS.] (a) It is the  
23 legislature's intent to encourage pupils to communicate with  
24 their parents or guardians about human sexuality and to respect  
25 rights of parents or guardians to supervise their children's  
26 education on these subjects.

27 (b) Parents or guardians may excuse their children from all  
28 or part of a comprehensive family life and sex education program.

29 (c) A school district must establish policies and  
30 procedures for providing parents or guardians reasonable notice  
31 with the following information:

32 (1) if the district is offering a comprehensive family life  
33 and sex education program to the parents' or guardians' child  
34 during the course of the year;

35 (2) how the parents or guardians may inspect the written  
36 and audiovisual educational materials used in the program and

1 the process for inspection;

2 (3) if the program is presented by school district  
3 personnel or outside consultants, and if outside consultants are  
4 used, who they may be; and

5 (4) parents' or guardians' right to choose not to have  
6 their child participate in the program and the procedure for  
7 exercising that right.

8 (d) A school district must establish policies and  
9 procedures for reasonably restricting the availability of  
10 written and audiovisual educational materials from public view  
11 of students who have been excused from all or part of a  
12 comprehensive family life and sex education program at the  
13 request of a parent or guardian.

14 Subd. 4. [ASSISTANCE TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS.] (a) The  
15 Department of Education may offer services to school districts  
16 to help them implement effective comprehensive family life and  
17 sex education programs. In providing these services, the  
18 department may contract with a school district, or a school  
19 district in partnership with a local health agency or a  
20 nonprofit organization, to establish up to eight regional  
21 training sites, taking into account geographical balance, to  
22 provide:

23 (1) training for teachers, parents, and community members  
24 in the development of comprehensive family life and sex  
25 education curriculum or services and in planning for monitoring  
26 and evaluation activities;

27 (2) resource staff persons to provide expert training,  
28 curriculum development and implementation, and evaluation  
29 services;

30 (3) technical assistance to promote and coordinate  
31 community, parent, and youth forums in communities identified as  
32 having high needs for comprehensive family life and sex  
33 education;

34 (4) technical assistance for issue management and policy  
35 development training for school boards, superintendents,  
36 principals, and administrators across the state; and

1 (5) funding for grants to school-based comprehensive family  
2 life and sex education programs to promote innovation and to  
3 recognize outstanding performance and promote replication of  
4 demonstrably effective strategies.

5 (b) Technical assistance provided by the department to  
6 school districts or regional training sites may:

7 (1) promote instruction and use of materials that are age  
8 appropriate;

9 (2) provide information that is medically accurate and  
10 objective;

11 (3) provide instruction and promote use of materials that  
12 are respectful of marriage and commitments in relationships;

13 (4) provide instruction and promote use of materials that  
14 are appropriate for use with pupils and family experiences based  
15 on race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic and cultural  
16 background, and appropriately accommodate alternative learning  
17 based on language or disability;

18 (5) provide instruction and promote use of materials that  
19 encourage pupils to communicate with their parents or guardians  
20 about human sexuality;

21 (6) provide instruction and promote use of age-appropriate  
22 materials that teach abstinence from sexual intercourse as the  
23 only certain way to prevent unintended pregnancy or sexually  
24 transmitted infections, including HIV, and provide information  
25 about the role and value of abstinence while also providing  
26 medically accurate information on other methods of preventing  
27 and reducing risk for unintended pregnancy and sexually  
28 transmitted infections;

29 (7) provide instruction and promote use of age-appropriate  
30 materials that are medically accurate in explaining transmission  
31 modes, risks, symptoms, and treatments for sexually transmitted  
32 infections, including HIV;

33 (8) provide instruction and promote use of age-appropriate  
34 materials that address varied societal views on sexuality,  
35 sexual behaviors, pregnancy, and sexually transmitted  
36 infections, including HIV, in an age-appropriate manner;

1       (9) provide instruction and promote use of age-appropriate  
2 materials that provide information about the effectiveness and  
3 safety of all FDA-approved methods for preventing and reducing  
4 risk for unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted  
5 infections, including HIV;

6       (10) provide instruction and promote use of age-appropriate  
7 materials that provide instruction in skills for making and  
8 implementing responsible decisions about sexuality;

9       (11) provide instruction and promote use of age-appropriate  
10 materials that provide instruction in skills for making and  
11 implementing responsible decisions about finding and using  
12 health services; and

13       (12) provide instruction and promote use of age-appropriate  
14 materials that do not teach or promote religious doctrine nor  
15 reflect or promote bias against any person on the basis of any  
16 category protected under the Minnesota Human Rights Act, chapter  
17 363A.

18       Sec. 2. [REPEALER.]

19       Minnesota Statutes 2004, section 121A.23, is repealed.



APPENDIX  
Repealed Minnesota Statutes for 05-2798

**121A.23 PROGRAMS TO PREVENT AND REDUCE THE RISKS OF SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS AND DISEASES.**

Subdivision 1. Sexually transmitted infections and diseases program. The commissioner of education, in consultation with the commissioner of health, shall assist districts in developing and implementing a program to prevent and reduce the risk of sexually transmitted infections and diseases, including but not exclusive to human immune deficiency virus and human papilloma virus. Each district must have a program that includes at least:

- (1) planning materials, guidelines, and other technically accurate and updated information;
- (2) a comprehensive, technically accurate, and updated curriculum that includes helping students to abstain from sexual activity until marriage;
- (3) cooperation and coordination among districts and SCs;
- (4) a targeting of adolescents, especially those who may be at high risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections and diseases, for prevention efforts;
- (5) involvement of parents and other community members;
- (6) in-service training for appropriate district staff and school board members;
- (7) collaboration with state agencies and organizations having a sexually transmitted infection and disease prevention or sexually transmitted infection and disease risk reduction program;
- (8) collaboration with local community health services, agencies and organizations having a sexually transmitted infection and disease prevention or sexually transmitted infection and disease risk reduction program; and
- (9) participation by state and local student organizations.

The department may provide assistance at a neutral site to a nonpublic school participating in a district's program. District programs must not conflict with the health and wellness curriculum developed under Laws 1987, chapter 398, article 5, section 2, subdivision 7.

If a district fails to develop and implement a program to prevent and reduce the risk of sexually transmitted infection and disease, the department must assist the service cooperative in the region serving that district to develop or implement the program.

Subd. 2. Funding sources. Districts may accept funds for sexually transmitted infection and disease prevention programs developed and implemented under this section from public and private sources including public health funds and foundations, department professional development funds, federal block grants or other federal or state grants.

1 Senator ..... moves to amend S.F. No. 878 as follows:

2 Page 1, delete line 21 and insert "an abstinence-first  
3 approach to delaying initiation to sexual activity that  
4 emphasizes abstinence while also including education about the  
5 use of protection and contraception; and"

March 30, 2005

Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee:

My name is Dr. Christopher Reif and I am offering this testimony in support of comprehensive sex education.

As a Family Physician, I have seen the importance of sex education for people of all ages. I have seen children as young as five and six ask some very good questions about sex. This means we need good answers from their parents, doctors and teachers. I have talked with junior high and high school teens about the many ways that sexuality comes into their lives. As we all know, teens hear about sex from their friends, their music, movies, and videos. It's up to us as their parents, teachers, and physicians to listen to the their questions and help them learn what is true and what is not true about sex. And then as teens grow into adulthood, they need to keep learning about sexual health so that they can deal with the new issues that always arise and then one day can themselves be good parents, teachers, and professionals.

All of this depends on a complete and thorough education of our children through their school years. As a father, I have seen my four children grow in their understanding of sexual health from our teaching at home, and at our church, and through our schools. Because of this, sex is something they know about, can talk about, and I am confident will make right and healthy choices about.

You can help the kids, parents, teachers and health professionals of Minnesota with good sex education. I ask for your support of Senate File 878, the comprehensive sexuality education bill.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Thank you,

Christopher Reif, MD, MPH  
Hennepin County Medical Center  
Family Practice Residency Program  
5 West Lake Street  
Minneapolis, Mn 55408  
Office/Voice 612-545-9284  
Mail code #618  
Fax 612-545-9259

SF878/SF1262



Minnesota AIDS Project™

# MAP Facts

## Comprehensive Sexual Health Education

### MAP Action

**MAP supports proven sexual health education programs that teach both abstinence and contraception to reduce the risk of HIV, STIs and unintended pregnancy.**

MAP opposes any efforts to impose abstinence-until marriage curriculum requirements that are costly and ineffective at encouraging young people to delay sexual activity.

The 1999 social conservatives have advanced similar proposals intended to undermine the effectiveness of comprehensive sexual health education.

### For Information:

Contact MAP community affairs  
612-341-2060 (metro)  
800-243-7321 (statewide)  
612-341-4057 (fax)  
[www.mnaidsproject.org](http://www.mnaidsproject.org)  
[community.affairs@mnaidsproject.org](mailto:community.affairs@mnaidsproject.org)

### Comprehensive is Just That: *Comprehensive*

Comprehensive sexual health education includes abstinence as well as risk-reduction. Contrary to what opponents say, it is not “teaching young people how to have sex”. The curriculum that is actually being used in Minnesota schools is overwhelmingly abstinence-based. A recent survey stated that 94% of schools were teaching abstinence as the most effective method to prevent HIV and STIs. Comprehensive programs also include communication and refusal skills, healthy relationships, abuse, psychological maturation of teens, emotional, social and legal impact of sexual behavior, prevention of sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy and their impacts, condom efficacy and anatomy. *All* young people need this information, regardless of when they become sexually active

### Comp Sex Ed Has Worked in Minnesota

Minnesota enacted the K-12 HIV curriculum requirement in 1988, calling for sexual health education that was “comprehensive, technically accurate and updated.” During the subsequent ten-year period, there was a drop in the percentage of Minnesota students who reported having had sexual intercourse, an increase in condom use among those who had sex, and an increase in communication with partners about protection from sexually transmitted infections.

### Abstinence-Only Education Does Not Work

In contrast, abstinence until marriage education does not include any information on contraception or STI prevention. It relies on scare tactics and grossly overstates contraception failure rates. It does not provide young people with information they will need for healthy lives. Hundreds of studies have shown sex education does not lead to earlier or increased sexual activity, with one exception — programs teaching abstinence as the only option! There are no scientific, published studies that show abstinence-only programs having any effect.

### Minnesota’s Abstinence-Only Experiment a Failure

Through Education Now and Babies Later, Minnesota has been investing resources in a program that offers an abstinence-only message in some communities. An extensive evaluation of the program released in January 2004 showed that young people who participated were no less likely than their peers to engage in sexual activity, demonstrating the continued failure to this approach.

In the 2003 legislative session, legislation was proposed requiring that school districts implement a costly dual-track system with an abstinence-only until marriage curriculum. Proponents of this approach argued that it would have no fiscal impact as the state offered this curriculum already. When their offices were asked which curriculum they were referring to, it turned out to be the first 5 of 10 segments of Postponing Sexual Involvement, which was also used in ENABL. Interestingly, now that it has been found to be ineffective, proponents of the dual-track system are now saying that ENABL wasn’t a “true” abstinence-only until marriage approach which begs the question what were they really referring to in the 2003 session.

### Minnesotans Support Comp Sex Ed

Nine out of ten Minnesotans support sexuality education in high schools. 77 percent believe sexuality education should include both abstinence and contraception. 80 percent of parents disagree with the claim that combining teaching about abstinence and contraception sends a mixed message or encourages kids to have sex.

# The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

## Teen Pledges Barely Cut STD Rates, Study Says

By Ceci Connolly

**T**EENAGERS WHO take virginity pledges -- public declarations to abstain from sex -- are almost as likely to be infected with a sexually transmitted disease as those who never made the pledge, an eight-year study released yesterday found.

Although young people who sign a virginity pledge delay the initiation of sexual activity, marry at younger ages and have fewer sexual partners, they are also less likely to use condoms and more likely to experiment with oral and anal sex, said the researchers from Yale and Columbia universities.

"The sad story is that kids who are trying to preserve their technical virginity are, in some cases, engaging in much riskier behavior," said lead researcher Peter S. Bearman, a professor at Columbia's Institute for Social and Economic Research and Policy. "From a public health point of view, an abstinence movement that encourages no vaginal sex may inadvertently encourage other forms of alternative sex that are at higher risk of STDs."

### Rates of Disease

The findings are based on the federally funded National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, a survey begun in 1995 that tracked 20,000 young people from high school to young adulthood. At the start of the project, the students were 12 to 18 years old and agreed to detailed, sexually explicit interviews. They were re-interviewed in 1997 and again in 2002, when 11,500 also provided urine samples.

Virginity pledges emerged in the early 1990s based on the theory that young people would remain chaste if they had stronger community support -- or pressure -- to remain abstinent. Programs vary, but in most cases teenagers voluntarily sign a pledge or publicly announce their intention to abstain from sex. Often pledgers receive a pin or symbolize the promise and team up with an "accountability partner."

Since it was founded in 1993, the virginity group True Love Waits claims 2.4 million youths have signed a card stating: "Believing that true love waits, I make a commitment to God, myself, my family, those I date, and my future mate to be sexually pure until the day I enter marriage."

The study, published in the *Journal of Adolescent Health*, found that 20 percent of those surveyed said they had taken a virginity pledge. Bearman and co-author Hannah Bruckner broke them into two categories -- "inconsistent pledgers" and "consistent pledgers" -- to reflect the fact that some changed their status or their responses between interviews. Among those youngsters, 61 percent of the consistent pledgers and 79 percent of the inconsistent pledgers reported having intercourse before marrying or prior to 2002 interviews.

Almost 7 percent of the students who did not make a pledge were diagnosed with an STD, compared with 6.4 percent of the "inconsistent pledgers" and 4.6 percent of the "consistent pledgers." Bearman said those differences were not "statistically significant," although Robert Rector, who studies domestic policy issues at the conservative Heritage Institute, said he interpreted the data to mean that young people committed to the abstinence pledge were less likely to become infected.

The study did not detect major geographic differences but found that minorities were far more likely to have an STD. About one quarter of African American girls in the survey tested positive for at least one STD in 2002.

In terms of high-risk behavior, the raw numbers were small, but the gap was statistically significant, Bearman said. Just 2 percent of youth who never took a pledge said they had had anal or oral sex but not intercourse, compared with 13 percent of "consistent pledgers."

### Debate on Abstinence

The report sparked an immediate, bitter debate over the wisdom of teaching premarital abstinence.

Deborah Roffman, an educator and author of "Sex and Sensibility: The Thinking Parent's Guide to Talking Sense About Sex," said youths who take virginity pledges are often undereducated about sexual health. "Kids who are engaging in oral sex or anal sex will tell you they are practicing abstinence because they haven't had 'real sex' yet," she said.

Ralph DiClemente, a professor at Emory University's School of Public Health in Atlanta,

compared virginity pledges to adults' efforts to make New Year's resolutions.

"I wish it was that easy. We'd all be a lot healthier," he said. "If we can't do it as adults, why would we expect kids to be able to handle those issues?"

But Joe S. McIlhane Jr., chairman of the Medical Institute for Sexual Health, said the study offers an incomplete picture because it could not say whether sexually active teens who did not take a pledge had been pregnant or treated for an STD before the 2002 testing. The analysis "doesn't prove or disprove" assertions that virginity pledges are flawed, he said.

On the other hand, Bill Smith, public policy vice president for the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States, said, "Not only do virginity pledges not work to keep our young people safe, they are causing harm by undermining condom use, contraception and medical treatment."

Conservative academics said the paper overlooked earlier important findings about adolescents who take virginity pledges, most notably that they have fewer pregnancies and out-of-wedlock births.

"It's hugely successful on those variables," Rector said. "Bearman has focused in on the one variable he thinks can show they [pledgers] don't do better."

President Bush has requested \$206 million in federal funding for abstinence-only programs this year.

Several True Love Waits officials were unavailable Friday, according to a receptionist. Telephone calls to another virginity group, the Silver Ring Thing, were not returned.

# **Comprehensive Sex Education vs. Authentic Abstinence**

## **A Study of Competing Curricula**

Shannan Martin, Robert Rector, and Melissa G. Pardue



**Shannan Martin** is a Research Assistant in Welfare Policy at The Heritage Foundation.

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**WARNING:** This report contains sexually explicit, graphic material, as quoted from the material reviewed.



# Executive Summary

Sexual activity in the teen years is linked to a number of important social concerns. America is facing a rising threat of sexually transmitted diseases among teens. Teen pregnancy and out-of-wedlock childbearing remain significant problems. Teen sexual activity is linked to emotional problems and depression, and there is widespread concern that casual sexual activity at an early age can lead to unstable relationships and marital failure later in life.

Two basic approaches to these problems have emerged. The “safe sex” approach encourages teens to use contraception, especially condoms. By contrast, traditional abstinence education focuses on delaying the onset of sexual activity, teaches the harm of casual sexual activity, and encourages students to view sexuality as part of a process of developing intimacy and lifelong commitment. Traditional abstinence programs teach that teens should not be sexually active until they have at least finished high school and that the best life outcomes will be achieved by delaying sexual activity until marriage.

In recent years, a new approach, termed “abstinence-plus” or “comprehensive sexuality education,” has played a prominent role in the public debate over sex education. According to proponents, abstinence-plus or comprehensive sex-ed programs place a strong emphasis on abstinence but also contain information about contraception. This approach is presented as the middle ground between safe sex and abstinence.

## Quantitative Analysis of Sex-Ed Curricula

Heritage Foundation analysts recently conducted research comparing the content of the two different types of sex-ed curricula: authentic (traditional) abstinence programs and comprehensive sexuality education curricula—also called “abstinence-plus.” The researchers analyzed nine major comprehensive sex-ed/abstinence-plus curricula and nine traditional/authentic abstinence curricula. The analysis measured the percentage of text in each curriculum that is devoted to different topics or themes.

Quantitative analysis revealed that traditional abstinence and comprehensive sex-ed/abstinence-plus curricula differ radically in their contents and messages. It also revealed that the claim that abstinence-plus/comprehensive sex-ed curricula place an emphasis on abstinence is false.

On average, authentic or traditional abstinence curricula devote 53.7 percent of their page content to abstinence-related material. In addition, these curricula devote 17.4 percent of their content to the subjects of healthy relationships and the benefits of marriage, both of which directly reinforce the main theme of teen abstinence. Authentic abstinence curricula allocate zero percent of their content to promoting contraception.

Comprehensive sex-ed/abstinence-plus curricula take the opposite approach. On average, these curricula devote only 4.7 percent of their page content to the topic of abstinence and zero percent to healthy relationships and marriage. The primary focus of these curricula is on encouraging young people to use contraception. On average, comprehensive sex-ed curricula devote 28.6 percent of their page content to describing contraception and encouraging contraceptive use. Overall, comprehensive sex-ed curricula allocate six times more content to the goal of promoting contraception than to the goal of promoting abstinence. (See Table A and Chart A.)

**Table A**

| Table A  |   | The Heritage Foundation                |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <b>Comparison of Content of Authentic Abstinence and Comprehensive Sex-Education/Abstinence-Plus Curricula</b>   |   |  |  |
|  | Comprehensive Sex-Education/<br>Abstinence-Plus<br>Curricula* | Authentic<br>Abstinence<br>Curricula** |  |
| <b>Abstinence-Related Material</b><br>(Encouraging Abstinence; Abstinence-Related Risk Avoidance; Negative Consequences of Early, Non-marital Sex; Understanding the Differences Between "Love" and "Sex"; Promoting Abstinence)   | 4.75%   | 53.7%                                  |  |
| <b>Healthy Relationships and Benefits of Marriage</b>  | 0.0%  | 17.4%                                  |  |
| <b>Promoting Contraception</b>   | 28.65%  | 0.0%                                   |  |
| <b>HIV/STD Awareness</b>   | 24.6%   | 11.7%                                  |  |
| <b>Biology and Reproduction</b>  | 6.0%  | 2.6%                                   |  |
| <b>Sexual Behaviors and Sexual Alternatives to Intercourse</b>   | 1.6%  | 0.0%                                   |  |
| <b>Date Rape</b>   | 1.1%  | 0.6%                                   |  |
| <b>Dangers of Drugs and Alcohol</b>  | 1.6%  | 3.1%                                   |  |
| <b>General Behavioral Skills</b><br>(Communication Skills; Decision Making and Goal Setting; General and Short-Term Refusal Skills; General Risk Avoidance)  | 25.0%   | 10.9%                                  |  |
| <b>Miscellaneous</b><br>(Volunteerism and Career Planning; Open-Ended Discussion on Families; Other)   | 6.7%  | 0.0%                                   |  |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>100.0%</b>   | <b>100.0%</b>                          |  |
| <p>* AIDS Prevention for Adolescents in School; Becoming a Responsible Teen; Be Proud! Be Responsible!; Focus on Kids; Get Real About AIDS; Reducing the Risk; Safer Choices 1 &amp; 2; Teen Outreach Program; Teen Talk.</p> <p>** Choosing the Best Life; Game Plan; Heritage Keepers; No Apologies; Operation Keepsake; Sex Respect; Teen-Aid; Wait Training; Why kNOW.</p> |   |  |  |

## **Weakness of Abstinence Messages in Comprehensive Sex-Ed Curricula**

Moreover, the calculation that comprehensive sex-ed/abstinence-plus curricula, on average, allocate 4.7 percent of their page content to abstinence actually overemphasizes the vigor of the abstinence message in these programs. In addition to the vast differences in the quantity of abstinence material between authentic abstinence and comprehensive sex-ed curricula, there are equally large qualitative differences in the abstinence messages of the two types of curricula. With few exceptions, the limited abstinence messages in comprehensive sex-ed are perfunctory, simplistic, unconvincing, and equivocal.

The most fundamental difference in abstinence messages between the two types of curricula is that authentic abstinence courses express teen abstinence as a clear standard or goal and encourage all students to strive to meet that standard. By contrast, the goal of comprehensive sex-ed curricula is not to have teens abstain from sexual activity, but to reduce the risk of STDs and pregnancy that results from unprotected sexual activity. Abstinence—or not having sex—is mentioned as one option that teens may consider to avoid risks, but the overwhelming emphasis is on reducing risk by encouraging contraceptive use. Since comprehensive sex-ed programs place by far the greatest focus on using contraception, the implicit message is that abstinence is of secondary importance.

Contrary to claims made by some advocacy groups, comprehensive sex-ed curricula do not teach abstinence as the primary and preferred goal for teens, instructing students about contraception only as a less desirable “fallback” position when abstinence fails. Instead, abstinence and contraception are presented as two possible options for avoiding STDs and pregnancy, with the overwhelming emphasis placed on contraception.

While comprehensive sex-ed curricula do inform students that abstinence is the “safest choice,” they repeatedly represent teen sex with contraception as safe. Thus, the overall message given to teens is merely that abstinence is marginally safer than protected sex. Beyond this modest health message, most of the curricula have difficulty finding favorable things to say about abstinence or positive reasons to be abstinent. Since abstinence requires greater character and self-control and a stronger determination to resist social trends and pressures than does “safe sex,” the failure to make a strong, broad-based case that abstinence is clearly superior to protected sex makes the brief “abstinence message” that is given both flat and unconvincing.

## **Comprehensive Sex-Ed Curricula Contain Little or No Message to Delay Sexual Activity**

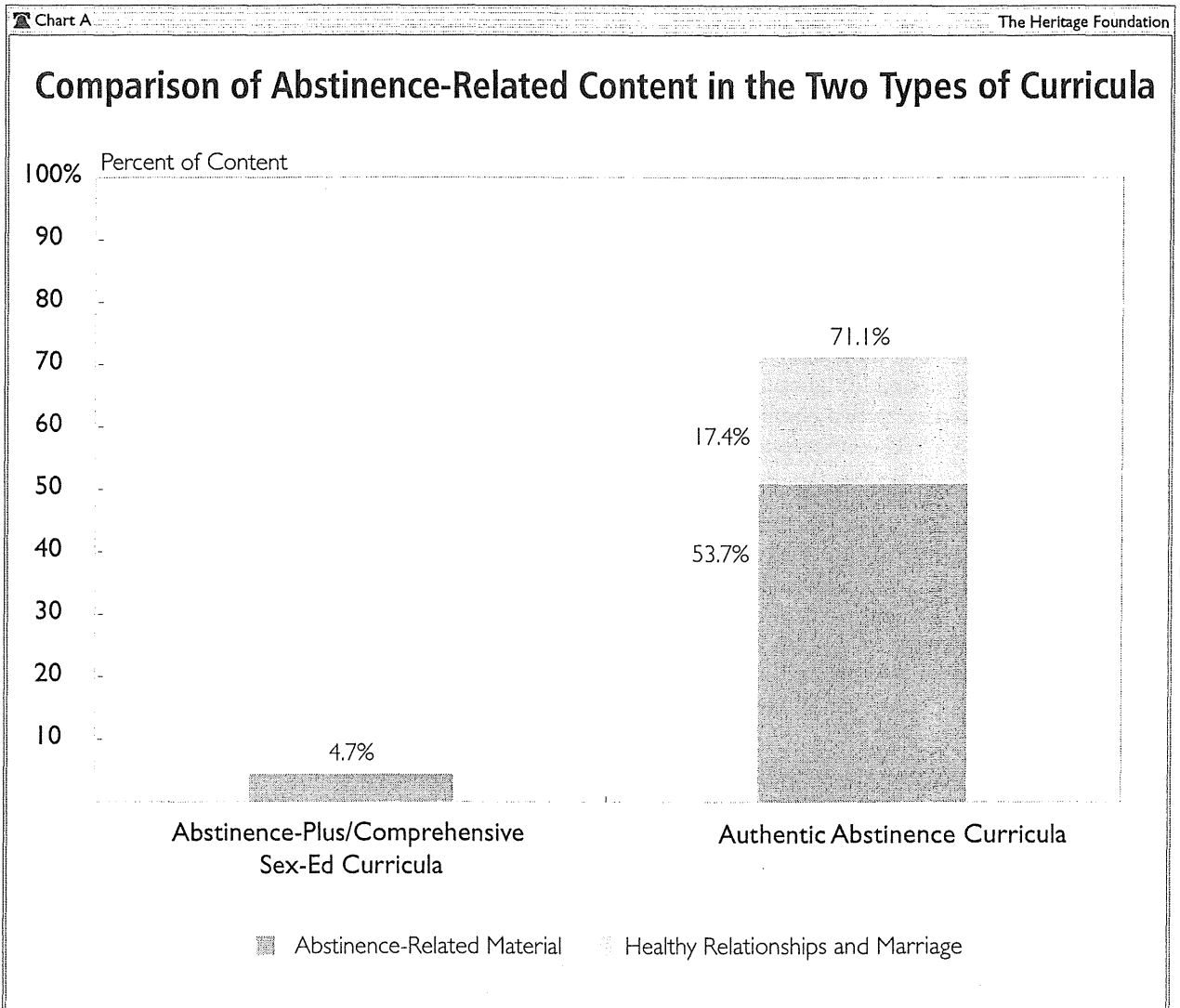
The comprehensive sex-ed curricula provide no standards about when students should begin sexual activity. While 94 percent of adults and 92 percent of teens believe that it is important for society to give a “strong message” that young people “should not have sex until they are, at least, out of high school,”<sup>1</sup> none of the comprehensive sex-ed curricula convey this message. None encourage abstinence through high school as a goal. Indeed, out of 942 pages of text in the nine comprehensive sex ed curricula reviewed, not one single sentence urging young people to abstain from sexual activity through high school was found.

Even the vague notion that students should “wait until they are older” before beginning sex is largely absent from the comprehensive sex-ed curricula. Throughout the nine curricula, less than ten sentences could be found urging or suggesting that young people wait until they were older before beginning sexual activity. In most cases, even these sentences lacked force.

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1. National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, *Americans Sound Off About Teen Pregnancy*, December 2003, p. 8.

Chart A



Delaying sexual activity is simply not a significant concern in comprehensive sex-ed programs: The overwhelming focus is on informing students about contraception and encouraging them to use it. To refer to these curricula as “abstinence-plus” is therefore wildly misleading. These programs could be more accurately termed “safe-sex plus,” indicating that they are, in fact, safe-sex curricula that also include a few brief, weak references to abstinence.

## **Themes of Authentic Abstinence Curricula**

While comprehensive sex-ed courses are focused on the physical risks of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and pregnancy, authentic abstinence programs take a more holistic approach to human sexuality: They are far more concerned with the social and psychological aspects of sex. Authentic abstinence curricula place a major emphasis on love, intimacy, and commitment. Young people are taught that human sexuality is not primarily physical, but moral, emotional, and psychological in nature. These programs stress that, under proper conditions, human sexuality inherently involves long-term emotional bonding. They teach youths that personal happiness, love, and intimacy are most likely to occur within the commitment of a faithful marriage and that, in contrast, casual sex with multiple partners is likely to undermine the natural process of bonding and intimacy.

Throughout their curricula, authentic abstinence programs teach that abstinence is the best lifestyle for every teen. Students are taught that choosing to remain abstinent throughout adolescence is an important decision—and one that reaps great rewards in the present and the future.

Authentic abstinence courses instruct teens about the differences between lust, infatuation, and real love. The curricula teach that teen sexual relationships generally include large elements of self-delusion; despite hopeful expectations, nearly all such relationships are unstable and short-term. Most sexually active teens state that they regret their initial sexual experience and wish that they had waited. In authentic abstinence curricula, teen abstinence is presented not merely as a solution to the immediate problems of pregnancy, STDs, and emotional harm, but as a pathway leading to respect for one’s self and others, to healthier relationships, and, eventually, to love and happiness in marriage.

**Fear-based Curricula?** It is often loosely charged that authentic abstinence curricula are “fear-based.” Examination of these curricula reveals there is no basis whatsoever for this claim. Both authentic abstinence and comprehensive sex-ed curricula present compelling information about the real threats of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and teen pregnancy to the health and well-being of young people. The content of the two types of curricula are quite similar on these topics; however, comprehensive sex-ed curricula, on average, devote more than twice as much page content to the threat of STDs when compared with authentic abstinence curricula. Thus, it might be said that comprehensive sex-ed courses are more “fear-based” than are authentic abstinence courses. In reality, “fear-based” is not a term that accurately describes either type of curriculum.

## **Themes of Comprehensive Sex-Ed/Abstinence-Plus Curricula**

In contrast to authentic abstinence programs, comprehensive sex-ed curricula largely depict human sexuality as a physical process. They focus on warning young people about the threats of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases that can result from unprotected sexual activity. Their predominant goal is to reduce the level of “unprotected” sexual activity by encouraging young people to use contraception.

A very large portion of comprehensive sex-ed curricula is devoted to describing various types of contraception and discussing the pros and cons of each type. Students are strongly urged to use contraception (particularly condoms) for protection and are given skills to help increase condom use. For example, students are coached on how to convince a resistant sex partner to use condoms.

While comprehensive sex-ed curricula do not overtly encourage teens to engage in sexual activity, they do not really discourage it. The focus is on reducing the risks of STDs and pregnancy among teens. Abstinence is presented as one technique for avoiding immediate risks, but the predominant emphasis is on using contraception, especially condoms. For the most part, teens are not urged to avoid sex *per se*, but to avoid sex without contraception. As long as the teen feels “comfortable” with the activity, protected teen sex is not criticized, but is presented as commonplace, healthy, and largely unproblematic. The decision to use contraception during sex is almost always presented in a very favorable light, while teen sexual activity itself is rarely questioned or criticized.

The underlying message that pervades comprehensive sex-ed curricula is that it is okay for teens to engage in sex as long as “protection” is used. Indeed, it is difficult to find any passage in the curricula where voluntary teen sex with protection is either criticized or depicted as “not okay.”

With rare exceptions, sex at an early age and sex with many different partners are not treated as problems. Comprehensive sex-ed curricula ignore the vital linkages between sexuality, love, intimacy, and commitment. There is no suggestion that sex is best within marriage.

## **Most Comprehensive Sex-Ed Curricula Contain Explicit and Controversial Sexual Material**

Comprehensive sex-ed curricula encourage contraceptive use, teach teens how to obtain contraception, and instruct them on how to convince sex partners to use contraception. Most comprehensive sex-ed curricula have teachers demonstrate condom use by unrolling condoms on fingers, bananas, or dildos. Four out of the nine curricula reviewed have students practice unrolling condoms on bananas, dildos, or their fingers.

Many comprehensive sex-ed curricula contain additional explicit and offensive material such as discussions of anal sex, homosexual role-playing, and language encouraging mutual masturbation and encouraging teens to watch erotic movies. Much material in “abstinence plus” curricula would be alarming to parents. For example, *Be Proud! Be Responsible!* instructs teachers to:

Invite [students] to brainstorm ways to increase spontaneity and the likelihood that they'll use condoms.... Examples:... Store condoms under mattress.... Eroticize condom use with partner.... Use condoms as a method of foreplay.... Think up a sexual fantasy using condoms.... Act sexy/sensual when putting the condom on.... Hide them on your body and ask your partner to find it.... Wrap them as a present and give them to your partner before a romantic dinner.... Tease each other manually while putting on the condom.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, *Focus on Kids* prompts teachers to:

State that there are other ways to be close to a person without having sexual intercourse. Ask youth to brainstorm ways to be close. The list may include...body massage, bathing together, masturbation, sensuous feeding, fantasizing, watching erotic movies, reading erotic books and magazines....<sup>3</sup>

While the amount of such explicit and shocking material varies widely among the comprehensive sex-ed curricula reviewed, all of the curricula contained at least some material that would be disturbing to many parents.

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2. *Be Proud! Be Responsible!*, p. 78, 79.

3. *Focus on Kids*, p. 137.

## **Parents Overwhelmingly Support Authentic Abstinence Curricula**

In December 2003, Zogby International conducted a poll of a nationally representative sample of parents in the United States to determine their attitudes toward sex education. The poll shows that American parents overwhelmingly support the themes and messages of authentic abstinence education programs. With regard to many themes, parental support is nearly unanimous.

Specifically, the poll revealed that:

- Most parents want teens taught a strong abstinence message. For example, 79 percent of parents want teens to be taught that they should not engage in sexual activity until they are married or at least in an adult relationship leading to marriage.
- Ninety-one percent of parents want teens to be taught that “The best choice is for sexual intercourse to be linked to love, intimacy, and commitment. These qualities are most likely to occur in a faithful marriage.”
- Sixty-eight percent of parents want sex education programs to teach that “individuals who are not sexually active until they are married have the best chances of marital stability and happiness.”
- Ninety-one percent of parents want schools to teach that “adolescents should be expected to abstain from sexual activity during high-school years.”

All of these themes are central to authentic abstinence education curricula.

## **Parents Overwhelmingly Reject Comprehensive Sexuality or Abstinence-Plus Education**

The Zogby poll revealed that parents overwhelmingly oppose the messages contained within comprehensive sex-ed curricula. For example:

- Comprehensive sex-ed curricula focus almost exclusively on contraception and, in most cases, include little or no meaningful material on abstinence. However, only 2 percent of parents believe abstinence is not important, and only 7 percent believe teaching about contraception should receive more emphasis than teaching about abstinence.
- More than 90 percent of parents want sex education programs to teach teens to abstain, at least until they have finished high school. Comprehensive sex-ed programs do not contain this message, and much of their material implicitly undermines it.
- Comprehensive sex-ed programs convey, through repeated examples, the strong implicit message that teen sexual activity is okay as long as contraception is used. Only 7 percent of parents agree with that message.
- Seventy-nine percent of parents want students to be taught to abstain until they are married or close to marriage. These values are light years removed from the content of “abstinence-plus” courses.
- Parents overwhelmingly support the main themes of abstinence education on intimacy, commitment, love, and marriage. However, these themes are conspicuously absent from comprehensive sex-ed curricula. As a result, these courses fail to meet the needs and desires of most parents.
- While most parents want teens to be taught the basic biological facts about contraception, comprehensive sex-ed courses go far beyond that. They encourage contraceptive use, teach students how to obtain contraception, and have students practice using condoms. Only one-quarter of parents support this type of aggressive contraceptive promotion.

## **Government Spending Does Not Match Parental Priorities**

The Zogby poll showed that 85 percent of parents believe that teaching about abstinence should be given as much emphasis as, or greater emphasis than, teaching about contraception. Only 8 percent believe that promoting contraception is more important. Regrettably, governmental spending priorities directly contradict parental priorities. Currently, the government spends at least \$4.50 to promote teen contraceptive use for every \$1.00 spent to promote teen abstinence.

## **Should Abstinence Programs Teach About Contraception?**

The poll showed an apparent divergence between abstinence education and parental attitudes in only one area: Seventy five percent of parents want schools to teach teens about both abstinence and contraception. Abstinence curricula, in general, do not teach about contraceptive use, except to explain contraceptive failure rates.

However, this disparity between abstinence education and parental opinion is more apparent than real. Schools that teach about abstinence usually also teach the basic biological facts about reproduction and contraception in a separate class, such as health. This arrangement has widespread parental support. Some 56.4 percent of parents believe that abstinence and contraception should not be taught in the same class. Only 39.9 percent of parents believe that abstinence and contraception should be taught together in the same class.

Overall, the values and objectives of the overwhelming majority of parents can be met by providing teens with a strong abstinence program while teaching basic biological information about contraception in a separate health or biology class. This arrangement appears to be common in schools where abstinence is taught.

By contrast, only a tiny minority (less than 10 percent) of parents supports the values and messages taught in comprehensive sex-ed curricula. Since the messages of these courses—such as it is okay for teens to have sex as long as they use condoms—contradict and undermine the basic values that parents want taught, these courses would be deemed unacceptable, even if combined with other materials.

## **Abstinence Programs Are Effective**

Abstinence programs provide young people with the strong, uplifting, moral messages that nearly all parents desire. Numerous evaluations show that abstinence programs are effective in encouraging young people to delay sexual activity.<sup>4</sup> The effectiveness of these programs is quite remarkable, given that they typically provide no more than a few hours of instruction per year. In those few hours, abstinence instructors seek to counteract thousands of hours of annual exposure to sex-saturated teen media, which strongly push teens in the opposite direction.

## **Safe-Sex Lobby Seeks to Abolish Abstinence Education**

In recent years, advocacy groups such as SIECUS (Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States) and Advocates for Youth have claimed that parents strongly support comprehensive sexuality education (“abstinence-plus” instruction). This claim is based on tortuous logic. The groups begin their argument with polls showing that parents want teens to be taught about both abstinence and contraception. They then make the unsubstantiated assertion that comprehensive sex-ed programs place a strong emphasis on abstinence, as well as contraception, and conclude that most parents must want comprehensive sex-ed courses for their children.

4. See Robert Rector, “The Effectiveness of Abstinence Education Programs in Reducing Sexual Activity Among Youth,” Heritage Foundation *Backgrounder* No. 1533, April 8, 2002.



This argument relies on a radical misrepresentation of the content of comprehensive sex-ed programs. As this study shows, these curricula focus overwhelmingly on describing contraception and promoting contraceptive use. They contain, at best, brief and equivocal references to abstinence. Yet polls show that only 7 percent of parents support sex-ed courses that put a greater emphasis on contraception than on abstinence. Simply put, only a tiny fraction of parents would support the actual content of comprehensive sex-ed/abstinence-plus curricula.

In the political arena, Advocates for Youth and SIECUS have sought to eliminate funding for abstinence curricula or to replace abstinence education with comprehensive sex education. Like the claim of strong parental support, this lobbying is done under the pretext that comprehensive sex-ed contains a strong abstinence message and thereby renders authentic abstinence education superfluous.

However, since comprehensive sex-ed courses do not, in fact, contain meaningful abstinence content, this stratagem amounts to nothing more than a surreptitious effort to abolish abstinence education and replace it with a thinly disguised safe-sex agenda. In reality, replacing abstinence education with comprehensive sex-ed would mean almost entirely eliminating the abstinence message in U.S. schools. Nearly all parents would object to this change.

## **Conclusion**

The contention that comprehensive sex-ed/abstinence-plus courses place a major emphasis on abstinence is false. In fact, comprehensive sex-ed curricula are little more than old-style safe-sex courses wrapped in a new, misleading label. The predominant focus of these courses is on encouraging students to use contraceptives, and they contain very little, if any, meaningful abstinence content. Authentic abstinence programs contain 15 times more material on abstinence (and the supporting topics of healthy relationships and marriage) than do comprehensive sex-ed programs. While parents overwhelmingly support the uplifting values and messages contained in authentic abstinence curricula, they overwhelmingly reject the permissive values and messages contained in comprehensive sex-ed.

It is true that polls suggest that parents want teens to be taught a strong abstinence message as well as basic biological information about contraception. Since abstinence curricula do not typically teach about contraception, this might be interpreted as a disapproval of abstinence education. However, nearly all parents strongly support abstinence education, and most do not want contraceptive materials to be inserted into abstinence curricula.

Instead, the wishes of most parents can be fulfilled by providing teens with a strong traditional abstinence course while teaching the basic facts about contraception in a separate health class. In fact, this arrangement typically exists in most schools where abstinence is taught. In contrast, comprehensive sex-ed courses contradict the basic values that parents want taught and would be unacceptable to most parents under any circumstances.

## What is comprehensive sex education and why is it so controversial?

Comprehensive sex education advocates believe that sex education taught to children needs to include more than the abstinence message. Here's a sample of model standards developed by Sex Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS). SIECUS is the recognized authority for comprehensive sex education.

### SIECUS guidelines:

#### Ages 5 to 8 -

- "Both boys and girls have body parts that feel good when touched." (p. 25)
- "Touching and rubbing one's own genitals to feel good is called masturbation." (p. 51)
- "Vaginal intercourse – when a penis is placed inside a vagina – is the most common way for a sperm and egg to join." (p. 26)
- "People often kiss, hug, touch and engage in other sexual behaviors with one another to show caring and to feel good." (p. 52)

#### Ages 9 to 12 -

- "People of all sexual orientations can have relationships that are equally fulfilling." (p. 29)
- "Many boys and girls begin to masturbate for sexual pleasure during puberty." (p. 52)
- "Masturbation does not cause physical or mental harm." (p. 52)
- "A legal abortion is very safe." (p. 62)

#### Ages 12 to 15 -

- "Masturbation, either alone or with a partner, is one way people can enjoy and express their sexuality without risking pregnancy or an STD/HIV." (p. 52)
- "The size and the shape of sexual organs does not affect a person's ability to reproduce or experience sexual pleasure." (p. 28)
- "Some sexual behaviors shared by partners include kissing; touching; talking; caressing; massaging; and oral, vaginal, or anal intercourse." (p. 53)

#### Ages 15 to 18 -

- "Some people use erotic photographs, movies, art, literature, or the Internet to enhance their sexual fantasies when alone or with a partner." (p. 56)

Source: Guidelines for Comprehensive Sexuality Education, Kindergarten – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade. 2004. Sex Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS)



*Stories to challenge bias and create belonging*

# Families All Matter Book Project

## Curriculum Guide

A Project of



aMaze

Nurturing the Values of Family / Community / Diversity

# Lesbian/Gay Family Members Booklist

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## Lead Books

(Lead Book: K)



### Daddy's Roommate

by Michael Willhoite (Alyson Wonderland, CA, 2000)

#### Synopsis

This book discusses in a clear and respectful way the relationship between two committed gay men through the eyes of the young son of one of the men.

(Lead Book: 1)



### King and King

written and illustrated by Linda de Haan & Stern  
(Tricycle Press, Berkeley, CA, 2002)

#### Synopsis

This light-hearted fairytale is about a prince's search for the one he will marry. The whimsical illustrations follow his fruitless encounters with numerous princesses until finally he feels his heart stir for another prince. The two princes marry and everyone lives happily ever after.

(Lead Book: 2-3)



### Asha's Mums

by Rosamund Elwin/Michele Paule (Women's Press, Toronto, 1990)

#### Synopsis

This book is about a girl with lesbian parents and the awkward position she finds herself in when her teacher doesn't understand her family.

(Lead Book: 4-5)



### My Two Uncles

by Judith Vigna (Women's Press, Toronto, 1995)

#### Synopsis

This is a story about a 50th wedding anniversary celebration where some family members are not welcome. Elly makes a beautiful anniversary gift with her uncles, and then learns that they will not attend the big event. It turns out that Grampy does not accept his son's partner because his son is gay. Elly struggles to understand. Grampy is touched by the gift, and in the end his heart might be warming to Elly's two uncles.

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## Follow-up Books

(K-1 Only)

### Anna Day and the O-Ring

by Elaine Wickens

(Alyson Wonderland, Boston, 1994) (OP)

#### Synopsis

A simple story of a young boy who lives with his two mothers. The "o-ring" for his new birthday tent is missing but turns out to be hidden under the family dog, Anna Day. Through this simple story of family life, and using real color photographs, the author portrays a positive picture of a family with two mothers.



identifies the Lead Book read by the classroom reader.

The Follow-up Books are left in the classroom for teachers and students to read throughout the week.

OP denotes books that are out-of-print but available through libraries.



**Family Diversity Themes**  
Lesbian and Gay Family Members

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**Follow-up Books, continued**

*(Grades 1 +)*

**Heather Has Two Mommies**

by Leslea Newman (Alyson Wonderland, CA, 2000)

Recommend: Tenth Anniversary Edition Only

**Synopsis:**

This book is about Heather, a pre-school age girl who lives with her parents, a lesbian couple she calls Mama Kate and Mama Jane. Heather enters a preschool, where she meets other children and learns about their families. Initially, Heather is worried about the fact that some kids have Dads, and she doesn't. Her teacher leads the class in a discussion about what is truly important in a family which helps all of the kids feel comfortable about sharing their different family stories.

*(Grades 1 +)*

**One Dad Two Dads Brown Dad  
Blue Dad**

by Johnny Valentine

(Alyson, Boston, 1994) (OP)

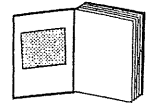
**Synopsis**

This is a light-hearted story in rhyme of a boy telling about his two fathers who are blue. The boy is proud of his fathers and makes a strong point that being blue doesn't change the way the fathers do things as parents.



## Theme: Lesbian and Gay Family Members

*paste inside front cover*



Lead Book: K



### Daddy's Roommate

written and illustrated by Michael Willhoite

©2000

#### For Reader Preparation:

##### Synopsis (for the reader, not the students)

This book discusses in a clear and respectful way the relationship between two committed gay men through the eyes of the young son of one of the men.

#### For the Classroom:

##### Read this to students before reading the book:

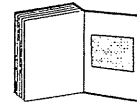
*"This book tells about a boy who lives part of the time with his mom and part of the time with his dad and his dad's roommate. Listen for how many different things this boy's family does together."*

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## Theme: Lesbian and Gay Family Members

### Daddy's Roommate



*paste inside backcover*

#### Discussion Questions

- Who is in this boy's family? Draw a family map of this boy's family.
- What did the boy in the story enjoy about spending time at his dad's house?
- In the story, the mom tells her son that his dad and roommate are gay. What do you think gay means? (Definition: Gay describes a man who loves another man in a romantic way or a woman who loves another woman in a romantic way.)
- What did we learn about families today?

**Record responses on a sheet for the closing session!**

#### Journal Activity

- Draw or write about something interesting you learned from this story.
- Draw or write about your favorite part of the story.



## Objectives

### Students will:

1. Understand that there are many strong, loving LGBT (Lesbian/Gay/Bi-sexual/Transgender) people raising children and living everyday family lives.
2. Understand that many children are acquainted with LGBT people.
3. Understand that there are many prejudices in our society about people who are LGBT.
4. Identify name-calling (and other unkind behaviors) about LGBT people as inappropriate, unacceptable, and hurtful.

## Rationale

1. There are children in every classroom who have family members, friends, or acquaintances who are LGBT. Every school has students who will identify themselves as gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, or transgender at some point in their life.
2. Unchallenged bias toward LGBT people is harmful to the well-being of all students because it perpetuates the damaging myth that it is acceptable to discredit or dehumanize a whole group of people.
3. Children from LGBT families may feel invisible or excluded because their family is not often acknowledged at school, in books, in the media, etc.

4. LGBT - parented families face barriers to their full participation when they fear and/or experience prejudice, discrimination, and marginalization in school/ community settings.
5. It remains very difficult in our culture to talk about this topic with our children because homophobia (prejudice and fear of LGBT people) remains such a strong, divisive force in our culture. Regardless of one's individual beliefs or opinions, it is important to treat LGBT individuals and families with respect.

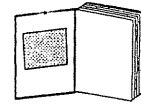
## Why do we recognize homophobia and its effects on children?

1. Terms like "gay" or "fag" are often used by students as a put-down. This reflects the bias that "straight" (heterosexual) people are superior to LGBT people.
2. Research repeatedly shows that students perceived as gay or lesbian are among the most likely targets of bullying and violence at school.
3. Intolerance and acts of bias against LGBT students limit their full participation in school, and can result in depression, social isolation, or death.



## Theme: Lesbian and Gay Family Members

*paste inside front cover*



*Lead Book: Grades 2-3*



### Asha's Mums

written by Rosamund Elwin & Michele Paulese

illustrated by Dawn Lee

©1990

### For Reader Preparation:

**Synopsis (for the reader, not the students)**

This book is about a girl with lesbian parents and the awkward position she finds herself in when her teacher doesn't understand her family.

### For the Classroom:

**Read this to students before reading the book:**

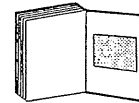
*"Raise your hand if you've ever gone on a school field trip. This story is about Asha, who has a problem with her field trip slip."*

*(cut page here)*



## Theme: Lesbian and Gay Family Members

### Asha's Mums



*paste inside backcover*

### Discussion Questions

- Who were the characters in the story? Who is in Asha's family?
- Did somebody have a problem in this story? Who? What was the problem? (e.g., the teacher didn't understand how Asha could have two moms.)
- What did Asha's friends have to say about having two moms?
- One of the problems in this story was that some people did not understand how Asha could have two moms. Asha has lesbian parents. Do you know what that means? (e.g., Lesbian parents are when two women love each other and make a family together.)
- Have you ever heard other kids use the word gay? What do you think they mean when

they use this word? How would it feel if you or someone you cared about were gay and you heard this word used as a put down?

● What did we learn about families today?  
**Record responses on a sheet for the closing session!**

### Journal Activity

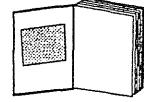
- Have you ever had a hard time because of who was in your family? Draw or write about it.
- Write or draw about something you learned from this story.





## Theme: Lesbian and Gay Family Members

*paste inside front cover*



Lead Book: Grade 1



### King & King

written and illustrated by Linda de Haan & Stern Nijland @ 2002

#### For Reader Preparation:

##### Synopsis (for the reader, not the students)

This light-hearted fairytale is about a prince's search for the one he will marry. The whimsical illustrations follow his fruitless encounters with numerous princesses until finally he feels his heart stir for another prince. The two princes marry and everyone lives happily ever after.

#### For the Classroom:

##### Read this to students before reading the book:

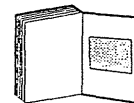
*"This story is a fairytale, a make believe story, about a prince."*

(cut page here)



## Theme: Lesbian and Gay Family Members

### King & King



*paste inside backcover*

#### Discussion Questions

- Was there anything in this story that surprised you?
- What parts of this story do you think of as a fairytale, an imaginary story that could never really happen?
- What parts of the story do you think could really happen?
- How did the queen feel about the prince choosing to marry another prince?

Definitions reader can use to define 'gay' and/or 'lesbian' for young children:

- When two men love each other romantically they are called 'gay'.
- Two women who love each other romantically are called 'gay' or 'lesbian'.

- What did we learn about families today?
- Record responses on a sheet for the closing session!**

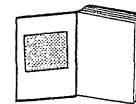
#### Journal Activity

- Draw or write about something you learned from this story.
- Draw or write about what might happen next with the King and King.



## Theme: Lesbian and Gay Family Members

paste inside front cover



Lead Book: Grades 4-5



### My Two Uncles

written and illustrated by Judith Vigna

©1995

#### For Reader Preparation:

##### Synopsis (for the reader, not the students)

This is a story about a 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary celebration where some family members are not welcome. Elly makes a beautiful anniversary gift with her uncles, and then learns that they will not attend the big event. It turns out that Grampy does not accept his son's partner because his son is gay. Elly struggles to understand. Grampy is touched by the gift, and in the end his heart might be warming to Elly's two uncles.

#### For the Classroom:

##### Read this to students before reading the book:

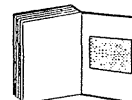
*"In this story there is a large family celebration where two important family members do not feel welcome. Listen to the story and think about how it would feel not to be included in an important family event, accepted for who you are."*

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## Theme: Lesbian and Gay Family Members

### My Two Uncles



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#### Discussion Questions

- Who are the main characters in the story?
- Why didn't Grampy invite Ned's partner to the 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary celebration? (e.g., Grampy couldn't accept that his son's partner was a man.)
- What feelings did the different characters in the story have?
- What happened in this family because of Grampy's feelings?
- Did Grampy learn anything or have a change of heart toward Ned and Phil during this story? What makes you think that he did or didn't?
- How does it feel to be excluded? Has this ever happened to you or to someone you care about?

- What did we learn about families today?
- Record responses on a sheet for the closing session!**

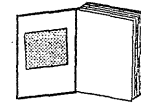
#### Journal Activity

- Write about a time when you saw someone not accepted for who they were. What could a person do in a situation like that?
- Write about what might happen at this family's next gathering.



## Theme: Lesbian and Gay Family Members

paste inside front cover



Grades K-1 only

### Anna Day and the O-Ring

written by Elaine Wickens

©1994 (OP - available thru libraries only)

#### For Reader Preparation:

##### Synopsis (for the reader, not the students)

A simple story of a young boy who lives with his two mothers. The "o-ring" for his new birthday tent is missing but turns out to be hidden under the family dog, Anna Day. Through this simple story of family life, and using real color photographs, the author portrays a positive picture of a family with two mothers.

#### For the Classroom:

##### Read this to students before reading the book:

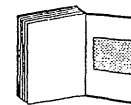
*"This is a story about a four year old boy named Evan, his family, and his dog named Anna Day. Evan has a new tent which is held together with something called an o-ring. As we read this story, think about what the dog, Anna Day, might do to keep Evan from putting up his tent. Also think about the ways that Evan's parents help him."*

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## Theme: Lesbian and Gay Family Members

### Anna Day and the O-Ring



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#### Discussion Questions

##### Reader:

Draw a picture of Evan's family and his tent.

- In this story, what problem did Evan and his moms have?
- Who are all the members in Evan's family? (Write their names on the picture you've drawn.)
- How did Evan's moms help him?
- Would the story be different if Evan had a dad and a mom? or two dads?
- What did we learn about families today?

**Record responses on a sheet for the closing session!**

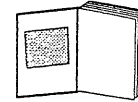
#### Journal Activity

- Write or draw a funny story that happened with a pet in your family.
- Write or draw another story about Evan, his dog, and his two moms.



## Theme: Lesbian and Gay Family Members

*paste inside front cover*



Grades 1+

### Heather Has Two Mommies: 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition

written by Leslea Newman

illustrated by Diana Souza

©2000

### For Reader Preparation:

#### Synopsis (for the reader, not the students)

This book is about Heather, a pre-school age girl who lives with her parents, a lesbian couple she calls Mama Kate and Mama Jane. Heather enters a preschool, where she meets other children and learns about their families. Initially, Heather is worried about the fact that some kids have Dads, and she doesn't. Her teacher leads

the class in a discussion about what is truly important in a family which helps all of the kids feel comfortable about sharing their different family stories.

### For the Classroom:

#### Read this to students before reading the book:

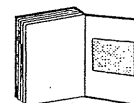
*"This story tells about Heather, a little girl who goes to preschool and learns that not all families are the same. Listen for how many different kinds of families are in this story."*

*(cut page here)*



## Theme: Lesbian and Gay Family Members

### Heather Has Two Mommies



*paste inside backcover*

### Discussion Questions

- Who was in Heather's family?
- Why was Heather worried that something was wrong with her family?
- What did her teacher do to help her and the other kids understand about different kinds of families?
- Why might a family have two moms and no dad, or two dads and no mom? (e.g., This is an opportunity to teach kids about gay and lesbian parents.)
- What did we learn about families today?

**Record responses on a sheet for the closing session!**

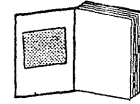
### Journal Activity

- Write or draw what you think are the most important things about a family.
- Write or draw about something you learned from this book.



## Theme: Lesbian and Gay Family Members

*paste inside front cover*



Grades 1+

### One Dad - Two Dads - Brown Dad - Blue Dads

written by Johnny Valentine

illustrated by Melody Sarecky

©1994 (out-of-print - available thru libraries only)

#### For Reader Preparation:

##### Synopsis (for the reader, not the students)

This is a light-hearted story in rhyme of a boy telling about his two fathers who are "blue". The boy is proud of his fathers and makes a strong point that being blue doesn't change the way the fathers do things as parents.

#### For the Classroom:

##### Read this to students before reading the book:

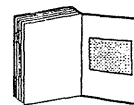
*"In this story Lou has two dads that are blue. As we read this story, think about how Lou's dads are different or the same as other parents."*

(cut page here)



## Theme: Lesbian and Gay Family Members

### One Dad - Two Dads - Brown Dad - Blue Dads



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#### Discussion Questions

- What's special about Lou's family?
- Did being blue change how Lou's dads acted as parents? (On a piece of chart paper, have the class make a list of things about Lou's dads that were the same or different from other dads in the story.)
- Why do you think the girl asked questions about Lou's dads?
- What did we learn about families today?

**Record responses on a sheet for the closing session!**

#### Journal Activity

- Write or draw about things that dads you know like to do.
- Write or draw different kinds of families.

**AMAZE Families All Matter Book Project  
Selected Metro Area Sites**

**ANOKA COUNTY**

Al Amal School  
1401 Gardena Ave NE  
Fridley MN 55432

Crooked Lake Elementary  
2939 Bunker Lake Blvd. N.W.  
Andover, MN 55304

Hamilton Elementary  
1374 111<sup>th</sup> Ave. N.W.  
Coon Rapids, MN 55433

**CARVER COUNTY**

Chaska Elementary School  
1800 N. Chestnut Street  
Chaska, MN 55318

**DAKOTA COUNTY**

Tarek Academy  
4100 E. 66<sup>th</sup> Street  
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076

Pinecrest Elementary School  
975 West 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
Hastings, MN 55033

**HENNEPIN COUNTY**

In Minneapolis Public Schools District:

Barton Open  
Hale Elementary  
Hiawatha Elementary  
Keewaydin Elementary  
Lake Harriet Lower Campus  
Longfellow Elementary  
Marcy Open  
Northrup Urban Environmental  
Ramsey International Fine Arts  
Sanford Middle School  
Seward Montessori  
Windom Open School

Evergreen Park Elementary  
7020 Dupont Ave. North

Mpls, MN 55430

Highlands Elementary School  
5505 Doncaster Way  
Edina, MN 55436

Kaleidoscope Charter School  
21755 129th Ave. N  
Rogers, MN 55374

Minnesota Transitions Charter School  
3216 E. 29<sup>th</sup> St.  
Minneapolis, MN 55406

Osseo Elementary School  
324 Sixth Avenue N.E.  
Osseo, MN 55369

Palmer Lake Elementary School  
7300 West Palmer Lake Drive  
Brooklyn Park, MN 55429

**RAMSEY COUNTY**

In St. Paul Public Schools District:  
Arlington Senior High School  
Benjamin E. Mays Magnet  
Battle Creek Environmental Magnet  
Friends School  
Frost Lake Magnet  
Groveland Park Elementary  
Highland Park Elementary  
Highwood Hills Elementary  
John A. Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary  
Linwood A+ Elementary  
Monroe Community School  
Phalen Lake Elementary  
Roosevelt Elementary West Side School of Excellence  
Webster Enrichment Magnet  
Family Resource Center: School Readiness & ECFE programs

Brim Hall Elementary School  
1744 West County Road B  
Roseville, MN 55113

Central Park Elementary School  
535 W. County Road B2  
Roseville, MN 55113

Falcon Heights Elementary School  
1393 Garden Ave.  
Falcon Heights, MN 55113

Harambee Community Cultures/Environmental Science Elementary  
30 East County Road B  
Maplewood, MN 55117

Little Canada Elementary School  
400 Eli Road  
Little Canada, MN 55117

Parkview Center School  
701 West County Road B  
Roseville, MN 55113

Tri-District Community Cultures/Environmental Science School  
30 County Rd. B  
Maplewood, MN 55117

**WASHINGTON COUNTY**

Afton Lakeland Elementary School  
475 St. Croix Trail S  
Lakeland, MN 55043

Eagle Park Elementary School  
7362 E. Pt. Douglas Rd.  
Cottage Grove, MN 55016

Newport Elementary School  
851 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Newport, MN 55055



**AMAZE Families All Matter Book Project  
National Sites – 18 sites in 13 states**

Harford County Public Schools  
c/o Hall's Cross Roads Elementary School  
203 E. Bell Air Avenue  
Aberdeen, MD 21001

Community School  
900 Lay Road  
St. Louis, MO 63124

Catlin Gabel Lower School  
8825 SW Barnes Road  
Portland, OR 97225

Educational Resource Center  
Mount Vernon Nazarene University  
800 Martinsburg Road  
Mount Vernon, OH 43050

Sarae Pacetta  
246 S. Huntington Ave. #1

Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

Beth Reis  
Public Health Educator  
2124 Fourth Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98121

Instructional Materials Selection Center  
Madison Metropolitan School District  
545 West Dayton Street  
Madison, WI 53703-1995

Woodring College of Education  
516 High Street – MS 9088  
Bellingham, WA 98225-9088

Colleen Ellingson  
1549 N. 51<sup>st</sup> Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53208

GLSEN Boston  
29 Stanhope Street  
Boston, MA 02116

Western Washington University  
516 High Street  
Bellingham, WA 98225

Robert Muller Center for Living Ethics  
340 Country Club Road  
McKinney, TX 75069

Sharon Evans Brockman  
9271 Rising Creek Way  
Elk Grove, CA 95624

Michelle Samuels  
2535 North Court  
Bethlehem, PA 18017

Andrea Campos  
15310 Carrollton Lane  
Tampa, FL 33624-2200

Dawn Marie Gessner  
1031 N. Holly Ave., #6  
Tucson, AZ 85716

The Orchard School Foundation  
615 West 64<sup>th</sup> St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46260-4798

Adoption Resources of Wisconsin  
6682 W. Greenfield Ave., Ste. 310  
Milwaukee, WI 53214-4960