



Monday *MONITOR*

Monday, January 11, 2010

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WHY MISSOURI YOUTH DESERVE COMPREHENSIVE SEX EDUCATION... "GAPS FOUND IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S SEX KNOWLEDGE"

CNN.com—12.15.09—Elizabeth Landau [excerpted]

A new survey by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy (NCPTUP) finds about half of sexually active young people do not regularly use contraception, despite believing that pregnancy should be planned.

"What is surprising is just how wide the gap is between young single adults' intentions and behavior on this very important issue," NCPTUP's Bill Albert said of the survey of 1,800 people ages 18-29.

Twenty-nine percent of female and 42 percent of male respondents said it is at least slightly likely they will have unprotected sex within the next three months, while 17 and 19 percent, respectively, said it is quite or extremely likely.

The survey also found gaps in knowledge about contraception and safe sex. Sixty-three percent of those surveyed acknowledged an insufficient understanding of birth control pills, and 30 percent had little or erroneous knowledge about condoms. For example, 28 percent of men incorrectly believed they would get extra protection from wearing two condoms at once, a practice that can cause condom breakage. Eighteen percent of men wrongly believed that having sex while standing reduces a woman's chance of pregnancy.

Roughly one in five participants reported having had no sex education in school. While most people have heard of birth control pills and condoms, they have never been taught how to use or access them, suggested Dr. Yolanda Wimberly, assistant professor of clinical pediatrics at Morehouse School of Medicine and an adolescent-medicine specialist at Atlanta's Grady Health Systems.

For full article, go to:

http://www.cnn.com/2009/HEALTH/12/15/sex.report/index.html?eref=rss_health&utm_source=eedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+rss%2Fcnn_health+%28RSS%3A+Health%29

37th ANNIVERSARY OF ROE V. WADE || EVENTS ACROSS MISSOURI

KANSAS CITY: Wednesday, January 20th—Discussion of "The Changing Climate of the Nation's Abortion Debate" featuring KU Asst Prof of PoliSci, Alesha Doan (author of *Opposition and Intimidation: The Abortion Wars and Strategies of Political Harassment*). Cocktails/appetizers 5:30pm; Program 6:30pm. Tickets: \$37 (Young Friends \$17). For info/tickets: <https://www.ppkm.org/donations/index.asp>.

ST LOUIS: Friday, January 22nd—Freedom of Choice Coalition Reception at the Wine Press, 4436 Olive in CWE, 5:30 to 7:30pm. Mix and mingle with pro-choice friends and enjoy a cameo appearance by Lady HaHa, Kate Clinton. Complimentary appetizers, cash bar! Tickets: \$10 at the door. For info: angie.postal@ppslr.org

SPRINGFIELD: Wednesday, January 27th—Reception & Awards. Join local poets and slam artists to celebrate choice. 7:00pm at First Unitarian Universalist Church, 2434 E. Battlefield. Tickets: \$10 (\$5 for students). For info: crystal.brigman@ppslr.org

2010 Choice Lobby Days: Tuesday, February 16th; Tuesday, March 16th; & Wednesday, April 28th.

THE \$1 BILLION OPPORTUNITY

By *Cecile Richards and Timothy E. Wirth—RH Reality Check—Jan 11 2010*

Over the past year, the United States has done much to reestablish its standing in the world. On Friday, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton made another monumental stride forward by announcing our nation's renewed commitment to ensuring that women worldwide have access to safe and effective reproductive health care.

We agree with Secretary Clinton: The status quo is unacceptable. Some 215 million women worldwide report that they do not have the option to delay or avoid pregnancy, something which most women in wealthy countries take for granted. Every year more than half a million women — nearly all of whom live in developing countries — die of pregnancy-related causes. Moreover, one in three deaths related to pregnancy and childbirth could be avoided if women who wanted effective contraception had access to it.

Behind the statistics are the stories of the women our colleagues meet around the world. Recently, a single mother came to a clinic in Peru to give birth to her fifth child. She explained that it was an unplanned pregnancy and that she was mired in poverty and did not have the resources to care for the four children she had already. She meekly asked a member of the clinic staff to take her newborn baby from her and raise it. Had she been given access to contraceptives and family planning, she would not have been forced into this kind of despair.

Secretary Clinton's promise of support for women like this one would go a long way to making good on our commitment to promote the health of women and their families by ensuring that they have increased access to the family planning they need. The Secretary's pledge builds upon a commitment the United States made 15 years ago -- at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). At this historic meeting, 179 countries, including the United States, vowed to achieve universal access to reproductive health care by 2014. We knew then what we know today: giving women and girls access to reproductive health care is vital to strengthening families, communities and societies.

Most experts believe that the global community needs to devote \$6.7 billion annually to achieve the goal of universal access to reproductive health. We strongly believe that the United States should contribute its fair share, at least \$1 billion annually. Providing this funding is essential to making good on the commitment we made in 1994. It will also get us closer to moving the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) from goals to realities.

Investing \$1 billion in family planning programs that provide education, counseling and contraceptives on a voluntary basis to women and couples would help millions of families live better lives. It would also help achieve major reductions in infant and maternal mortality, HIV infections and global poverty.

A 2009 Guttmacher Institute and United Nations Population Fund study further demonstrated this impact. Meeting the global need for family planning and reproductive health could eliminate an estimated 75 million unintended pregnancies and 20 million unsafe and illegal abortions each year. When women are able to control the number and spacing of their children, families have more resources to direct toward the children that they choose to have. Those children are consequently better fed and educated, as well as more frequently vaccinated.

Over the last 30 years, U.S. funding levels for international family planning programs have experienced peaks and valleys. However, since 2006, Congress has approved steady increases for reproductive health and family planning programs. The Fiscal Year 2010 appropriations bill, adopted last month, had broad bipartisan support and contained \$648.5 million, record spending for reproductive health and family planning.

While funding levels are moving in the right direction, the United States can and must do more. Considering the value it could offer, a \$1 billion investment in international reproductive health and family planning is a smart opportunity that we cannot afford to miss. We applaud Secretary Clinton for moving us closer than ever to meeting our obligation to the women of the world.

This article is co-authored by Cecile Richards, President of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, and Timothy E. Wirth, President of the United Nations Foundation and the Better World Fund.

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