



Teens, Faith, and Sexuality

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Wise about Youth

A Training and Consulting Company for Youth-serving Organizations

Third Annual Teen Pregnancy Prevention Grantee Conference:
Ready, Set, Sustain: Continuing Our Success
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2013 Wise about Youth





WISE ABOUT YOUTH

Training, Consulting, Meeting Facilitation, and
Event Planning for Youth-serving
Organizations

www.wiseaboutyouth.com



Projects

National Association of School Nurses

Action for Healthy Kids

ETR Associates

Best Selling Author and Reality TV Personality
Toya Wright

Adolescent Health & Youth Development
Public Health Districts

Disclosure

Educational or instructional materials referenced during presentations at the Third Annual Teen Pregnancy Prevention Grantee Conference: *Ready, Set, Sustain: Continuing Our Success* are for informational purposes only. Presenters' references to these materials do not constitute endorsement by OAH, ACYF, CDC or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Any statements expressed are those of the presenters and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department.



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Expectations?

To **understand the role faith leaders** can have with supporting teen sexual decision making

To select at least **two strategies to engage** faith leaders for adolescent sexuality education

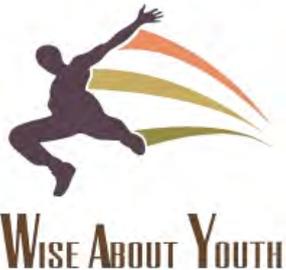
To develop at least **two message statements** to gain faith leader support for developing sexually healthy youth

Goals & Objectives



Who is here

- Name
- Where are you from?
- Role and Organization
- One word to describe a recent success you have had with someone (no repeats!)



Group Agreements

**Guidelines for
making our
time together
safe and
meaningful**





Personal Bias



What

Do You

Know?

Youth Data

Teens and Faith

- 82% affiliated with a local congregation
- 80% had few or no doubts about their beliefs in the past year
- 71% felt “extremely” “very” or “somewhat” close to God
- 65% prayed alone a few times a week or more often
- 61% “definitely” believed in divine miracles from God

Teens and Faith



- 52% attended worship two to three times a month or more often
- Mormon youth were the most engaged and Catholic young people were the least

http://www.nbcnews.com/id/7019023/ns/us_news/t/study-most-us-teens-serious-about-religion/#.UUOzLL_McSc

Teens, Faith, & Sexuality

- 31% of teens who are involved in faith communities have had sexual intercourse, versus 46% of all teens in the U.S.
- Religious teens are 50% more likely to wait to have intercourse and are 80% more likely to use a condom when they do.
- 92% of teens believe that morals and values should play a major role in sexual decision-making
- Religious teens are less likely to use alcohol and other drugs

<http://religiousinstitute.org/just-say-know-a-faith-based-advocacy-guide-for-sexuality-education/sexuality-youth-and-education-in->



Making the Case

Unique Position of FBOs

- An important role in shaping the ethical norms of their communities
- Unique perspectives on the spiritual dimensions of sexuality and the importance of healthy sexuality as an aspect of human life
- Important messengers and mentors for young people
- Second only to public schools in the number of young people they reach

<http://religiousinstitute.org/just-say-know-a-faith-based-advocacy-guide-for-sexuality-education/talking-points-for-clergy>



FBOs Want to Improve

- More than 90% of Protestant and Jewish clergy believe individuals can benefit from discussions of sexuality issues in worship services, youth groups, religious school, and adult education.
- African-American pastors are among the most supportive; 80% agree that Christian education should include sexuality issues.

Lake, Snell, Perry and Associates, *National Survey on Religion and Choice* (Washington, D.C.: Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, 2000)



FBOs Want to Improve

- 68% of clergy agree that they could be doing more than they currently are in the area of sexuality education
- 85% of clergy think that it is appropriate to speak about sexuality from the pulpit
- 95% agree that it is appropriate to speak about sexuality in religious schools or youth groups
- At least 14 denominations have official policies supporting sex ed in their congregations and public schools

<http://religiousinstitute.org/just-say-know-a-faith-based-advocacy-guide-for-sexuality-education/talking-points-for-clergy>

Young People Need Faith Leaders

- Youth want and need to hear more from their faith communities about sexuality
- The sexuality education available in many public schools is not adequate.
- Young people need and deserve accurate information on the entire range of sexuality topics and issues

<http://religiousinstitute.org/just-say-know-a-faith-based-advocacy-guide-for-sexuality-education/talking-points-for-clergy>

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Young People Need Faith Leaders

- Without access to vital information from trusted adults, young people turn to less-reliable sources that put them at risk of disease and unintended pregnancy.
- Young people of faith will make sexual decisions in a religious framework if supported by caring adults.
- Comprehensive sexuality education prepares young people for healthy relationships, dating, marriage, and parenting

Broad Public Support

- A majority of voters in nearly every demographic category, including Roman Catholics and evangelical Christians, support comprehensive sex education.
- A majority of self-described evangelical or born-again Christians support sexuality education that includes information about availability of instructions on how to use contraceptives and being taught in schools.

Primary Goals of Sexuality Education

Information

Complete, medically accurate information
about all aspects of human sexuality

Primary Goals of Sexuality Education

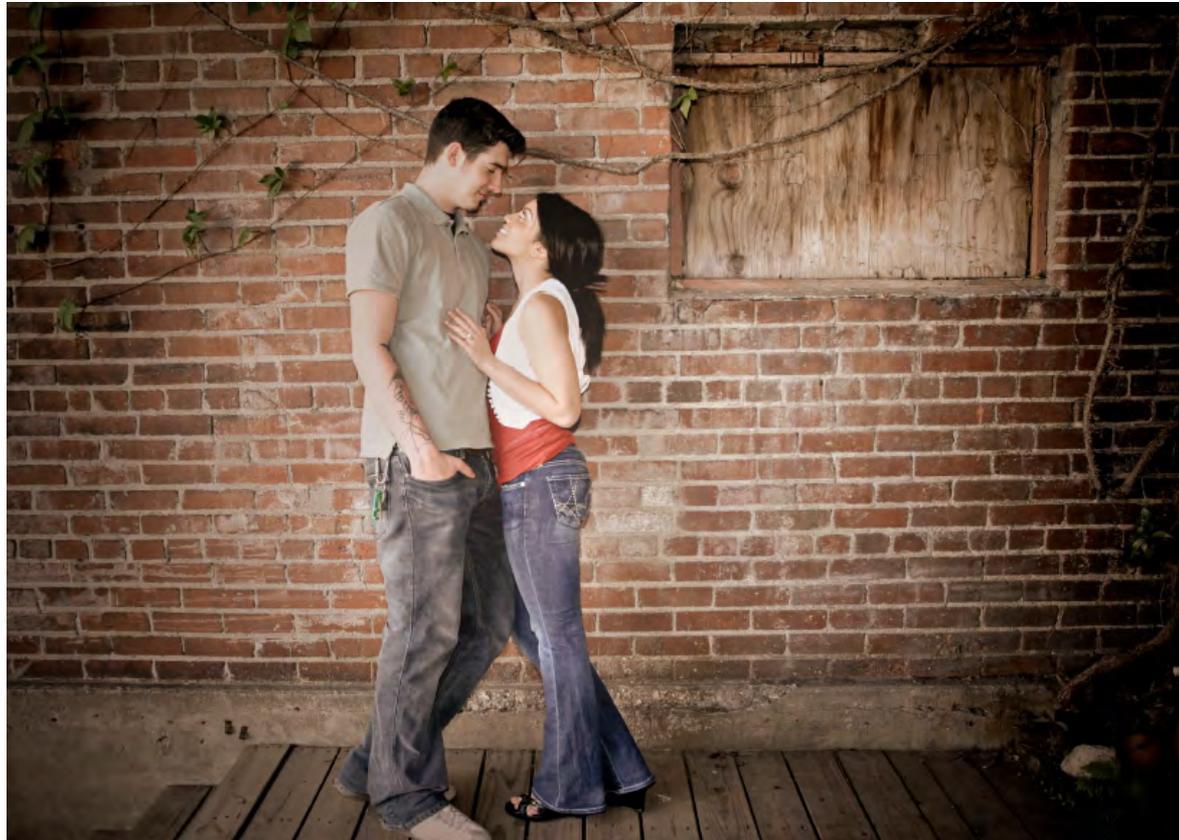
Attitudes, Values, and Insights

Young people shape their attitudes and values from their faith community and family members.

Primary Goals of Sexuality Education

Relationships and Interpersonal Skills

- Communication
- Decision-making
- Assertiveness
- Peer refusal



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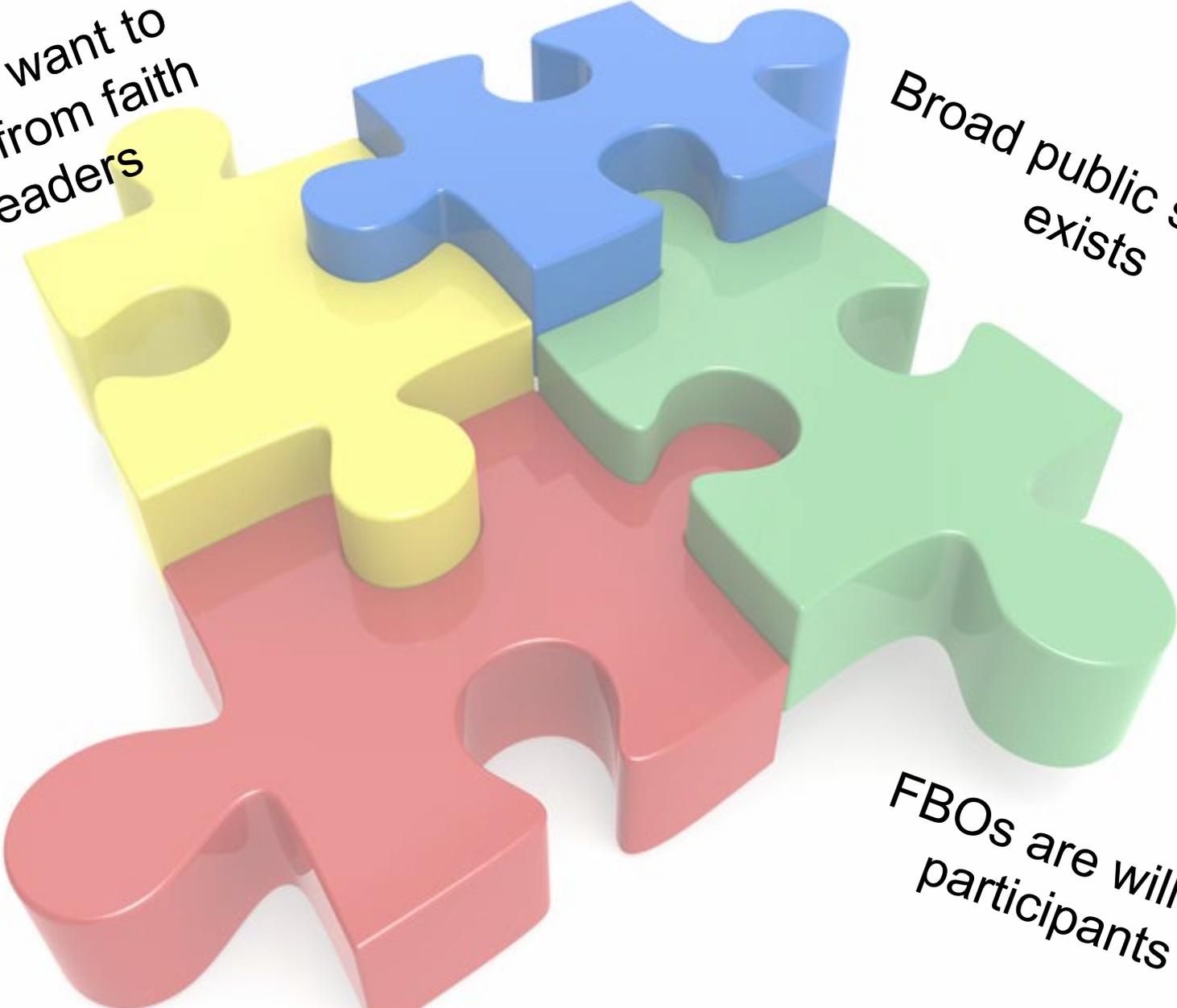
Primary Goals of Sexuality Education

Responsible Decision-Making

CSE addresses

- Abstinence
- Resisting pressure for sexual intercourse
- Encourages the use of contraception and other sexual health measures when young people do become sexually active

Provide youth with the skills and knowledge they need to develop their own moral capacity



Youth want to hear from faith leaders

Broad public support exists

FBOs are willing participants

Engage



Step One: Find Supportive Clergy

- Staff and Board member relationships
- Currently engaged faith leaders
- Local Interfaith Clergy Association
- Interfaith Alliance chapter (www.interfaithalliance.org)
- Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice affiliate in your state (www.rcrc.org)

- Unitarian Universalist and United Church of Christ ministers are on record as supporters of sexuality education
- Don't forget clergy and other faith leaders who don't serve congregations!
 - Hospital, prison, college chaplains
 - University/Seminary faculty
 - Parish Nurses

Find Supportive Clergy

O-U-T-R-E-A-C-H



- No cold calls or mass mailings!
- In person in their office
- PREPARE!
- Short, sweet, confidential, and thankful 😊

Messaging Tips



- Partner with young people
- Religious expression is diverse
- Ask for their ideas
- Share how you can be of service

Small group activity

- Who is the target person?
 - What is their title?
 - What organization or sector do they represent?
- What is their agenda?
- What type of information and resources do they need from you to meet their agenda AND support you?



Resources



<http://www.religiousinstitute.org/publications>

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Resources



<http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/religion-and-spirituality?task=view>

Sexuality Education Resources for Communities of Faith:

<http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/serced/2045?task=view>

<http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/religion/resources.aspx>



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Coordination for Youth-serving Organizations

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