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Lets Talk about Sex

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LETS TALK ABOUT SEX

lets talk about sex





Sex-E-cation Action Plan



- All pictures and names used in this presentation do not depict or identify the people who consented to participate in this study.
- In order to protect their individual identity and privacy, the research team has used pseudonyms to communicate our findings.

Research Questions:

1. What are students' perspectives of Sex Education at Bellman Secondary?
2. How would students change the Sex Education offered here at Bellman Secondary, if they could?



...To address our research questions, we conducted:

Participatory Action Research

- This research method was conducted with rather than on Bellman Secondary students
- Eight of us, student co-researchers, conducted this study in order to create a Sex Education Action Plan for Bellman Secondary
- The purpose of this plan is to inform the teachers of students' thoughts and opinions regarding Sex Education

Our Research Process

- In the beginning, we had a general discussion in two Grade 12 classes regarding the Sex Education we've received at Bellman Secondary.
- 8 co-researchers were randomly selected to further investigate the topic.
- We took part in workshops that helped us understand the ethical approaches to conducting research. We were taught how to conduct and structure interviews.
- We came up with interview questions.

...Our Research Process

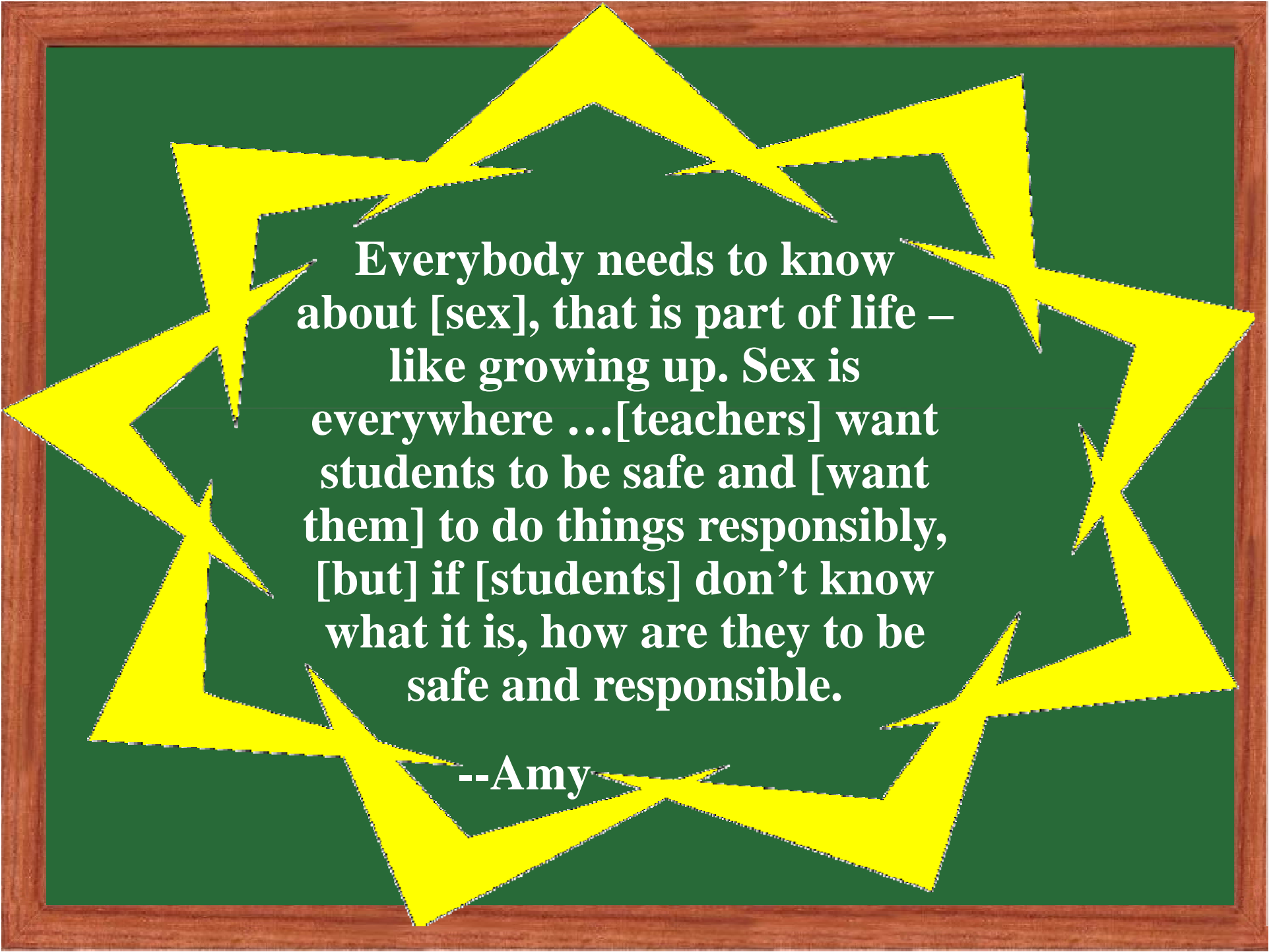
- Each co-researcher interviewed 2 or 3 Grade 12 students, asking for their thoughts on the Sex Education here at Bellman Secondary.
- Then, our 22 interviews were transcribed allowing us to analyze the information. We used this data to create this action plan which has been made for the students by the students. This plan is now presented to you, our educators.
- Our goal is to contribute to our sex education program by getting involved in our own education, thereby increasing our knowledge and enjoyment for this part of our education.

Sample Questions:

1. What does Sex Education mean to you?
2. In what ways has Sex Education influenced you?
3. Can you describe positive and negative Sex Education experiences you have had at Bellman Secondary?
4. What should the action plan for Sex Education here at Bellman Secondary look like?
5. In addition to gym class, what other classes should include a Sex Education component?
6. How do you think the educators will respond to our Sex Education Action Plan for Bellman Secondary?



Our Research Findings...



Everybody needs to know
about [sex], that is part of life –
like growing up. Sex is
everywhere ...[teachers] want
students to be safe and [want
them] to do things responsibly,
[but] if [students] don't know
what it is, how are they to be
safe and responsible.

--Amy

IMPORTANT

...not all kids get it from their family, they have to get it is somewhere. [Sex ed] is very important. ...some families, some parents aren't comfortable talking about it, some religions don't encourage that. So for [students] to get it at school, I think it is good for kids.
Michelle

I think it's better to be taught in the classroom like the majority of kids don't have parents they can talk to about that kind of stuff.
- Bob

I probably wouldn't have been as informed and knowledgeable about it without [sex education]. -Luigi

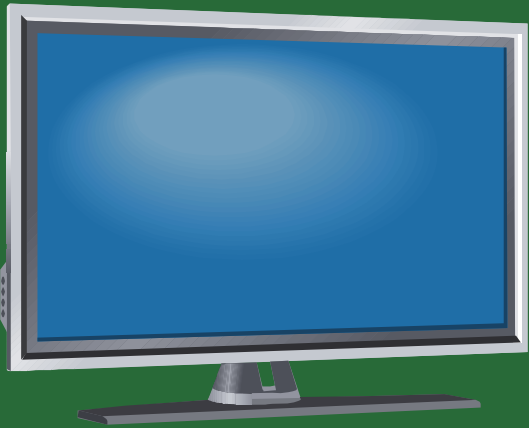
What Influences Students' Sexuality?



INTERNET

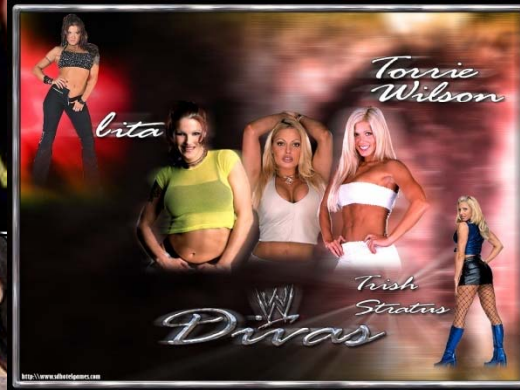
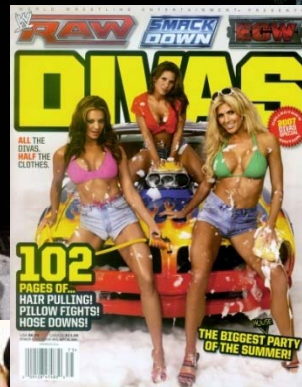
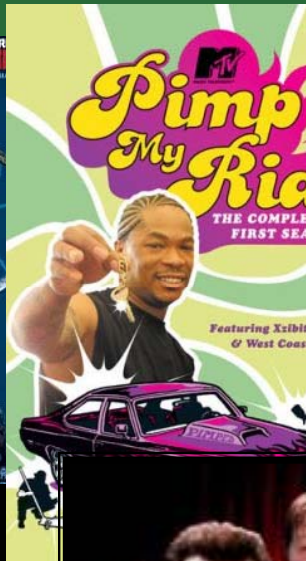
- “Well kids are naturally curious. I bet they’re going to find porn on the Internet and that is going to teach them pretty much all they are gonna need to know. But, they are getting a false sense of what it is going to be like. They are very loud in porn, overly loud.” – George.
- “Imagine if every kid learned about sex from what they found only in the media and on the internet. They would be totally unprepared for real life, thinking sex was just like porn.” –Mark
- “I don’t think that I would turn to a teacher and I don’t think that very many kids would. A lot of kids... would be more willing to find help through the Internet.” –Michelle





TELEVISION

- “Children these days have a lot of media influences and television shows can influence their views on sexuality” –Frank
- “When I was in Grade 9 and 10, it seemed to me that the media portrayed...the natural progression of a relationship [to be] like kissing, feeling up... and oral sex and, then, sex. That was the natural progression of a relationship and by like the one year mark...that is what we were supposed to be at. ...I guess that natural progression doesn't have to happen. And, that emotions should be more involved than your body.” –Carly





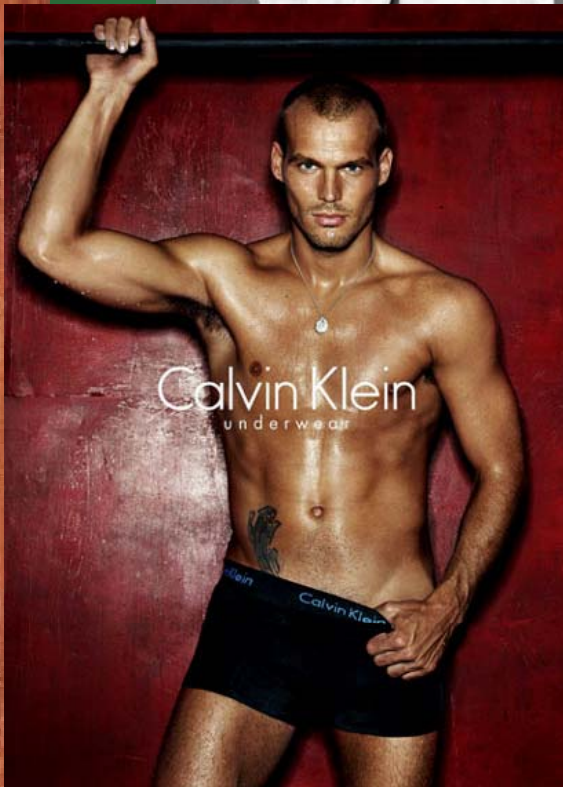
From SUDANES
REFUGEE to
INTERNATION
SUPERMODEL

ALEK

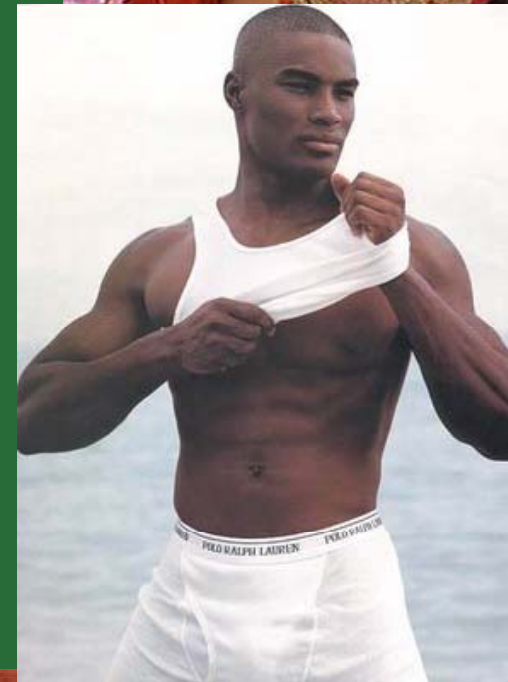
FASHION

S H I O N

“I guess you try to dress sexy sometimes. Looking sexy is cool. Sex is pretty much what teenage guys think about all the time.” – Rusty



“I am really driven by sex... I guess I’m influenced, in the way I choose to dress. I don’t show off my body because I don’t want to be viewed as a sexual object.” – Carly



Who do Students Talk to about Sex & Sexuality?



Students Talk to...

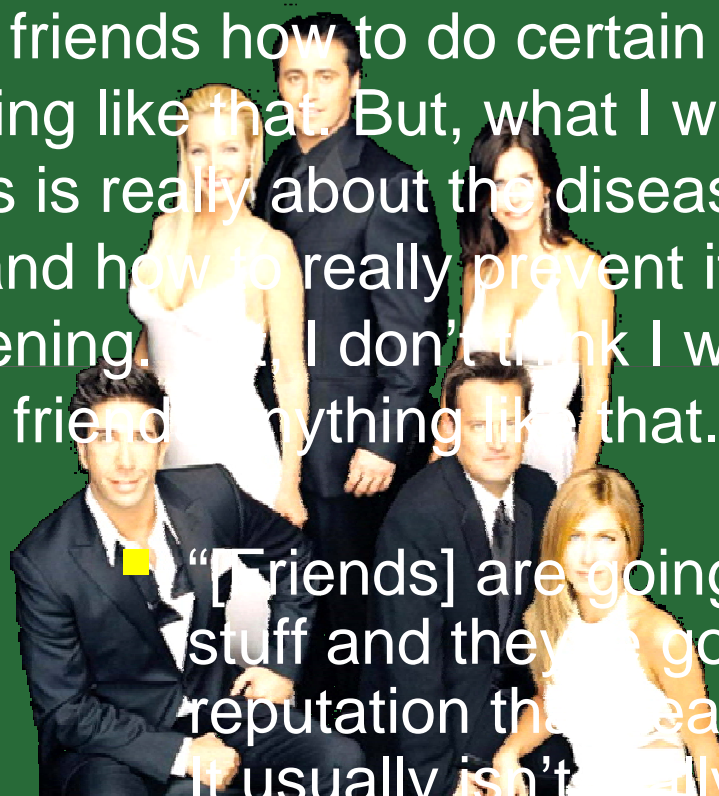
“I would have to say [I feel most comfortable talking with] a health care professional. Just because there is a lot less of a relationship with that person so you don't have to feel like you're exposing yourself to somebody who will judge you.” — Justin

“[Students] just want to talk to somebody who isn't going to tell anybody. It's just between you and that person and no one else. I think that is what everyone needs; at least that is what I need...I think a lot of people need that.” — Bob

“I feel most comfortable talking with my friends about [sex] rather than an adult” — Helga

Friends

“I would rather ask friends how to do certain things, like say oral sex or something like that. But, what I would ask parents or teachers is really about the diseases and the pregnancy worry, and how to really prevent it from happening. ... I don't think I would ask my friend anything like that.” –Sarah

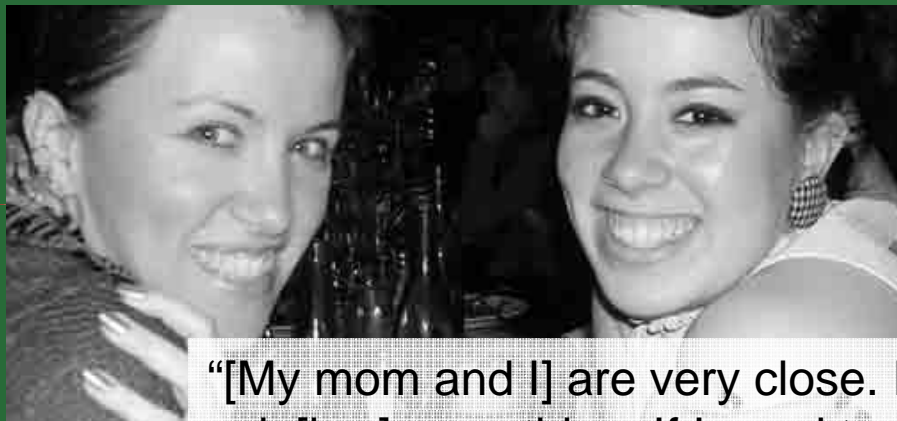


■ “[Friends] are going to just brag and stuff and they’re going to save their reputation that teach you anything. It usually isn’t really informative... So, I don’t think learning [about sex] from friends is really good. I don’t think it teaches you a lot.” –Bob



Parents

Some students who were interviewed for this study were comfortable talking about sex and sexuality with their parents.



“[My mom and I] are very close. I ask [her] everything. If I need to know something, she will tell me straight-up on how it goes. I trust her with everything.” –Sarah



“...with my parents, sure we’re open, but it is still a little iffy because... somewhere in the back of their heads, even if they are willing to talk to me about it, there is still a parental aspect that holds them back from fully accepting, or encouraging what I’m doing.” –Michelle

Parents

According to some students, their parents were reluctant to talk about sex and sexuality.

"I never talk to my dad, I think his idea would be to hand me a book...to figure it out on my own." Rebecca

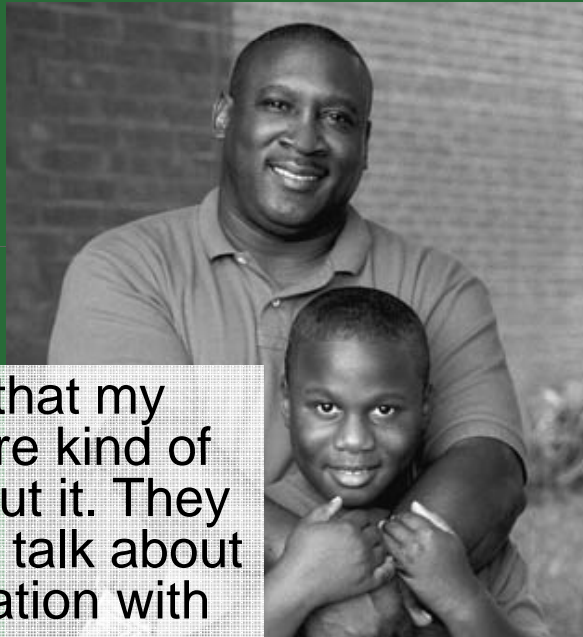


"My parents don't necessarily approve of me having sex but they accept that it is basically happening. I got the sex talk from my parents before and their main concern is the safety of it. They don't want me having a child at the age of 18 or 17". – Frank



Parents

Other parents have not spoken with their children about sex and sexuality



“I think that my parents are kind of liberal about it. They don’t really talk about sex education with me. They have never had the ‘sex talk’... they kind of stay out of it. I don’t know if they feel it’s their business.” -Justin

“It isn’t something that we talk about... I get the feeling that [I] must wait until marriage...that isn’t really my view on it. I have a very different view.” –Brittney



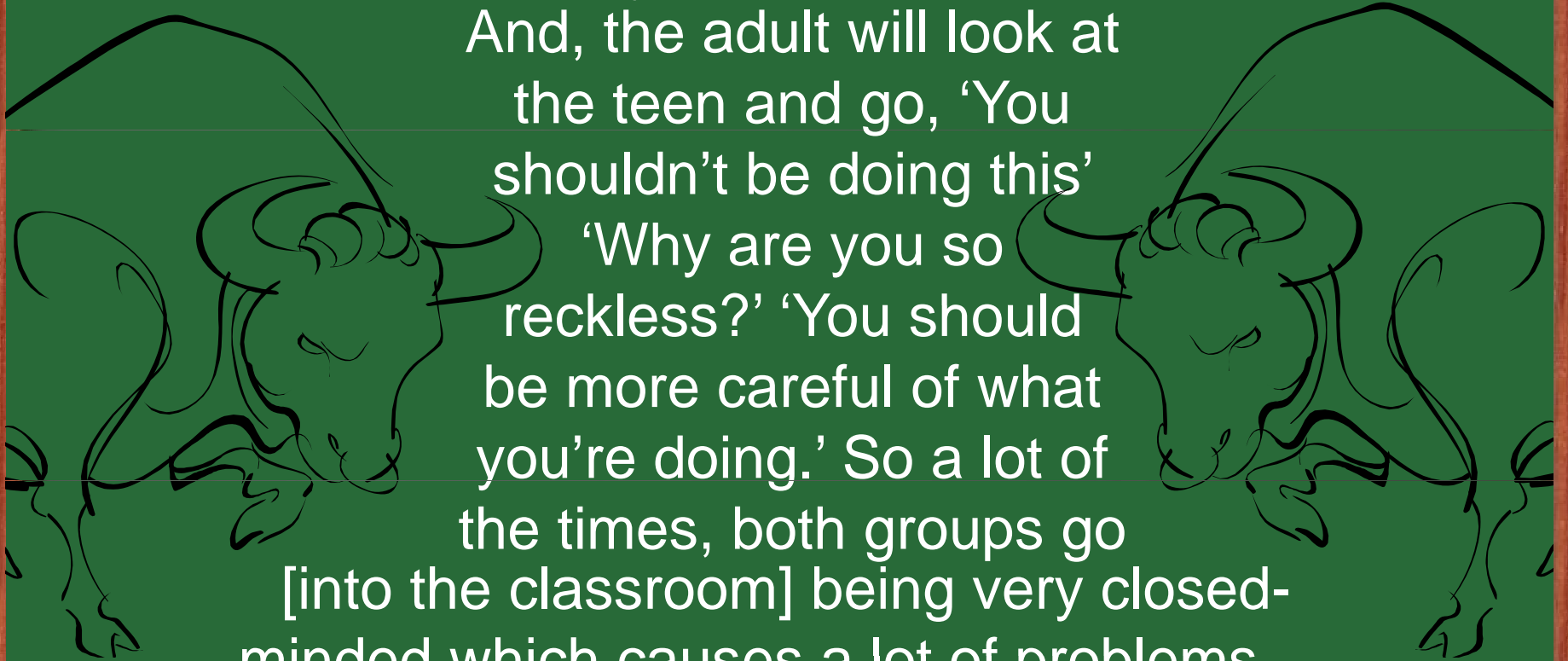
Clashing Perspectives

“Teens will look at the adults and go ‘You don’t know what you are talking about.’ Or, ‘How would you know what my experience is?’

And, the adult will look at the teen and go, ‘You shouldn’t be doing this’

‘Why are you so reckless?’ ‘You should be more careful of what you’re doing.’ So a lot of the times, both groups go [into the classroom] being very closed-minded which causes a lot of problems.—

Michelle



What Does Sex Education Mean to Students?



"Sex Education" Means...

Essentially, the first thing that comes to mind I guess is a repetitive, watered-down version of what the education system wants us to be taught. – Brittney

Well, I think it's more of a get out of class free card. –Wanda

Sex Education means to me, the most dreaded part of Phys. Ed. –Wendy

I guess you should learn the dangers and the good things about it. And, what is socially acceptable... ..you learn more the technical and you learn about terminology and such at school, especially in high school...You learn about what the norms are. –Rusty

"Sex Education" Means...

Sexual education doesn't mean a whole lot to me, in terms of education. I can learn anything on the internet.—Richard

Sex ed is an opportunity to talk about concerns I'm not comfortable discussing with my parents, plus we don't do anything, so its alright to catch up on sleep.—Ryan

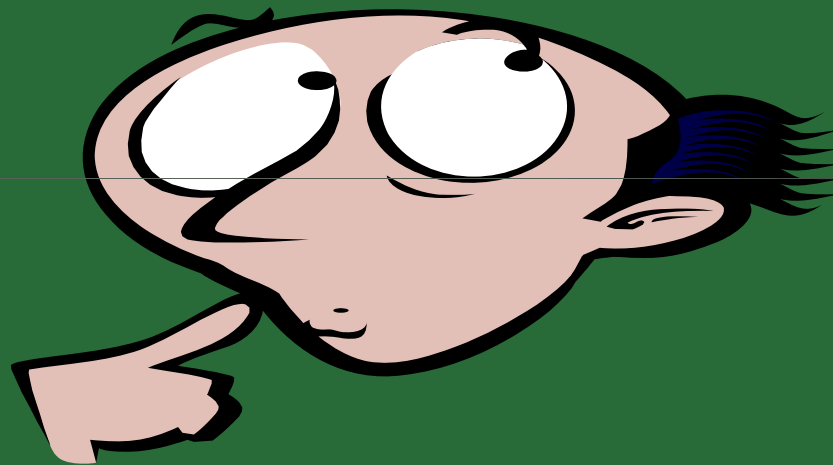
I think it is important for people to understand the risks of sex and what can be the outcome but also learn how to enjoy sexual activity safely. —Fiona

Sex education to me is learning about birth control methods and the "terrible" things that happen if you have sex. Nothing is pro-sex.—Tiffany

Sex education means learning the proper knowledge about the different topics of sex to enhance our awareness and knowledge.—Roberto



Who should teach Sex Education?



Sex Ed. Teachers

Some students believed that the teachers here at Bellman Secondary are teaching sex ed effectively

- ✓ “I do appreciate having it at school and it shouldn’t be a geography teacher or anything like that, but I think our teachers, [who] teach sex ed do know what they are doing and if they need any help there’s always people who specifically do that. I don’t think that our sex ed is in the wrong hands or anything like that.” – Rebecca





Sex Ed. Teachers

Other students suggested that it is necessary for teachers to become better educated in sexual health and gain a better understanding of teaching sex education to teenagers.

- “I don’t think that the teachers here are educated enough in order to teach sex ed and I think that they need to get professionals to come in and teach students... and they really don’t give... it [the attention it] really deserves. I can honestly say that I learned nothing in high school with the teachers teaching it.”—Allie

A Medical Professional

Whether it be that some students feel uncomfortable with the classroom teacher or suspect that the teacher is unqualified to teach sex education, some students said they would want a nurse involved in their sex education.

- ...bring a nurse in or somebody who specializes in that area to teach kids. Not the normal teacher. Because if they wanted to say a comment or ask a question they wouldn't be embarrassed or scared to ask in front of the teacher because they don't know this person. —Allie
- [teachers] don't know everything and to have a medical professional that you know is right, that you know is a very credible source of information—that would help [students] a lot.—Frank



The School Nurse

Some students identified the school nurse as a person who could teach components of the sex education program at Bellman Secondary. However, all the students interviewed commented that they have had very little interaction with her during their time at Bellman Secondary.

- May be if that nurse was in all the time and she made more appearances, or she came in and like I knew her. I have been at Bellman Secondary for five years and I've been there once. I don't know her, I don't know who she is. She could be a really swell lady, and I wouldn't even know. — Bob
- [The school nurse] doesn't know me. She doesn't know anything about me, she doesn't know my history, sure I could tell her, but now she has known me for a grand total of 3 seconds. How much good is that gonna do?—Michelle



Mandatory Sex Education

Some students believe that sex education ought to be mandatory to ensure that every student receives the same education.

- “...definitely do sex education in Grade 9. Don’t wait till later ...that’s when students really need to know about it. At least, the dangers of it... and try to include everyone.”— Pearl



- “...if you want everyone to get the same [sex] education you have to make sure that everyone gets it. You’re not going to [put] what... is really important in a course that is not mandatory...”— Brittney

Mandatory Sex Education

Some student believe that having sex education once isn't sufficient.

- “[Those who] aren’t taking phys’ ed courses are going to be deprived of [sex education]... In Grade 9, they teach you about sex. Then, in Grade 10, they teach you about drugs and sex, but they go further into the sex, they teach you... a lot more ... [Those who] take Grade 9 gym, and then they’re done [with phys’ed], they’re [going to] forget a lot of what they learned and they’re not going to relearn it again. So they are deprived.” — Bob

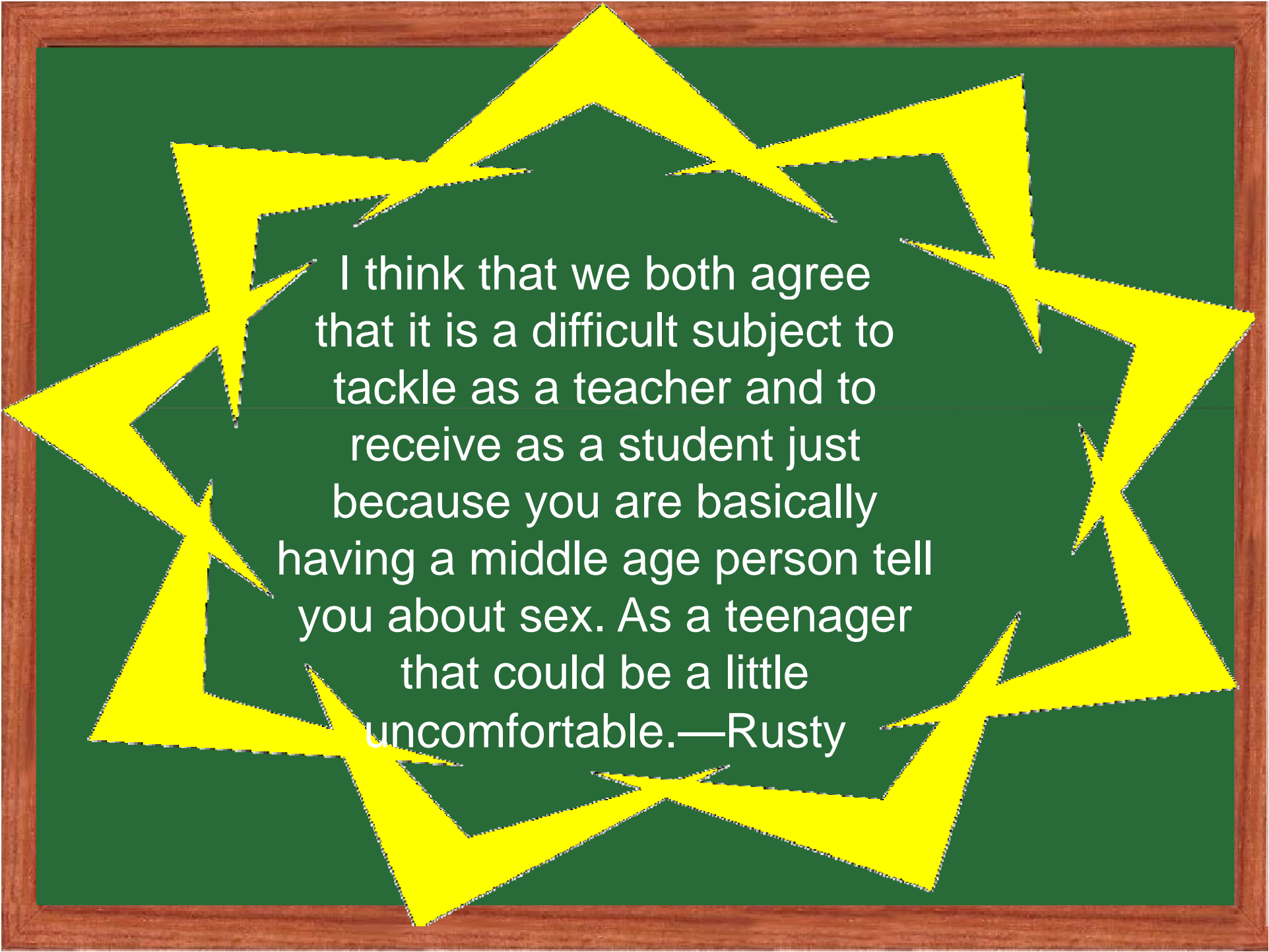


Mandatory Sex Education

To ensure that ALL Bellman Secondary students get sex education, some students suggested that teachers consider incorporating sex education into English

- “Maybe in English. I know that is kind of weird. But, that’s the one class that everyone has to take all through high school. A lot of people stop taking gym after Grade 9 so they don’t continue with health and sex ed. They stop after Grade 9, they stop taking gym. So, maybe English.” – Amy
- “I think it is good to have [sex education] in gym, but that doesn’t grab everybody. So English classes [could include sex education] because it is mandatory...” – Mike



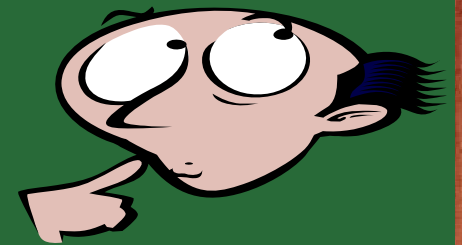
A green chalkboard with a wooden frame. A large, yellow, multi-pointed starburst graphic is centered on the board, with its points extending towards the edges. The text is written in white on the green background.

I think that we both agree
that it is a difficult subject to
tackle as a teacher and to
receive as a student just
because you are basically
having a middle age person tell
you about sex. As a teenager
that could be a little
uncomfortable.—Rusty

Health Fair

Every year Bellman Secondary has a Health Fair. Some students in Grade 11 and 12, who are in physical education classes, take part to ensure that it runs accordingly. Health care professionals are invited to Bellman Secondary to teach these students about sex-related issues.

What Worked Well with the Health Fair?



Health Fair

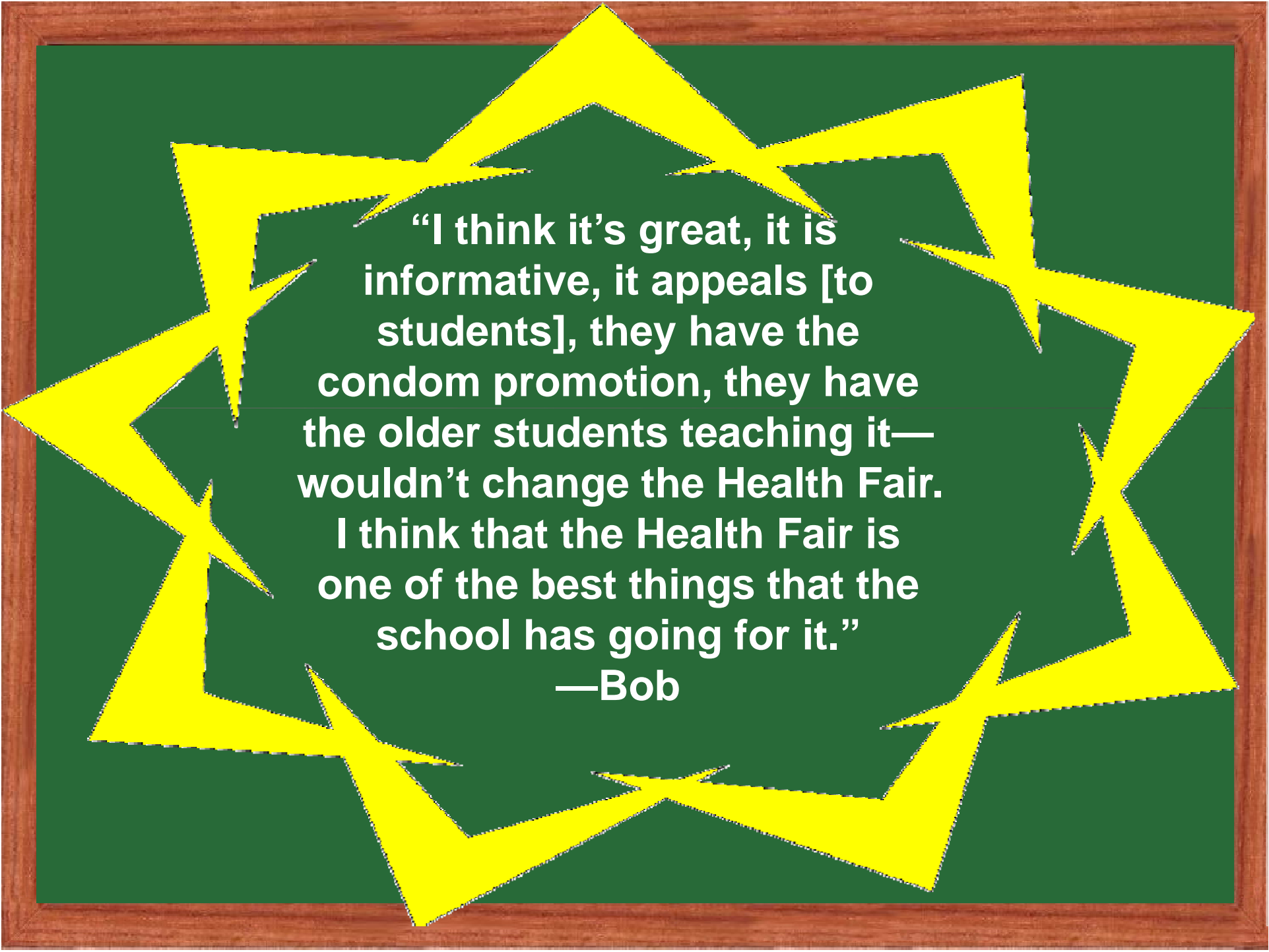
Some students identified the interactive nature and relaxed atmosphere of the Health Fair as two factors that contributed to its success.

- “I think [the Health Fair] is a good thing to do because it is students teaching other students...people are a bit more interested in listening to their fellow students talk. And, then you are learning more if you are running the Health Fair ... It is a good idea.”— Amy
- Michelle believes the Health Fair is a success “... because it’s such a relax atmosphere, such a fun atmosphere, there is constant movement: [students will not be] afraid to speak up about [sex and sexuality]”
- ... [the Health Fair] is helpful to a degree for people who are hesitant to ask questions because it is just your peers throwing information at you in a non-threatening type of way. So, for those people that are timid, it is a good thing, it is helpful. —Brittney

Health Fair

Some students stressed that the Health Fair offered them an opportunity to learn information about sex and sexuality from peers as well as from medical professionals

- “...the Health Fair is...an appeal to authority...I’ve talked to the people who run the stations for it, [and] you can be very open about anything, you can even ask questions being obnoxious and they’ll give you a medical answer. They’re all professionals, so you know what they’re talking about is fact. ...it’s a really good way to have a variety of [information about] sexual topics all...in one location”—Frank
- It covers... the major topics that you want to know about and they always give you other sources if you want more information, like websites or people you can call. —Wanda
- ...[people] learn stuff from it because they see pictures and the worse things that can happen...and the side effects...Plus you, get free condoms. —Sam



**“I think it’s great, it is
informative, it appeals [to
students], they have the
condom promotion, they have
the older students teaching it—
wouldn’t change the Health Fair.
I think that the Health Fair is
one of the best things that the
school has going for it.”**

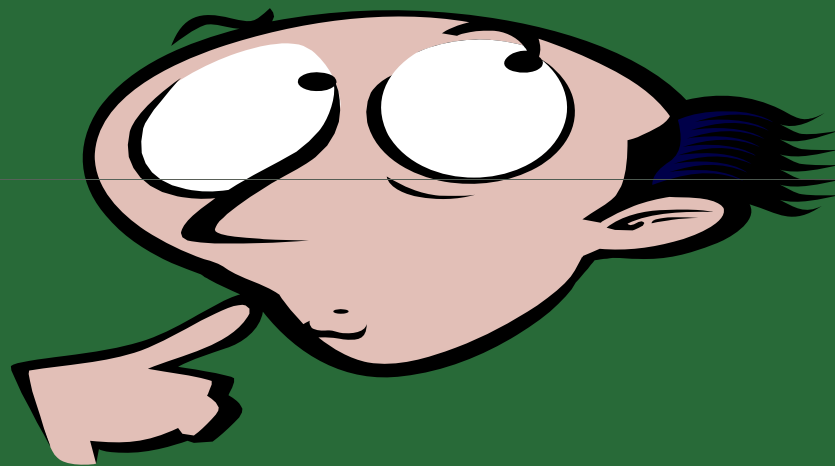
—Bob

Health Fair

When the interviewed students were asked how the health fair could be improved, some people highlighted organizational aspects.

- ...the information should be monitored more because I remember being at my booth [and thinking] “Oh, I don’t know that... You may want to go to another booth and ask them. May be they’ll know.” I think that we should be given more guidelines and maybe, more supervision, or more preparation time because just being thrown on a booth and be like okay you are going to be a pro on STDs and it’s like “I don’t know, I’d be better off here.” It’s just poorly organized sometimes. —Rebecca
- “...when I’ve volunteered to run [a booth]... we kind of learned about the stations the day of, 5 minutes before all the Grade 9s came in. I think it might me slightly better if...the people running it could come into the senior classes for half an hour and just briefly explain [the content so they] learn their station. Not to say that they don’t pull it off well...but it would be slightly more accurate considering you didn’t learn it on the fly 5 minutes ago.”—Michelle

What is working when it comes to teaching Sex Education?



Bellman

✓ [In gym classes], they supplied a lot of information [about sex and sexuality] to me more than anyone else.
—Sarah

✓ ...it started out in...Grade 9 gym class. I found it kind of weird at the start. A bunch of ... guys all talking about sex and everything. [The teacher] brought a really relaxed approach to it, and make some funny jokes, put some overheads. It just seemed alright.— Chad

✓ I'd say that I've learned a lot of random facts that you should know. Like learning the best ways of contraception. They teach the number one rule: Birth control + Condom... "You can't fail, when you use both." One or the other alone, it's a little bit risky.—Bob

✓ [Biology and Families] really gave me different perspectives because there isn't one thing to explore ...in sexual education. There's many implications.—Frank

Bellman



...we were assigned [sex-related topics], and then we did presentations. So it was like we were being taught by our peers which is, I thought, helpful... it was just like you were talking to the class. So that was good. –Brittney



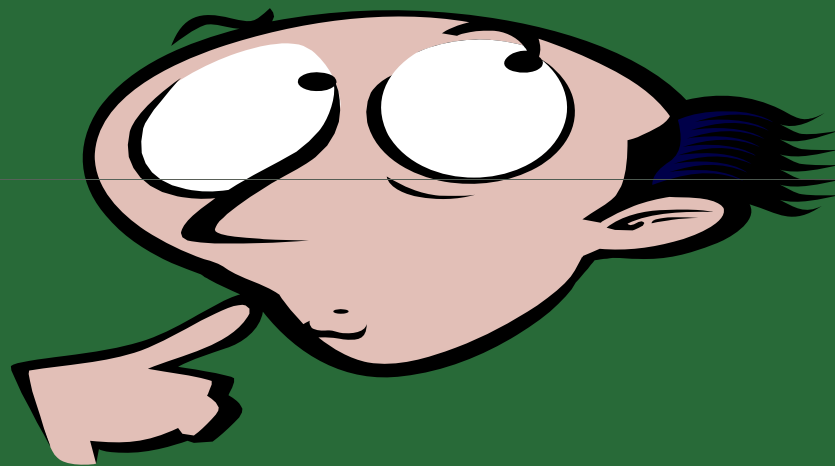
...for me it was the teacher who was very comfortable talking with us. She was pretty young which I think is a good idea. Students can relate to her. And, she was a female teacher, so the boys talk to the male teacher and the girls talk to the female teacher. That is definitely the best way. –Sam



Bellman

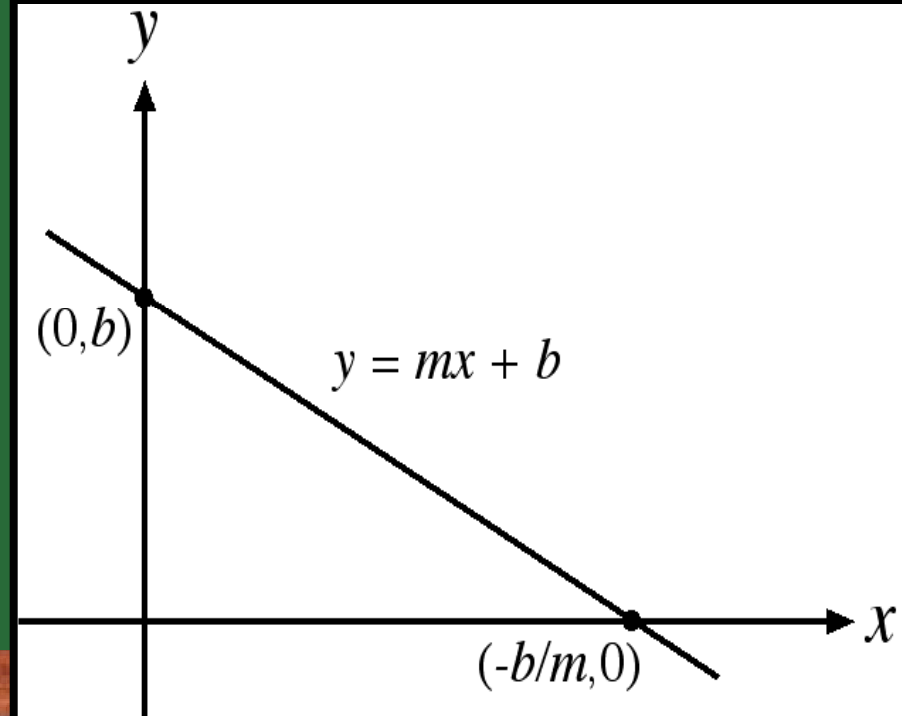
- ✓ ...the parenting course is really good because they have that mechanical babies and you take them home and you find out what it's actually like... I tried to apply for that course a couple of times because I wanted to try it out. I know that it is a wake-up call.—Sarah
- ✓ In Family Studies we went over briefly certain [sexual] things and how it relates to the family and the social implications of sex as oppose to the biological stuff you learn in phys'ed.—Frank

What is not working when it comes to teaching Sex Education?

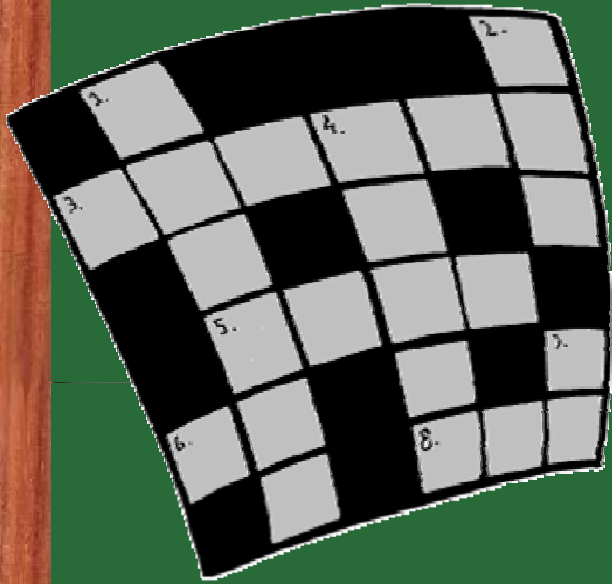


Sex Education ~~=~~ Math

- "...I think a lot of [teachers] unfortunately have been taught that... **X** number of these kids are having sex, that **X** number of these kids are getting an STI. So, they [come to the classroom with] a very factual standpoint... Try and get [teachers] more involved and teach them how to teach such a touchy subject because it is not the same as teaching **$y = mx + b$** ... [They] have to take a certain approach..." —Michelle

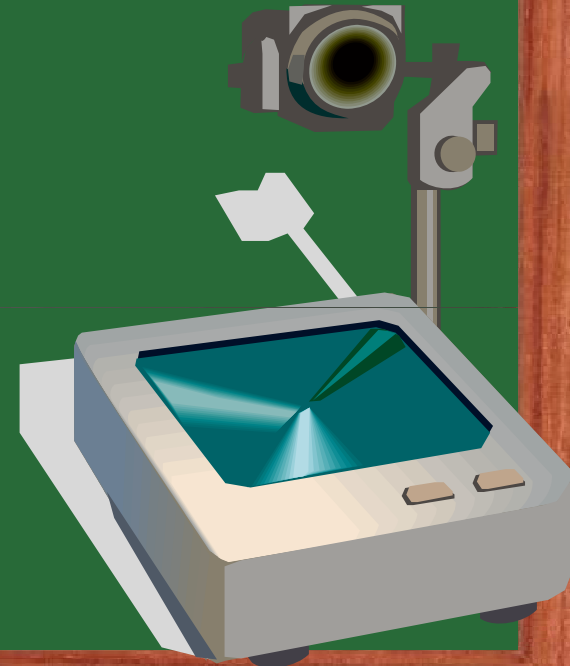


Teaching Methods



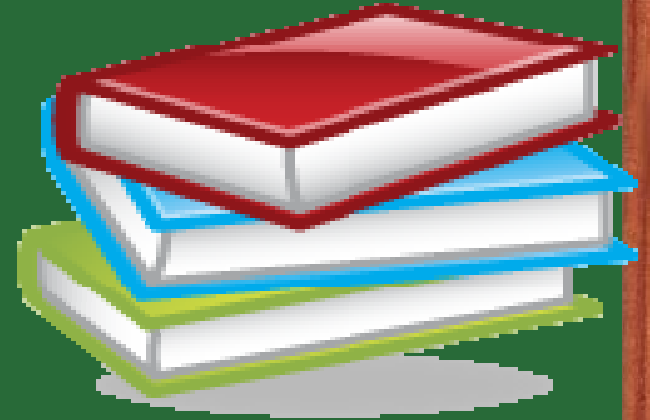
X ...had a crossword of all the sex ed language. Like gonorrhea, and penis, and it was like... “Okay, you know the vocabulary, congratulations.” What do you know about it? What did you learn?” I don’t think that is all that effective. —Michelle

X It is a lot of overheads, kind of like labels on different body parts, anatomy. I don’t think that really benefits my overall knowledge of sex and sex ed. There is nothing really. I think it is important to talk about safe sex than it is to talk about the anatomy aspect of it.—Justin



Teaching Methods

X “In a classroom,...it was kind of awkward, sit-down and talk about it. What do I remember? I don’t know. It was all kind of textbook: This is what we are required to say...” -Brittney



X Always so damn awkward! You only get the textbook answers: missionary, heterosexual, after you’re married, STDs. —John

X They are old movies... and I think they were informative, but when we were watching the movie, we’d take it as a joke. We weren’t really taking it seriously because it’s like people would go “ha, ha because he has a funny hairdo” or “he has funny glasses.”—Luigi



**According to
some students,
the sex education
classroom
ought to be a...**



COMFORT ZONE

“It doesn’t make a difference to me [who teaches sex ed, so long as the person is...willing to listen to me and I will [then be] encouraged to listen to them. I want an environment where everyone is very respectful of one another and not judgmental...the biggest thing is to be... open-minded, [and] respectful.”—Michelle

...someone you trust, someone who maybe has had sex before and knows what they are talking about and does not give false information out...Usually...teachers...just older people [who] would be able to help you out.—Sarah



Trust & Confidentiality

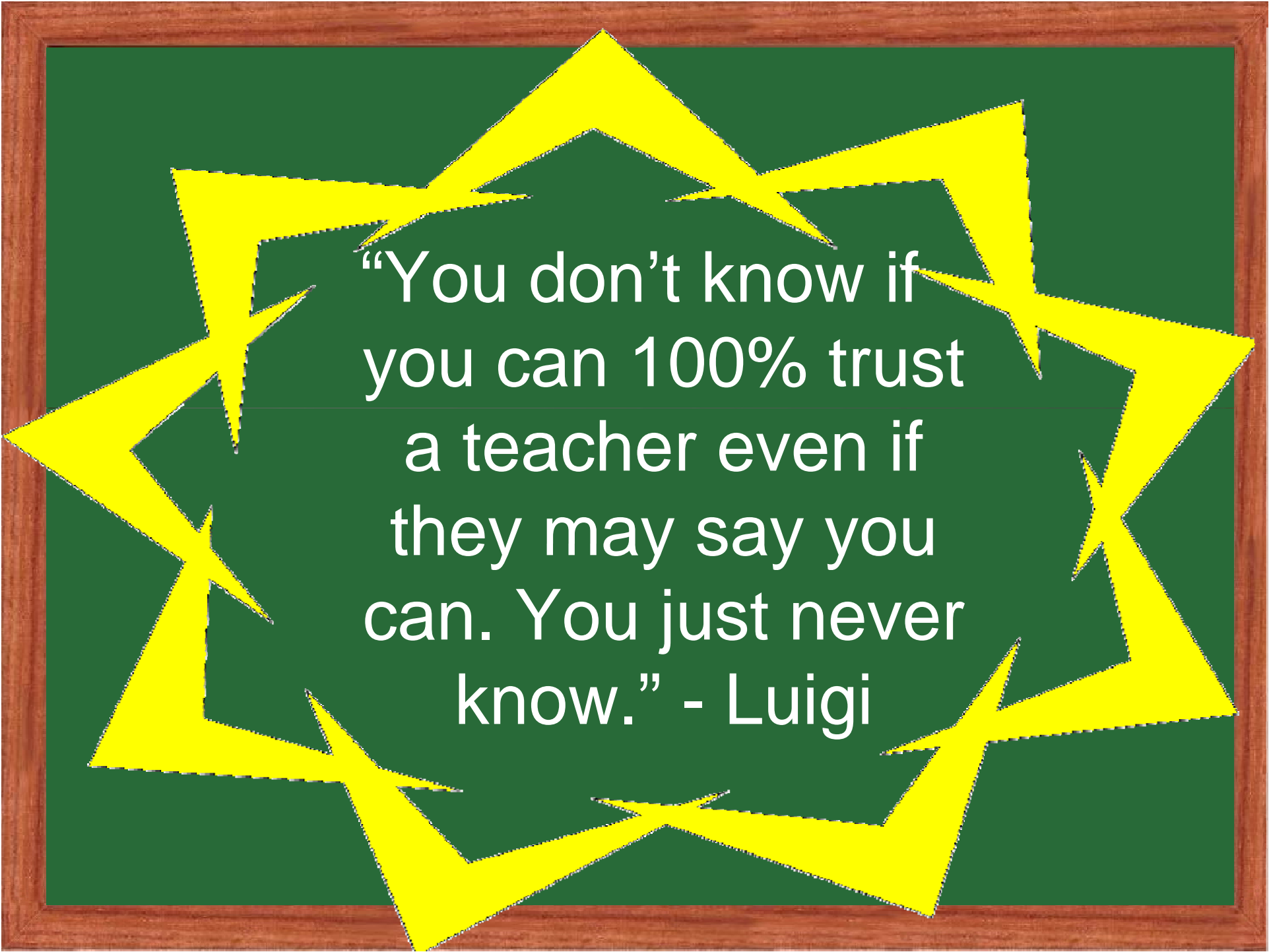


Students are hesitant to engage in class discussions or ask questions about sex and sexuality because they don't know if they can trust their teachers and peers

“Teens are hesitant to [talk], hesitant to [release]... information ...without getting into trouble... teens aren't sure if ‘My teacher [is going] to keep this confidential?’ ‘What are my classmates going to think?’ ...teachers don't really get it out that [the discussion] is [going] to be confidential...”—Michelle.

Students feel more comfortable talking to someone who guarantees them confidentiality over a teacher who can possibly tell their co-workers in the staff room.

“...with a medical professional, you have that doctor-patient confidentiality [so] you can talk to them about anything.”—Frank

A green chalkboard with a wooden frame. A large, yellow, multi-pointed starburst graphic is centered on the board, with its points extending towards the edges. The text is written in white on the green background.

“You don’t know if
you can 100% trust
a teacher even if
they may say you
can. You just never
know.” - Luigi

Judgement

Students believe they are vulnerable to judgment from teachers and students when they engage in discussions related to sex and sexuality.

X “I’d be uncomfortable [going to my teachers about sex and sexuality]. They know my parents... I wouldn’t want [the teacher] to have a lower opinion of me. I have a reputation to uphold.” – Bob

X “...if you are in Grade 9, you know that you are going to see that teacher...every day for the rest of high school. I don’t think you want to talk about a personal issue or stuff about sex...” – Frank

X “If I ask a question people are going to think I’m a virgin...for guys, when you’re growing up as a boy, it is a bad thing to be a virgin. When you are a girl, it’s like ‘Hold on to that V-card; I’m still pure; No one is going to call me a slut.’” – Bob

5

A+

50%

10

66%



Open-Minded

George stressed that establishing an open atmosphere and open discussions are critical in sex education

- “[When you’re with your friends], you’re more open, a lot more biases come out, exaggerations, hyperbole if you will. Things open up. Yeah, it is a lot more crude. Whereas, in school you sit down, you’re not open, there will be more, a lot more jokes, here and there. It’s not the same way. Because there is an authority figure to mediate what you are talking about.”

George’s sex education experience contrasts with Brittney’s

- “...there wasn’t any kind of awkward sit-down, “now I’m going to tell you everything.” It was just like when you feel you have something you would like to know, you ask it and then we’ll answer the question. It was always like open, “don’t be afraid or ashamed to ask questions.”

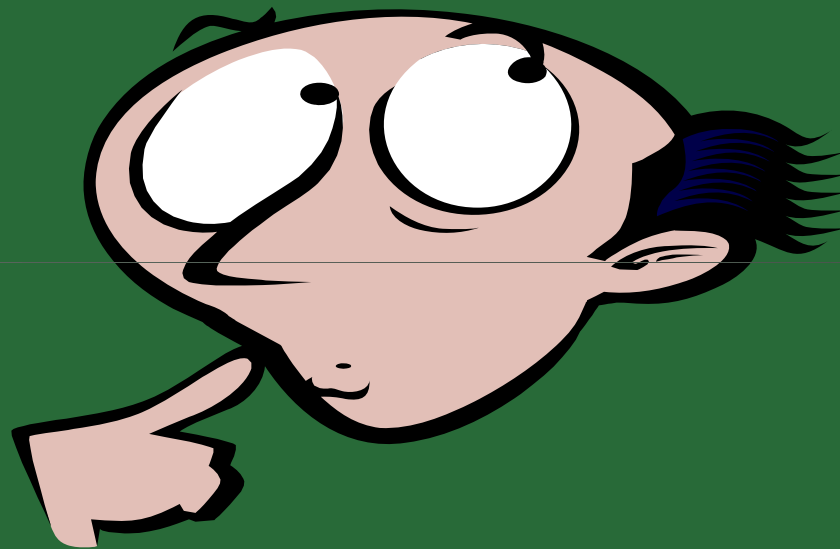


...Open-Minded

Michelle offers this advice to teachers responsible for teaching sex education:

“Just be open with kids right off the bat, so you immediately break that barrier that [sex education] is taboo. ...[you] have to be very flexible with [your] schedule, with [your] timetable, and with the kids. You never know what will come up...if a kid asks a question it could trigger something that could really help the class....[You] should be open enough, flexible enough, and willing enough to [address the question]. Instead of like, “Oh, NO NO, I have to cover this topic right now. It’s a part of my schedule. If I don’t do it, then we won’t get to this topic today.” So what? You’ve got something else covered, you’ve still taught them something.”

What Sex-Related Content do Students Remember Learning ?



Sex-Related Content

I find that they teach you a lot so like when you go into real life situations you are kind of informed already. And, you kind of know how to stay safe. So, I think that's good. –Bob

...they talked about STIs and the risks of having sex. That's all I can remember. It wasn't very in-depth. It was very short. –George

...when you look at the course of Families, where you look at sex, marriage, relationships, and in other cultures as well... It broadens your perspective, it makes you look at the big picture, not the specific STI you get from someone. –Frank

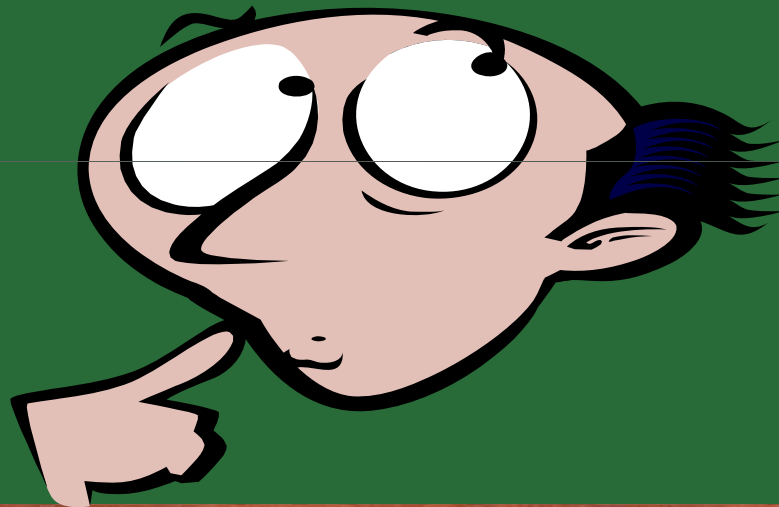
I'd say that a lot of the cut-and-dry stuff, I have learned at school...The basics symptoms,...wear protection, [and] the basic anatomy, I've learned through school. It's the little details that I shove to the back of my brain and pull up later... a lot of them are from sex ed. –Michelle

Sex Education Content

When relating sex education in elementary school to that offered during high school, George emphasizes both similarities and differences.

“Well, when you are younger, it is very vague information that they are telling you. ...they don’t tell you exactly what you want to know. They like want to beat around the bush because you are so young—they don’t want to scare you for life. As you get older, they don’t tell you necessarily what you want to know, they are still beating around the bush because they don’t want the parents harassing them saying “Why are you teaching my son/daughter this?” So, they... still [offer] very vague answers to questions—in the end, that’s even worse for the child.”— George

**What feedback can students
give to enhance
the content taught in
Sex Education?**



Teach the boys
and the girls the
same sex ed
content

Teach the

Talk a
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Inform
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sex ed
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“I disagree with people telling kids, discouraging them from having sex. Kids are naturally curious; they are going to do it. If you ban something, that’s the forbidden fruit, they are gonna want to do it even more.... If they have the knowledge, and they know the risks and what they are getting into, [and] what they are doing, they’ll be more inclined to wait.” - George

Student Suggestions for Sex Education

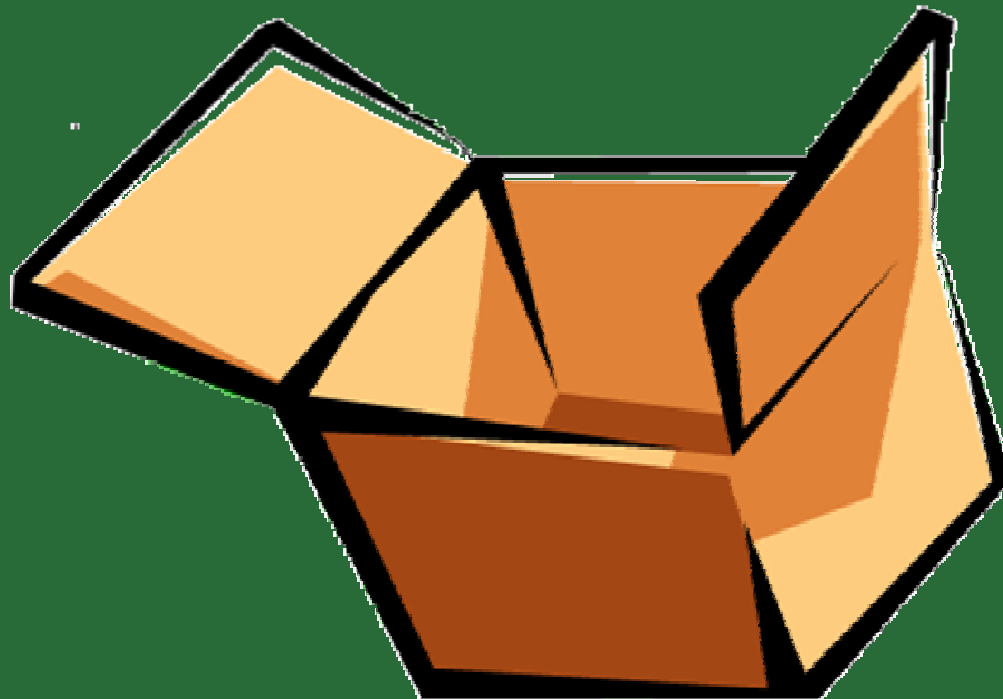
Involve the Students

Some students stressed that teachers need to acknowledge their students' interests because according to Luigi, "students don't have a say in what they learn."

- I guess I would talk with the class and see what they already knew about it and ask their opinions on what they thought and maybe like branch off what they said and talk about what they don't know. –Luigi
- ...[sex ed.] needs to be more useful...it is either stuff that everyone knows or it is not anything useful. So it should be more kind of like: what do you want to know... –Brittney
- think mainly because the phys-ed teachers are old and they don't know what's up. I think it should be like, student's input, but the teacher's final decision. –Wendy

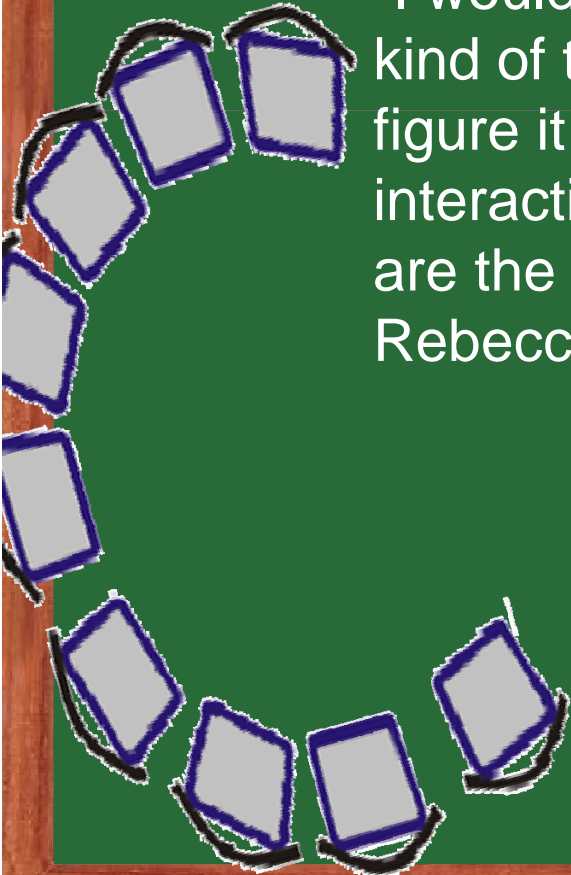
**Teachers could Involve
Students in
Sex Education by
Offering Students...**

Honesty Box



Discussion

Some students acknowledged that teachers ought to refer to textbook materials for factual information; however, they suggested that discussions were effective at exploring other aspects of sex education.

- 
- “I wouldn’t want sex ed to be just hardcore textbook kind of thing, like here are the facts go out there and figure it out for yourself. I think it should be more interactive and more discussion based instead of here are the handouts fill in the blanks kind of thing” — Rebecca

- ...when you are dealing with sexuality, it has ... emotional connections with people. Those things can never be on paper. Those things cannot be recorded and documented. You cannot catalogue the way people feel because those are ever changing things...—Rusty

Guest Speakers

In order to make sex education more interactive, some students have suggested that teachers invite guests into the classroom.

- “...have someone who had a teenage pregnancy ...have someone who has AIDS come in to speak to the class and tell a...story.”— Bob
- “I think it would be good to have guest speakers. Like in my Law class, we had someone from the sex trade come and talk to us. ...show the consequences and other aspects of it as well. There is more to sex than the meeting of two individuals: there is the sex trade and sex for different reasons, there’s rape. There is all sorts of stuff where if we had guest speakers from the community that knew a lot of a topic and [were] educated, they can give seminars with the classes—that would be very beneficial.” — Chad

Interaction & Peer Education

In addition to inviting guests into the sex education classroom, students believe that sex education could be made more interactive.

- [If I were to teach sex ed] it would be more interactive; it wouldn't be just sitting down at a desk and just taking notes and having tests on it... [They should] have a more health fair type atmosphere. Not necessarily booths, but have the kids move around not just sit around. Get them active." – George
- "The teachers could have the Grade 9s go to the auditorium for an open seminar. No one feels awkward, everybody is there. Even have the students participate. ...have some Grade 12 students come in and do some presentations on a topic." – Bob

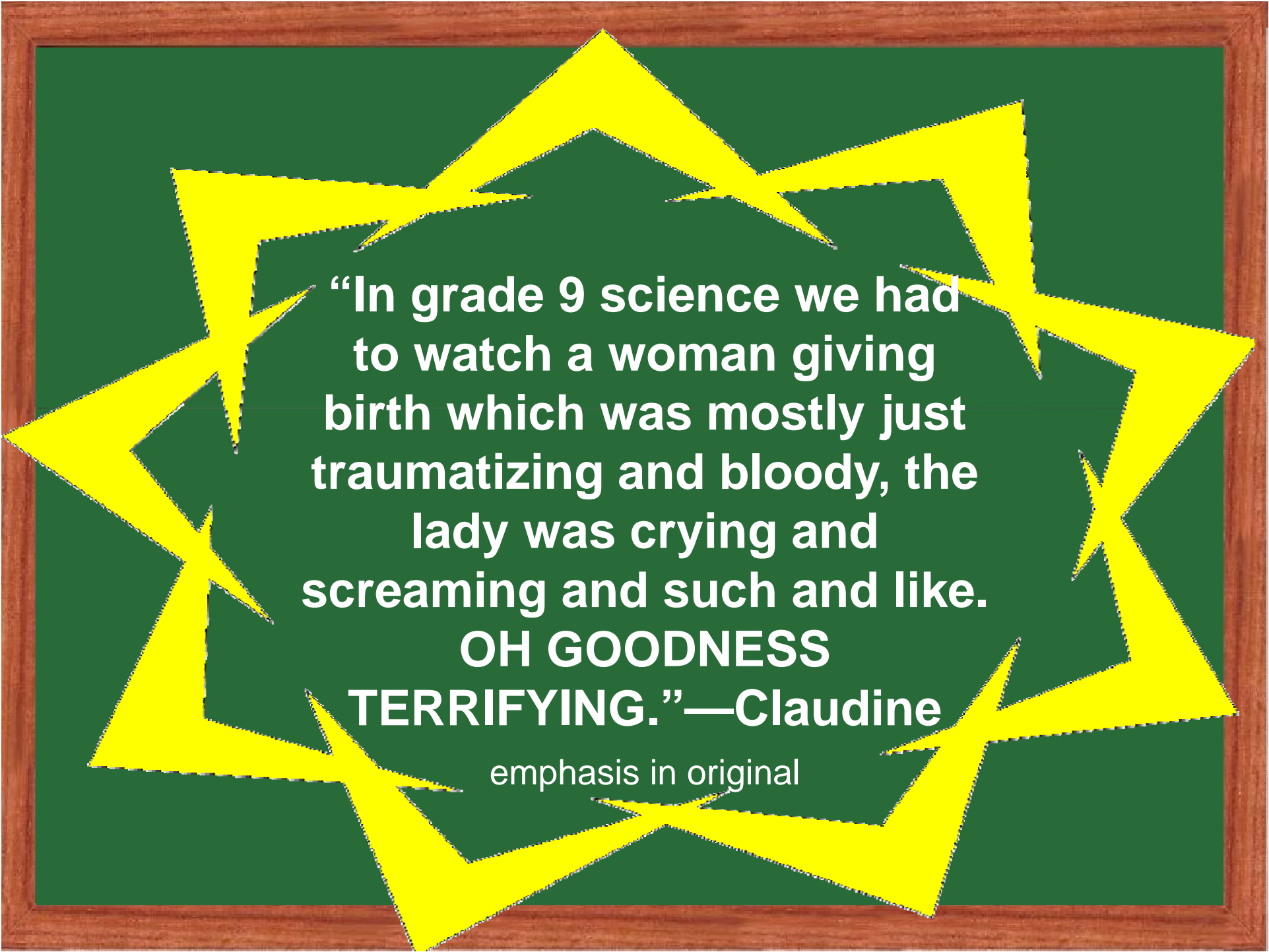


Visuals & Multi-Media



- “...make sex ed fun for the kids, find multi-media ways of presenting things. ...make information appealing to the younger audience. You just got to make it fun, make it cool. Don’t make it scary, but make it informative.”— Bob

- “Eliminate the nasty pictures. ...More videos.” — Wendy
- “Videos, are always the golden ticket. ...maybe update some of the videos I know they are kinda old. I think most of the videos were about like abstinence and how its like the best choice. ...be a little more realistic and...understand that... the majority of high schoolers probably aren’t, or aren’t thinking of being abstinent. So you...have to understand the reality of it and show more videos of how to be safe.” — Pearl



**“In grade 9 science we had
to watch a woman giving
birth which was mostly just
traumatizing and bloody, the
lady was crying and
screaming and such and like.**

**OH GOODNESS
TERRIFYING.”—Claudine**

emphasis in original

Case Studies & Personal Experiences

Some students recognized that handouts and textbooks are helpful; however, they appreciate the personal experiences and the descriptions provided in case studies.

- “You have to have a balance textbook versus experience. If you just have textbook, nobody is going to listen. If you just have personal experiences, you know, details start going a little questionable and you don’t have the basis as to “What does that fully mean? What is behind that?” – Michelle
- “Practical applications. Think about situations that these kids are going to be in. May be do case studies or something... Make it practical for them so that when they go in the exact same situation, they are going to do the right thing. You just can’t talk about sex in general, create examples, you know.” –Bob

Individual Projects

Some students identified the importance of conducting projects in which they have to review articles and current information on sex education.

- “ Doing more hands on projects, or research articles, or go out on their own and try to find information to see what’s new out there.” – Chad
- I think that [sex education] should be more practical methods of teaching [because] throwing information at kids isn’t working anymore. Yes, it is informative... but you really have to get kids working on it. You have to have them go out and take what you have thrown at them and apply it somewhere in.. a research project or anything like that...they are actually learning for themselves.... if students go out and find out for themselves, that’s not bad. Learn from their own research, their own experiences, they’ll be educated a lot more.” – Frank

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Sex is a touchy
subject not only to
the students but also
to their parents. The
curriculum would
most likely have to
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...a more private
environment,
like a classroom
instead of an
entire gym.

pre
less
arms

Give students a
confidential survey
to discuss what
they want to know

I would continue sex ed
throughout the 4 years:
the problems facing
grade 12's sexuality
differs hugely from
grade 9.

community based
course taught by
someone slightly
different than those
class.

Introdu
educatio
younge

Use
statistics

be a trust
circle

fair sh
be two

different things

include peoples'
stories about
their experiences
good and bad

Student Researchers' Concluding Comments

The teachers should take our efforts seriously because we did this study for us, the students. We want to make the upcoming sex ed classes the best they can be, and who knows how to improve them better than the students who went through it. The teachers should consider the effort that we put in conducting this study, and use our suggestions to improve the sex ed program at Bellman Secondary.

The goal of education is to add and expand on the knowledge of students. So when these students believe that there is a better way, the educators should listen. This action plan was made in a professional and serious manner to give the student a voice on how "sex ed" is taught to them. They know this is a topic that they will need to know about in their lives, and while some feel it is a good system, others do not feel the same. Education is meant to help prepare students for the future, so if they feel they are not prepared, than something is wrong. This action plan was made to address that problem.

**We Took Action by
Conducting this Study
and Creating this Action Plan.
Now, its Time for you to
Take Action!**