

# WHOLE PERSON HEALTH

Spring 2008

## Personal Note from the Program Director

As 2008 begins, we are already in the final year of a grant which *fully* funds our presence in the public schools.

We are the largest abstinence-until-marriage program in Palm Beach County, reaching the most schools, thousands of students, parents, and others, providing the unvarnished truth about sexual health.



In classrooms and clubs, we teach the whole person about love, sex, and marriage. Through seminars and trainings, we educate for character through dynamic and practical presentations. We strive to rebuild a culture of marriage and to strengthen family life in Palm Beach County. Indeed, we are a counter-sexual revolution in our community.

I hate to imagine Palm Beach County without our voice of truth, but it is a real possibility. Instead, I prefer to envision that many in our area will rise up to support the truth and to support our young people by supporting First Care's prevention program – Be the One! Will you?

Please see the back panel for further information on how to support our program.

By Joseph Sowers

Only the whole person understanding of human health provides the framework for such a discussion. When applied to sex education, the whole person approach to health provides an opportunity for an open, honest, and complete discussion of human sexuality. By communicating a broader and deeper significance to the sexual act, it gives teens a truly compelling justification for abstaining from sexual activity until marriage.

Article from the Educational Guidance Institute.

For more information, please visit their website at [www.egionline.com](http://www.egionline.com).

The key to effective sex education is recognizing that the sexual act is not merely physical, but multi-dimensional and dynamic. In fact, the sexual act has considerable import for the physical, emotional, and intellectual aspects of the self. The body is wired to communicate a message during sexual activity, both to one's self and one's partner: namely, this is someone I can trust and to whom I can make myself radically vulnerable, both emotionally and physically. When this dynamic is coupled with an unstable, rather than a permanent relationship, it should come as no surprise that one's social health is compromised. Indeed, thorough research has verified the detrimental effect that casual sexual encounters have on one's ability to form lasting relationships in the future, particularly within the context of marriage.

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*Humans are simply not wired for casual sex. The practice of withholding this information is a deeply troubling one.*

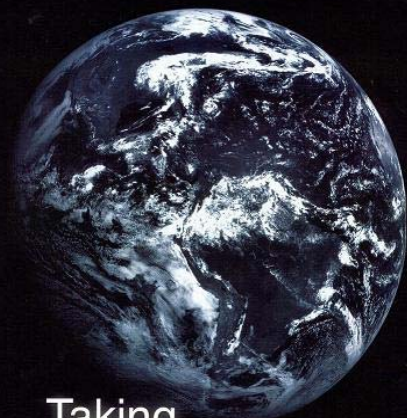
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It has long been a concern of the schools, and indeed, seen as an important component of a student's health, to foster character growth and an ethical outlook on life. There is no reason that this aspect of the person should be overlooked in the sex education classroom. A teenager who is engaging in sexual activity with multiple partners could be spreading diseases without even knowing it. A young man engaging in sexual activity with a young woman puts her at risk for a difficult and often traumatic event: namely, dealing with an out-of-wedlock pregnancy. Beyond these more obvious physical effects, the reality of how a casual sexual encounter affects the whole person should be seen as having a deep ethical significance. The young man or woman who invites such an encounter compromises the *total* well-being of both parties. If a student is disposed to compromise another person in this manner, educators should seek to guide him or her to a higher ethical standard.

The debate between "abstinence education" and "safe-sex education" is often framed in this way: should the teacher emphasize the success rates of contraception in order to encourage their use, or the failure rates of contraception in order to discourage risky behavior altogether? The problem with this question is that *it dismisses the innumerable risks of teenage sexual activity for which there is no protection.* The human person is simply not wired for casual sex. The practice of withholding this information from students is a deeply troubling one. Moreover, any honest account of human sexuality will make the student aware of the *positive* effect that the

sexual act has on the person within the context of marriage. Only the whole person understanding of human health provides the framework for such a discussion. When applied to sex education, the whole person approach to health provides an opportunity for an open, honest, and complete discussion of human sexuality. By communicating a broader and deeper significance to the sexual act, it gives teens a truly compelling justification for abstaining from sexual activity until marriage.

ABSTINENCE —



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## Reality Check

**Comprehensive Sex Education vs. Abstinence-Until-Marriage:** The defining difference between these two opposing models can be summed up as follows:

- (1) The educational focus of the comprehensive sex education model is on the transmission of technical prevention skills and techniques so that adolescents can perform as “rational-decision makers” prior to each sexual encounter.
- (2) The educational focus of the abstinence-until-marriage model is on teaching young people a rationale for saving sex for marriage based on social and moral norms. The marriage message is taught as a standard to be desired and defended.

Which do you consider the best approach for teaching the next generation about healthy relationships?



If you are interested in supporting our program in Palm Beach County, please visit [www.first-care.org](http://www.first-care.org).

*Be the One* offers training seminars and workshops on a wide variety of subjects related to love, sex, and lasting relationships.

For more information, call 561-721-9286.

Be the One's school-based programs are entirely paid for by a three-year, \$2.4 million dollar Community-Based Abstinence Education grant from the Administration for Children and Families.