

Where are teens getting their information?



A recent survey by the Texas Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy has highlighted an environment in Texas that is too often unsupportive of providing young people with the comprehensive information they need to be sexually healthy. The challenges in the environment that emerged in the survey results are not limited to any particular situation or location—all of us can clearly be doing better. We learned that:

- only one in five** of young adults say that conversations they have had with their parents about these topics were definitely helpful.
- more than one-third** of young adults either don't remember the sex ed they received in school or didn't receive it at all. If they do remember the content, it was often rooted in fear and shame.
- only half** of young adults say they have ever talked to a medical provider about sexual and reproductive health.

“ **Sex is in shows...it's everywhere in our media. But then in our schools and in our homes, it's not talked about in a healthy way.** ”

Lack of education over sexual health...because a lot of schools and adults tell you not to do it (but) they don't specifically tell you how to avoid pregnancy or how to be safe with it.

TEXAS YOUNG ADULTS

Maybe we shouldn't be surprised that young adults in our survey said their primary source of information on sexual health is Google, and asking their friends was their second most common choice. But believe it or not, they want this important information from trusted adults in their life. Despite the fact that they're currently turning to their friends, social media, and Google, they said that the most effective ways to deliver information are via medical professionals, schools, and parents.

Youth in Texas Say...

Where are you most likely to turn for information on sexual health?



Google



Friends

What/who is most effective for providing information on sexual health?



Medical Professionals

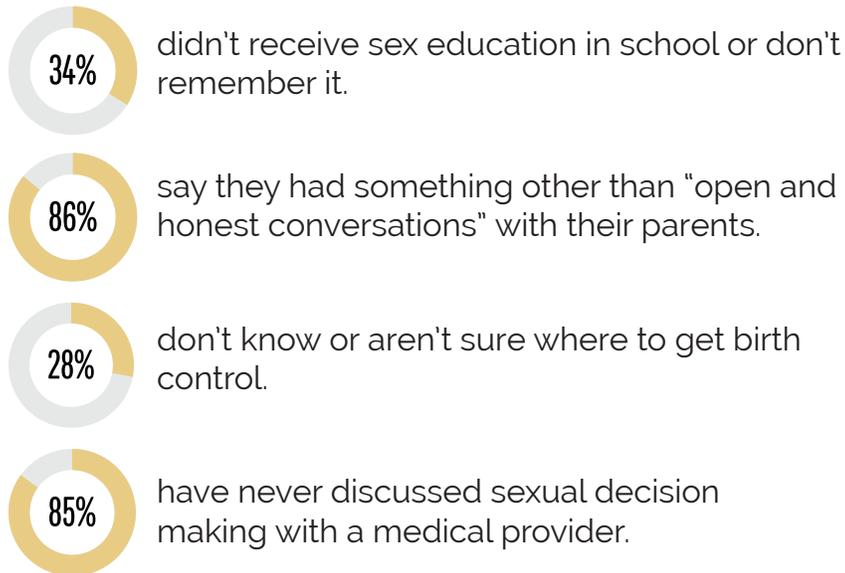


School

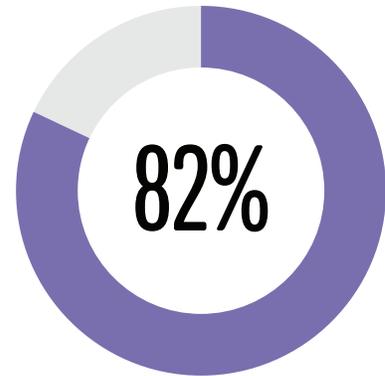


Parents

Two-thirds of young adults surveyed agree they have “all the information (they) need to be sexually healthy,” yet...



BUT REALLY...



of young adults are most likely to turn to Google when they need information about sexual health.

This information gap is a reminder that the task of educating young people in Texas about their sexual health is not the sole responsibility of any one group of people. We must all play our part. School-based sexual education is essential, but it alone is insufficient. Parents are an ideal source of information, but they need help educating their kids. And medical providers, no matter their specialty area ought to consider broadening their conversations with young adults.

There are more than 4 million youth ages 10 – 19 in Texas. All of them need and deserve age-appropriate, medically accurate information about how to prevent teen pregnancy and improve their sexual health. What is happening right now isn't working. We know that reaching all young people with this information is a daunting task that requires us deploying every available resource and method available. While we often focus on school-based sex education when we think about delivering information, that is not the only avenue we have available. In addition to schools, parents, medical providers, community programs all could and should be doing more. We also can't forget the fact that among young adults in Texas, **82% say that Google is their primary source of information**; and social media and the internet are not going away. And while a great deal of information on the internet is unreliable, there are also a number of existing high-quality, age-appropriate, medically accurate resources on sexual health for youth and young adults. Developing media literacy and helping guide kids to existing resources can help fill the information gap.

“ That kind of format (social media) is the most digestible for our generation; we have the attention span of like exactly six seconds.

TEXAS YOUNG ADULT

But, what about those young people who may fall through the cracks: those without parents or guardians at home, those not enrolled in school, and those without reliable internet access? By providing high-quality information on reproductive health through as many channels as possible, we have the best chance of reaching the young people who need it most.

★ All research reported is from a Gap Analysis conducted by 1000 Feathers, LLC unless otherwise noted.

★ For more information, visit www.txcampaign.org, or follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

