ONE IN THREE TEENS GET NO FORMAL EDUCATION ABOUT BIRETH CONTROL

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[摘要] November 28, 2006. The proportion of U.S. teens who had received any formal instruction about birth control methods declined sharply between 1995 and 2002, while the proportion who had received only information about abstinence more than doubled to more than one in five, according to "Changes in Formal Sex Education: 1995-2002," by Laura Duberstein Lindberg et al., published in the December 2006 issue of Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health. Only 66% of males and 70% of females received formal instruction about birth control in 2002, compared with 81-87% in 1995. Black teens were even less likely than whites to have received any instruction about birth control methods.
[关键词] sexuality;contraceptives;Formal Sex Education

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2002," by Laura Duberstein Lindberg et al., published in the December 2006 issue of Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health. Only 66% of males and 70% of females received formal instruction about birth control in 2002, compared with 81

- 87% in 1995. Black teens were even less likely than whites to have received any instruction about birth control methods.

While the vast majority of Americans support a comprehensive approach to sex education that encourages young people to delay sexual activity but also provides medically accurate information about contraception, these findings suggest that schools have retreated from this approach. The authors analyse data from the 1995 National Survey of Adolescent Males and the 1995 and 2002 National Surveys of Family Growth to examine changes in adolescents' reports of the sex education they have received from formal sources such as schools, churches

In fact, many teens receive information about contraception and abstinence too late:—

after they have begun to have sex. In 2002, slightly more than half of sexually experienced males and six in 10 such females had received any instruction about birth control methods before they first had sex, down from 61% of males and 72% of females in 1995; one

quarter of each had not received information about abstinence in 2002, either. Here again, black teens were at greater disadvantage:—

only one in three sexually experienced black males and fewer than half of sexually experienced black females had received instruction about birth control methods before they first had sex.

" Other research has clearly shown that improving contraceptive use reduces teen pregnancy. Yet instead of providing teens with the information they need to protect themselves, our results show that we are retreating from talking about contraceptive use and instead focusing on unrealistic approaches that try to convince teens to abstain from sex until marriage," says lead author Laura Duberstein Lindberg. "As a result, young people are increasingly unlikely to receive medically accurate information in schools, and many do not get that information in time to protect themselves from unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease."

These findings complement earlier Guttmacher research showing that four in 10 sex education teachers do not teach their students about contraceptives at all, or teach that contraceptives are ineffective. The lack of information on birth control is not surprising in light of the federal government's billion

dollar investment over the past decade in suppress abstinence until—

marriage programs that do not provide medically accurate information about contraception. To ensure that public dollars are being put to good use, the authors call for the reversal of these policies and for evaluations of the impact of abstinence

only education on teens' knowledge, behavior and outcomes.

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