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Zogby Poll Shows Parents Overwhelmingly Support Abstinence-Centered Sex Education over Condom-Based Programs

Coalition Releases Results of Landmark Survey

Colorado Springs — The Coalition for Adolescent Sexual Health, an ad hoc partnership of pro-family groups that includes Focus on the Family, released the results of a ground-breaking survey assessing parental attitudes on sex education today. The poll, conducted by Zogby International, revealed that parents overwhelmingly support abstinence-centered sex education and adamantly oppose condom-based programs.

The survey marks the first time that parents have been polled using exact quotes from "comprehensive" sex education guidelines developed and endorsed by groups such as the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS) and Planned Parenthood. The results indicate that when parents hear the real truth about what such programs promote — untainted by media spin — they soundly reject it.

The survey found that 75 percent of parents disapproved of condom-based sex education curriculum promoted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. More than 61 percent also disapproved of "comprehensive" sex education presented in the classroom as well. Seventy percent strongly disapprove of their teens getting contraceptives without their approval and 46 percent disapprove of schools giving teens contraceptives with the approval from "a parent."

"The message is clear," said Dr. Bill Maier, vice president and psychologist in residence for Focus on the Family. "In terms of sex education, parents want their children provided with information consistent with their values and expectations."

But disproportionate federal funding for abstinence-centered education is also clear. President Bush proposed $135 million for character-based abstinence education in fiscal year 2003, but a General Accounting Office study estimated that condom-based programs received at least $219 million in federal funding in 1998. Congress is again considering abstinence funding as it looks at welfare reform legislation this year, even though it is not expected to completely close the current funding gap.

"We have spent billions of tax dollars promoting the 'safe sex' myth. In return, we continue to see numerous epidemics that plague our nation as well as an alarming erosion of values," said Dr. James Dobson, president and founder of Focus on the Family. "Congress should consider the will of parents over the agendas of organizations that profit from teen sex and commit to funding programs that promote abstinence until marriage."

Zogby International surveyed 1,245 parents of children in grades K-12, chosen at random nationwide in January 2003. The margin of error is +/-2.8%. Full results of the survey can be seen at www.whatparentsthink.com.

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James C. Dobson, Ph.D. is a psychologist, author, radio broadcaster and the president of Focus on the Family. Founded in 1977, Focus on the Family is a nonprofit Christian organization committed to strengthening the family in the U.S. and throughout the world. Focus on the Family's secular and Christian radio and TV broadcasts are heard or seen by 28 million people a week.