

WHY ABSTINENCE
EDUCATION IS THE
best value
FOR YOUR STUDENTS

The inclusion of social background factors such as race, parental education, family income, and family structure had little impact on the findings. Even after inclusion of background factors, teen virginity was found to be a significant and independent predictor of academic success. Abstaining teens did dramatically better academically when compared to sexually active teens from identical socio-economic backgrounds."

Teenage Sexual Abstinence and Academic Achievement.
R. Rector, K. Johnson. 2005.

A&M Abstinence Programs Include:

- Goal Setting
- Character Development
- Decision Making Skills
- Media Awareness
- Dealing with Peer Pressure
- Cultivating Healthy Relationships

Sources

- 1 *National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health)*
- 2 Zogby International. Survey of Nationwide Parents of Children Age 10-16. March 2007.
- 3 *National Association of State Boards of Education, Policy Update: The role of education in teen pregnancy prevention.* 1998, Policy Information Clearinghouse: Alexandria, VA.
- 4 Hoffman, SD, *By The Numbers: The Public Costs of Adolescent Childbearing 2006*, The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. Washington, DC.
- 5 Robert Lerner, "Can Abstinence Work? An Analysis of the Best Friends Program," *Adolescent and Family Health*, Vol 3, No 4 (2004), pp. 185-192.
- 6 Community Based Abstinence Education Program Announcement, US Department of Health and Human Services, April 2008.
- 7 *Teenage Sexual Abstinence and Academic Achievement.* R. Rector, K. Johnson. 2005.
- 8 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System.* MMWR June 6, 2008; 57 (No. SS-4).

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THE BENEFITS OF **abstinence** EDUCATION

Peer Reviewed Research

Academic Achievement

"Teens who abstain from sex during high school years are substantially less likely to be expelled from school; less likely to drop out of high school; and more likely to attend and graduate from college."¹

Parental Attitudes

"84% of parents support emphasizing building healthy relationships, bolstering self-worth and self-control, rather than condom usage skills."²

Teen Pregnancy

"Parenthood is the leading cause of school dropout among teen girls."³
 "Less than 2% of teen mothers have a college degree by age 30."⁴

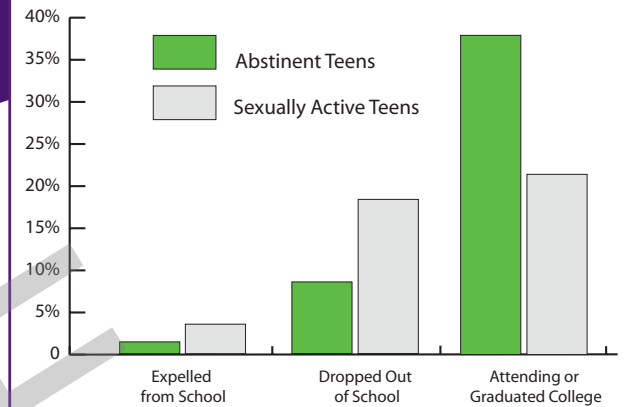
Avoiding Risk Behaviors

Teens who abstain are more likely to have a reduction in other high-risk behaviors, including smoking, alcohol and drug use.⁵

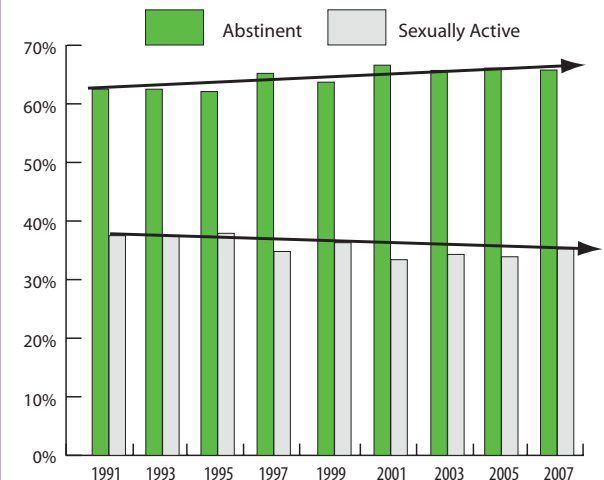
Life Skills/ Future Orientation

Teens who abstain are likely to have greater future orientation, greater impulse control, greater perseverance, greater resistance to peer pressure, and more respect for parental and societal values.¹

Abstinence and Academic Achievement⁷



Sexual Activity Among High School Students in the U.S.⁸

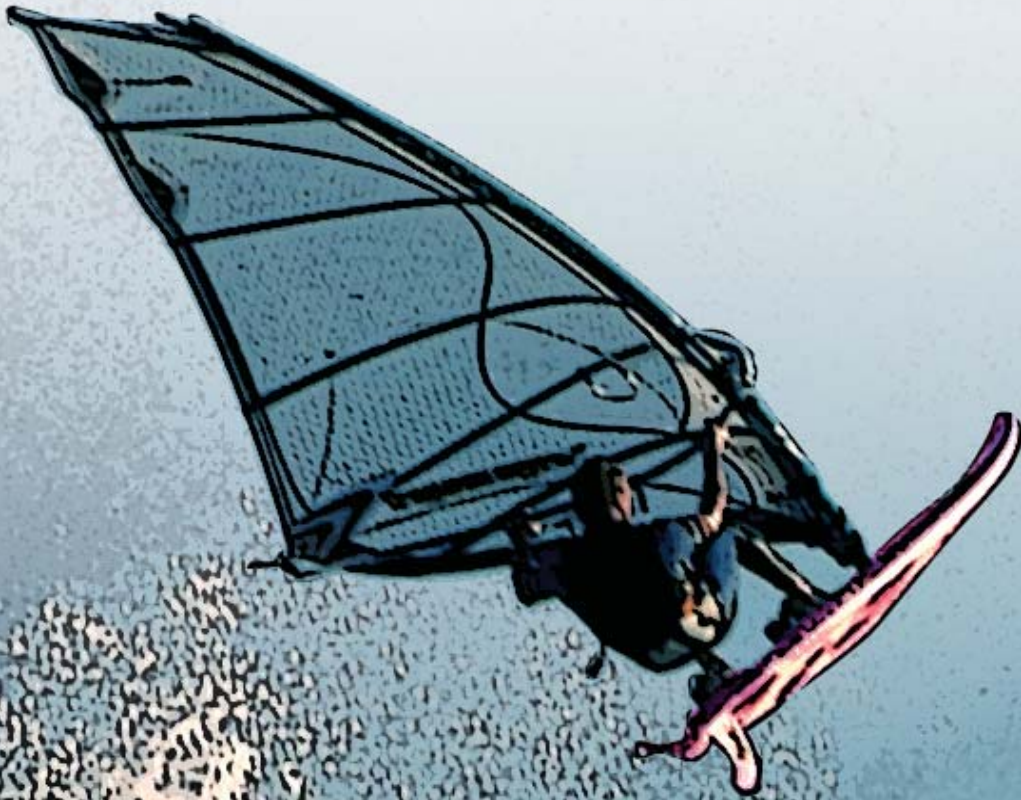


Summary of Findings

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families define sexual abstinence as voluntarily choosing not to engage in sexual activity until marriage. Sexual activity refers to any type of genital contact or sexual stimulation between two persons including, but not limited to, sexual intercourse.⁶ Demand for Abstinence Education is based on research proving its ability to positively influence not only teen pregnancy, STDs and risk behaviors, but the success of abstinent students in academic achievement and future orientation. Abstinence Education programs enable teenagers to focus on their goals and realize how the decisions they make in their teen years affect their future. The above chart shows the academic success of abstinent students, as well as the much lower rates of students who are sexually active. With most high school students choosing not to be sexually active (chart 2) and parents overwhelmingly supportive of abstinence education, it only makes sense that school administrators, wanting their students to have the **best chance of success** academically and throughout their life, should choose to provide abstinence education in middle and high schools.

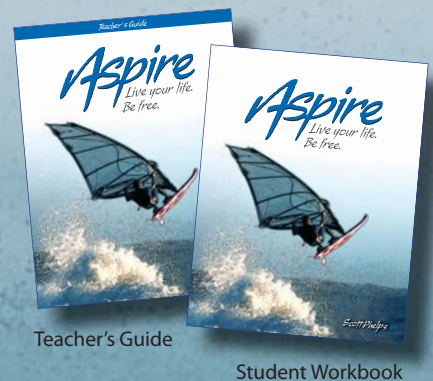
Aspire

Live your life.
Be free.



- 1. Living Life On Purpose**
Considering your future.
- 2. Standing Strong**
Resisting pressures.
- 3. Thinking Ahead**
Choosing to be free.
- 4. Protecting Your Mind**
Taking control of the media.
- 5. The Power of Self-Control**
Building your character.
- 6. Marriage Rocks**
Looking forward to your future.
- 7. Making A Fresh Start**
Letting go of the past.
- 8. The Big Picture**
Life is short. Live well.

New *Aspire* 3rd Edition
Fully Updated for 2008



An Abstinence & Marriage Education Program
for High School Students in Public and Private Schools

By Scott Phelps

Aspire is written for students in grades 9-12 and is specifically designed to fulfill the requirements for federally funded abstinence education programs. *Aspire* is a positive presentation of the benefits of abstinence until marriage and helps teens understand the decisions they make today affect their dreams for the future. The 8 chapter program may be implemented in 8 or 16 class sessions. The *Aspire Teacher's Guide* includes classroom activities, PDF printable worksheets, parents' notes, and a full PowerPoint presentation to accompany each of the eight chapters.

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Aspire High School Program Results

From January through May 2008, Life Network's Education for a Lifetime presented *Aspire* to students in grades 9-12 in the Colorado Springs, Colorado region. From these participants, 2,606 students completed pre-course evaluations and 1,793 completed post-course evaluations that were used to assess the program quality and effectiveness. Questions were developed to correspond with Title V A-H Guidelines for Abstinence Education.

Outcome measurements showed the following changes in information and attitude as a result of Aspire:

A person who has been sexually active is able to choose abstinence for the future.

	<u>Pre-Course</u>	<u>Post-Course</u>
Agree/Strongly Agree	55%	78%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	23%	11%

By abstaining from sexual activity until marriage, I will be physically healthier than if I do not abstain.

	<u>Pre-Course</u>	<u>Post-Course</u>
Agree/Strongly Agree	56%	73%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	19%	11%

People who abstain from sexual activity until marriage tend to be emotionally and mentally healthier than those who do not.

	<u>Pre-Course</u>	<u>Post-Course</u>
Agree/Strongly Agree	55%	70%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	20%	12%

Becoming sexually active before marriage makes it harder for someone to study and stay in school. .

	<u>Pre-Course</u>	<u>Post-Course</u>
Agree/Strongly Agree	40%	56%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	35%	22%

Becoming sexually active before marriage makes it harder for someone to have a good marriage and family life in the future.

	<u>Pre-Course</u>	<u>Post-Course</u>
Agree/Strongly Agree	37%	54%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	41%	25%

Abstinence from sexual activity outside marriage should be the expected standard for those in my school.

	<u>Pre-Course</u>	<u>Post-Course</u>
Agree/Strongly Agree	38%	45%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	26%	21%

Abstinence from sexual activity is the only 100% effective way to avoid pregnancy.

	<u>Pre-Course</u>	<u>Post-Course</u>
Agree/Strongly Agree	80%	81%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	11%	9%

Abstinence from sexual activity is the only 100% effective way to avoid sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

	<u>Pre-Course</u>	<u>Post-Course</u>
Agree/Strongly Agree	75%	78%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	16%	11%

The expected standard for engaging in sexual activity should be within marriage.

	<u>Pre-Course</u>	<u>Post-Course</u>
Agree/Strongly Agree	57%	64%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	19%	15%

Sexual activity outside of marriage is likely to have harmful emotional and mental consequences.

	<u>Pre-Course</u>	<u>Post-Course</u>
Agree/Strongly Agree	58%	66%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	20%	15%

Sexual activity outside of marriage is likely to have harmful physical consequences.

	<u>Pre-Course</u>	<u>Post-Course</u>
Agree/Strongly Agree	50%	64%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	21%	14%

Having a child outside of marriage is likely to have harmful consequences for the child and the child's parents.

	<u>Pre-Course</u>	<u>Post-Course</u>
Agree/Strongly Agree	73%	75%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	12%	11%

Having a child outside of marriage increases the odds of poverty for the child and the child's family.

	<u>Pre-Course</u>	<u>Post-Course</u>
Agree/Strongly Agree	60%	67%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	15%	11%

I consider myself to be fully capable of saying "No" to sexual activity.

	<u>Pre-Course</u>	<u>Post-Course</u>
Agree/Strongly Agree	75%	76%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	10%	9%

I am fully aware of the ways that alcohol and drug use can increase a person's vulnerability to sexual advances.

	<u>Pre-Course</u>	<u>Post-Course</u>
Agree/Strongly Agree	86%	85%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	5%	5%

Before getting married, it is important to be financially self-sufficient.

	<u>Pre-Course</u>	<u>Post-Course</u>
Agree/Strongly Agree	76%	78%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	6%	6%

To what degree has the *Aspire* program influenced you to be sexually abstinent from now until you are married?

Previously sexually abstinent: 60.4% of students answered "quite a bit" or "completely"; and an additional 19.7% answered "somewhat"

Previously sexually active: 37.4% of students answered "quite a bit" or "completely"; and an additional 22.8% answered "somewhat"

A&M Partnership

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
1250 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024

JAN 29 2009

Dear Grantee:

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has completed a thorough and objective review of medical and scientific information in the *Aspire* (2nd ed.) curriculum used by your ACF-funded program. We are pleased to report that based on an extensive assessment conducted by research analysts and healthcare professionals, you may continue using *Aspire* with the enclosed Curriculum Supplement in your program.

The review process has been a collaborative effort that has included ACF staff, grantees, curriculum publishers, and a panel of medical experts. A summary of the findings are given in the enclosed Report of the Review of Medical and Scientific Information, the Curriculum Supplement and the Reference Supplement.

You may continue using *Aspire* (2nd ed.) as long as you adopt the Curriculum Supplement and ensure that participants receive the information it contains. If you are using a later edition of the curriculum that incorporates the revisions in the supplement or are only using sections of the curriculum for which the Curriculum Supplement is not relevant, providing the information in the Curriculum Supplement may not be necessary. You may also choose an alternate way of modifying the curriculum, or you may opt to use a different curriculum – these alternatives may require a medical review of new materials. Please note that all abstinence education curricula reviewed to this point will require the use of a Curriculum Supplement. Within 30 days, please provide a written description of the approach that you plan to adopt.

In 2008, Congress directed the Secretary of Health and Human Services to require that each applicant for financial assistance under the abstinence education program certify that all materials proposed in the application and funded during the project period of the grant are medically accurate. In addition, Congress directed that a panel of medical experts review such grant applications and assess whether the materials proposed are medically accurate.

In your grant application, you certified that all materials proposed are medically accurate. In addition, ACF responded to the Appropriations Committee's directive by developing a medical accuracy review process that involved the comparison of information presented in each curriculum to the information cited in source documents. In testimony offered during an April 2008 congressional hearing, Government Accountability Office (GAO) officials said the review process implemented by ACF satisfied their 2006 recommendation that ACF develop procedures to help assure the scientific accuracy of materials used in ACF funded abstinence-until-marriage education programs.

The review process will ensure that all program participants are provided with accurate medical and scientific information. By working together, we can develop stronger programs and achieve the best possible outcomes for youth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stan Koutstaal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Stan Koutstaal, Ph.D.
Director, Division of Abstinence Education



Endorsements from Educators

“We enjoyed this curriculum because of the way it broke down the concepts in concrete ways with visuals. These students have mental health and development disabilities. I would recommend *Aspire* to others!”

Kathy Ortiz, Aurora Public Schools, Colorado

“Scott Phelps has achieved a breakthrough in the creation of *Aspire*. In a time where reliable data and science based strategies are critical for positive youth development, *Aspire* delivers a balanced and fitting resource for abstinence educators. Not only that, but *Aspire* esteems youth while encouraging them to adopt greater standards for living.”

Ayinde Russell, Abstinence Educator, CO

“I just finished the *Aspire* curriculum with my classes for this semester (the first that I had used it). It was awesome! I can honestly say I have never had any kind of discussion starters like your information provided. I am usually pretty good at facilitating discussion with my classes but your curriculum took it to a whole new level. Most importantly the students responded very favorably to it.”

Earl Sadler, Jr., Pamlico County High School, NC

“The material shared and your delivery of the message was received well. Students are still talking about the topic. The impact has students in other classes inquiring about my class and subject matter... Thanks for all you do!”

Lily Gomez, Teacher, Arizona

“The *Aspire* curriculum was very powerful and has the potential to inspire youth to make life-enhancing choices.”

Cori Donaldson, Greenlee County Health Tobacco Education and Prevention Program, AZ

“I enjoyed teaching the lessons, great material. I really like the students to have the book to fill out as well as take home... most of the responses were very positive. Thanks for your help in this important health issue.”

Roberta Seaton, Kingfisher County Health Department, OK

“*Quest* is phenomenal and I want to read more. I think it is great! It is what we educators need for middle school students. The activities and stories will capture their attention, focus their attention on their future and encourage them to make some plans.”

Dori Horstman, Bethany Christian Services, IA

“Love the stories - a great variety that can relate to a lot of kids' situations, whether it's the kids' personal situation or people they know or are living with. It will be fun to incorporate this into what we are currently doing.”

McKenzie Shunko, The Ignition Project, AZ

“The stories in each chapter are an excellent teaching tool. They grab the student's attention and give information to help them think through the issues and draw their own conclusions.”

Jeanne Christian, Abstinence Educator, IL



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Endorsements From Students

I think this program is fantastic because it really shows us how real life is and how serious your actions are. This program changed my life because I know now I know how to think before I act.

Oscar 10th Grade*

This program had a great impact on my personal decisions. At first I expected the program to pretty much force me to choose abstinence. I was wrong. The program taught me that abstinence is a choice and it can change every aspect of my life. Because of this program, I have chosen to stay abstinent and live a healthy life.

Rebecca 11th Grade*

The Presentation had a lot of impact on me. It put a lot of things in perspective for me, and makes things more realistic. It changed my mind, and I now look at things differently. Thank you!

Taylor*

Thank you for coming and speaking to our class. Your talks had a huge impact on me. I have been thinking a lot about my life and choices. You guys have changed my relationship with my girlfriend. I told her I wanted more communication. It was cool to hear about her life and her dreams. We also decided to wait on sex and it feels like a huge weight was lifted. I really do appreciate you both coming in to speak. I now have goals, a better relationship with my girlfriend, and I'm happy. Thank you so much!

Justin*

**Student names have been changed to protect their identity*