

PATTON – FULLER COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

Sexually Transmitted Infections Curriculum Program

Program Goal: Introduce a new education curriculum to teach youth and students how to reduce the risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections (STIs)

Program Purpose: A comprehensive sexuality education program to meet the needs of all students in this district

Program Scope: STIs can cause long-term health problems, particularly in women and infants. Health complications that arise from STIs include pelvic inflammatory disease, infertility, tubal or ectopic pregnancy, cervical cancer, and perinatal or congenital infections in infants born to infected mothers. The program will offer youth and students opportunities to increase their knowledge about STIs and related topics.

Program Audience: Students, parents, school districts, local and state public health departments, and community members

Program Background: This sexuality education curriculum focuses primarily on STIs. This unit is intended to teach youth how to prevent or reduce the risk of contracting STIs. Responsible sexual behavior has been identified by the United States Department of Health and Human Services as one of the leading health indicators of the Healthy People 2010 initiative (CDC, 2006).

A comprehensive sexuality education unit has been planned to meet the needs of all students in this district. Abstinence will be encouraged, as it is the only 100%-effective method for preventing infection. Contraception will also be taught to enable students to protect themselves from health risks or complications. Students require information concerning healthy skills, protection, and health care services—information not provided by abstinence-only programs (Johnson-Vickberg et al., 2003).

High-risk sexual behavior is an issue in this society because students lack accurate knowledge, self-esteem, and skills for communication, decision making, and resistance. One crucial misconception is that many students believe they are not at risk for contracting STIs (Meeks & Heit, 2001).

Students should feel capable of taking control of their own sexual health by seeking information and resources, and by utilizing skills acquired through a sexuality education unit. Many parents do not think they have enough knowledge or skills to teach their own children about sexuality, nor do they feel comfortable doing so (Adderley-Kelly & Stephens, 2005). If we did not offer this unit, students might seek information elsewhere and not necessarily from reliable sources. Additionally, high school may be the last place

students have the opportunity to be formally educated about sexuality-related topics (Meeks & Heit, 2001).

References

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