

Essay on The Necessity of Sex Education in India

“In India talking about sex openly is not relished and accepted in society. Despite a very large number of patients suffering from HIV/Aids, sex—the word and subject—are taboo in many parts of the country and is not discussed openly.” The increasing incidences of abusing child in sex-related crimes have put the society at the thresh-hold of such a perverted state that has no solution in sight. Small children of 5 to 10 years of age are being lured with toffees and biscuits and exploited them by insane minds. With adolescents becoming more and more vulnerable to drug and sexual abuse, the importance of sex abuse is gaining more importance. There is a lack of a system of awareness, where the adults’ accountability towards a child fails in the gravest manner. These are some of the crucial issues at hand, which could be saved and cured if proper sex education is imparted to the young.

There is no consensus in India over introducing sex and reproductive health education in the school and college syllabus. With more than 4.5 million people infected by HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, India has become the world’s second-largest hub of the disease. That means that while India has the second-largest population of HIV sufferers after South Africa, a taboo on talking openly about sex has ensured that sex education is not taught in schools, and people, especially women, are reluctant to seek treatment for sexually transmitted diseases. What a pitiable -situation!

Most of the parents hesitate to talk to their children about the topic and other such matters. And in schools, the children are just taught about the basics—such as biological changes in girls and boys and reproduction etc. The schools are generally trying to make the children aware of these evils such as drug addiction, alcoholism and

other dangerous things. Topics related to sexual changes at puberty, substance abuse, myths concerning the reproductive growth of a child and sexually transmitted diseases are not part of the curriculum of education. Central and State governments are taking a moralistic position on this issue and have refused to recognise the magnitude of the problem. Ignorance and sex can be a troubling and sometimes deadly mix for young people and people living under suffocating societal demands.

Sex education is also a means to respect a partner, a wife, a husband, a boyfriend, a girlfriend, and a means to respect sexual preferences. Back in 1993, a survey of 35 sex education projects conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO) showed that sex education in schools did not encourage young people to have sex at an earlier age or more frequently, as is being propagated by the so-called moralists. Rather importantly, the survey showed that early sex education delays the start of sexual activity, reduces sexual activity among young people and encourages those already sexually active to have safer sex. Furthermore, the WHO published a review of 1,050 scientific articles on sex education programmes. Researchers found “no support for the contention that sex education encourages sexual experimentation or increased activity. If any effect is observed, almost without exception, it is in the direction of postponed initiation of sexual intercourse and/or effective use of contraception.” Failure to provide appropriate and timely information “misses the opportunity of reducing the unwanted outcomes of unintended pregnancy and transmission of STDs, and is, therefore, in the disservice of our youth”, the report called *Effects of Sex Education on Young People’s Sexual Behaviour*. This report was commissioned by the Youth and General Public Unit, Office of Intervention and Development and Support, Global Programme on AIDS, and the WHO.

Actually speaking there is no right or wrong answer when talking about sex, and every question needs to be answered, no matter how private. This up-front approach would surely decrease the frustrations and aggressions linked to sexuality amongst youth.