



## Parkway Sex Ed: Meeting Student Needs and Parent Expectations

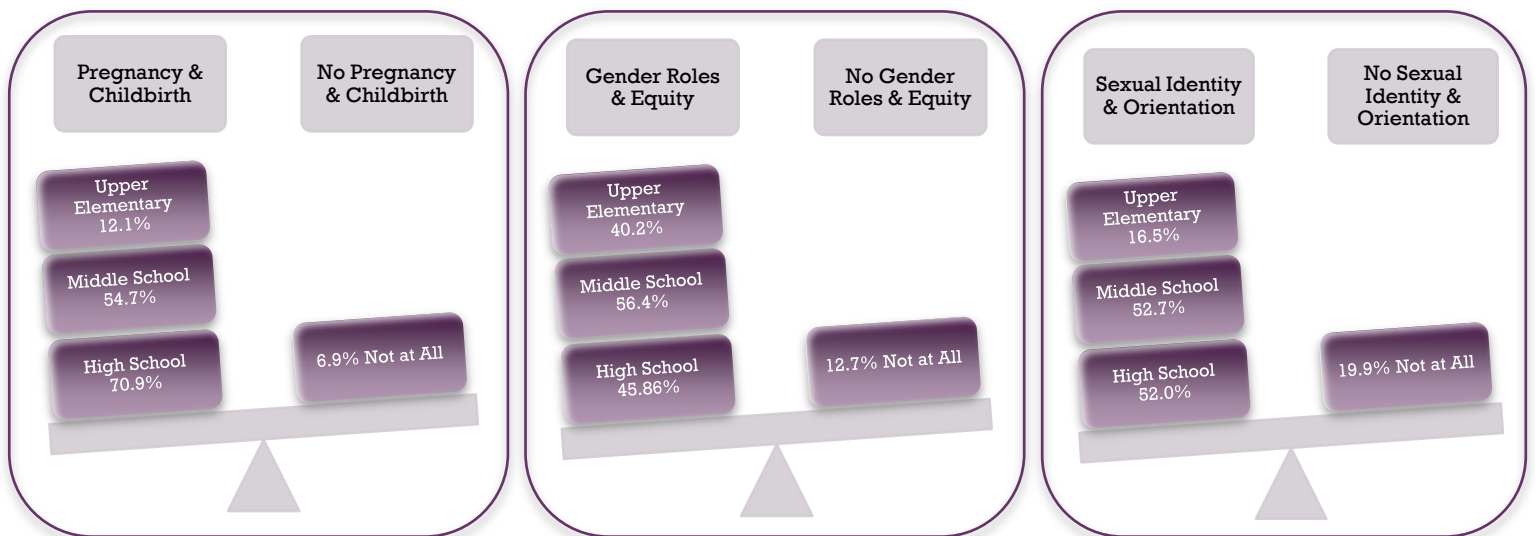


According to the 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey,

# 43%

of Missouri high school students have engaged in sexual intercourse.

In a survey administered by the Parkway District, parents were asked to, “Consider each topic below and choose the school level at which you feel it to be most appropriately taught. Choose as many as you feel are appropriate.”. Below are their responses for three sexual health topics.



## The scales tip in favor of sex ed.

Parents want what is best for their children. A majority of parents in the Parkway School District think students should learn about key sexual health topics before leaving high school. In fact, over 90% of 1,600 parent respondents in the District supported the teaching of sexuality education (2014 Parkway Parent Sexual Health Education Survey). Comprehensive sexual health education has been shown to decrease teen pregnancy rates, delay initiation of sexual activity, and increase the use of contraception.

## What is comprehensive sexual health education?

Comprehensive sexual health education provides instruction about human development and sexuality, including education on abstinence, pregnancy, family planning, and sexually transmitted diseases.

Parkway has an abstinence-based sexual health framework and it is considering a more comprehensive approach.

The Teen Pregnancy & Prevention Partnership promotes adolescent sexual health and teen pregnancy prevention by uniting Missouri through advocacy, collaboration, training, and public awareness.

To learn more, visit

[www.teenpregnancy-mo.org](http://www.teenpregnancy-mo.org)

For Parkway specific information, visit

[www.tinyurl.com/pkwysxed](http://www.tinyurl.com/pkwysxed)



## Meeting Student Needs:

### Young people need comprehensive sex education to stay healthy.

- + Sex education that includes information about condoms and contraception has been found to be effective in delaying sexual intercourse, increasing condom or contraceptive use, and reducing the number of partners among teens. <sup>(1)</sup>
- + Adolescents ages 15-24 account for nearly half of the 20 million new cases of STD's each year. <sup>(2)</sup>
- + Research has shown that a majority of the decline in teenage pregnancy can be attributed to improved contraceptive use rather than a decrease in sexual activity. <sup>(3)</sup>

### Inclusive, comprehensive sexual health education promotes respect and safety.

- + Key findings from the 2014 Missouri School Climate Survey Analysis by the MO GSA Network included (available at <http://www.mogsanet.dreamhosters.com/what-we-do/missouri-school-climate-survey>):
  - o Over 90% of Missouri students reported hearing homophobic language used by peers in their schools.
  - o 80% of Missouri students reported hearing gender negative language used by peers.
  - o 4 out of 10 students do not know how to report incidents of harassment.
- + A panel of medical and behavioral health professionals, including experts in family therapy, ethics and the psychology of religion, convened by the American Psychological Association in July 2015 made the following consensus statement:
  - o "Same-gender sexual orientation (including identity, behavior and/or attraction) and variations in gender identity and gender expression are a part of the normal spectrum of human diversity and do not constitute a mental disorder." <sup>(4)</sup>
- + A majority of teens use technology to facilitate communication and connect with friends and romantic partners. Unfortunately, 22% of teen daters have had a partner use the internet or a cellphone to call them names or put them down. <http://pewrsr.ch/1KShdjT>

1. Alford S. Science and Success, Second Edition: Programs that Work to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, HIV & Sexually Transmitted Infections. Washington, DC: Advocates for Youth, 2008.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014). Reported STDs in the United States. Atlanta, Georgia. Retrieved January 23, 2015, from <http://www.cdc.gov/nchhstp/newsroom/docs/STD-Trends-508.pdf>
3. John S. Santelli, MD, MPH, Laura Duberstein Lindberg, PhD, Lawrence B. Finer, PhD, and Susheela Singh, PhD, Explaining Recent Declines in Adolescent Pregnancy in the United States: The Contribution of Abstinence and Improved Contraceptive Use. Am J Public Health. 2007 January; 97(1): 150-156.
4. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Ending Conversion Therapy: Supporting and Affirming LGBTQ Youth. HHS Publication No. (SMA) 15-4928. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2015.