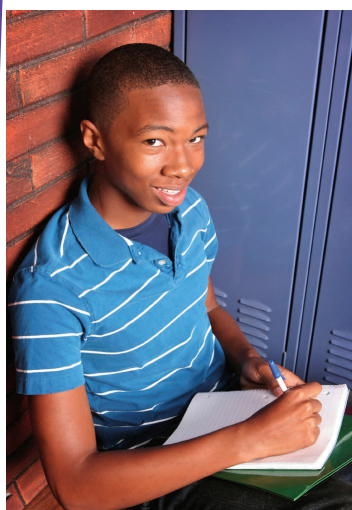


TEEN ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH INFORMATION

Do Your Students Have Access to Adequate Reproductive Health Information?



In order for adolescents to make informed decisions regarding their Reproductive Health (RH), they have to be equipped with the necessary information to make smart choices.

As was discussed in earlier packages, when young adults between the ages of 15 and 24 years were asked to list their preferred sources of Family Life Education information, teachers ranked as the second most preferred choice.

It is therefore imperative that teachers seize the opportunity to ensure that when they are approached for information, they can steer their students in the right direction.

A key way to facilitate this is to improve the learning materials, publications and general information on

What is Reproductive Health?

As previously stated, the type of information that should be made available to students include information on all factors that affect one's Reproductive Health.

It is important to remember that Reproductive Health does not solely focus on the

Reproductive Health available to students in their libraries.

This can be done through the purchase of monthly or yearly subscriptions to various journals online and through the mail as well as the purchase of surveys and other official publications containing key Reproductive



Access to the right information is key to student awareness.

Health.

The provision of this information can help to ensure that adolescents are aware of the consequences of risky sexual behaviour and the importance of abstinence.

For those adolescents who are already sexually active, it can encourage them to practise secondary abstinence and wait until they are old enough to make responsible choices before they engage in sex. activity.

The materials that are therefore selected for students to access should speak to how decisions they make regarding their Reproductive Health can affect more than their bodies but their mental health, their social life, and the lives of those close to them.

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How Useful will RH Information be to Students?

These journals, surveys and other publications can be useful to students for personal use as well as for research.

Journals such as “Reproductive Health Matters” provide information on



factors affecting maternal mortality, infant mortality, research and services that meet women’s Reproductive Health needs and other key information.

Publications of this nature can give teenagers information on how early motherhood can increase the risk of death for both mother and child, and also can bring awareness to female and male susceptibility to Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs).

Other RHS publications can also prove beneficial as they can advise students about where to go to access RH services.

This information may not always be provided and gives adolescents the opportunity to access the information and care they may need under specific circumstances.

“Contracting an STI can be a very traumatic experience”

What are the Effects of Poor RH Decision Making?

The effects of poor RH decisions are also explained in some publications. These can include the stress associated with STIs or early pregnancy. Contracting an STI can be a very traumatic experience which, if left undetected, can lead to permanent damage to the reproductive system and for those which cannot be cured, may lead to great financial expense to maintain one’s health. However, beyond the physical effects, an STI may also lead to shame and a feeling of low self worth or self esteem. A teen may also be faced with the decision of having to drop out of school and seek employment in order to financially support his/her new child.

The strain on resources to achieve these goals can increase the stress of the mother, her family and as a result the child. Adolescents will also have to face a dwindling social life with limited time available for “hanging out” with friends due to new responsibilities of parenthood.

What are Some Ways to Improve Student Access?

The first thing to be decided is whether your school has a reading centre in its library. If not, a reading centre should be developed where students can access publications for their research or personal use.

In Guidance classes, students can also be given assignments individually or as a group to present on Reproductive Health findings and implications for young people.

It is important that these sessions be interactive to engage students as well as to cement the learning process.

Students can have debates between “teams” assigned by the teacher on why RH is important and how teens should approach



the topic.

Students can also be asked to create their own National Reproductive Health campaign. In these ways, students will be able to target the key issues that need attention and also find ways to make RH more interesting for their age group.

Key Publications to Purchase

Reproductive Health Matters

This journal offers in depth analysis of Reproductive Health matters from a women-centered perspective, written by and for women's health advocates, researchers, service providers, policy makers and those in related fields with an interest in women's health. Its aim is to promote laws, policies, research and services that meet women's Reproductive Health needs and support women's right to decide whether, when and how to have children.

To view their website, please go to : <http://www.rhmjournal.org.uk>

Path: Outlook Publications

PATH is an international non-profit organisation that creates sustainable, culturally relevant solutions, enabling communities worldwide to break longstanding cycles of poor health. By collaborating with diverse public- and private-sector partners, we help provide appropriate health technologies and vital strategies that change the way people think and act. Our work improves global health and well-being. Their Outlook publications are good source of RH information and have topics such as:

- ◇ Progress in Cervical Cancer: Updated Evidence on Vaccination and Screening;
- ◇ Reducing Unmet Need for Family Planning: Evidence-Based Strategies and Approaches;
- ◇ Encouraging Healthy Sexual and Reproductive Health Behaviours; and
- ◇ Increasing Access to Reproductive Health Services Through Pharmacists

Access their publications at : <http://www.path.org/publications/>

International Family Planning Perspectives (The Guttmacher Institute)

The Guttmacher Institute advances Sexual and Reproductive Health worldwide through an interrelated program of social science research, public education and policy analysis. Their International Family Planning Perspective publications explore a wide range of topics worldwide, including:

- ◇ Fertility Awareness;
- ◇ HIV/AIDS Risk Perception; and
- ◇ Factors Affecting the Timing of First Intercourse.

Access their publications at : <http://www.guttmacher.org/archive/IFPP.jsp>

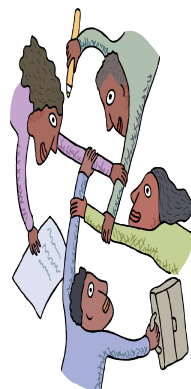
Find Creative Ways to Get Funding for Your Centre

Have a school fundraiser with proceeds going to the centre

Using upcoming school fundraising activities may be a great way to collect funds for the purchasing of materials and reading space for students. Parents, family members and friends of the students will also be happy to spread the word.

Get students to help out!

A fun way to get the students involved is to get them to assist with the design of flyers and special announcements regarding your fundraising activities. This will make them appreciate the initiative and will make them take the activity to heart



“Get Students to Help Out”

The National Family Planning Board
5 Sylvan Avenue
Kingston 5



ATTENTION: WE ARE ON FACEBOOK!!!!

If any of your male students are older than 14 years of age, get them to join our Male Sexual and Reproductive Health Caucus Page. Invite them to go to Facebook and type in: Male Sexual and Reproductive Health Caucus and give their views on our discussion boards! We discuss issues such as Abstinence and Reproductive Health.

The National Family Planning Board (NFPB), where it can, seeks to provide valuable information on Reproductive Health to the public.

One way in which the Board has been doing so is with the distribution of Information Packages to Guidance Counsellors within various High, Junior High, Technical High and All-ages schools in Kingston and St. Andrew (KSA).

Publications Available in our Library which Include Information on Reproductive Health

Publication	Year	Volume/Author
You, Your Life, Your Dreams	2008	Petrina Lee Poy, Maria Faget Montero and Martha Murdock
Annual Family Planning Statistical Report	2003-2009	The National Family Planning Board
Reproductive Health Survey	2002	The National Family Planning Board
Outlook	1993-2010	Path
Reproductive Health Survey: Young Adults Report	2002 and 2008	The National Family Planning Board
International Family Planning Perspectives	1987-2007	The Guttmacher Institute
Reproductive Health Matters	1999-2010	Elsevier
Family Planning Saves Lives	1991-2009	Population Reference Bureau
Network	1994	Family Health International