



For Immediate Release:

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HHS Dedicates \$10 Million for Research of Sex Education Strategies that Can Provide Optimal Health Outcomes for Youth

(Washington, DC) HHS has launched a research initiative that will increase our understanding of the protective factors teens need to truly thrive. The project is an effort to improve both Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) programs and Sexual Risk Avoidance (SRA) programs by adhering to science to improve healthier outcomes for youth. With nearly a billion dollars having been spent in the last seven years on the Obama administration's TPP program that, according to HHS findings, produced glaringly dismal results with 73% of program participants faring worse or no better than those not in the program, this research will offer a new set of metrics to help inform sex education policy going forward. According to the announcement released by HHS, the questions the research will seek to answer include the following:

- How can communities work together to promote healthier outcomes for youth?
- How can educational resources more effectively resonate with youth?
- What economic impact does sexual delay have on the individual and on society as a whole?
- What can we learn from teens and their parents about conversations on avoiding risks and risky behavior, in order to improve future prospects for life success?
- How can social media be used to promote healthy and future-focused decision-making?
- Is it possible for youth who are currently engaged in risky behaviors to make healthier choices in the future?
- How can public health strategies inform the way we talk to teens about sex, relationships, and thriving and life success?

With a view on optimal health outcomes, the project could provide an expanded view of the impact sex can have on the life and future of a teen. "We are encouraged that this research initiative will begin to seek answers that address issues beyond teen pregnancy prevention. By asking questions that impact the health and well-being of teens in a holistic manner, we can be better prepared to create programs that focus on teen sexual activity in a broader context. There is more to sex than contraception and consent. Sex education for teens must be about helping youth to succeed on many levels to achieve healthier life outcomes," stated Mary Anne

Mosack, Executive Director of Ascend. [Read more about the details of this HHS research project here.](#)

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Ascend champions youth to make healthy decisions in relationships and life by promoting well being through a primary prevention strategy, and as a national membership and advocacy organization that serves, leads, represents and equips the Sexual Risk Avoidance field.