

Testimony in opposition to HF 358

My name is Barb Anderson and I am a former high school teacher, who for many years, has studied comprehensive sex education and its impact on school-age children.

A few years ago, I spoke to a class of college students at the University of Minnesota on the benefits of abstinence education. I asked how many of them in the class had been exposed to comprehensive sex education (CSE) in the public schools. Every hand went up.

I explained to them the following information about the dangers of young girls having sex in their teens:

A teenage girl's cervix (the opening to the uterus) is immature and very vulnerable to infection due to an area called the transformation zone or T-zone. This T-zone in a young girl's immature cervix is covered by only one layer of cells. In a young girl, this cervical tissue is softer and more easily permeated by bacteria and viruses—especially HPV which can easily take up residence.

When a girl is in her twenties, the T-zone is replaced by many layers of cells that are more difficult to penetrate. These differences put a young girl at higher risk for STDs even with condoms. One in four teenage girls now has a sexually transmitted disease. They have infections that cause everything from infertility to cervical cancer—some with diseases they will have for a lifetime.

When I asked the college students in my class to raise their hands if they heard *this* message in CSE, not a single hand went up.

Comprehensive sex education is not medically accurate and certainly is not comprehensive!

Protect our young people and vote 'no' on HF358.

Thank you.

Barb Anderson

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