

September 15, 2008

Dear School Principal and Health Educator,

We expect teachers to handle teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, and the failings of the family. Then we expect them to educate our children.

~John Sculley, former PepsiCo CEO

You do not have an easy job and no single set of resource materials can make up for the challenges you face. However, we know that as a dedicated educator you have the best interest of your students in mind. We, the Health Access and Privacy Alliance (HAPA), hope you will find the resources included with this letter helpful.

Who are we and why are we sending you this information?

HAPA is a coalition of civic, educational, religious, and professional organizations in Indiana dedicated to improving the health and safety of women, children, and families. As a part of this mission, we want to help prevent unintended pregnancies (thereby reducing abortion rates) and the spread of sexually transmitted infections.

We have a tremendous challenge in Indiana where 31 teens become pregnant every day. However, studies show that the best way to prevent teens and young adults from engaging in unsafe sexual practices is through education. Our goal is to help you locate the materials needed to effectively communicate with young people about their sexual health choices.

HAPA understands sexual health education is tricky to navigate. In Indiana,

- State law does not require school corporations to teach sexual health education.
- If a school does offer sexual health education, it must teach abstinence. Schools are free to teach an "abstinence *plus*" curriculum unless their district accepts certain federal funds which limit them to "abstinence *only*."
- State law requires school corporations to include instruction on AIDS and breast/testicular cancer regardless of funding sources.

HAPA does not encourage the violation of federal funding restrictions or school board/curriculum protocols. We simply feel young people are best served when the adults in their lives know about sexual health resources that exist. Whether you can use these materials directly with students, or refer a parent to them, they exist to aid adults in helping young people learn to make informed, responsible decisions and develop into healthy adults.

Please take advantage of the Web sites and other resources we have suggested. You may also want to pass these materials along to other school staff who might find them useful. Do not hesitate to contact HAPA at info@hapaindiana.org with any questions about our organization or the materials referenced in this packet.

Sincerely,

Robyn Pauker-Honig
HAPA President