

## **Danielle Lyles: Parents, sex is rampant, and scare tactics don't work**

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When I was in junior high, I was a member of a girls' Bible study group, and a big moment for us was the day we signed our names on laminated abstinence cards. These days, some of those same girls are self-proclaimed Kamasutra experts, most are sexually active and one is a 16-year-old mother.

Sure it's easy to write off this example as the exception – or to blame such behavior on revealing clothes, explicit music and suggestive magazines. But parents who do so are just kidding themselves. It's an orgy out there; casual sex is growing like weeds.

Here are the facts in our terms: Friends-with-benefits are trendy, trains are becoming more popular, orgies are more accepted than ever, and oral sex is more casual than denim.

A friends-with-benefits relationship is one in which two platonic friends have repeated sexual encounters to fulfill their urges without strings attached. It often results in scarring because (gasp!) teenagers are super-hormonal and leach onto each other fast.

Trains occur when one girl has two to 20 sexual partners in an evening, often without the use of a condom. This trend is spreading because the reservoir of women with low self-esteem is deep, as is the well of sexually charged males.

Orgies are back in style because of the fantasy appeal. Ideally, all three partners are platonic and can be open without anyone feeling jealous or neglected. And the use of the term "oral sex" is almost unheard of because many teenagers don't view it as sex at all. Often it's as common as kissing on a first date.

All of this is not to say that the abstinence-until-marriage teens don't exist, but best I can tell, that population is slimming rapidly.

So here's my solution: knowledge. But not scare tactics.

I have attended countless sex "education" classes, both at school and church, beginning in fourth grade and continuing to the present. I've found none to be helpful or informative. I distinctly remember one program in junior high during which a projector displayed large and disturbing pictures of genital herpes while the instructor provided an anecdote about a girl who refused to have sex with her boyfriend but took a nap naked next to him and contracted an ugly STD. The

instructor seemed to imply that teenagers shouldn't even touch one another – and thus quickly lost credibility.

None of the sex education programs discussed proper condom usage or the option of masturbation. You simply can't fight pleasure with herpes horror stories.

Many adults and teens push for abstinence-only education in the name of Christian ethics. But Christianity has always advocated wisdom, not ignorance. So says Proverbs 12:1, "Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid."

The very foundation of Christianity is having the faith to obtain much knowledge and use it to discern right from wrong. Therefore, it makes sense that a full-circle education is absolutely necessary to walk a righteous path.

It would be easy to assume that I'm exaggerating, but that's just denial speaking. This is really happening to kids as young as 13.

By withholding knowledge, parents are unintentionally fertilizing that orgy. Those who would give teenagers better tools to make their own decisions would uproot the weed. Ignorance is indefensible.