
The Power of Partnerships with Parents

**Barbara Flis, Founder
Parent Action for Healthy Kids
Farmington Hills, Michigan
248-538-7786**

barbflis@msn.com

www.parentactionforhealthykids.org

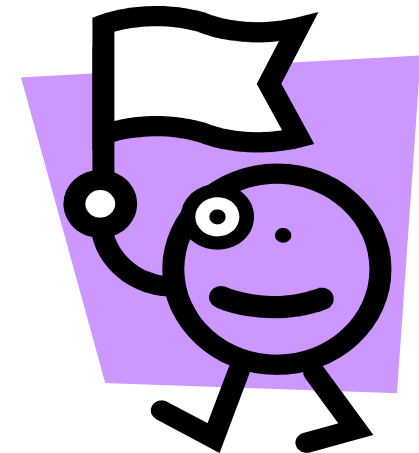
“I have no special talents. I am only passionately curious.”

Albert Einstein



www.michigan.gov/miparentresources

Perception of Parent Support for Sex Education



Why partner with parents?

- Any HIV or sex education program for youth will be less effective if it is not supported and reinforced by parents
 - Young people want and need messages regarding healthy sexuality and relationships from parents or trusted adults
 - Education for parents is often an “add on” rather than an integral part of programs geared towards young people
 - Educators/providers attitudes towards parents can be the biggest barrier in reaching them.
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Why partner with parents?

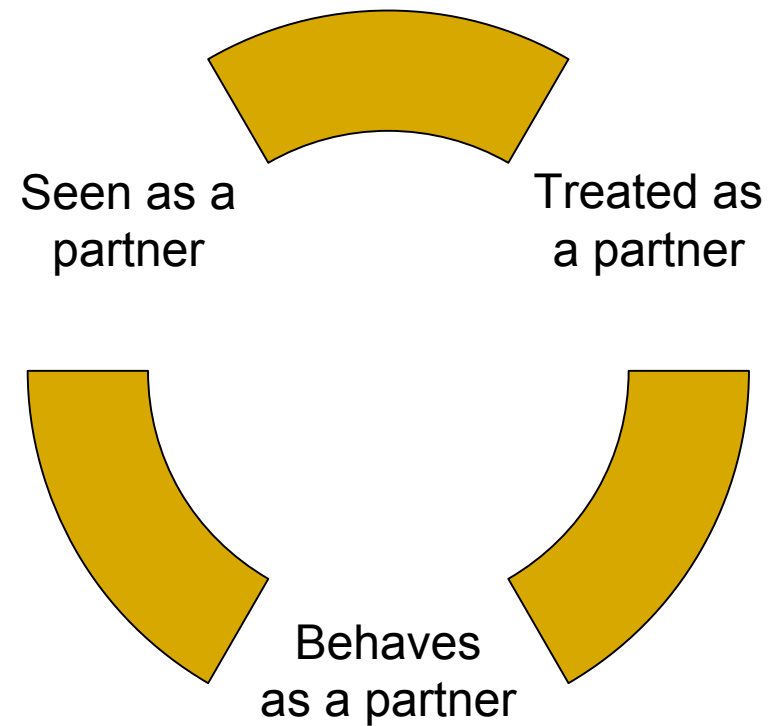
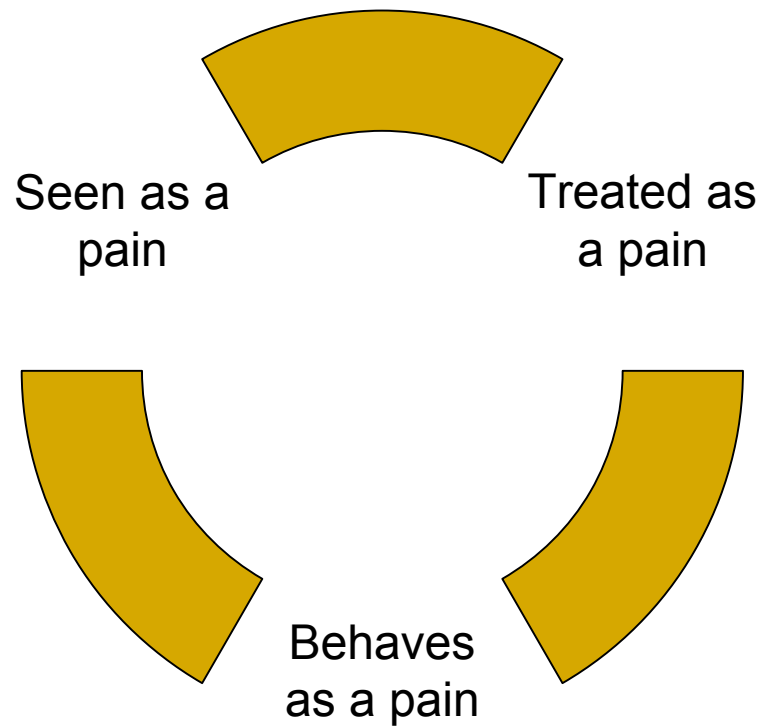
- One parent can make or break your program
 - Educators are intimidated by parents
 - Parents are intimidated by educators
 - The barrier to quality HIV and sexuality education isn't always the parent
 - Partnering with parents cannot only prevent the disasters, but can energize & fuel your best efforts and program
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Perception

“Perception is a mirror not a fact, and what I look on is my state of mind, reflected outward.”



Parent Paradigm

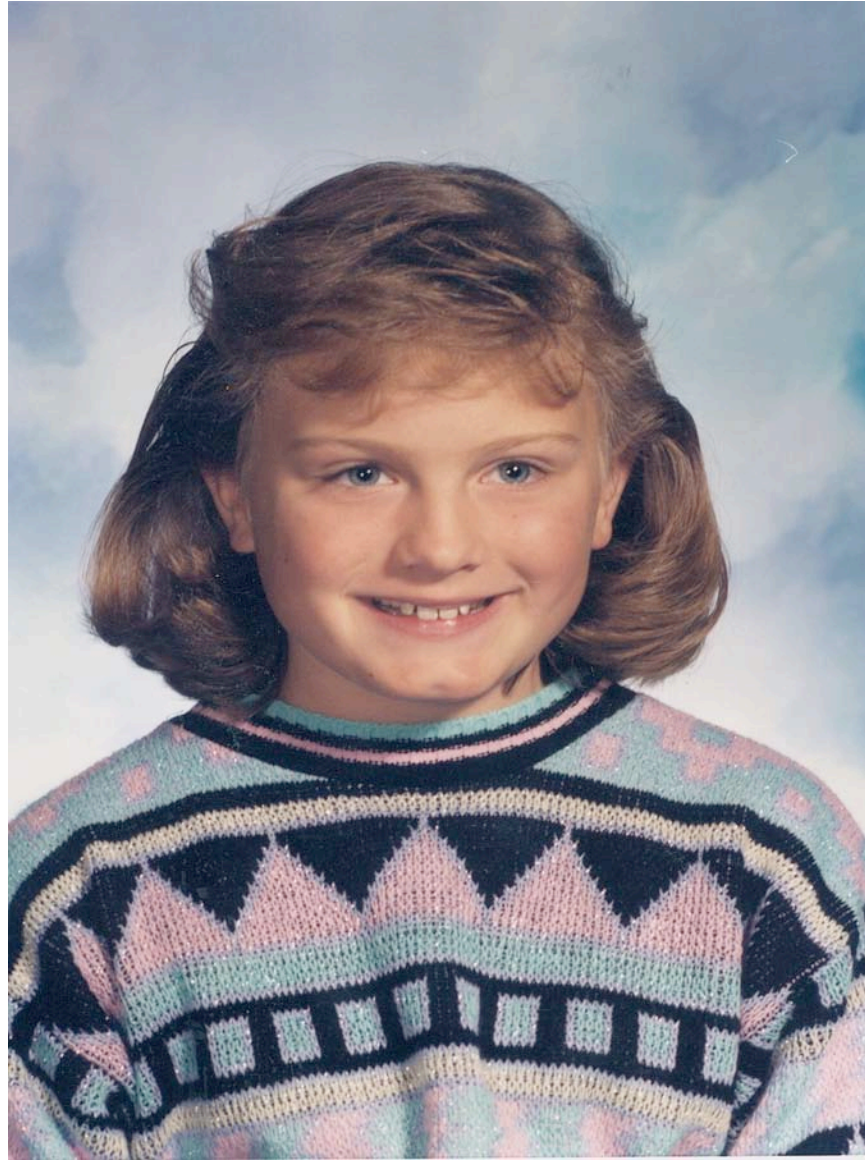


Our babies don't keep!

Cooking and cleaning can wait 'till tomorrow for babies grow up we've learned to our sorrow. So quiet down cobwebs, dust go to sleep, I'm rocking my baby and babies don't keep.



Julie – 4th Grade

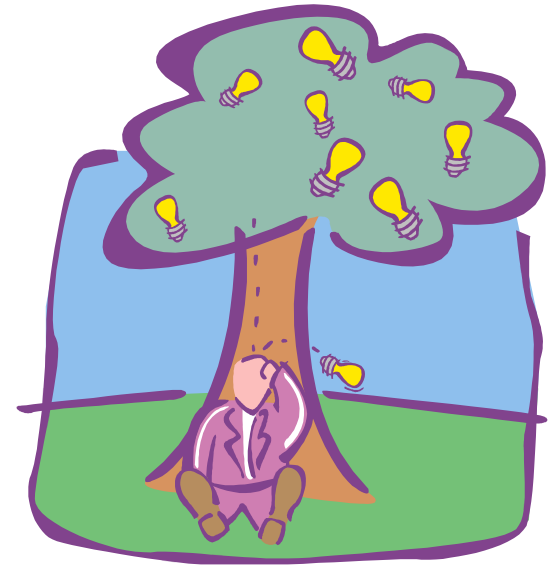


Julie – 10th Grade



Something to Ponder

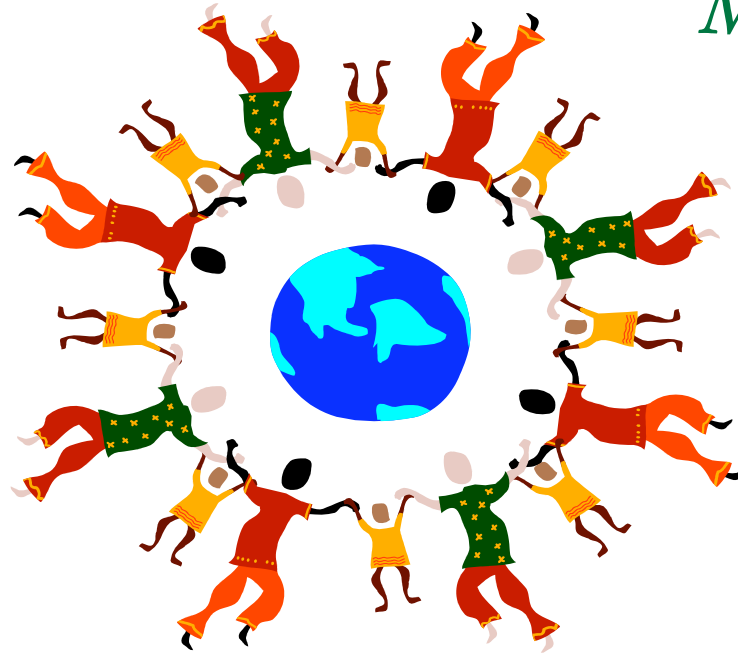
***For people in distress
will sometimes prefer
a problem that is
familiar to a solution
that is not.***



Source: Neil Postman, *The End of Education*

*We must have places where children can
have a whole group of adults they can trust.*

Margaret Mead



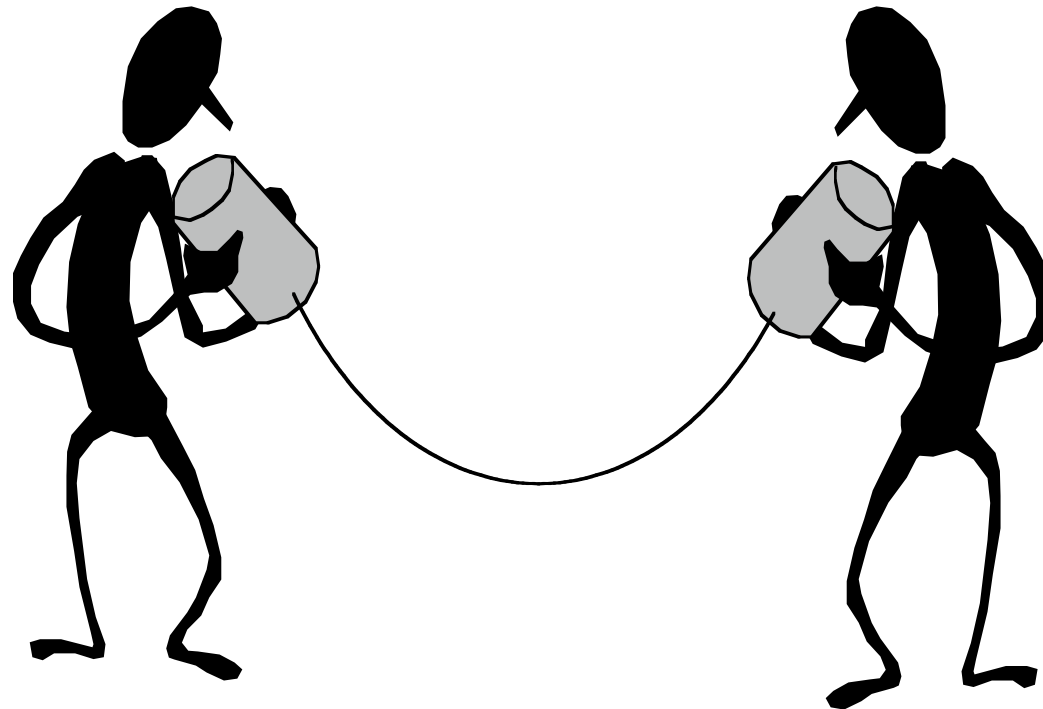
*It's hard to wring my
hands when I am busy
rolling up my sleeves.*

Linda Geraci, *Discovering and Exploring Habits of
Mind*



“What we have here folks is a failure to communicate!”

Cool Hand Luke

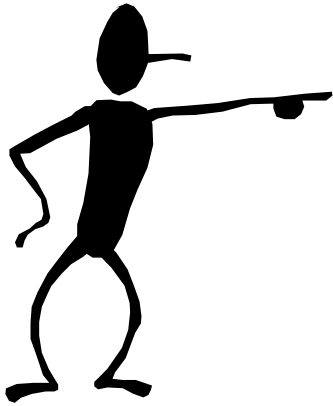


Communication & Conflict

The void created by the failure to communicate is soon filled with poison, drivel, and misrepresentation.

C. Northcote Parkinson

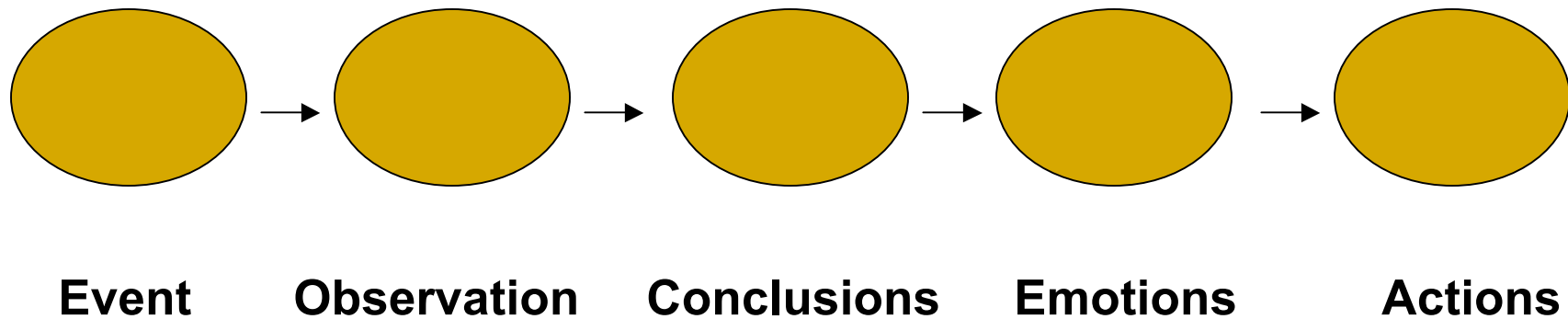
Symptoms of Conflict



- **Judging**
... who you are
- **Characterizing**
... what you do
- **Attributing**
... motives to explain why you do it
- **Dictating**
... solutions to perceived problems

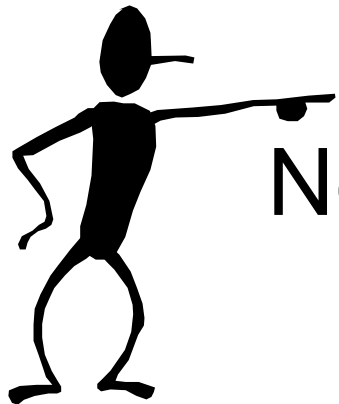
Source: D.B. Moore 2004

The Path of Meaning



Source: Better Than Duct Tape: Dialogue Tools for Getting Results and Getting Along. By Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, and Switzler

Choose Words Carefully



Need to



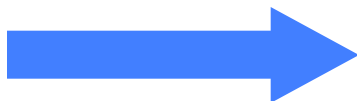
Want to

Have to



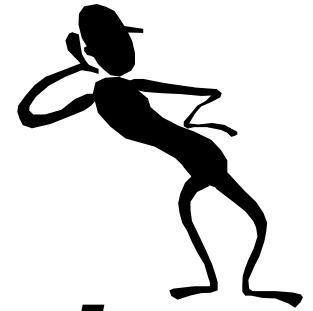
Choose to

Should



Would like to

Source: Medicine of the Cherokee by Garrett, J.T. & Garrett, M.



***So much brilliance is
lost upon those who
have no ears.***

Author Unknown

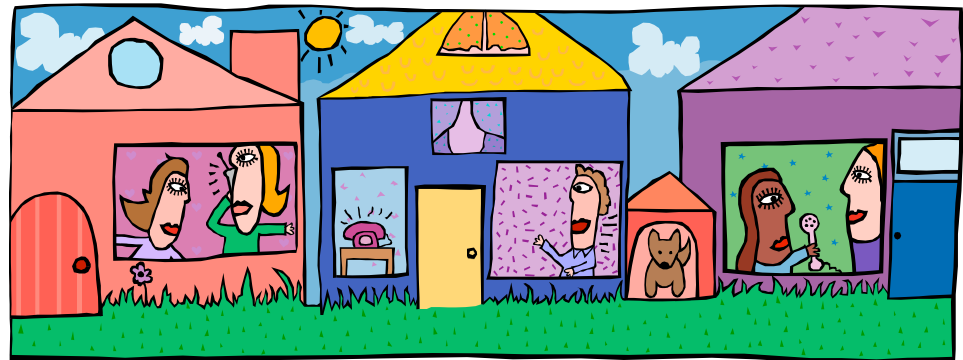
How you behave toward people will be determined by how you view them.

This will determine how they view you and how they behave toward you.

ACTIVITY

Rankings of Place in the Community

- **Ace to 10**
 - Live a comfortable life
- **9 to 6**
 - Doing OK
- **5 to 2**
 - Struggling

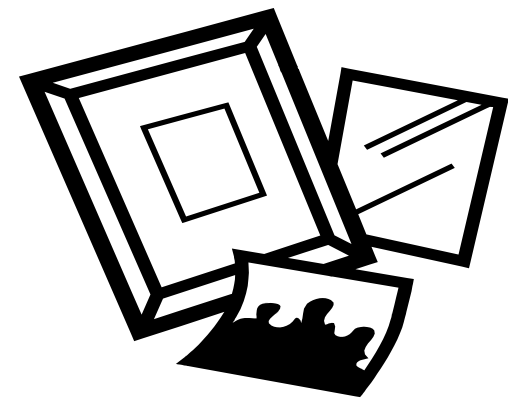
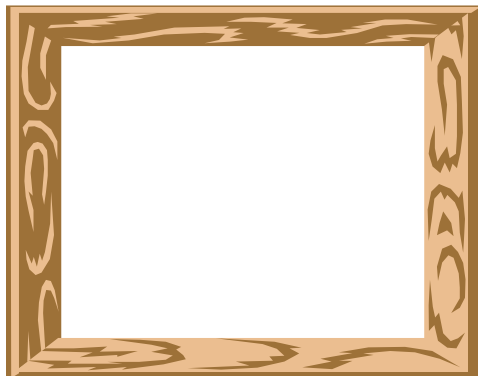
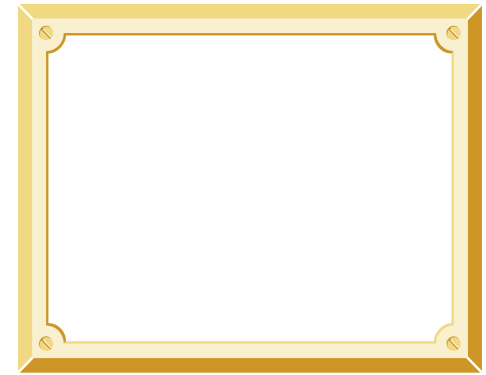


Remember

**People with the least amount
of power are often the best
observers!**

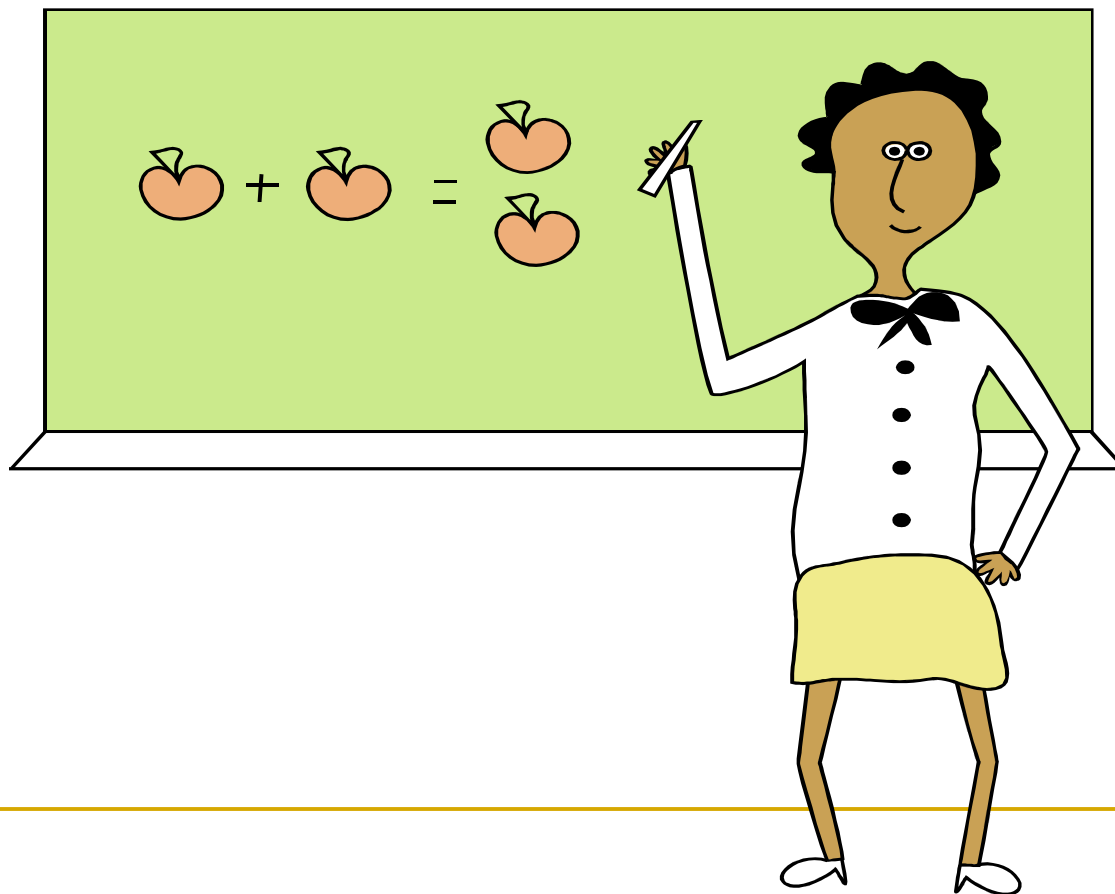


It's time to "re-frame" the issue!



Parent Support for Sex Education!

Let's do the math!



Michigan Parent Survey

- 78% of parents support sex ed in school
- 70% of parents support instruction that includes lessons on abstinence, condoms & contraception
- 10% of parents support abstinence only lessons
- 11% of parents oppose sex ed in school
- 3% of parents said teach about condoms and contraception but not abstinence

North Carolina Parent Survey

- 91% of parents support sex ed in school
- 89% of parents support comprehensive sexuality
- 9% of parents oppose sex ed in school
- 90% of parents felt sex ed content decisions should be made by parents and public health professionals & oppose involvement of politicians

Public Opinion on Sex Education in US Schools

- 82% of respondents support abstinence plus instruction
- 68% of respondents support condom instruction
- 36% of respondents support abstinence only instruction
- 57% disagreed that teaching condom use encourages teens to have sex

Public Opinion on Sex Education in US Schools *(Continued)*

- Percentage of support for sex education programs by attendance at religious services:
 - 70% support abstinence plus
 - 47% support abstinence only instruction
 - 51% support condom instruction
 - 39.9% oppose abstinence-only instruction
-

Minnesota Parent Survey

- 89.3% support Comprehensive Sex Ed
 - Catholic 92.3%
 - Born Again Christians 83.2%
 - Politically “very conservative” parents 50.6%
- 91.3% Pregnancy Prevention
- 94.6% STI education
- 66.6% Sexual orientation
- 63.4% Abortion
- 56% strongly agreed or agreed that students in abstinence-only classes were less likely to use contraceptives when they became sexually active.

Parent/Community Sex Education Survey

- **Why is it Important to Consider Community Standards?**
 - *A curriculum is unlikely to be implemented or effective unless it is consistent with what most parents want for their children.*
 - **How Do You Assess Community Standards?**
 - *The best way to find out what parents want for their children is to ask them in the form of a brief, straightforward **parent survey**.*
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Making it Work for Parents!

How does this affect me now?

Practical knowledge is

USEFUL

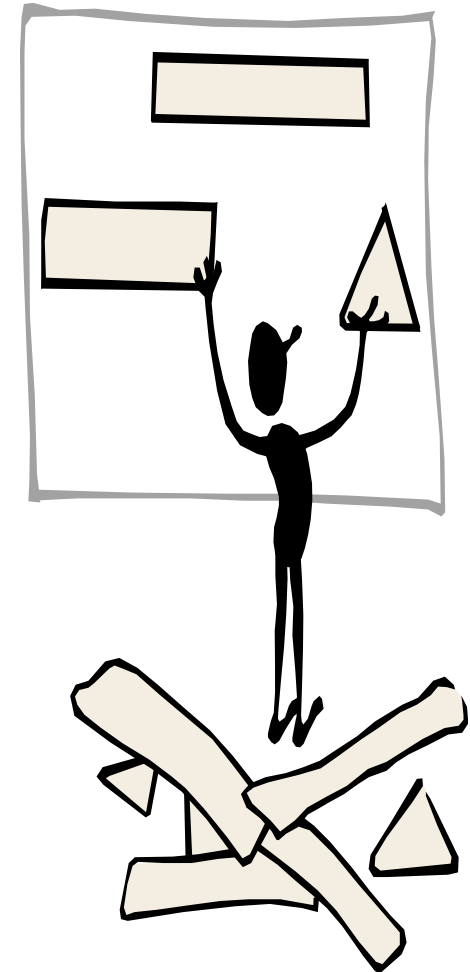
and

USEABLE

knowledge

Engineering the Parent Component

- **Parents know that sex education is important**
- **Talking to their kids is difficult & most parents don't know what to say & how to say it**
- **Parents don't know what happens in the classroom & have no criteria to assess it**
- **Parents often feel judged and/or shut out by professionals, teachers & administrators**
- **If parents understood effective sex ed curriculum, they would support it**



Abstinence Education



Parents often are confused by the terminology
(e.g., abstinence-only abstinence-centered,
abstinence-based)

Abstinence-Only

Promotes abstinence from sexual behaviors as the only way to completely avoid the negative consequences of being sexually active.

Abstinence-Based

Also promotes abstinence as the only way to completely avoid the negative consequences of being sexually active: however, it also teaches ways to reduce the risk of pregnancy or HIV/STD infection associated with sexual activity.

Why is Quality Sexuality Education Important?



1. Because we are all sexual beings.
 2. Because sexuality can either be a positive or negative force in our lives.
 3. Because there are many health risks associated with sexual activity including HIV, other STD's and unintended pregnancy.
 4. Because of the health, social and economic costs, the consequences of sexual activity are often significant.
-

Why is Quality Sexuality Education Important?



5. Because young people are overwhelmed with conflicting and powerful messages about sexuality.
 6. Because young people need facts and skills to make healthy decisions.
 7. Because sexuality education will happen with or without adult guidance.
 8. Because we want our youth to grow up to be sexually healthy and responsible adults.
 9. Because today's youth become tomorrow's parents and mentors.
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Goals and Messages of Successful Programs

Sex Education programs may have many goals:

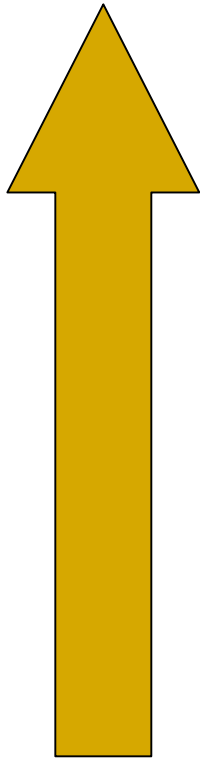
- Providing accurate information
- Promoting a positive sexual identity
- Increasing communication between youth and trusted adults
- Equipping young with skills, to maintain positive relationships
- Fostering health behaviors

Primary Goals:

- Prevent sexual behaviors that may result in negative consequences, such as unplanned pregnancy, unhealthy relationships, or infection with HIV/STD.
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Knowledge ≠ Behavior Change

Better Indicators



Behavior

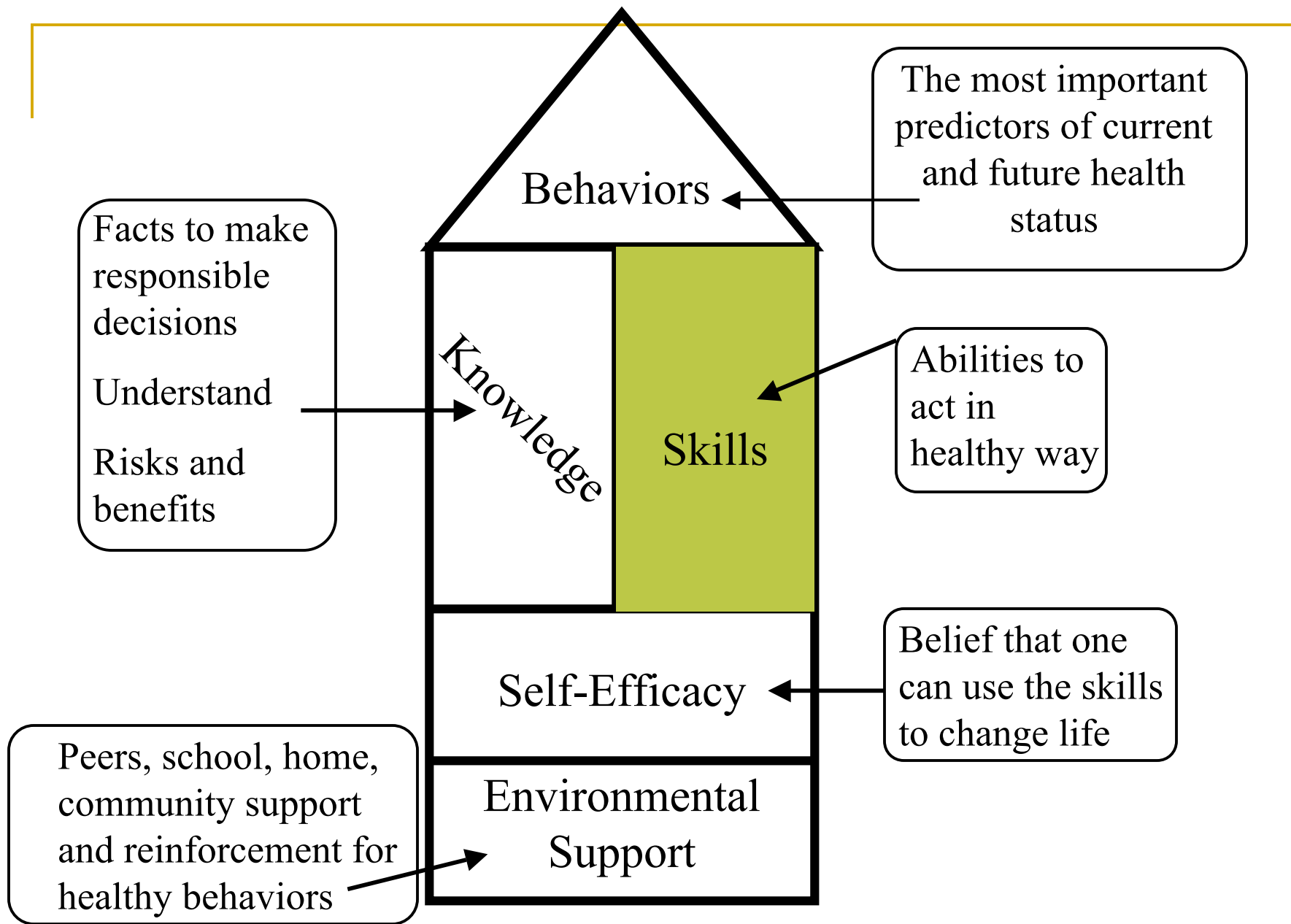
Intention

Knowledge

Remember that what people **know** may not determine what they **do**.

Example:





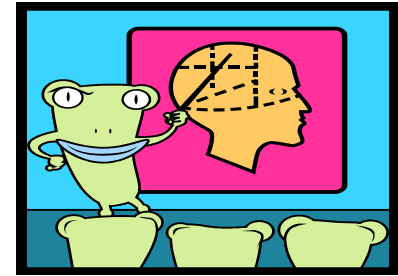
Source: Rivertown Consultants

Healthy Behaviors



- Wear a seat belt every time you drive or ride in a car.
- Brush your teeth at least twice a day
- Eat four or more servings of fruit or vegetables a day.
- Get 7-8 hours of sleep each night
- Never drive more than five miles an hour over the speed limit
- Exercise at least three times a week
- Follow the schedule appropriate for your age for regular check-ups/physical examinations

Brain Development



- During early adolescence there is a dramatic neurological growth & change (infancy is the only other time the brain achieves such strides)
- Cortex – CEO of the brain where judgments are made and emotions are regulated.
- Limbic system – Where emotions originate and send out gut reactions such as anger and fear. Limbic system is going full blast without the counter balance of a mature prefrontal cortex

Sanjaya's Biggest Fan

American Idol



Partnering with parents – Lessons learned!

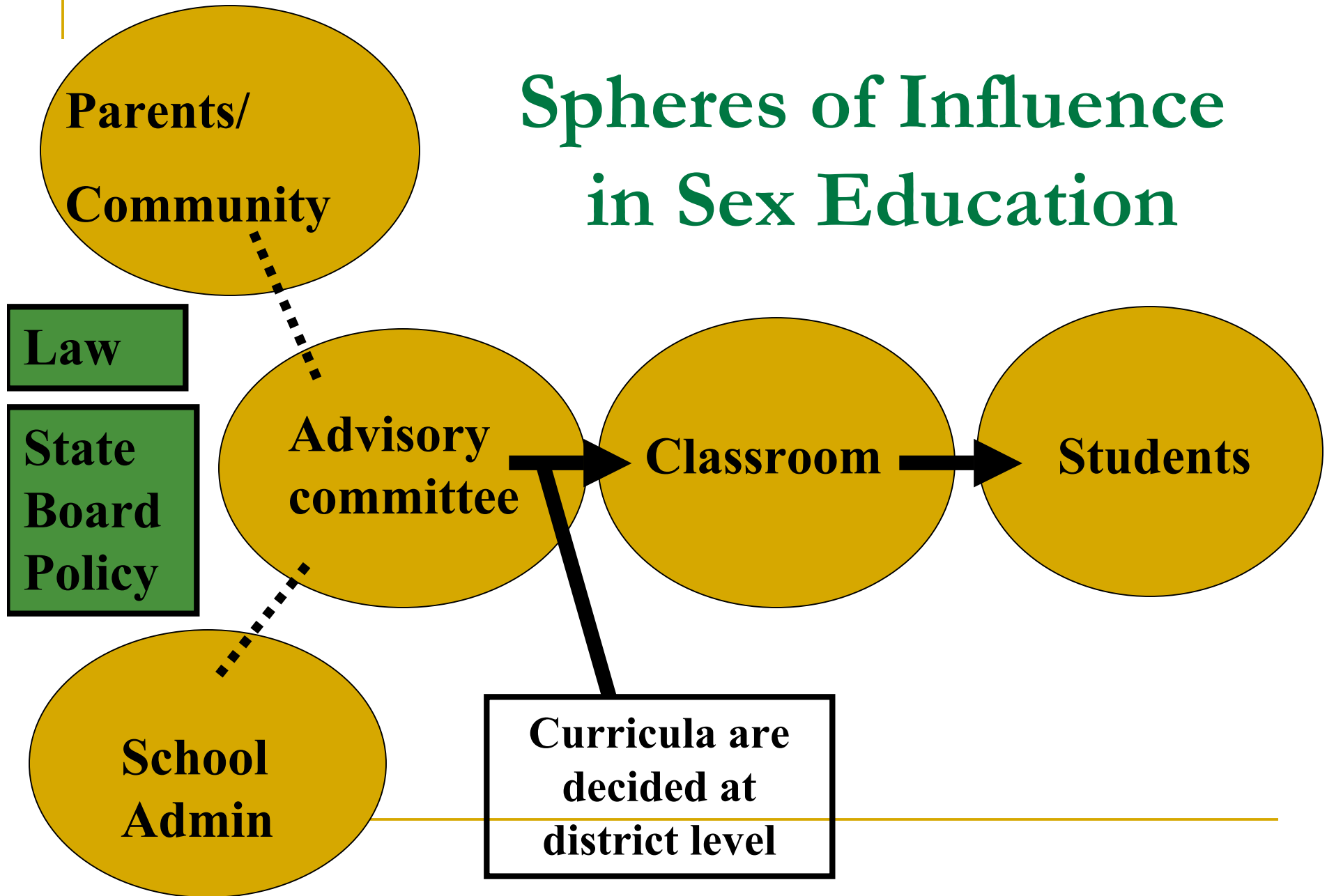
■ Parents:

- ❑ **Want and support sex education**
 - ❑ Are concerned about their kids environment
 - ❑ **Think sex education is taught more than it is**
 - ❑ Want to share the responsibility for teaching sex education with schools
 - ❑ **Want well trained teachers**
 - ❑ **Want to know when lessons are taught so they can continue the conversation at home**
 - ❑ Fear repercussions if they push too hard
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Welcome to Michigan!



Spheres of Influence in Sex Education

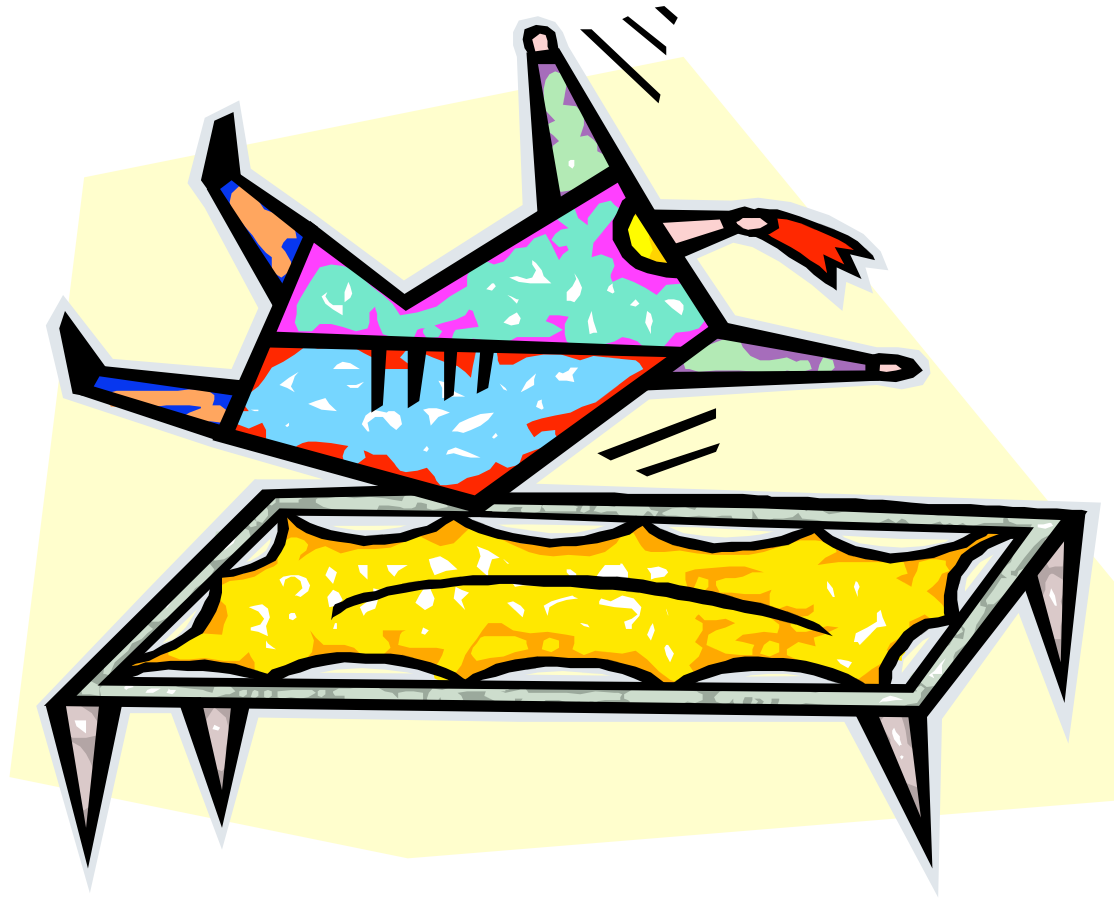


Membership of Sex Education Advisory Board



Parents (Cannot be employed by a school district)	Students Educators
Parents	Community Health Professionals Clergy

A Story About Charles!



Thank You!

Barbara Flis

Parent Action for Healthy Kids!



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