

MEDIA ALERT
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Teach the Facts.org

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Community Forum Announced for September 25, 2005:
“Teach the Facts – Just Say NOW to Comprehensive and
Inclusive Health Education” -- Updated Information

September 9, 2005, Rockville, MD – As the Montgomery County Public School System prepares improvements to its 8th and 10th grade health education curriculum, TeachTheFacts.Org today announces a community forum, “Teach the Facts – Just Say NOW to Comprehensive and Inclusive Health Education,” to be held on Sunday afternoon, September 25, 2005, in the auditorium of Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, 4301 East-West Highway, Bethesda, MD, from 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM.

Speakers will include Dr. Paul Wertsch, Chair of the American Medical Association’s Advisory Committee on Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues and past President of the Wisconsin Medical Society; Deborah Roffman, nationally-renowned educator and author of *Sex and Sensibility: The Thinking Parent’s Guide to Talking Sense About Sex*; and Glenn Northern of Rockville, Planned Parenthood Federation of America’s Sexuality Education Policy Manager. These experts will discuss the positions of mainstream American medical and mental health professional associations, all of whom support age-appropriate comprehensive sex education (as opposed to “abstinence only” approaches) and reject the proposition that homosexuality is a disease that can and should be “cured.” They will also discuss their own experiences in the field.

Keynoting the forum will be Maryland General Assembly Delegate Ana Sol Gutierrez. Delegate Gutierrez was a member of the Montgomery County Board of Education from 1990 through 1998, including service as president of the Board in 1995-96. Also speaking will be Robert Rigby, Jr., a special education teacher from Virginia, who will talk about his personal experience with "reparative therapy."

The forum will also provide ample time for audience questions and discussion.

Last May, groups allied with James Dobson's Focus on the Family and Jerry Falwell's Liberty Counsel temporarily blocked MCPS's plan to implement medically and educationally sound revisions to the health education curriculum. These groups continue to attack such sound revisions and have urged that discredited and dangerous "reparative therapy" notions be part of the curriculum. In contrast, TeachTheFacts.org believes that it is essential that the community hear and discuss the facts underlying the efforts of our public school system to improve health education.

TeachTheFacts.org is a grassroots community organization launched by Montgomery County parents to advocate for science-based health education for public school students based on the wisdom of organizations such as the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Psychiatric Association, and the American Psychological Association. More information can be found at www.teachthefacts.org.