

# Saying No

Grade 6–8, Lesson 4

## Summary

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Students define abstinence and learn the steps to refusing effectively. In small groups, they practice using refusal skills and observe their peers modeling effective refusal skills.

## Student Learning Objectives

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The student will be able to ...

1. Define sexual abstinence as it relates to pregnancy and STD prevention.
2. Demonstrate effective peer refusal skills to avoid sexual risk behaviors.

## Lesson Timing

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Warm up	Bell work + 2 minutes
Definition of abstinence	5 minutes
Refusal skills	10 minutes
Refusal skill scenario – large group	10 minutes
Refusal skill scenarios – small group	20 minutes
Assign homework	
Exit ticket	3 minutes
Total	50 minutes

## **FLASH Key Concepts**

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Abstinence is choosing not to have oral, anal or vaginal sex.

Most high school students are abstinent.

Choosing abstinence means a person does not have to worry about pregnancy or STDs.

People of every sexual orientation and gender identity choose abstinence.

People can choose abstinence at any point in their lives, whether or not they have had sex before.

## Standards

### National Health Education Standards (SHECAT)

Standard 1	Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.
SH1.8.7	Determine the benefits of being sexually abstinent.
SH1.8.9	Describe why sexual abstinence is the safest, most effective risk avoidance method of protection from HIV, other STDs, and pregnancy.
SH1.8.10	Describe the factors that contribute to engaging in sexual risk behaviors.
SH1.8.12	Explain the importance of setting personal limits to avoid sexual risk behaviors.
Standard 2	Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.
SH2.8.1	Explain how perceptions of norms influence healthy and unhealthy sexual practices, behaviors, and relationships.
Standard 4	Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
SH4.8.1	Demonstrate the effective use of verbal and nonverbal communication skills to promote sexual health and healthy relationships.
SH4.8.3	Demonstrate effective peer resistance skills to avoid or reduce sexual risk behaviors.
SH4.8.4	Demonstrate effective negotiation skills to avoid or reduce sexual risk behaviors.
Standard 5	Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.
SH5.8.2	Determine when potentially risky sexual health-related situations require a decision.
SH5.8.7	Choose a healthy alternative when making a sexual health-related decision.
Standard 7	Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.
SH7.8.1	Explain the importance of being responsible for practicing sexual abstinence.

### National Sexuality Education Standards

PR.8.CC.2	Define sexual abstinence as it relates to pregnancy prevention.
PR.8.IC.1	Demonstrate the use of effective communication skills to support one's decision to abstain from sexual behaviors.
PR.8.IC.2	Demonstrate the use of effective communication and negotiation skills about the use of contraception including abstinence and condoms.
SH.8.IC.1	Demonstrate the use of effective communication skills to reduce or eliminate risk for STDs, including HIV.
PS.8.CC.3	Explain that no one has the right to touch anyone else in a sexual manner if they do not want to be touched.
PS.8.CC.4	Explain why a person who has been raped or sexually assaulted is not at fault.

## **Rationale**

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Supporting young people to be abstinent is an important component of teen pregnancy and STD prevention, and is especially important in middle school, when most young people are not yet sexually active. The FLASH curriculum encourages positive attitudes and positive peer norms about abstinence, builds confidence to remain abstinent, teaches refusal skills, avoids denigrating condoms and birth control, and avoids putting down students who are sexually active, based on recommendations from recent research on effective abstinence education.<sup>1 2 3</sup>

This lesson is a part of the abstinence series in FLASH, which teaches refusal skills at all grade levels. Students apply and practice these skills with age appropriate scenarios, beginning in elementary school with friendship scenarios and progressing toward scenarios involving sexual content and dating situations. The lesson format and the specific refusal skills taught are purposefully the same in all FLASH lessons.

Research has shown that many existing abstinence-only programs are ineffective and can have negative effects on teens' sexual health and behavior. These programs do not delay sexual initiation, reduce the number of sexual partners, or increase abstinence.<sup>4</sup> Some actually decrease contraception and condom use when teens do have sex, and decrease the likelihood of STD testing and treatment.<sup>5 6 7</sup> The FLASH curriculum seeks to avoid these unintended outcomes by employing a different approach, relying heavily on recent research about abstinence programs with positive outcomes.<sup>1</sup>

Gender stereotypes are intentionally avoided throughout the abstinence lesson in an effort to support the sexual violence prevention goals of the curriculum.

## **Materials Needed**

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### **Student Materials**

- *Refusal Skills Checklist*
- *Scenario B: Levi and Gabrielle (partially scripted)*
- *Scenario C: Rebecca and Jackson*
- *Scenario D: Maria and Stephanie*
- *Scenario E: Marquis and Andre*
- *Individual Homework: Saying No*
- *Family Homework: Saying No*, available in English, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Vietnamese and Arabic
- *Lesson 4 Exit Ticket*

### **Classroom Materials**

- *Lesson 4 Warm Up*
- *Refusal Skills Visual*
- *Scenario A: Levi and Gabrielle (fully scripted)*, 2 copies for demonstration

## **Teacher Preparation**

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1. Prepare Visual for document camera or projector.

## Activities

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### 1. Warm Up

Display warm up as bell work.

**Prompt:** Research shows that only a little more than 10% of middle school students in the U.S. have ever had sex.

Below are some of the benefits of choosing abstinence. Please choose the one benefit that you think is best, or most important, and explain why you chose it.

### 2. Define abstinence and discuss how common it is among teens

*Today we are going to discuss abstinence. Can someone define abstinence? (Allow students time to give their own definitions of abstinence and validate them.)*

*There are lots of ways to think about abstinence. The definition we are going to use at school is that abstinence means not having vaginal, anal or oral sex. Just to remind you, vaginal sex is when a penis goes in someone's vagina, anal sex is when a penis goes in someone's anus (their butt), and oral sex is when one person's mouth goes on another person's penis or vagina.*

*Why do you think it's important that we talk about abstinence? (Any answers that support positive attitudes and peer norms are good.) Exactly. When people don't have vaginal, anal or oral sex, they don't have to worry about pregnancy or STDs.*

*Lots of people don't know how common it really is for teens to choose abstinence. Did you know that most middle school students and even most high school students are abstinent? Sometimes it seems like everyone is having sex, when really that isn't true.*

*People of every sexual orientation and gender identity choose abstinence, including gay, lesbian, bisexual and straight people, and people who are transgender and cisgender. And, adults and teens both choose abstinence at different points in their life, even after they've already had sex.*

### 3. Teach refusal skills

Tell students they will be learning about how to say no in a variety of situations. Brainstorm ways to be clear when saying no. Show students the *Refusal Skills Visual* and read through it as a class, giving a brief explanation of each step. Discuss that forcing or pressuring someone to have sex is always wrong.

*It's important to start learning now about how to communicate with boyfriends or girlfriends, whether you are already dating or not. Today we are going to practice, because it's something that everyone will need to do at some point.*

*I want to be really clear that people always have to listen when another person says no, no matter how they say it. It is never OK to force or pressure someone into having sex or into any kind of sexual touch. It is always the fault of the person who forced or*

*pressured them, and it is always wrong.*

*In this lesson, we are going to assume that you like the person you are saying no to, and you want to continue hanging out with them, but you don't want to have sex with them. We are going to practice it this way because those are the times when it will feel harder to say no.*

*These are the steps you are going to use today when you practice saying no. In real life you might not always use all these steps, but practicing them today will help you so you can use any of them when you need to.*

**1. Say no.**

*Clearly say that you do not want to have sex.*

**2. Explain why.**

*For example, "I don't want to get pregnant," or "I'm not ready to have sex."*

**3. Suggest an alternative.**

*Suggest something else that you two can do instead. For example, "I think that we should go outside now."*

**4. Leave if you need or want to.**

*Sometimes one person may not respect the other person's no. At that point, it's important to get out of the situation or get help from someone else.*

**4. Refusal skills scenarios – large group**

Introduce scenarios and do a large group demonstration of refusal skills by having two volunteers read Scenario A.

Then have all students practice refusal skills by writing new lines for Levi in Scenario B. Remind students that Levi likes Gabrielle and wants to continue going out with her, but doesn't want to have sex with her.

Have one volunteer read Gabrielle's lines and invite several students to share their lines for Levi with the whole class as you are reading through the scenario.

*Now let's practice the refusal skills through a series of scenarios. The first scenario we will do as a class. It is scripted and I will need two volunteers to read the script.*

*Thanks! Now we will all have a chance to make up some lines for Levi.*

**5. Refusal skills scenarios – small group**

Introduce the small-group scenario practice. Pass out and review the *Refusal Skills Checklist*.

Break the class into small groups with three people per group. Each small group will practice with all three scenarios (Scenarios C, D and E). For each scenario, one person will be the asker, one person will be the refuser, and one person will fill out the *Refusal Skills*

## ***Middle School FLASH, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition***

*Checklist* while they observe. Give students 10 minutes to fill in lines for all three scenarios. Every student fills in the lines for all three scenarios, even though they will only be reading one of them in their small group.

Remind the class that the person playing the refuser likes the asker and wants to continue hanging out with them, even though they want to say no to them.

In each group, each member takes a turn being the asker, the refuser and the observer. After reading each scenario out loud with the new lines written by the refuser, everyone will switch roles and do another scenario, so that each person gets the opportunity to be in each role. The purpose is for everyone to practice refusal skills and to hear good refusal skills.

Debrief as a large group after all groups have finished, debriefing each scenario one at a time. Ask volunteers from a few of the groups to give examples of the refusal skills that they came up with or observed. Validate all of the refusal language. Conclude the lesson by praising the students' effort and skill.

### **6. Assign homework**

Allow students to choose between the individual or family homework and explain the assignments as needed.

*Individual Homework: Saying No*

*Family Homework: Saying No*, available in English, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Vietnamese and Arabic

### **7. Exit ticket**

Hand out the *Lesson 4 Exit Ticket*.

**Prompt:** You learned today that most middle and high school students are not having sex. How can that information make it easier for someone to choose not to have sex?

**Answer:** Any answer that provides a rationale for how this information makes it easier to abstain is acceptable.



# Warm Up

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Visual

Research shows that only a little more than 10% of middle school students in the U.S. have ever had sex.

Below are some of the benefits of choosing abstinence. Please choose the one benefit that you think is best, or most important, and explain why you chose it.

- Choosing abstinence means a person does not have to worry about pregnancy or STDs.
- Choosing abstinence can help a person focus on other things that are important to them, like school, sports, friends or family.
- Choosing abstinence helps a person not have sex until the time is right for them.
- Choosing abstinence can help a person stick to values that are important to them.
- Choosing abstinence can help a couple get to know one another better before they decide to have sex.

# Refusal Skills

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Visual

- 1. Say NO**
- 2. Explain why**
- 3. Suggest an alternative**
- 4. Leave if you need or want to**

# Refusal Skills Checklist

Handout

**Directions:** For each scenario, check off the refusal skills you see the actors using.

	<b>Scenario B</b> Levi and Gabrielle	<b>Scenario C</b> Rebecca and Jackson	<b>Scenario D</b> Maria and Stephanie	<b>Scenario E</b> Marquis and Andre
Says NO (or states that he/she does not want to have sex).	_____	_____	_____	_____
Is clear.	_____	_____	_____	_____
Explains why.	_____	_____	_____	_____
Suggests an alternative.	_____	_____	_____	_____

# Refusal Skills Scenario A

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Handout

## Fully Scripted (for Class Demonstration)

Levi and Gabrielle have been dating for 2 weeks. They have talked and decided they were not going to have sex. Levi is not ready to have sex and is really scared about getting someone pregnant.

They decide to go to Gabrielle's house after school to study. Gabrielle's mom is running late at work and won't be home for an hour. They have the house to themselves. They decide to skip studying and kiss on the couch.

**Gabrielle:** I really like you and I think you're so hot. I know that we already decided not to have sex, but I didn't think we'd ever get the chance to be alone together. Now that we're alone, I really think we should have sex.

**Levi:** I like you, too, and it's cool hanging out. And I want to kiss you, but I don't want to have sex.

**Gabrielle:** But don't you like me? If you liked me, you'd want to have sex with me.

**Levi:** Gabrielle, I don't want to have sex. I'm not ready to have sex and I don't want to get you pregnant.

**Gabrielle:** But when are we going to get the chance to be alone like this again? I really want you.

**Levi:** The answer is no. I like you too, and I'm not ready to have sex. I think we should go outside to hang out so we don't get more tempted.

**Gabriel:** OK. I'm sorry I pressured you.

# Refusal Skills Scenario B

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Handout

## Partially Scripted (for Large-Group Practice)

Levi and Gabrielle have been dating for 2 weeks. They have talked and decided they were not going to have sex. Levi is not ready to have sex and is really scared about getting someone pregnant.

They decide to go to Gabrielle's house after school to study. Gabrielle's mom is running late at work and won't be home for an hour. They have the house to themselves. They decide to skip studying and kiss on the couch.

**Gabrielle:** I really like you and I think you're so hot. I know that we already decided not to have sex, but I didn't think we'd ever get the chance to be alone together. Now that we're alone, I really think we should have sex.

**Levi:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Gabrielle:** But don't you like me? If you liked me, you'd want to have sex with me.

**Levi:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Gabrielle:** But when are we going to get the chance to be alone like this again? I really want you.

**Levi:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Gabrielle:** OK. I'm sorry I pressured you.

# Refusal Skills Scenario C

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Handout

## Small-Group Practice

Rebecca and Jun are eighth grade girls who live on the same street. Jun invited Rebecca over to hang out on a Friday night and keep her company while her older brother has some friends over. Rebecca didn't know that the older teens would be there and that they would be drinking. Jackson, a boy from school is there. He offers Rebecca a beer. Rebecca does not want to drink. She doesn't like the taste of beer and doesn't want to get in trouble when she goes home.

**Jackson:** Hey Rebecca. It's nice to see you outside of school. Fun party, huh? Can I get you a beer?

**Rebecca:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Jackson:** Oh come on, don't tell me you don't drink. I'll get you a beer.

**Rebecca:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Jackson:** Really? It's just one beer!

**Rebecca:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Jackson:** OK, that's cool. Do you want a soda?

# Refusal Skills Scenario D

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Handout

## Small-Group Practice

Maria, an 8th grade girl, is hanging out at the mall after school with some friends. Stephanie, a high school girl, just stopped by with some friends. Maria thinks that Stephanie is really cute and is very flattered when Stephanie starts talking to her and flirting with her. Maria is not allowed to date yet, and her parents would definitely not let her date someone in high school.

**Stephanie:** It's been so fun hanging out with you. We should hang out again sometime. Want to get together after school on Friday?

**Maria:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Stephanie:** Oh come on, it's not like you have to tell your parents that we're hanging out. We could just meet up at the mall again.

**Maria:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Stephanie:** That's really a shame. I like you and would like to get to know you better. What do you say? Meet me here on Friday?

**Maria:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Stephanie:** OK. I understand. Maybe I'll see you at school next year.

# Refusal Skills Scenario E

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Handout

## Small-Group Practice

Marquis and Andre have been good friends since the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Marquis does not want to have sex with his girlfriend, Jasmine. He feels like he is too young to have sex and doesn't want to risk a pregnancy. Even though Andre has never had sex, he is pressuring Marquis to have sex since Marquis has a girlfriend.

**Andre:** I can't believe that you haven't had sex with Jasmine. What are you waiting for?

**Marquis:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Andre:** You better get to it. She is going to wonder why you haven't even tried.

**Marquis:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Andre:** Oh come on. You can't stay a virgin forever!

**Marquis:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Andre:** OK, I get it. That makes sense.



# Individual Homework: Saying No

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

Write a 300 word paper (1/2 to 1 page) about a time you saw a person say no to someone they cared about in a movie or on a TV show. Did it go well, or not so well? Think about the four steps from our lesson:

- Say no
- Explain why
- Offer an alternative
- Leave if you need or want to

Write about how the person used each of the steps, and whether they did a good job using them. Make sure and mention if they left any of the steps out. Explain what they did that you think made them successful or unsuccessful in saying no. Finally, if they did a good job saying no but the other person did not do a good job of hearing their no, make sure to point that out.

Turn in your paper by \_\_\_\_\_. Include your name and class period at the top of the page.

# Family Homework: Saying No

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All Family Homework is optional. Students may complete Individual Homework instead.

**Purpose:** Family Homework is a chance to share your beliefs about sexuality and relationships, and the beliefs of your family, culture or religion.

**Directions:** Student will do the homework with a family member or trusted adult who is like family. Find a quiet place where the two of you can talk privately for 5-10 minutes. Please follow these guidelines:

- It is OK for either of you to skip a question.
- What you discuss will not be shared with anyone else, unless you give one another permission to share it.
- Take turns asking questions. When it is your turn to listen, try to understand the other person's response.

**Ask the student:** What do you think about teens dating or agreeing to be a couple? What are the advantages and disadvantages?

**Ask the adult:** What kinds of rules or expectations do you have for me about dating while I am in middle and high school?

**Ask the adult:** How do you think someone would know it was the "right time" for them to have sex?

**Ask the student:** How do you think someone would know it was the "right time" for them to have sex?



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## Family Homework Confirmation Slip: Saying No

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Due: \_\_\_\_\_

We have completed the family homework.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of family member or trusted adult

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of student

# Exit Ticket

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Handout

You learned today that most middle and high school students are not having sex. How can that information make it easier for someone to choose not to have sex?

## Lesson 4: Assessment Questions

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1. What are some of the benefits of choosing not to have sex?

2. Following the steps we learned in class, write your own response to the following scenario.

Juanita and David have been dating for 3 weeks. They are hanging out at David's house with his mom and little brother, Tommy. Unexpectedly, Tommy gets sick and starts throwing up, so David's mom takes him to the doctor. Juanita and David find themselves alone in the house. They move to the couch and start to kiss.

**David:** I really like you. I know we already decided not to have sex, but I just didn't think we would ever really get this chance. I think we should do it. You're so hot.

**Juanita:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**David:** But this is our one chance. When are we going to get another chance to be alone again? Plus, aren't you having fun?

**Juanita:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**David:** Aw, man, I thought you liked me. This would be a great way to express how much we love each other.

**Juanita:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**David:** OK. You're right. I respect your decision.

## Lesson 4: Assessment Key and Standards Alignment

Question	Answer	Standards
1. What are some of the benefits of choosing not to have sex?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When people don't have vaginal, anal or oral sex, they don't have to worry about pregnancy or STDs.</li> <li>Any other answer that supports positive attitudes about abstinence is acceptable.</li> </ul>	NHES: SH1.8.7 SH1.8.9
<p>2. Following the steps we learned in class, write your own response to the following scenario. Remember to (1) Say no, (2) Explain why, and (3) Offer an alternative. You can also choose to leave if you need or want to.</p> <p>Juanita and David have been dating for 3 weeks. They are hanging out at David's house with his mom and little brother, Tommy. Unexpectedly, Tommy gets sick and starts throwing up so David's mom takes him to the doctor. Juanita and David find themselves alone in the house. They move to the couch and start to kiss.</p> <p><b>David:</b> I really like you. I know we already decided not to have sex, but I just didn't think we would ever really get this chance. I think we should do it. You're so hot.</p> <p><b>Juanita:</b></p> <p><b>David:</b> But this is our one chance. When are we going to get another chance to be alone again? Plus, aren't you having fun?</p> <p><b>Juanita:</b></p> <p><b>David:</b> Aw, man, I thought you liked me. This would be a great way to express how much we love each other.</p> <p><b>Juanita:</b></p> <p><b>David:</b> OK. You're right. I respect your decision.</p>	Any answer in which the student declines and follows the steps is acceptable.	NHES: SH4.8.1 SH4.8.3 SH4.8.4
<p><b>Exit Ticket:</b></p> <p>You learned today that most middle and high school students are not having sex. How can that information make it easier for someone to choose not to have sex?</p>	Any answer that provides a rational for how this information makes it easier to abstain is acceptable.	NHES: SH2.8.1
<b>Individual Homework</b>		NSES: PR.8.IC.1 SH.8.IC.1

# Integrated Learning Activities

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## **LANGUAGE ARTS: New Dialogue with Refusal Steps**

Working with a text you are already reading for Language Arts, write a short summary of a situation in which one character did not say no but should have, or did not say no effectively. Then script the dialogue between the characters using the refusal skills steps. For example, if Romeo had declined to marry Juliet after she proposed to him (Act 2, Scene 2), how would he say no, explain why and offer an alternative?

## References

<sup>1</sup> Jemmott, J.B., Jemmott, L.S., & Fong, G.T. (2009). Efficacy of a theory-based abstinence-only intervention over 24 months: A randomized controlled trial with young adolescents. *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*, 164, 2, 152–159.

<sup>2</sup> Alford, S. (2003). *Science and success: Sex education and other programs that work to prevent teen pregnancy, HIV & sexually transmitted infections*. Washington, DC: Advocates for Youth.

<sup>3</sup> Alford, S. (2008). *Science and success, second edition: Programs that work to prevent teen pregnancy, HIV & sexually transmitted infections*. Washington, DC: Advocates for Youth.

<sup>4</sup> Kirby, D. (2007). *Emerging answers 2007: Research findings on programs to reduce teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases*. Washington, DC: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Government Reform. (2004). *The Content of Federally Funded Abstinence-Only Education Programs*, Prepared for Rep. Henry A. Waxman. Washington, DC.

<sup>6</sup> Bearman, P., & Brückner, H. (2004). Promising the future: Virginity pledges and the transition to first intercourse. *American Journal of Sociology*, 106, 4, 859–912.

<sup>7</sup> Bearman, P., & Brückner, H. (2005). After the promise: The STD consequences of adolescent virginity pledges. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 36, 4, 271–272.

