



Action of the Month: Sexuality Education

Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations

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"We believe that human sexuality is one of the greatest gifts that we have been given"

—Rev. Bill Sinkford, President, UUA

Since 2005, Unitarian Universalist youth and adults have gathered every year with allies from other faiths to speak to their congressional representatives in Washington, DC about the importance of comprehensive, medically accurate sexuality education to our congregations, our communities, our youth, and our families. Unitarian Universalists have offered comprehensive sex ed. in our congregations since 1971 and continue to be at the forefront of the struggle to provide young people with the information that they need to make responsible and life-affirming decisions, grounded in Unitarian Universalist principles and values, about their own sexuality.



Take Action: March 23rd and 24th— Help us create a buzz about sexuality education on Capitol Hill. While participants at the fifth annual Sexuality Education Advocacy Training are visiting with Members of Congress and their staff members, we urge you to call your own congressional representatives in support of the Responsible Education About Life (REAL) Act. Here's a sample call script that you can copy and use:

Dial the Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224 3121 for the House or (202) 225 3121 for the Senate. Ask for your Senator's or Representative's office.

When a person answers: May I speak with the staff member who works on education? I am a constituent from (your city) and I'm a (*choose one or several*): Unitarian Universalist, person of faith, student, youth, sexuality education/OWL facilitator. Is your boss aware of the Responsible Education About Life Act?

If YES, begin with the next paragraph. If NO, or if they request more information, say: The Responsible Education About Life Act, also known as REAL, will provide funding to states for medically accurate, age appropriate, comprehensive sexuality education in public schools that includes information about abstinence and contraception, and teaches from both values and public health perspectives. If passed, REAL would make it possible for states to choose the sexuality education program that meets the public health needs of their communities.

Continue with: I'd like to ask (Senator or Representative's name) to vote for the REAL Act. My religious tradition affirms sexuality as a sacred gift. Abstinence-only-until marriage programs deny our youth critical information that might help them avoid sexually transmitted infections and unintended pregnancy. We need to provide our young people with age appropriate, medically accurate information about sexuality and sexual health. In addition to the people in my faith tradition who favor comprehensive sexuality education, 8 out of 10 American adults support including information about abstinence and contraception in sexuality education courses for students in grades 9-12. Failing to provide our youth with accurate information about pregnancy and disease prevention is ethically wrong, especially since as many as 70% of adolescents will become sexually active before they turn 19. The fact that youth and young adults lack accurate and complete information about their sexuality represents a colossal moral and public health failure. For all of these reasons, I am asking (Representative or Senator's name) to support the Responsible Education About Life Act. Thank you for your time and your commitment to this issue.

For more information, visit uua.org or write to la_womensissues@uua.org with stories and photos about your call-in day.

Congregational Success: Unitarian Universalist congregations all over the country teach "Our Whole Lives," (OWL) a comprehensive sexuality education curriculum for youth and adults. On February 1st, 2009, Alison Lobron's article in the *Boston Globe Sunday Magazine* featured the OWL students and facilitators from the UU Church in Bedford, MA. The article highlights the positive contributions of Unitarian Universalist and United Church of Christ partners to sexuality education in their communities. Find more information about OWL at <http://www.uua.org/religiouseducation/curricula/ourwhole/>.

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