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Evaluating the Effectiveness of a Faith-Based Sexual Abstinence Curriculum

Lisandra V. Gonzalez

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Evaluating the Effectiveness of a Faith-Based
Sexual Abstinence Curriculum

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B.S., Eastern Connecticut State University, 1998

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Evaluating the Effectiveness of a Faith-Based Sexual Abstinence Curriculum

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

Human sexuality has been the subject of great controversy across societies and through time. Differences in ideology, culture, moral values and religious beliefs shape sexual behaviors across and within groups. Ambivalence, controversy and sensitivity become even sharper when adolescent sexuality is the topic of concern. There is little public, professional or political consensus about what are the appropriate sexual guidelines for teenagers (Haffner, 1998).

In the 1950s, in the United States, most teenagers considered kissing and "petting" the furthest they would "go." Adolescents reached physical maturity later and would marry earlier. Today's, adolescents reach physical maturity earlier and they marry later in life (Haffner, 1998 and Brown, 2000). This phenomenon has created an "extended adolescence" and a larger "window of opportunity" for sexual experimentation.

In 1970, children 15 years of age represented only 5% of young people between the ages of 15 to 19 who were sexually active. Now, 24% of 15-year-olds are sexually active (Goldfarb, 1997). The danger in the increase of sexually active adolescents is that they are engaging in sexual activity without the maturity required to make wise decisions for such an emotionally and physically risky behavior (Haffner, 1998 and Brown, 2000). In addition, engagement in premature sexual intercourse is frequently without protection from disease or conception; what is called "un-safe sex." As a result of adolescents not practicing
safe sex, teen pregnancy has become very prevalent; abortion has become the frequent solution to teen pregnancy and there are increasing rates of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS. Factors associated with early initiation of sexual intercourse include drug and alcohol use, rape, delinquency and poverty (Haffner, 1998).

This thesis explores early adolescent sexuality among teens, especially Hispanic teens, and reviews the efforts being made so far to address early adolescent sexuality. It assesses the role of the church in providing sex education and evaluates the effectiveness of a faith-based abstinence intervention for Puerto Rican Christian youth. It concludes with recommendations for future programmatic directions.

Adolescent Sexual Practices

Sexual Intercourse. Most young people begin having sex in their mid-to-late teens; more than half of 17-year-olds have had intercourse (AGI, 1999). According to the 2003 Center of Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) nationwide Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), 46.7% of all high school students report having had sexual intercourse on at least one occasion; a decrease from 54.1% in 1991. Whites account for this reduction more than Black or Hispanic students. The prevalence of having had sexual intercourse was significantly higher among Blacks (67.3%), and Hispanics, (51.4%), than among White students (41.8%). The prevalence of sexual activity ranges from 32.8% among ninth graders to 61.6% among twelfth graders. About 34.3% of students
nationwide report being sexually active defined as having sexual intercourse in the three months preceding the survey. This prevalence was also higher among Blacks (49.0%) and Hispanics (37.1%) than among White students (30.8%).

Also the YRBSS asked about the number of sexual partners, with 14.8% of students reporting having had sexual intercourse with four or more sex partners during their lifetime; a decrease from 18.7% from 1991. However, having four or more sexual partners is higher among Blacks (28.8%) and Hispanics (15.7%) than among White students (10.8%). A total of 7.4% of students nationwide had sexual intercourse prior to 13 years of age. The prevalence of having sex prior to age 13 was also higher among Blacks (19.0%) and Hispanics (8.3%) than among White students (4.2%) (CDC, 2004).

An increasing number of sexually active teens are using alcohol or drugs before engaging in intercourse. Among the students who are sexually active (34.3%) the YRBSS also found that 25.4% of them had had alcohol or used drugs just prior to last sexual intercourse; an increase from 21.6% in 1991 (CDC, 2004). The prevalence of substance use prior to sex was higher among Whites (26.8%) and Hispanics (24.1%) than among Black students (19.5%) (CDC, 2004).

Contraception. The majority of the students who had their first sexual intercourse experience did not use contraception (Goldfarb, 1997). However, among the 34.3% high school students who are currently sexually active, 63.0% reported that either they or their partner had used a condom during last intercourse; this is an increase of 46.2% from 1991. Blacks, 72.8%, and Whites,
62.5% were more likely than Hispanic students, 57.4% to report condom use (CDC, 2004). In addition to condom use, 17.0% of sexually active students reported that either they or their partner had used birth control to prevent pregnancy before last sexual intercourse. Whites (22.3%) were more likely than Hispanics (11.2%) and Black students (7.9%) to report birth control use (CDC, 2004).

Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD)

In the United States, more than 65 million people are currently living with a sexually transmitted disease (CDC, 2000). Every year about 15 million people become infected with one or more STD (Cates, 1999) and 3 million of those are teenagers. Approximately 25% of sexually experienced adolescents become infected each year and 13% of the young people between ages of 13 to 19 contract an STD annually (Goldfarb, 1997). Among these STDs, the most common are chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, genital herpes, human papillomavirus (HPV), human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and trichomoniasis (CDC, 2000).

Chlamydia. Chlamydia is the most common of all the STDs and is higher among adolescents, especially female adolescents (CDC, 2000). Forty percent of Chlamydia cases are reported among young people 15 to 19 years old. The prevalence of infection usually ranges from 13% to 26% among female adolescents attending urban adolescent medicine programs for gynecological care (CDC, 2000). In adolescent males it was found that 5% to 10% were infected
with Chlamydia (Krowchuk, 1998). Chlamydia is common among all racial and ethnic groups, but prevalence is higher among racial and ethnic minorities mainly because of lack of access to screening and treatment programs (CDC, 2000). Since Chlamydia is primarily asymptomatic the great majority of people who have it do not know it (NIAID, 1998). Therefore the frequency reported by the CDC and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease (NIAID) are of those who have been screened and treated and not the total number of teens infected.

**Gonorrhea.** Reported gonorrhea rates declined steadily until the late 1990s. Between 1992 and 1995, rates of gonorrhea among 15 to 19 year olds dropped from 869.4/100,000 to 664.6/100,000, a 24% reduction (Krowchuck, 1998). However, rates of gonorrhea across all age groups were shown to increase by 9% between 1997 and 1999 (CDC, 2000). Rates for adolescents have increased 13% between 1997 and 1999. Rates of gonorrhea are highest among females, age 15 to 19 years of age and males between the ages of 20 and 24. In addition, males are more likely to be infected (136.0/100,000) than females (129.9/100,000), Blacks (848.8/100,000) are 30 times more likely than Whites (27.9/100,000). Hispanics are the least likely (75.3/100,000) to be infected (CDC, 2000).

**Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).** HIV is ranked sixth among the leading causes of death among young people 15 to 24 years of age (NIAID, 1999). The NIAID (1999) reported that due to the average period of HIV infection
(approximately ten years) most younger adults acquire HIV during adolescence. Through December of 2002, 4,785 new cases of AIDS among adolescents between the ages of 13 to 19 were reported to the CDC. This number does not include those that are HIV infected and do not have AIDS. Surveillance by the CDC reported that among this group of adolescents, 17% were White, 60% were Black and 22% were Hispanic (CDC, 2002).

**Human Papillomavirus (HPV).** HPV is the most prevalent STD among adolescents and young adults (Krowchuck, 1998). It has become an increasing public health concern since some types of HPV infections cause cervical cancer (CDC, 2000). Different tests used for the diagnosis of HPV have different levels of sensitivity and accuracy. As a result the frequencies of HPV range from 1.7% to 12% of women with adolescents showing the highest rate of any age group at 46% (Krowchuck, 1998). Comprehensive surveillance data are not available for HPV and no estimates are available by race and ethnicity (Weinstock, 2004).

**Genital Herpes (HPV-2).** HPV-2 is one of the most common sexually transmitted diseases in the United States. It is believed to be acquired during adolescence and young adulthood. From the late 1970s to the early 1990s, herpes prevalence increased 30% (Fleming, 1997). This increase was greater among teens and young adults, specifically among White teens ages 12 to 19 years old (Fleming, 1997). Even though the HPV-2 is increasing among White teens, the infection is more common among Blacks who have a seroprevalence of more
than 45%, compared to 17% in Whites (Fleming, 1997). Not enough data is available on Hispanics and the estimates available are very poor (Weinstock, 2004).

The great majority of STD infections are asymptomatic, especially among females and many of these teens do not know that they are infected (NIAID, 1998). Most STDs can be cured if detected early but if not, they can lead to serious consequences. These consequences include pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), cervical cancer, infertility and death. If a pregnant mother has an STD it can also be passed on to the child during labor and can lead to congenital problems, mental retardation and also death (NIAID, 1998).

**Teen Pregnancy**

The United States has the highest teen pregnancy and abortion rate in the industrialized Western World (Goldfarb, 1997 and AGI, 2002). However, from 1990 to 2000 the rate of teen pregnancy has dropped by 28% (AGI, 2004). This drop in teen pregnancy can be attributed to changes in teen behavior. According to a study by Santelli et al. (2004), it was found that the drop in the teen pregnancy rate was due to a delayed initiation of sexual intercourse and increase in contraceptive use. This is consistent with the report of CDC YBRSS 2003 where an increase in condom use and a decrease in sexually active teens were reported.
In spite of the reductions in teen pregnancy in all states, it is still a public health problem and continues to be a greater problem for Black and Hispanic than for White students (CDC, 2003). Sexually active adolescents account for about 13% of all births (AGI, 1999). The children of teen mothers are more likely to be premature and low birth weight, have poor health, grow up in a household without a father, run away from home, be physically abused and be abandoned and neglected (Sulak, 2004).

Ethnic minority groups still account for teen pregnancies more than Whites. According to the CDC YBRSS 2003, 4.2% of students report having been pregnant or getting someone pregnant. The prevalence of having been pregnant or having gotten someone pregnant was higher among Blacks (9.1%) and Hispanics (6.4%) than among White students (2.3%) (CDC 2003).

Adolescent females have disproportionately high numbers of abortions, 19% of the total even though teens represent only 15% of the population (AGI, 2002). These rates are also the highest among developed countries (AGI, 2002). Black women are more than 3 times as likely as White women to have an abortion and Hispanic women are 2.5 times as likely (AGI, 2002). Teen pregnancy costs American taxpayers about $20 billion yearly in public funding support (Goldfarb, 1997).

Early adolescent sexuality exposes American teens to unwanted pregnancies, STDs and HIV. For the last decade teen pregnancy rate and the age
of first intercourse among teens have decreased. Black and Hispanic teens, do not account for the reduction in teen pregnancy and initiation of first intercourse. However, there are a number of programs that are addressing the need for reduction in teen sexuality and the consequences that come with early adolescent sexuality.

Sex Education

A Historical View. In the United States, the emphasis on sex education and pregnancy prevention was a response to the increasing rate of teenage pregnancy in the early 1970’s. In 1978 congress passed an amendment to Title X of the Public Health Services Act to make teenagers eligible to receive subsidized family planning services. In the same year, Congress passed the Adolescent Health Services and Pregnancy Prevention Act. This Act was designed to provide care for pregnant teenagers and to empower them to become independent (Donovan, 1984). In general, the sex education programs in the 1970s focused on increasing knowledge about sex and the consequences and risks of teen pregnancy. Programs also provided pre and postnatal health services for the teen mothers and their children (Card, 1999 and Thomas, 2000).

As the government continued efforts to address teenage sexuality and pregnancy prevention, the Adolescent Family Life Act (AFLA) was created in 1981. The main goals of the AFLA were to promote abstinence as the only effective method of pregnancy prevention, to involve the support of family and
churches, and to promote adoption as a positive option (Donovan, 1984 and Thomas, 2000). This Act allowed agencies to provide family planning services to pregnant teenagers where there were no such services in the community. The primary focus, however, was teaching abstinence. In the 1980s sex education changed from not only preventing pregnancies but also preventing STD and HIV/AIDS. In general, many of the sex education programs in the 1980s not only focused on “Just say No” approaches to abstinence and character-based programs, but also refusal skills and contraceptive use (Card, 1999 and Thomas, 2000).

In the 1990s, while reforming the welfare system, Congress added section 510 to Title V of the Social Security Act (Thomas, 2000). Under Title V, Congress approved $50 million annually (FY 1998 to FY 2003) in funding for states to teach sexual abstinence education until marriage as the standard for all school-age children (Devaney et al., 2002; Sonfield and Benson Gold, 2001.). According to the Social Security Act, eight components define abstinence education as a program that:

1. has as its exclusive purpose, teaching the social, psychological, and health gains to be realized by abstaining from sexual activity;
2. teaches abstinence from sexual activity outside marriage as the expected standard for all school age children;
3. teaches that abstinence from sexual activity is the only certain way to avoid out-of-wedlock pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and other associated health problems;
4. teaches that a mutually faithful monogamous relationship in context of marriage is the expected standard of human sexual activity;
5. teaches that sexual activity outside of the context of marriage is likely to have harmful psychological and physical effects;
6. teaches that bearing children out-of-wedlock is likely to have harmful consequences for the child, the child's parents, and society;
7. teaches young people how to reject sexual advances and how alcohol and drug use increases vulnerability to sexual advances; and
8. teaches the importance of attaining self-sufficiency before engaging in sexual activity.

In addition, the states had the option of providing "where appropriate, mentoring, counseling, and adult supervision to promote abstinence from sexual activity, with a focus on those groups which are most likely to bear children out-of-wedlock" (U.S. Social Security Act, 1996).

The way sex education was approached in the 1990s was reflected in the types of programs delivered during that decade. These programs included a positive view on teen sexuality, more STD and HIV prevention programs, community-wide initiatives, youth development programs and, as noted above, more emphasis on abstinence education (Card, 1999).

Types of Sex Education. In the United States today there are two types of sex education for adolescents: "comprehensive" and "abstinence only." Comprehensive sex education, also known as abstinence plus, recognizes that many teenagers will become sexually active. In addition to teaching abstinence, it teaches about contraception and condom use and includes discussions about, abortion, STDs and HIV (Thomas, 2000 and Collins et al., 2002). Programs that
fit this description include *Reducing the Risk, Postponing Sexual Involvement* and *Program Education Now and Babies Later* (Thomas, 2000).

Abstinence only programs promote abstinence from sex as the only method for the prevention of pregnancy and STDs in adolescents (Thomas, 2000). These programs address abortion, STDs and HIV as negative consequences of teen sexuality (Collins et al., 2002). Some of these programs include *Success Express, Project Taking Charge, Sex Respect, Teen-Aid, Values and Choices* and *Facts and Feelings* (Thomas, 2000).

**Abstinence: Pros and Cons.** Given that there are two sides to sex education it is no surprise that there continues to be a very political and controversial debate. Supporters of “abstinence only” education argue that discussing anything beyond abstinence education is not effective and that abstinence is the only solution to the STD epidemic and teen pregnancy among sexually active teens (Brown and Hillard, 1996). Researchers argue that programs that emphasized the abstinence education are sending a more consistent message (Kirby et al., 1991) and that abstinence is protective from the emotional and psychosocial harms that come from premature sexual relationships (Orr et al., 1991 and Billy et al., 1988).

In 1996 Brown and Hillard published an article titled “Opposing Opinions on Abstinence Programs for Adolescents.” In this article, Brown and Hillard presented a debate between Stan Weed, M.D. and Leslie Kantor, M.P.H. and
Debra Haffner, M.P.H. on their views on "abstinence-only" education programs. Weed argued that the word "abstinence" needs to be defined because "one can be surprised to learn what some groups have redefined as abstinence so that it includes everything short of sexual intercourse." He argued that some groups would include undressing, petting and mutual masturbation as part of their abstinence programs.

An ambiguous definition of abstinence can lead to risky sexual behaviors because teens are not told from what behaviors they need to abstain. This lack of clarity in the abstinence message is particularly dangerous because behaviors such as undressing, petting, mutual masturbation, oral sex and anal sex are risky and may lead to sexual intercourse. Even though some may attribute the recent decline in teen pregnancy to the popularity of abstinence programs, there are some reports by the popular press that suggest teens may be engaging in oral sex as a means of "abstinence" (Remez, 2000). These reports cannot be confirmed because there is not enough documented data to accept or reject these allegations. However, whether these reports are accurate or not, teenagers are faced with the danger that oral sex can lead to the transmission of some STDs such as HPV, herpes, hepatitis B, gonorrhea, syphilis, chlamydia, and chancroid (Edwards and Carne, 1998).

A review of abstinence-only programs by Thomas (1999) concluded that some abstinence only programs have been effective in making desirable
attitudinal changes and delaying first intercourse. Thomas found that effective programs contain enforcement of clear and appropriate values making abstinence the norm and incorporate positive parent involvement to increase communication with teenagers (Thomas, 2000). Thomas adds that no evaluation has shown that "the abstinence message to be detrimental or impractical."

Those that do not support “abstinence only” education say that these programs are not effective because they are fear-based and exclude vital information from adolescents regarding pregnancy and STD prevention. According to Kantor and Haffner (1996) “young people deserve to receive effective sexuality education that stresses the benefits of abstinence but also includes information about pregnancy and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases.” Some may argue that it is unethical to withhold contraception information from students especially if they are sexually experienced teenagers (Wiley, 2002). Kantor and Haffner strongly feel that these “abstinence only” programs deny necessary information and skills for adolescents to make wise and responsible decisions (Brown and Hillard, 1996).

While some abstinence-plus programs have been effective in delaying first intercourse, decreasing frequency of intercourse and decreasing teen pregnancy (Thomas, 2000), there are questions about the effectiveness of abstinence-only programs. According to some researchers, there has not been an evaluation of a program with an exclusive abstinence message that shows a significant positive
impact on behavior (Thomas, 2000). According to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services the evaluation of abstinence education programs funded under Title V Section 510 will be complete and available in the summer of 2005.

While schools have been the focus of sex education there have been other institutions involved in sex education and risk reductions for adolescents including after school programs and community based organizations. There has been considerable interest in involving churches in sex education both because they provide the opportunity to access young people and the moral position and guidelines for sex education.

Faith and Sexuality

The argument is that religion has been effective in promoting health and reducing risk among adolescents (Donahue and Benson, 1995; Wallace and Forman, 1998; Regnerus, 2003). Religious participation has been shown to be protective against suicide ideation, suicide attempts, alcohol use, delinquency, violence and sexual involvement (Donahue and Benson, 1995; Nonnemaker et al., 2003).

Ellison and Levin (1998) found that religion promotes moderation, discourages risky behaviors, promotes moral and ethical teachings, gives guidance and advice about family life (marriage and child rearing) and promotes family cohesion. Religion can increase self-esteem and self-efficacy (Ellison and Levin, 1998; Wallace and Forman, 1998; Nonnemaker et al., 2003) by developing
and promoting an individual's sense of relationship with the "divine other" who cares and loves unconditionally (Ellison and Levin, 1998). This relationship gives individuals a sense of self-worth and control. Religion provides answers to fundamental questions about self-worth and emotional guidance (Rappaport and Simkins, 1991). Religion also provides social control, values, individual and group identity, and access to adult support and peer relationships (social support), both of which have constructive influence on development (Donahue and Bensen, 1995; Wallace and Forman, 1998; Nonnemaker et al., 2003).

There is extensive research which shows that religion has a positive impact on adolescent sexual behavior by delaying initiation of sexual intercourse (Thornton and Camburn, 1989; Donahue and Benson, 1995; Holder et al., 2000; Zaleski and Schiaffino, 2000; Nonnemaker et al., 2003). These studies suggest that highly religious adolescents initiate sexual activity later, have fewer sexual partners and engage in sex less than their less religious peers (Miller and Moore, 1990; Zalenski and Schiaffino, 2000; Miller and Gur, 2002; Nonnemaker et al., 2003). A study by Thornton and Camburn (1989) also suggests that young people who attend religious services have less permissive attitudes towards sex. Sexual behavior and attitudes were found to significantly influence religious involvement (Thornton and Camburn, 1989).

Although religious involvement has been shown to be protective of early initiation of sexual intercourse, it may represent a risk factor for unsafe sex
among sexually active adolescents (Zalenski Schiaffino, 2000). Studies have shown that religious adolescents (especially women) are less likely to use contraception at first intercourse (Cooksey et al., 1996; Zalenski and Schiaffino, 2000; Miller and Gur, 2002; Nonnemaker et al., 2003). Another study by Studer and Thornton (1987) found that sexually experienced adolescent girls regularly attending religious services were less likely to have used an effective medical method of contraception than those who were rarely attending religious services.

In addition to the risk of unprotected sex, high religiosity has been associated with forced sex and letting males control the use of birth control (Miller and Gur, 2002). Miller and Gur (2002) believe that if sexual activity is strictly forbidden, as it is in many Protestant churches (Petersen and Donnenwerth, 1997) then adolescent girls are left with very few skills for negotiating sex and contraceptive use. This may be a direct result of the Christian teaching on premarital sex and an indicator of the fact that many Protestant churches are not effective in educating their youth about sex.

Despite the variety of positions on sex education and different approaches taken by families, schools, churches, government and society, there continues to be a general agreement that sex education is a necessary component of adolescent development. Within this framework, efforts can be made to educate teens about the dangers of premarital sexual experience. Religious institutions
can provide a welcoming environment where some of these dangers can be addressed and other positive behaviors can be encouraged.

This thesis evaluates the efforts of faith-based sexual abstinence intervention for Christian Puerto Rican youth in preventing early adolescent sexuality. The objectives of this thesis are to 1) describe the context for the development of sex education in the church; 2) describe the development and implementation of a faith-based abstinence education program; 3) assesses the impact of this faith-based abstinence education program; and, 4) make recommendations for future directions.

The following chapter provides an understanding of the context of this intervention by describing the church and its statements of faith. Chapter 3 describes how the intervention was implemented and includes a description of the curriculum used. Chapter 4 presents the baseline data. Chapter 5 describes the efforts made to evaluate the integrity of the intervention. Chapter 6 presents a comparative analysis between the three time points where data was collected. Chapter 7 describes the overall impact of the intervention, limitations to this study and future directions for this kind of research.
History of the church

The City of Springfield, MA has a population of 152,082 inhabitants. Of which, 41,343 are Hispanic or Latino with the great majority being Puerto Ricans, 36,251 (DHCD, 2000). Many Puerto Ricans came to New England in the 1940s as part of the migrant farm labor force. As the need for farm workers grew, Puerto Ricans came primarily from the island of Puerto Rico. The Department of Labor of Puerto Rico worked out a number of contract agreements whereby the Department of Employment Services, Farm Placement Division in Massachusetts could hire Puerto Ricans from the island to do seasonal farm work (Morales, 1986). As a result, many Puerto Ricans migrated to New England during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s and settled in around Springfield, MA and Hartford, CT (Morales, 1986 and Fitzpatrick, 1987). Once they were settled family and friends soon followed.

Responding to the increasing Hispanic population, in 1975 a project was developed in four churches in Springfield, MA. The American Baptists,
Episcopal, Methodist and Evangelical churches united their efforts to initiate a Hispanic church. Their vision was to do outreach to the Hispanic population and they thought that it would be better for the Hispanics to do it themselves. Because the church had no affiliation to a particular denomination it was first named Christian Biblical Church.

The Christian Biblical Church was officially founded in January 4, 1976 with a total of seven members, including the pastoral family (3). After a few years it became affiliated with the American Baptist Churches USA and the name was changed to “Iglesia Bautista Hispana” (Hispanic Baptist Church, HBC). Later “Renovación” (Renewal) was added to the name in order to identify the specific mission of the church.

The first pastor of the church was Rev. Reyes Ortiz who served the church for 12 years. In 1988 he retired and the church hired a new pastor, Rev. Pedro Rafael Osorio. Rev. Osorio found the church in the midst of several difficult situations. The church was going through financial difficulties and was not able to keep up with its financial responsibilities. In addition, attendance was a challenge with only 35 members meeting for Sunday morning services and only 19 active members. At the time HBC gathered in a local church from whom they rented their facilities. After effective outreach and as the news of a growing Hispanic church spread through Springfield, membership at HBC increased and the resources to buy a temple became available. HBC was later forced to find a new meeting place because that local church was intimidated with their growing
presence and asked them to leave. Finally, they rented the facilities of Grace Baptist Church and within a year this church building was purchased. The first worship service held on the new facilities was on October 29, 1993.

Since 1993 HBC as grown and now 400 people meet for worship and teaching on Sunday mornings and 266 people are active members. People who worship at HBC are not only from the City of Springfield but they come from as far as Greenfield, MA, Enfield, Windsor, West Hartford and New Britain, CT. The congregation is composed of mainly Puerto Rican families but there are also families from the Dominican Republic, Argentina and Peru. Because the services are simultaneously translated into English (through live radio transmission), second generation families are also found at HBC along with people that are Anglo and African-American. Out of the 400 people that worship at HBC there are 74 men and 135 women, (there are 54 married couples), 120 children and 80 young people.

Baptist Principles

As part of the American Baptist Churches, HBC holds to certain principles:

*Jesus is the son of the living God* – Jesus is confessed as the son of the living God, their Lord and Savior. Jesus died and carried the sin of the world so through Him humanity could be saved (John 3:16). God raised Him from the dead and He now sits at the right hand of God as a mediator making intercession for all believers (Colossians 3:1, Romans 8:34). He is the way, the truth and the
life and no one comes to the Father except through Him (John 14:6). Because of Jesus there is direct access to the Father (HBC, 1998 and ABC, 1998).

*The Bible: The way of faith and conduct* – The Bible is the divine and inerrant word of God and the basic function of the Bible is to teach and correct (2 Timothy 3:16-17). It is their point of reference and indicates who they are and in whom they believe. The word of God contains the base of the Christian discipline, which also reveals God’s love for them. What they learn, say and do is always subject for comparison to what the Bible says about it. “They are the people of the Book” (HBC, 1998).

*Two Ordinances*: The two ordinances are The Baptism and The Holy Communion. 1) The Baptism should be for believers of Christ. This act does not bring salvation to anyone (Mark 16:16). It is a picture of the death and resurrection of Christ, a testimony of the experience of faith as well as a remembrance of the new life they now live in Christ (Romans 6:4). It is an act of obedience and love to their Lord. 2) The Holy Communion it is to be observed in remembrance of how Christ offered himself on the cross for all humanity (Luke 22:19-20). The participants need to be believers of Jesus Christ. It is a time of joyful celebration, good news, and affirmation of the family of God as they all come equally to sit at the table with Christ. Hope and salvation is proclaimed for all (HBC, 1998).

*Universal Priesthood of the Believer* – All believers are called to testify about God and His will and to offer their lives in service to the world. In the Old
Testament a chosen people of a certain genealogy had access to the presence of God and were able to offer sacrifices on behalf of the people for forgiveness of sin. Under the new covenant there is in Christ, all believers have direct access to the presence of God through Jesus (Revelation 1:6; 1 Peter 2:9) and animal sacrifices are no longer needed because Jesus was the perfect sacrificial lamb for all humanity. According to 1st Timothy 2:5, they can approach God directly through Christ the great High Priest (HBC, 1998).

Congregational Governance – As a member and participant of a body of believers (the church) each believer in Christ has access to the revelation that comes from God and can discern the will of God for the world and the church of which is part. The community of believers meets to consider financial, theological and administrative matters. Each problem and situation is analyzed in the light of the Scriptures, their foundation of faith, and under the direction of the Holy Spirit of God they seek His will in each decision that needs to be made (HBC, 1998).

Freedom of Conscience – It is the freedom to think and act freely but in a responsible manner. Every person is entitled to have full freedom of conscience and that freedom is to be respected and considered by those who think differently. The respect to the freedom of conscience of someone else is the foundation of their right to demand respect to their own freedom of conscience (HBC, 1998 and ABC, 1980).
**Separation of Church and State** – Church and state are separate not only in their functions, but also in the source of their financing. Government being under public control is properly financed by taxation. Membership in religious institutions and organizations is voluntary, and therefore should be supported by voluntary contributions. The use of tax money for support of religious groups is in opposition to the spirit and letter of the Constitution (ABC, 1983).

This principle does not mean that the state is indifferent to the church, nor that the church is unconcerned for the state. It means rather that church and state are separate in their institutional life and that neither controls the other (ABC, 1983).

**Freedom of Religion** – Every person is entitled to have full freedom of worship and to profess and exercise religious beliefs in public as well as in private. There is an understanding that people who live under governments freely elected by democratic processes have a responsibility to understand the difficulty of religious believers who suffer the persecutions, restrictions, and harassments of undemocratic governments. Believers express their concern for these, their brothers and sisters, and pledge to keep them in their prayers, and to seek to bring the pressure of world opinion to bear on their situation so that the world may come to have full freedom of conscience and worship (ABC, 1980).

**Church Organization**

HBC is governed by a body of pastors and elders. The senior pastors are Rev. Rafael Osorio and his wife, Loyda Osorio and there are three Associate
Pastors: William González, Miguel González and Marisol González. At HBC there are also opportunities for Seminary Pastors to do their internship before ordination. This pastoral body along with other leaders of the church is able to have various ministries and areas of service to the community.

The organizational chart is as follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pastoral Body</th>
<th>Elders</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Staff</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior Pastors</td>
<td>President</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associate Pastors</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminary Pastors</td>
<td>Treasurer's Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aides</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| **Office**             |                      |
| Pastors                | President            |
| Secretary              | Treasurer            |
| Administrative         | Treasurer            |
| Assistant              | Other members        |
| Janitor                | Ex-Oficio            |

| **Programmatic Boards**|                      |
| Evangelism             | Christian Education  |
| Missions               | Administration       |

| Ministry of Service    |                      |
| Communications         | Christian Arts       |

|                      | The Family           |

The church offers the following ministries and services:

**Pastoral Counseling** – Rev. Osorio, senior pastor, is available along with the other associate pastors to anyone who may need counseling in dealing with family crisis, spirituality and everyday life.

**Ministry of Service** – The Ministry of Service includes Open Pantry providing food services for the needy; Agape, providing for the homeless of the city; Dorcas, providing help for the families in crisis; McDonald House, while families from other countries are housed here and their children are undergoing surgery at Shriner’s Hospital, HBC provides a friendly face and supplies any needs these families may have; Angel Tree, provides Christmas gifts to children
whose parents are incarcerated; and Prison Fellowships, providing a message of hope for men and women that are incarcerated.

**Family Ministries** – The Family Ministries includes ministry for children, youth, women, men and married couples with appropriate activities that can address their particular need. The youth in particular are given great attention and they participate from youth group, Sunday school, trips, camps, retreats, social activities, missionary work, arts and much more.

**Christian Education Ministry** – The Christian Education Ministry is dedicated to the teaching and formation of each individual as Christians. This includes CLET (Centro Laico Educativo y Teológico) Center for Lay Ministers Formation and Theological Education, CUME (Center for Urban Ministries) through Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, in Boston, “MasterLife” for the formation of disciples and leaders and the Bilingual Ministry providing translation for English speaking individuals.

**Evangelism Ministry** – The Evangelism Ministry is dedicated to the spreading of the gospel\(^1\) of Jesus Christ. This ministry includes outreach by way of radio, Internet and street evangelism. It also includes the New Believers Ministry in which a new believer in Christ is given support and placed in a nurture group where they learn about their new Christian life.

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\(^1\) Gospel means good news. In the Bible the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is known to be good news because it is believed that this way God brought salvation and hope to all humanity.
*Missions* - Every year HBC goes to missionary trips to Dominican Republic, Argentina and Peru. During these trips monetary, material, and medicinal aide is provided to the places they go.

*Christian Arts Ministry* - The Christian Arts Ministry includes the worship teams, drama, music, clowns, pantomime, drawing, painting and dance.

*Administration Ministry* - The Administration Ministry involves the kitchen, bookstore, interior decorations, gardening, and the Mattoon Street Festival. HBC is located in a Historical part of Springfield, MA between Matton and Pearl Street. Matton Street Festival is done every year to exhibit this beautiful part of Springfield. The festival is characterized for the local vendors, arts and crafts, food and the exhibition of the beautiful homes in the area including the historical HBC.

*Communications Ministry* - The Communications Ministry includes sound, radio, recordings, website and video.

HBC has been in the city of Springfield, MA for 25 years and has been committed to minister to the Hispanic community. All these ministries and outreach events help in the accomplishment of God's vision for this church. The Hispanic Baptist Church considers the families to be one of their main priorities and within the families the youth (from here on referred to as the "Jóvenes").
The Jóvenes

HBC has about 80 jóvenes ranging from 12 to 30. This group of jóvenes is divided in three sub-groups: Jóvenes I, ages 12 to 14; Jóvenes II, ages 15-17, Jóvenes III or Young Adults, ages 18 – 30.

The activities for the jóvenes are programmed by a steering committee composed of a coordinator and two (2) jóvenes representative of each age group. This committee includes seven (7) counselors who help during youth activities, counseling and family interventions. The youth activities are designed to be age appropriate and targeted to meet their particular need. Some of these activities include retreats, Bible studies, prayer, concerts, mission trips, and social outings. Many of the topics covered include God’s purpose for life, relationship with God and dating among others.

There are, however, six principles that these jóvenes are taught as part of their church membership and baptism course (HBC, 1998). These are:

1. “God chose you from the foundations of the earth.”
   The jóvenes are taught that even before God created the earth (according to the accounts in the book of Genesis), He already had in mind the creation of humanity.

   For He chose us in Christ before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight.  
   (Ephesians 1:4)

2. “God wants to save you from eternal condemnation.”
   Sin separated humanity from God and brought condemnation and death. However, God’s will is for humanity is to repent, be saved, healed and restored to him. God accomplished this by having Jesus die on the cross for all humanity.

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2 Jóvenes is the Spanish word used for youth, teens, or young people
...God doesn’t want anyone to perish but that all should come to repentance.  
(2 Peter 3:9)

For I know the thoughts I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.  
(Jeremiah 29:11)

3. “God wants to have an intimate and personal relationship with you.”
Once saved, healed, free and restored in Christ, God wants to have an intimate and personal relationship with each human being. He also wants this relationship to grow and to mature.

I am the vine and you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.  
(John 15:5)

4. “God wants you to be part of His plan for humanity.”
God invites all humanity to be His collaborators, agents of reconciliation, healing and proclaimers of His Gospel.

... that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ...  
(2 Corinthians 5:19-20)

We then, are workers (collaborators) together with Christ...  
(2 Corinthians 6:1)

5. “God puts you in His church and He gives you spiritual gifts.”
God gives each individual talents, spiritual gifts, and spiritual grace to carry out diverse ministries in order to build up the body of Christ and to extend the gospel to all people and to all nations.

But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.  
(1 Corinthians 12:11)

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light...  
(1 Peter 2:9)

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3Used to describe a group of believers—cf. ‘one body in Christ’ (Rom. 12:5) and ‘body’ is referring to a local church, or to the universal church, i.e. 1 Cor. 10:17; 12:12; Eph. 1:23. (The New Bible Dictionary, (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1962.)
6. “Your challenge then is this to say 'here I am Lord, use me'; to discover your spiritual gifts and your calling; to perfect your gifts; to use your spiritual gifts and develop ministries.” Understanding these principles, the jóvenes are challenged to make a commitment and to put their talents and spiritual gifts in service to God and their local church.

These six principles are not only a teaching but also the basis for their beliefs and formation as they discover who they are. It is within this context that the jóvenes of HBC are taught about one of the most challenging areas of their adolescent life: their sexuality.

As it relates to sexuality, HBC teaches that:

1. “God created humans as males and females.”
   God created Humans as sexual beings with each having a specific gender.

   *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created Him; male and female he created them.* (Genesis 1:27)

2. “God created sex as a gift from Him.”
   Sex was created as a means of reproduction and for humanity’s enjoyment.

   *Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it.* (Genesis 1:28)

   *May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth.* (Proverbs 5:18)

3. “Reproduction and sexual enjoyment are to take place within the context of marriage.”
   God instituted marriage as the foundation for the family. It is within this context that reproduction and sexual enjoyment is to take place.

   *For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.* (Genesis 2:23)
4. “Engaging in sex before and outside of marriage is a sin against God and against our own bodies.”
   The Bible teaches that sex before marriage is “fornication” and sex outside of marriage is “adultery.” When a believer of Christ commits these “sins”, the Bible says that they do not only sin against God but also against their bodies because the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit of God.

   Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. (1 Corinthians 6:18-20)

   For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from fornication; that each one of you know how to control your own body in holiness and honor, not with lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one wrong or exploit a brother or sister in this matter. (1 Thessalonians 4:3-6)

5. “God is the source of strength in time of struggle and temptation.”
   God understand that humans are not perfect. For this reason the Bible teaches that He provides strength trouble times.

   I can do all things through Christ who strenghtens me. (Philippians 4:13)

   My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. (2 Corinthians 12:9)

   No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. (1 Corinthians 10:12-13)

   Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him (Jesus), because he always lives to intercede for them. (Hebrews 7:25)

   These concepts are taught within the context of a relationship with God. Their Bible teaches them that they can have access to God and forgiveness of sin through Jesus. In this relationship the jóvenes have been taught that God is a
good God and that He desires the very best for them including sexual purity. For those who fail to abide (it is expected that some would fail), there is forgiveness of sin. This teaching of forgiveness is encouraged because they believed that Jesus took the faults and sins of all humanity. "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." (Hebrews 4:16)

The Church’s Role in Sex Education

The position of the church was articulated by HBC’s Associate Pastor, William González. Pastor González feels that the church plays a vital and important role in educating families, jóvenes and individuals alike. When asked about the role of the church in sex education Pastor González began by explaining that the church’s main purpose is to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Bible teaches Christians to:

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19-20)

"Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation." (Mark 16:15)

Sharing the Gospel and making disciples is what Christians call “The Great Commission.” In the process of fulfilling this “Great Commission” is where Pastor González says that human beings are also affirmed and strengthened in certain life principles Christ taught known as “Kingdom

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4 Here church is not a particular denomination but the universal Christian church.
These principles include the integral and complete salvation of human beings and involve human development in all its facets (emotional, physical, and spiritual). It is within the reality called humanity and its development that sexuality can be found and Pastor González affirmed that the church plays a very important role because of the life principles associated with it.

The church plays an important role in sex education because it can reach the spiritual dimensions of humanity. Pastor González says that “we (the church) have an advantage and is that we see the dimension of ‘sin’ that is not explored in clinical and other disciplines...” The Bible teaches that humans do not “battle” just with physical things but also with spiritual things:

“For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against the evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against those mighty powers of darkness who rule this world, and against wicked spirits in the heavenly realms.” (Philippians 6:12)

In addition, the Bible also teaches that there is a “devil” who wants to destroy humans and one of the aspects he wants to destroy is sexuality. Pastor González says that “in this dimension we can see how it (sin) distorts the beauty of sexuality.” He continued “if there is a school of thought that accepts sexuality not only

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5 Kingdom Principles in the Bible can also be thought of as standards for living or values such as love God, love your enemies, giving to the poor, etc.

6 Salvation - This word is used to describe the deliverance of the Israelites from the Egyptians (Ex. 14:13), and of deliverance generally from evil or danger. In the New Testament it is specially used with reference to the great deliverance from the guilt and the pollution of sin wrought out by Jesus Christ, “the great salvation” (Heb. 2:3) (Easton, M. G., M. A. D. D., Easton’s Bible Dictionary, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1996.)

as something normal but also as a beautiful expression (in its place with healthy implications when it is done 'right'), it is the Christian thought.” The fact that the church is able to approach sexuality in this way, Pastor González affirms that is fundamental because “sexuality is not only a heated topic sociologically but also academically (for those who study it and like to theorize about it) spiritually and anthropologically (all cultures have sexuality present) and it is without a doubt a human reality (just like religion). He adds “this (spirituality) is an approach the church has available to them which other disciplines and science don’t have.”

Not understanding the spiritual dimension of humans is a limitation. Pastor González says that outside of Christian thought, in general, in a humanistic and secular society, it is more scientific to think that humans are the center of the universe and the “cosmovision.” “They (society) are limited by those things that are beyond reason or that can’t be explained or proven scientifically. Those things that can’t be explained through medical advances, psychology, etc. aren’t real, can’t be proven and because they can’t be proven then they are not real.” In other words, when approaching humanity “they” are already limited by the physical and the natural world. “And if you notice,” he adds, “when ‘they’ approach sexuality it is usually done from a biological and emotional perspective and the emotional perspective is extremely subjective...and the spiritual dimension is absent...and if there is a spiritual dimension present it is usually this abstract spirituality where humans are in control (of their lives) and not God.” Pastor González feels that the Biblical perspective is the opposite where “God establishes the boundaries and remains in
control." He continued to express that other approaches do not address the spiritual dimensions because "a well intended psychologist or educator comes and puts this whole reality aside."

Another limitation stems from the fact that in academic disciplines you cannot use God as an "explanation." In other words, "evil does not exist, the supernatural does not exist, humans do not need God, humans are a god within, etc." Pastor González says that when the Bible calls certain human behaviors "sinful acts," secularism says "...oh no, those are feelings of guilt because 'the person has been exposed to too many restrictions' which is all Freud's philosophy." Pastor González argues that this is a limitation especially when it has something to do with sexual identity and in this case abstinence. In regards to sex, he continued to explained, secular society tells you "you have to (have sex)" and when someone abstains is like "not drinking water and indispensable for living and it is presented as a basic need...," he continued, "I haven't met anyone who has died because of lack of sex for a reasonable amount of time." Another reason why Pastor González says this is a limitation is because it is a double standard. "For one side abstinence is the most effective and secure method against pregnancy and disease but on the other hand society encourages us to have sex. It is like two truths that cancel each other out... ... you can't abstain because if you are a human being but because it is a 'necessity' then you must have sex...you have to do it.....this is a double standard!" Pastor González says that the Bible does not ignore or deny human reality of sexuality but it provides restrictions for this sexuality to be expressed. Society, however, takes away the
"guard rails" along the way and says "you are free...you want it, you can have it, did it feel good, then do it!"

Pastor González insisted that the teachings of the Bible are clear and specific: "outside of the context of marriage there should be no sex." He recognizes that people may not understand this, will get upset at God and will engage in premarital sex anyway. However, Pastor González affirms that "the Bible has been clear and wiser than other intellectuals and counselors to present this method of public health and prevention (abstinence)."

In this age of open communication, Pastor González feels that there is a "huge" gap between what he calls knowledge and morality; between knowledge and the capacity in one's character to be wise and apply the knowledge obtained through education. He feels the youth from "other generations" with less sexual knowledge tended to engage in risky behaviors with less frequency than the "youth of today" who have more sexual knowledge. "In fact", he adds, "the knowledge learned today during junior high is what 'we' were learning in college." He continued to say that "younger youth do not have the moral capacity to apply all the knowledge they have acquired and to put to practice." Pastor González is amazed at this gap because it means that education is not enough to bring about change. He continued to say that "the church has a great opportunity to influence because of its ability to morally empower individuals." Pastor González does not reject science and the biological aspects of sex education but he feels that these are not enough. This means that the church is in a position to influence because of its spiritual
dimension and access to individuals. He continued by saying "all this good education but behaviors are not modified......why? ...well something is missing...the church has a message...let the church give its message without removing the biological education."

Pastor González affirmed that jóvenes who have a religious life or a 'healthy Christian life' have shown that moral self-control along with spiritual empowerment and a relationship with Christ, have the greater capacity of managing information the best and do not get involved in risky behaviors at higher rates when compared to their counterparts. He concluded, "I'm not saying that they don't do it (sex) but the incidence is less."

In the past, HBC has developed other interventions where it has attempted to educate not only the jóvenes but the whole family in a variety of issues including sex. Adolescent girls and boys have been separated and "talked" to about sex. HBC had never taken on a sex education intervention that would be tailored to the jóvenes and that would last more than one day. Understanding the importance of sex education in the church, the author approached Rev. Osorio with the proposal of doing a faith-based sex education intervention for the jóvenes of HBC.
Chapter 3 - Methodology

Faith-Based Intervention

The plan for this project involved the implementation of a sex education program and the systematic evaluation of its integrity and impact. This program implementation and evaluation included 1) the selection of the faith-based sexual abstinence curriculum, 2) the administration of pre-post intervention survey, 3) the collection of session observations, 4) individual in-depth interviews with the jóvenes, and, 5) evaluation of session.

This intervention took place in the spring of 2000. The goal of the intervention was to investigate the effectiveness of a faith-based sexual abstinence education and to teach and maintain sexual abstinence among adolescent youth of the Hispanic Baptist Church (HBC), Springfield, MA.

Considering the jóvenes' faith and system of beliefs, the following were the intervention's objectives:

- Build the jóvenes self-esteem.
- Provide sexual education.
- Build skills in dealing with pressure to have sex.

The Curriculum "True Love Waits"

The curriculum used is called True Love Waits (TLW) published by LifeWay Press. True Love Waits was created in April of 1993 based on the need to develop a Christian sex education program. TLW is sponsored by LifeWay
Christian Resources—the world’s largest provider of religious products and services—TLW is an international campaign that challenges teenagers and college students to remain sexually pure and abstinent until marriage.

TLW is based in religious theory and defines sexual purity as “abstaining from intercourse until marriage and not dwelling on thoughts of sex with someone other than a spouse.” In the Bible Jesus says "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:27-28). The TLW’s message is that until one is married, sexual purity means saying no to sexual intercourse, oral sex, and sexual touching. It also means saying no to a physical relationship that causes one to be "turned on" sexually. In addition, it means not looking at pornography or pictures that feed sexual thoughts. They also believe that sexual purity does not end with marriage. Marriage partners are supposed to experience sexual love with each other in a way that is fulfilling to both. In this context purity means being completely faithful to the spouse in thought and deed (TLW, 2004). "Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral" (Heb. 13:4).

The TLW message is disseminated to young people through churches, student organizations, health care groups, and on campuses across the nation. TLW hosts national, city-wide and regional rallies that are held each year. Part
of what TLW does at these rallies is to display covenant cards that have been signed by young people stating: "Believing that true love waits, I make a commitment to God, myself, my family, my friends, my future mate, and my future children to be sexually abstinent from this day until the day I enter a biblical marriage relationship".

At their first national rally on July 29, 1994 on the National Mall in Washington, DC, 25,000 young people displayed more than 210,000 covenant cards. Since this first national convention over a million jóvenes have signed covenant cards pledging to remain sexually pure and abstinent until marriage.

As part of the program TLW has developed several teaching materials and curricula. Among those are the materials chosen for this study: "Until I Say I Do" and "The Gospel of Sex Video." These materials teach church youth about sexual abstinence from a Biblical perspective and its main sections build on the relationship they have with Jesus and focuses on how that relates to their sexuality. The materials include refusal skills, showing adolescents how to respond to real life situations. It also allows for open discussions where adolescents can express their concerns and doubts regarding sex.

"Until I Say I Do" (Strack and Strack, 1999) contains five sessions and "The Gospel of Sex Video" series contains three sessions. The teaching material for this intervention was chosen in collaboration with Pastor González, who was assigned by Rev. Osorio to supervise this intervention. Pastor González's supervision was necessary to ensure the jóvenes were taught according to
Christian teachings. Pastor González selected 3 of the 5 sessions from “Until I Say I Do”: “Flirting with temptation”, “How far is too far on a date?”, and “Is sex wrong if you are really in love?” Pastor González also selected the entire “The Gospel of Sex Video” series which included: “The Gospel of Sex Video”, “Idol Thoughts”, and “Power Play.” These selections were based on what Pastor González thought would be relevant and appropriate for the jóvenes of HBC. Pastor González chose not to include the following sessions from “Until I Say I Do” because he felt that they were redundant and repetitive: “Think in the future tense” and “Sex: Isn’t everybody doing it?”

Out of the two resources, the following six (6) sessions were created (see Appendix A for copy of the curriculum):

Session #1 “Common Myths about Sex and the Standard of God” – For this session the jóvenes were presented with “The Gospel of Sex” Video. This video showed a general overview of what the Bible teaches about sex. It focused on sex being a gift from God; a gift not to be “opened” until marriage. It also encouraged the jóvenes to avoid tempting situations, to be sexually pure and to abstain from sexual intercourse. This video also presented real life testimonial of teens who had engaged in premarital sex, the consequences they experienced and their decision to abstain from sex until marriage. The common myths about sex among Christian youth were also discussed. Some of these included: “sex is bad”, “God hates sex”, “if you have premarital sex, you will get pregnant or
contract a horrible disease and die”, “virgin is a dirty word”, “if you’ve had sex, you’re ruined for life.”

**Session #2 “Idol Thoughts”** – This session focused on how society is fixated with sex and how it has become an “idol” for society. An “idol” was defined as “something people worship and anything that takes the place of God in a person’s life.” Such an idol can be money, success, significant others and sex. Part of this session included an exercise where the jóvenes were given everyday magazines to identify ads where sex was portrayed as a tool for selling products. The jóvenes identified that the message sent was that society uses sex to sell everything and as a result degrading it as something not important or precious in the life of a person. The jóvenes learned that God created all things including sex as an expression of love within marriage, that God should be first in their lives, and not to make sex an “idol.”

**Session #3 “Power Play”** – This session focused on understanding the Christian life as a life of true freedom and power as the Bible teaches in the book of Romans. The jóvenes were presented with a skit about a young man named “Joe.” “Joe” was a high school drop out, had run away from home and could not hold on to a steady job all because he was “free” to do what he wanted with his life. In light of this character, the jóvenes were taught that society gives a misleading sense of freedom and that living life as they please is not what God wants for them. The jóvenes were taught that true freedom is found in Jesus and
the sacrifice He made when He died for their sins. Because their sins have been forgiven the jóvenes can now live in true freedom. Through the power of Christ, the jóvenes were challenged to avoid sexual sin and to live free in a way that is pleasing to God.

Session #4 “Flirting with Temptation” - This session focused on understanding “temptation” and where it starts. The jóvenes were taught how to prevent and overcome temptation. This session included the role alcohol plays in many date rapes and how they can identify ways to avoid these kinds of incidents. Some of the ways the jóvenes were taught to prevent “tempting” situations included: 1) being aware of the fantasies playing in their mind, 2) asking God for help by changing their “want to’s” or desires, 3) recognizing that “it” (date rape, sex, etc) can happen to anyone, 4) exercising choices, and 5) having a system of accountability and support with each other.

Session #5 “How Far is Too Far on a Date” - This session focused on setting a goal of moral excellence. In reaching this goal the jóvenes were taught that sexual fulfillment is different for males and females, that physical affection is progressive and how it can get out of control. How far is too far was defined as “Anything that stirs up sexual feelings in one person that cannot be righteously fulfilled⁸”. They learned that in order to reach their goal they 1) must keep an open communication with God through prayer, 2) know that God understands

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⁸...righteously fulfilled...this means based on Biblical teachings.
their struggle and what they are going through, 3) know that God is on their side and His power is available to help them, and, 4) God (not society) must be their standard in order to reach their goal.

Session #6 “Is Sex Wrong if You are Really in Love?” – This session focused on understanding God’s plan for sexual intimacy; understanding that love is not enough reason to engage in premarital sex. The jóvenes discussed different scenarios of couples engaged in sexual intimacy. Using God’s standard they identified ways these couples could have avoided sexual intercourse. They also set personal limits, made a commitment for sexual abstinence and learned how to plan a date in order to avoid tempting situations.

The Sample – The Jóvenes

This intervention was targeted to 35 jóvenes, 12 to 19 years of age from HBC. These jóvenes are primarily Puerto Rican first and second-generation residents here in the United States. There are various levels of church involvement within the jóvenes but the majority of them participate in church youth activities. The jóvenes were divided by age, consisting of three groups: Group I, ages 12 to 14; Group II, ages 15 to 17; and Group III, ages 18 and older. This resulted in three manageable size groups of jóvenes and because of the wide range of ages the curriculum was presented age appropriately. Because this intervention was given as part of their church activities, all the jóvenes were
welcome to participate. Data, however, was only collected from those whom consent was obtained.

**In-depth Interviews**

Willing and interested jóvenes were asked to participate in the in-depth interviews. In order to ensure representation within the youth group, two jóvenes were selected per age group, one male and one female. The interviews lasted from 20 to 45 minutes. The objective was to have a deeper understanding of how jóvenes were influenced by sex. These interviews were semi-structured with topics ranging from school to church to the media as it all relate to sexuality.

**Study Implementation**

Recruitment was done about a month before the intervention was scheduled to begin. Announcements were made from the pulpit, during church activities and other church services.

Parental informed consent was obtained by holding an information/question session at the church. During this session the parents were presented with the curriculum and with the survey instrument for their review. At this time they gave consent for their child’s participation. The jóvenes consented to their own participation on the first session before the administration of the survey instrument. At this first session the jóvenes not interested in
participating had an opportunity to refuse their participation and/or respond to the survey instrument.

The church's Youth Counselors facilitated and taught the curriculum. These facilitators have worked with the jóvenes on a regular basis and have experience teaching a variety of curricula to them. The teaching consisted of interactive discussions between the jóvenes and the facilitators. During this teaching part, the jóvenes were affirmed by developing an understanding in the foundations of their faith as it pertains to sex.

**Evaluation**

The intervention was evaluated with two different methods:

*Process Evaluation* – In order to ensure that sessions were delivered in a comparative manner, each session was evaluated based on 1) the relevance of the material, 2) presentation, 3) youth response, 4) what to improve, and, 5) what was positive. Sessions were evaluated by two facilitators who were also youth counselors of HBC. Each facilitator was given session evaluation forms with instructions on how to evaluate the sessions.

*Pre-post Intervention Instrument* - The survey instrument was administered at the beginning and at the end of the intervention with a six month follow-up after the intervention ended (three time periods). The survey instrument captured the jóvenes' knowledge, behavior, subjective norms and intentions toward sex. Questions on knowledge included definition of sex and prevention of pregnancy and STDs. The behavior and intentions to perform actions such as
making out, masturbation and sexual intercourse were also asked. The jóvenes' subjective norms were captured by asking them what people of influence, like their parents, pastor, best friend and God, thought of sex in different situations prior to marriage. The jóvenes were also asked about their own feelings towards sex prior to marriage (see Appendix B for full copy of the instrument).

This survey instrument is a modification of what the State of Connecticut used to evaluate their “Positive Life Choices “abstinence only programs in towns such as Bridgeport, Waterbury and Danielson. The modifications consisted of the addition of questions on subjective norms. The survey instrument was translated into Spanish.

The jóvenes responded to the survey instrument individually in the same church room in which the course was given. To avoid identification of any questionnaire with an individual young person, the jóvenes identified themselves in their survey instrument with a random Bible book name known only to the individual. No one had knowledge of the identity of each jóvenes. If any of the jóvenes refused to answer the survey instrument this decision did not hinder him or her from participating in the intervention or any other church activity.

Significance of the study

The effectiveness of the intervention was based on the two methods of evaluation. The success and effectiveness of the intervention was measured by the changes in the jóvenes' attitudes, behavior intentions and behavior toward
premarital sex. The education portion of this intervention was aimed at changing their behavior intentions and modifying their subjective norms. The segment on refusal skills part was designed to build up the jóvenes’ self-efficacy in abstaining from premarital sex. Because this study has a small sample size it should be considered a pilot effort.

Data Analyses

Analyses of the data were based on within group changes and not individual changes over time. Baseline analysis was based on an N of 35. Comparative data analysis was done on the answers to the items on the survey instrument administered pre-intervention, T1, immediate post-intervention, T2, and after a 6 to 8 month follow-up, T3. The T1/T2/T3 comparisons were based on an N of 26 and were conducted using non-parametric tests such as Wilcoxon Signed Rank and Cochran Q test. These quantitative data were coupled with the qualitative observational notes of the sessions to assess integrity and acceptability of the intervention. For purposes of sub sample, dichotomous analyses of age and gender was conducted, comparing youngest versus oldest and male versus female, respectively, using Spearman’s Rho correlations.
Chapter 4 - Baseline Results

A total of 35 jóvenes were recruited to be part of this study. In this group of jóvenes there were slightly more males than females; 54% (19) of the jóvenes were males and 46% (16) were females. 51% (18) of the jóvenes were between the ages of 12 and 14 and 49% (17) were ages 15 to 19. 67% (22) reported being part of HBC for 5 years or less and 33% (11) reported 6 or more years.

In-depth interviews were conducted with 5 of the 35 jóvenes. These interviewees were "Rosa", "Maria", "Juan", "Pedro", and "Sofia." These jóvenes are representative of the HBC youth group and are involved in youth activities and in leadership.

"Rosa" is a 13 year old female and "Maria" is a 15 year old female. Rosa and Maria are sisters and they live with both of their parents and an older brother. Rosa and Maria's parents are working professionals. They are all active members of HBC.

"Juan" is a 15 year old male. Juan lives with both of his parents and a younger sister. Juan's dad is not able to work and his mother is a working professional.

"Pedro" is a 17 year old male. Pedro is the youngest of three boys. His oldest brother is married and Pedro lives with both of his parents and his middle brother. Both of his parents are working professionals. The family is an active member of HBC.
"Sofia" is 23 years of age. Sofia is an orphan and the legal guardian of her 13 year old brother. Sofia works full-time and attends a local college full-time.

The objective of these interviews was to have a deeper understanding of how jóvenes were influenced by sex. The interviews were all open ended covering a range of topics like parents, school, church, God, and the media and how all of these relate to sexuality.

The interview began by asking what they thought of when they hear the word sex. Rosa, Juan and Pedro said that "sex is male or female", "heterosexual intercourse", "belongs in marriage" or "sex outside of marriage." Maria however had a very specific view of sex. She said that there were two views of sex: the worldly view, and the religious view. With regard to the worldly view she thinks of

"This dirty image that people have sex just for having it that is a way of man having power; this is the way the world presents it."

In regard to the religious view she says:

"The way that I have been taught is that sex belongs in marriage and that is an act that God created to demonstrate His love."

These jóvenes reported that they did not have much communication with their parents about sexuality. They were taught that sex belongs in marriage but little more. One of the jóvenes, Rosa, reported communicating more with her mom about sex but this did not begin until she started dating. That is when her mother began to tell her what she was doing wrong:
"But when she sees me doing something wrong she'll tell me. Don’t sit on his lap, don’t hug him so much in front of people, no kisses in front of anybody, things like that."

All the jóvenes except for Maria reported that everything they know about sex they have learned at school and from friends. The lack of communication with parents was such that Rosa didn’t know anything about sex until she began attending school here in the U.S. at age 11.

The jóvenes reported that at church they were taught that sex belongs in marriage. Pedro in particular felt that there was no need for anything else other than to continue the constant repeated message of no sex before marriage. Maria however, felt that the church should do more sex education, and that they should do a better job at making sex education age appropriate. Sofia, felt that the church should do a better job at not just teaching about sexuality but also about preventing STDs and AIDS. This is a very unpopular and controversial subject in the church because the expectation is for those who are not married to abstain from sexual intercourse. However Sofia expressed the need for this kind of teaching because:

"...there are some people that come to church and they are living with somebody and that person comes in and out of their lives and they are having sex with this person whether they are married or not and are also part of the church, member or not.

...what if they come with AIDS or something and their spouse or they stop serving the Lord and they doing things behind their back and you don’t feel safe, what message can they take?"

The jóvenes expressed that the leadership, in particular the pastors of HBC, are very approachable. Pedro was the only one who expressed not feeling
comfortable speaking with any of the pastors but at the same time he did find them approachable.

The jóvenes did not feel that the church was prejudiced especially when it comes to teenage pregnancy. There was once a teenager who became pregnant while being part of the church's youth group. I asked them about this, and they felt that the church dealt with it okay. Maybe some people in the church panicked about it but it was not the majority and certainly not the leadership of the church. They actually felt that the teenager was the one who didn't want to work it out and ended up leaving the church. Interestingly Pedro expressed a feeling of betrayal on behalf of this teenager. In the interview he said:

"I think it was really tough because you are preached not to do this and you feel kind of hurt and betrayed to think that someone else is being taught the same thing and did it anyways."

When I asked him why he felt this way he said:

"Because in some cases the person was very close and you are kind of there for each other because it is hard to try to maintain your virginity and we all knew that we are friends and there for the hard times even to resist temptation and it is just to think that that person could not have come to us and say that 'I'm really close to losing my virginity'."

It seems that Pedro felt that this teenager should have communicated her struggle.

It appears that these interviewees feel that the biggest influence of sex is at school and through the media. When asked about the environment at their schools/work, they all expressed that "sex is everywhere." At school it is no big deal to have sex. In fact if you are dating someone, it is almost expected for you
to be having sex with the person you are dating. Maria said that losing your virginity is a sign of "womanhood." Both Rosa and Pedro agreed that there is a difference based on what grade you are in. Juniors and seniors seem to have more access and exposure to sex because they are more mature, have cars, and are independent and are also more likely to get pregnant. Freshmen and sophomores are not as mature, not as independent, and are new to high school.

When asked about peer pressure, they all said that they do not feel pressured. They hear conversations about sex, who their peers have been with and what they have done. When asked how they deal with this information and they mentioned that they don’t participate in those conversations. They walk away or express their beliefs and opinions. When I asked Maria if she was affected by peer pressure because of her virginity she responded:

"I’m firm in what I believe and I say that even the pressure that is not going to make me fall because I know in what I have believed and I know that is not correct. Many times I have been told and in school they know that I’m a Christian that I have certain values and they respect that. Sometimes they slip a comment in front of me and I respond. I have talked to some girls about that and some of them say ‘is true, I should hold on (not do it).’"

In responding to peer-pressure, it seems that they are very strong in their beliefs. When Pedro was asked the same question he said:

"I can’t say it was a pressure for me though when I was there because I would either avoid the conversation or just kind of leave..... I might just give my opinion on certain points depending on which people would listen. After a certain amount of time with some athletes you kind of get a relationship with them going and friendship with some and some people would listen to my opinion and others that wouldn’t."
When asked how they felt about their teachers and how they influenced the students, they seem to have different opinions about this. Some felt that teachers would encourage abstinence, others that they would encourage safe sex, and others that teachers would avoid any kind of encouragement. What Pedro found interesting was that some of the football coaches are also health teachers at his school and this is what he had to say about that...

"One thing that I can say for the record which is really ironic is that we have health teachers that are football coaches and since they are health teachers they require to teach about everything about sex and I find it ironic that much of the important players of the team have children and I find that ironic there are coaches that are health teachers and they always talk about sex and preventing, you know, having a child or getting STD's, it seem kind of weird."

Based on the jóvenes' perceptions, it seems that there are mixed messages coming from their teachers.

Juan, Rosa and Maria were asked about the media and how it portrays sex. All of them agreed that the media is very "open about sex." Maria used the word "bombarded" to express how she felt about TV and Juan said:

"The only thing they do is to put sex for everything and everywhere you put sex stuff to sell anything just like jeans or anything, to attract people."

Juan’s parents do not monitor what he watches on TV but he is very selective of what he watches. He watches ESPN, Sports, and Comedy. I specifically asked if he watches "Friends" and he said no. Rosa and Maria’s parents do monitor what they watch. They did not mind that their parents monitored them. In fact, Rosa mentioned that she did not watch much TV because of homework but she watches programs her family chooses such as
"Wedding Story", "Baby Story", and programs from the History channel. Rosa reported never watching "Friends."

One thing all these jóvenes, including Sofia, have in common is that they all rely on their relationship with God for their strength to abstain from sexual intercourse. They felt that God helps them fight temptation and their struggles. Having sex before marriage damages their relationship with God and they all want to wait until marriage to have sex. Pedro summed it up this way:

“I just want to say that just because you are a Christian and believe in Jesus and eternal life does not exclude that I am human and that I don't have feelings for myself and that even if I speak and what I speak sound easy it is still hard to being human to resist temptation and to not have sex when it is all around you and that is what the media is influenced by and the motto is sex and you are all surrounded by that and to not say that will not affect the Christian will be wrong and the battle it is just as hard as everybody else's and if a Christian person can do it will mean that any one else can but it helps to have Jesus in your heart and to have that personal relationship with God and I would encourage everybody else to give Jesus a try and anything in our lives is going to help out whether is sex, drugs, depression, stress."

Through these conversations these jóvenes are not shy in expressing how they feel about sex, sexual abstinence, and the pressures they face on a day-to-day basis. However open communication with their parents about sex seems to be lacking. This may be a small representation of how some families still have difficulties openly communicating about sex with their jóvenes. In spite of this lack of communication, these jóvenes understand the role their faith plays in their views and decision making towards premarital sex.


**T1 - Results**

Communication not only seems to be lacking in the families of the jóvenes interviewed but also in the church. In order to establish a baseline the jóvenes were asked to identify topics discussed in church before this intervention. Table 1 shows the list of topics and their responses.

**Table 1 - Topics discussed in church**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dating</td>
<td>16 (46)</td>
<td>19 (54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romantic relationships</td>
<td>14 (40)</td>
<td>21 (60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercourse</td>
<td>13 (37)</td>
<td>22 (63)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What to look for in a mate</td>
<td>13 (37)</td>
<td>22 (63)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masturbation</td>
<td>11 (31)</td>
<td>24 (69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstinence</td>
<td>10 (29)</td>
<td>25 (71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STD prevention</td>
<td>7 (20)</td>
<td>28 (80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS prevention</td>
<td>7 (20)</td>
<td>28 (80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy</td>
<td>7 (20)</td>
<td>28 (80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abortion</td>
<td>6 (17)</td>
<td>29 (83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menstruation</td>
<td>2 (6)</td>
<td>33 (94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific methods of birth control</td>
<td>1 (3)</td>
<td>34 (97)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth control</td>
<td>1 (3)</td>
<td>34 (97)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The great majority of jóvenes felt that all the topics listed above, with the exception of dating, had not been discussed in HBC before this intervention. Many of the Christian churches may speak on topics of sexuality from the pulpit but they do not necessarily do it in an open teaching forum. However, there are churches of different denominations and size and the way they choose to educate their congregations may vary. Since churches may not discuss sex openly, it is not surprising to see that the jóvenes reported lack of discussion of the topics of menstruation, abortion, pregnancy, birth control, specific methods of birth
control, HIV/AIDS prevention, and STD prevention. However, masturbation, romantic relationships, abstinence, what to look for in a mate, dating and intercourse were more likely to have been discussed than the other topics. Because of the jóvenes' desire to know more about these topics, HBC has attempted to teach about these topics and addressed them from the pulpit as sermons. However, the jóvenes have never been exposed to a formal teaching curriculum about sex and abstinence.

The jóvenes were also asked about the most effective way to prevent pregnancy and STDs. Table 2 shows their responses to this question.

Table 2 - Most effective method of pregnancy and STD prevention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Pregnancy Prevention % (n)</th>
<th>STD Prevention % (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstinence</td>
<td>91% (32)</td>
<td>87% (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condoms</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3% (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Control Pills</td>
<td>3% (1)</td>
<td>3% (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal</td>
<td>3% (1)</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No specific method</td>
<td>3% (1)</td>
<td>7% (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on their answers the jóvenes believe condoms are not the most effective way to prevent a pregnancy or STDs. They believe that abstinence is the most effective way to prevent pregnancy and STD prevention. The church's teachings could be reflected in the way that the jóvenes responded when asked if they felt mature enough to take care of a pregnancy or become a parent at this time in their life. As far as pregnancy, 100% (35) said that they did not feel responsible enough for a pregnancy; 97% (34) felt that they were not responsible enough for parenthood.
Youth Reported Behavior

Making Out

Making out was defined as kissing, hugging or touching someone in a romantic, intimate or sexual manner. When asked if they have ever spent a long time making out (no length of time was specified), 53% (18) said yes, and 47% (16) said no. Thirty three percent (6) of those who answered “yes” to this question were between the ages of 12-14 and 67% (12) between the ages of 15-19 (see Table 3).

Table 3 - Have you ever made out?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No (%)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12-14</td>
<td>6 (33)</td>
<td>12 (67)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>12 (75)</td>
<td>4 (22)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of those who said “no,” 25% (4) were between the ages of 15-19 and 75% (12) between the ages of 12-14. There was a significant correlation (rho= -.470, p=.005) between age and making out where the younger jóvenes were more likely not to have experienced making out. The fact that a subset of those who had made out were ages 12-14 reflects that some jóvenes do experiment at a young age.

According to Table 4, 44% (8) of the jóvenes who had made out had only done it with one person. The other 56% (10) have made out with more than person ranging from 2 to 17 people. Eighty-nine percent (7) of those who
reported making out with only one person were between 15 and 19. This can be compared to the experimentation taking place with the younger jóvenes. Of the jóvenes 12 to 14 years of age who reported making out, 5 (83%) reported doing so with more than 2 people.

Table 4 - Number of people the jóvenes have made out with by age.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number of people n (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 - 14</td>
<td>1 (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 - 19</td>
<td>7 (58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Masturbation

When the jóvenes were asked if they had masturbated in the past 41% (14) said "yes" while 59% (20) said "no." Of those who had masturbated, 64% (9) were males and 36% (5) were females. Males were more likely to masturbate or to report doing so than are females. Of those who said no, 45% (9) were males and 55% (11) were females.

When asked if they had masturbated in the last six months, 77% (10) said "yes" and 23% (3) said "no." Of those who had masturbated in the last six months, 80% (8) were males and only 20% (2) were females. Males were more likely to have answered "yes" than were females (rho = .693, p = .009). It was also found that males were more likely to have a higher frequency of masturbation per week (rho = -.734, p = .010). Five out of 6 males (83%) reported masturbating
more than once a week. Only 20% (1) of the females reported masturbating once a week and the other 80% (4) answered “0 times a week.”

When masturbation is broken down by age (Table 5) only 14.3% (2) of those masturbating were between the ages of 12-14 while 85.7% (12) were between the ages of 15-19.

Table 5 - Have you ever masturbated?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Masturbation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes n (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 - 14</td>
<td>2 (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 - 19</td>
<td>12 (75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A relationship was also found between age and masturbation where the older jóvenes were more likely to have masturbated (rho = -0.640, p<0.001). However, age and frequency of masturbation was significantly correlated (rho = -0.654, p=0.029) showing that the younger jóvenes had a higher frequency of masturbation per week when compared to the older jóvenes. Younger jóvenes could be in the process of experimenting and discovering themselves sexually in comparison with older for which the experience may no longer be new.

Sexual Intercourse

Only 3 (9%) out of the 35 jóvenes reported previous sexual encounters defined as “vaginal intercourse.” All 3 were males, between the ages of 15 and 19, who reported having sexual intercourse with one other person. One of them, a 19 year old, reported having recent intercourse in the past six months. A
significant positive correlation was found between those who had masturbated and those who had sexual intercourse (rho = .372, p = .030). Those who reported previous sexual encounters also reported having masturbated in the past. This also suggests that sexual activity is progressive going from one experience to another. No correlation was found between gender, age and sexual activity.

**Subjective Norms**

This section looks at an analysis of the jóvenes' "subjective norms." Subjective norms are what individuals consider to be a standard within a group and the willingness to conform to those standards. These can be influenced by family, friends, society, religion, and other factors. The jóvenes were asked about their subjective norms by asking their opinion about sex between people in different situations: sex on the first date, sex while dating, and sex while engaged to be married. The jóvenes were also asked about what they thought their pastor, best friend, parents, and God thought about sex in these same three situations. These questions were asked using an "Osgood Semantic Differential" (Summers, 1970) scale and each situation had the following aspects of sex: Bad or Good; Not Fun or Fun; Inappropriate or Appropriate; Not Healthy or Healthy; Sinful or Not Sinful; Scary or Not Scary; Not Enjoyable or Enjoyable; Unforgivable or Forgivable. The jóvenes rated the answers in the scale ranging from -3 to 3 with -3 being the most negative and 3 being the most positive. For
ease of analysis and description, the rating was then transformed to reflect 1 to be the most negative and 7 the most positive.

**Self-Perception**

When the jóvenes were asked what they thought of sex on the first date, the jóvenes expressed a negative view. The average responses are shown on Figure 1.

**Figure 1 - Jóvenes' average rating of sex before marriage across different aspects of sex.**

The jóvenes rated sex on the first date negatively across all aspects of sex with the exception of forgiveness. With the aspect of forgiveness the majority of the time the jóvenes felt that sex on the first date is more forgivable than unforgivable. The average rating became more positive as the scenarios moved from sex on the first date, to sex while dating, to sex while engaged to be married. Females were more likely to report sex on the first date to be Scary (rho= -.539, p=.004). In addition to this, older jóvenes were more likely to find
sex on the first date to be Inappropriate (rho = -.614, p < .001), Not Healthy (rho = -.392, p = .048), Sinful (rho = -.523, p = .005) and Scary (rho = -.436, p = .026).

The jóvenes rated sex while dating less negatively than for those on a first date. Significant correlations were found between age and whether or not it was inappropriate and scary to have sex while dating. Once again, the older jóvenes were more likely to find sex while dating to be Inappropriate (rho = -.663, p < .001) and Scary (rho = -.594, p = .002).

Ratings became less negative, when the jóvenes were asked about sex while engaged to be married. The older jóvenes were more likely to find sex while engaged to be Bad (rho = -.398, p = .036), Not Fun (rho = -.439, p = .032), Inappropriate (rho = -.600, p = .001), Not Healthy (rho = -.448, p = .028), Sinful (rho = -.475, p = .011), Scary (rho = -.594, p = .002) and Not Enjoyable (rho = -.469, p = .021).

In summary, older jóvenes were more likely to have a negative view of sex. Overall, Figure 2 shows that as the nature of romantic relationships move in seriousness, the jóvenes felt less negative and more permissive toward sex before marriage.
Figure 2 - Jóvenes’ average rating of sex before marriage

Best Friend

Best Friends can be of great influence in the life of a teenager. For that reason, knowing what the jóvenes think their best friends think about sex becomes very important in their decision making.

Figure 3 - Jóvenes’ average rating of what they think their best friend thinks of sex before marriage across different aspects of sex.
For people on their first date, the older jóvenes were more likely to think their best friend would find sex on the first date to be Inappropriate (rho = -.465, p = .019), Scary (rho = -.543, p = .007) but Forgivable (rho = .409, p = .047). For sex while dating, again, the older jóvenes were more likely to think their best friend would find sex while dating to be Scary (rho = -.484, p = .019) but Forgivable (rho = .492, p = .015). For people engaged to be married, the older jóvenes were more likely to think their best friend would find sex while engaged to be Bad (rho = -.403, p = .037), Inappropriate (rho = -.731, p < .001), Sinful (rho = -.478, p = .021) and Scary (rho = -.698, p < .001).

Figure 4 shows the jóvenes’ average rating on what they think their Best Friend thinks of sex before marriage. When the jóvenes were asked about what they thought their best friend thought of sex in these three scenarios prior to marriage, they reported a more permissive aspect of sex as relationships go from one stage to another. This is true for all the aspects of sex except for sinfulness. The jóvenes felt that their best friend would be permissive but still would think that sex is sinful.
Figure 4 - Jóvenes’ average rating on what they think their Best Friend thinks of sex before marriage.

Parents

Parents can be very influential in the life of a teenager. Figure 5 shows what these jóvenes think their parents think of sex before marriage.

Figure 5 - Jóvenes’ average rating of what they think their parents think of sex before marriage across different aspects of sex.
For people on their first date, the females were more likely to think that their parents would find sex on the first date to be Not Fun (rho = -.467, p = .021) and Scary (rho = -.524, p = .010). For sex while dating, the older jóvenes were more likely to believe their parents would find sex while dating to be Bad (rho = -.391, p = .049) and Inappropriate (rho = -.565, p = .003). Once again, for people engaged to be married, the older jóvenes were more likely to think their parents would find sex while engaged to be Bad (rho = -.524, p = .006), Inappropriate (rho = -.739, p < .001), Not Healthy (rho = -.445, p = .034), Sinful (rho = -.416, p = .035), and Scary (rho = -.568, p = .005).

Figure 6 shows the jóvenes average rating on what they think their parents think of sex before marriage. The jóvenes’ rating was more negative when asked about what they thought their parents think of sex during the same three scenarios, than it was in their best friend’s and their own opinions. This is expected given that parents are in charge of instructing and disciplining their kids. Although older jóvenes were more likely to have a negative view of sex, there is an overall pattern: as relationships get serious, sex before marriage is more permissive and forgiving.
Figure 6 - Jóvenes’ average rating on what they think their Parents think of sex before marriage.

Pastor

The pastor is seen as a person of authority who expresses his care very much like a parent does.

Figure 7 - Jóvenes’ average rating of what they think their pastor think of sex before marriage across different aspects of sex.
For people on their first date, the females were more likely to think that their pastor would find sex on the first date to be Scary ($\rho = -0.474$, $p = 0.017$) when compared to the males. Similarly, the older jóvenes were more likely to think their pastor would find sex on the first date to be Inappropriate ($\rho = -0.582$, $p = 0.001$), Scary ($\rho = -0.467$, $p = 0.019$) but Forgivable ($\rho = 0.563$, $p = 0.006$).

For sex while dating, again, the older jóvenes were more likely to think their pastor would find sex while dating to be Bad ($\rho = -0.462$, $p = 0.015$), Inappropriate ($\rho = -0.745$, $p < 0.001$), Not Healthy ($\rho = -0.464$, $p = 0.017$), Sinful ($\rho = -0.409$, $p = 0.038$), Scary ($\rho = -0.549$, $p = 0.005$), Not Enjoyable ($\rho = -0.433$, $p = 0.031$) but Forgivable ($\rho = 0.425$, $p = 0.034$). For people engaged to be married, the older jóvenes were also more likely to think that their pastor would find sex while engaged to be married to be Bad ($\rho = -0.585$, $p = 0.002$), Not Fun ($\rho = -0.492$, $p = 0.015$), Inappropriate ($\rho = -0.720$, $p < 0.001$), Not Healthy ($\rho = -0.499$, $p = 0.013$), Sinful ($\rho = -0.443$, $p = 0.018$), Scary ($\rho = -0.700$, $p < 0.001$) and Not Enjoyable ($\rho = -0.510$, $p = 0.011$).

In the case of the pastor, the jóvenes' ratings were also negative and similar to the ratings they gave their parents. There was a slight difference where the jóvenes rated the opinion of their pastor more positive than their parents. This is true for sex during the first date and sex while dating (see Figure 8). It was not true for sex while engaged to be married where the jóvenes rated the pastor slightly more negative than that of their parents. It is possible that the jóvenes felt that their pastor holds them to a higher degree of accountability
because of the importance of marriage as it is preached from the pulpit. Despite this slight difference, here there is the same pattern of sex before marriage being more permissive and forgivable as a dating relationship develops.

Figure 8 - Jóvenes’ average rating on what they think their Pastor thinks of sex before marriage.

God

As these jóvenes are being raised as Christian adolescents, each of them has their own opinions of God. For some He is a very merciful and compassionate God who through Jesus is able to sympathize with mankind. This makes God very real to them. For others God is seen as grandfather like figure who wants to punish people for their wrong doing. No matter what the concept of God is for these jóvenes, their perception of who He is likely to influence their decisions.
Figure 9 - Jóvenes’ average rating of what they think God thinks of sex before marriage across different aspects of sex.

For people on their first date, the females were more likely to find sex on the first date to be Scary (rho = -.736, p = <.001) when compared to the males. The older jóvenes were more likely to think that God would find sex on the first date to be Inappropriate (rho = -.405, p = .045), Scary (rho = -.484, p = .016) but Forgivable (rho = .524, p = .010).

For sex while dating, females were more likely to think that God would find sex to be Scary (rho = -.512, p = .013). The older jóvenes were more likely to think that God would find sex to be Inappropriate (rho = -.587, p = .002), Scary (rho = -.552, p = .006) but Forgivable (rho = .551, p = .005).

For people engaged to be married, once again, the older jóvenes were more likely to think that God would find sex to be Inappropriate (rho = -.724, p = <.001) but Forgivable (rho = .557, p = .006).
The jóvenes' rating of God was not much more negative than the one given to their pastor or parents. Figure 10 shows the jóvenes' average rating of what they think God thinks of sex before marriage.

**Figure 10 - Jóvenes' average rating on what they think God thinks of sex before marriage.**

Their rating of God is more similar to the one given to their pastor. This is possible given that they might view their pastor as a representative of God on earth. The jóvenes’ opinion of how God sees sex before marriage is not as negative as one would expect, it is however more permissive and less sinful as the dating relationship progresses. In this case, what is very evident is that God is a very forgiving God. This may reflect the teachings of the church; that God is merciful and compassionate.

In summary, although the jóvenes rating of sex is on the negative side of the scale, there is an overall acceptability of engaging in sex before marriage. Females and older jóvenes appeared to be more conservative than males and younger jóvenes. It is possible that female's views are a reflection of societal
expectations. Older jóvenes may be reflecting the results of attending church for a longer period of time than the younger jóvenes. Figure 11 shows the average values across the three scenarios of sex before marriage for each type of person.

Figure 11 - Average value rating of sex before marriage for each type of person.

Figure 11 shows how the average rating score increases from one stage of the relationship to another. The higher the score the more positive the opinion of sex is, and thus the more permissible before marriage. It is also worth noting that the jóvenes felt that their best friend thinks more positively of sex before marriage than anyone else in their circle of influence. This is important to know because their best friend’s opinion is of great influence in the decision making process of the jóvenes. As expected, God is perceived as the least permissive of sex before marriage.
Attitudes and Thoughts

The jóvenes were also asked a series of questions to understand their attitudes and thoughts about what is normative. In order to investigate these norms, they were asked whether it was appropriate for them to perform a particular behavior, at what age they thought it would be appropriate to perform that behavior, and if they intended to perform that behavior in the future.

Making out

When asked if making out at their age was appropriate, 40% (14) thought it was okay while 60% (21) did not. Of those who said it was okay, 43% (6) were between the ages of 12-14 while 57% (8) were between the ages of 15-19.

Of those who said it was not okay to make out at their age, 57% (12) were between the ages of 12-14 and 43% (9) were between the ages of 15-19. Also, 71% (10) of the males felt it was okay for them to make out at their age while only 29% (4) of the females did. Overall, females and younger jóvenes felt that it was not okay to make out at their age.

Earlier it was reported that a subset of the jóvenes, 53% (18), had reported making out. The ages of this subset of jóvenes was compared to their opinions on whether is okay to make out at their age. Of these jóvenes, 50% (9) felt it was okay to make out at their current age and the other 50% (9) did not.

There are no major differences between those who said “yes” and those who said “no.” Of those who had reported making out and said it was not okay
for them to make out at their age, 33% (3) were between the ages of 12-14, and 67% (6) between the ages of 15-19. Also, 33% (3) of them were males and 67% (6) were females.

Of the 18 jóvenes who reported making out, 10 (56%) were females. Of these females, 67% (6) said it was not okay to make out at their age. This shows a trend where females, when compared to males, think it is not okay to make out at their age.

When asked about what would be an appropriate age to make out, 23% (8) said between the ages of 12-15, 27% (10) said between the ages of 16-18, and 34% (12) said at age 19 or older. Fourteen percent (5) of the jóvenes did not report a specific age but instead gave other reasons such as “making out should happen during marriage”, “making out should happen when a person reaches maturity”, and it “depends” (based on some non-specified criteria).

No significant correlation was found between age, gender and what age the jóvenes said it would be appropriate for them to make out. However, 81% (13) of the females, versus only 48% (9) of the males, said that the appropriate age to make out is after the age of 16. There was a trend towards females being more likely to view making out as appropriate at an older age. In addition, the younger jóvenes were more likely to say that age 19 or older was the appropriate age to make out.
Masturbation

When asked about whether it was okay to masturbate at their age, only 14% (5) said "yes" and 85% (29) said "no." One hundred percent (5) of those who said yes, were between the ages of 15-19 (see Table 6).

Table 6 - Is it okay to masturbate at your age?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Yes n (%)</th>
<th>No n (%)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 - 14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18 (62)</td>
<td>18 (53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 - 19</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>11 (38)</td>
<td>16 (47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5 (100)</td>
<td>29 (100)</td>
<td>34 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of those who said "no", 62% (18) were between the ages of 12-14 and only 38% (11) were between the ages of 15-19. Younger jóvenes were more likely to think that it was not okay to masturbate at their age ($\rho = -0.440, p = .009$).

When broken down by gender, both males and females felt similar about this question. Fifty two percent (16) of males and 45% (13) of females felt it was not okay to masturbate at their age.

These results, however, are not a representation of what the jóvenes reported previously about ever masturbating. Forty one percent (14) who reported having masturbated, 9 males and 5 females, were compared to those who answer "yes" and "no" to this question by gender and by age.

Of those who reported ever masturbating, 29% (4) think that is appropriate for them to masturbate at their age while the remaining 71% (10) did not. It is interesting to note that none of those who thought it was okay were between the ages of 12-14 while 100% (4) were between the ages of 15 to 19. This
is interesting because these are the same jóvenes who said that they have
masturbated and yet the younger ones do not think it is appropriate to do it at
their age.

The jóvenes were also asked, "At what age do you think it is appropriate
for someone to masturbate?" the majority of the jóvenes did not offer an age and
felt that it should "never" be done.

Sexual Intercourse

This group of jóvenes felt very strongly that sex is not okay at their age.
When asked if having sex at their age was appropriate, only 9% (3) said it was
okay while 91% (32) said it was not.

The jóvenes were also asked to determine an appropriate age to have sex.
3% (1) thought that the appropriate age would be between 12 to 15, 0 said
between ages 16-18 and 64% (21) thought at age 19 or older. 33% (11) did not
specify an age but instead they said that sexual intercourse belongs in marriage.

Intent to perform behavior

Finally, the jóvenes were asked about their future intentions on
performing the behaviors in question. When asked, 82% (27) said they did not
intend to make out, 94% (32) said they did not intend to masturbate, and 100%
(32) said they did not intend to engage in sexual intercourse.

In summary the jóvenes' report of what is appropriate for their age
contradicts their behavior, with the exception of sexual intercourse. About 53%
of the jóvenes reported making out and yet 68% thought it was not okay to do it
at their age. Similarly when it comes to masturbation where about 41% reported
masturbating but 85% of them do not think is appropriate. This indicates the
reality that the jóvenes, regardless of age and sex, are experimenting sexually but
at the same time feel that these behaviors may not be appropriate. This
contraction may be indicative of outside expectations placed by their peers,
family or their religious community which can also be seen in their intent to not
engage in the behavior in the future.
Chapter 5 - Evaluating the Integrity of the Intervention

Implementation of Intervention

During the process of implementing this study, there were modifications to the protocol. The following 5 aspects were changes in the protocol:

1. **Information Session for Parents and Jóvenes** - An information/question session was planned in order to inform each parent of potential participants about the intervention. Due to time constraints and church schedule conflicts, HBC was unable to host this session and ultimately thought that it was not necessary. Instead, the intervention was announced from the pulpit during Sunday morning worship and if parents had questions and were interested in their child participating in the program they were to approach the co-investigator for more information. Parental informed consent was then obtained by giving each parent the consent form to take home and to bring back on the first day of the intervention.

2. **Administration of Survey Instrument** - During the administration of the survey instrument, the jóvenes were supposed to meet in the fellowship hall where there were supposed to be tables and chairs set up. Instead they were moved to the sanctuary because of another church activity already taking place in the fellowship hall. There were no tables in the sanctuary but the jóvenes were able to spread out in order to fill out the survey. The baseline survey was also supposed to be administered without any youth counselors
present to ensure the students honesty in their responses but this was not possible because of the openness of the sanctuary. Also, T3 survey instrument was not given to the jóvenes all at once. Instead it was given to them individually to take home and to bring back. As a result, the time between T2 and T3 varied depending on when the jóvenes brought handed in the T3 instrument survey to the co-investigator.

3. **Three Groups** - The jóvenes were divided into two groups (I, ages 12-14 and II, ages 15-19) rather than three groups (ages 12-14, 15-17, and 18-19). HBC felt that there was no need to keep the 15-17 age group separate from the 18-19 age group. HBC felt that curriculum material was appropriate for age group 15-19 as a whole and that there was not much difference between these ages in their capacity to understand and discuss the material.

4. **Intervention Schedule** - The intervention portion of this study was supposed to be 6 weekly sessions over 6 weeks. Instead it became 7 sessions over 10 weeks. A session on masturbation was added by the associate pastor who felt it was necessary for the students to be exposed to this material. This session was given to all the jóvenes at once. It took 10 weeks to complete the intervention because there were other youth and church activities previously planned.

5. **Session Evaluations** - Sessions 1 thru 7 for groups I and II should have been evaluated by at least two youth counselors, yielding two evaluations per session per group. Unfortunately, the youth counselors did not turn in
evaluations as expected. As a result, session evaluations were mostly obtained for group II and by only one youth counselor per session.

Session Evaluations

Given the level of organization of HBC, the jóvenes, especially those in the older group, had high expectations of the facilitators and the presentation. This group showed the need to be challenged and they themselves brought some challenges to the discussion. Group I, being the younger group, was very interested in the information and was not as challenging as group II. Both groups wanted to know clear cut, yes/no answers to their questions. They wanted direction and emphasis on what is “right.” The following are the session observation taken by the youth counselors:

Session #1 “Common Myths about sex and the standard of God” – During this session the jóvenes interacted well with the facilitator, asking questions and giving examples. They liked the teen focus video that was presented and the real life stories of teens that were involved in sexual behaviors and how they have turned to God to not continue in those behaviors. The jóvenes also liked the role plays and the challenges they were presented. This session answered questions and misconceptions the jóvenes had about sex.

Session #2 “Idol Thoughts” - During this session the jóvenes were taught how to identify the sex symbols found in society. The jóvenes were highly engaged in the discussion and liked the opportunity to talk about these symbols.
The jóvenes interacted well with the facilitator as the facilitator presented the information. The facilitator did a great job of keeping the jóvenes attention and facilitating the discussion. The jóvenes really liked this session because it gave them an opportunity to express their thoughts on how society exploits the use of sex.

Session #3 “Power Play” – (no observations handed in)

Session #4 “Flirting with temptation” – This session was particularly of interest to all the jóvenes because they were all able to relate to the real life scenarios and the information that was presented. This was significant because the information presented was not new to them yet they seemed to need the reinforcement. They were very interested in knowing how far they could go without “sinning.” The facilitator did an excellent job in the presentation of the material. During this session difficult theological truths were transformed into simple realities for the jóvenes.

Session #5 “How far is too far on a date?” – During this session there was good discussion and interaction with the facilitator. The jóvenes were very engaged even though some did not feel the need to talk about dating because the majority of them were not dating at the time. Some jóvenes felt that the theme was subjective given that they have different levels of maturity. One of the youth counselors reported that the jóvenes responded the best with the person who facilitated this session. This topic generated plenty of curiosity and discussion among the jóvenes.
Session #6 "Is sex wrong if we are really in love" – During this session there was not a lot of discussion. The reason for this was because the facilitator presented the material in a more preaching style and did not engage the jóvenes in much discussion. In addition, the jóvenes were not as interested and felt it was somewhat elementary because they “know that sex is wrong before marriage.”

Session #7 “Masturbation” – This session was not part of the TLW curriculum. It was a presentation put together by the associate pastor of the HBC. It was probably too complex in theological terms for some of the jóvenes to understand. Some of the jóvenes wanted to get “right to the point.” They wanted to know, according to the Bible, is masturbation right or wrong? The Bible however does not teach about masturbation. Instead, the associate pastor presented Bible passages that speak about purity, self control, and God’s grace to help the jóvenes arrive at the answer according to where they are in their relationship with God. Some students did not like this because they wanted a “real” answer. The control of the group was lost at times because they were very passionate jóvenes who felt that masturbation is a “sin” and that should not be done and could not get that kind of reinforcement from the associate pastor.

Overall, the curriculum was very relevant to the jóvenes. Given their Christian context they liked the scriptural basis and what God had to say about sex. Some of the jóvenes felt that the intervention became too long by the time session #5 was given and that the information became repetitive. Most of the
curriculum was presented in a facilitated discussion style with the exception of the first session which included a video. The jóvenes also felt that the presentation style became boring and monotonous, especially the older ones (group II). In spite of this, the jóvenes responded very positively to the intervention. They did like the opportunity to speak about sexuality and the openness to speak about the pressures they face.
Chapter 6 - Comparison T1-T2-T3

Thirty five jóvenes were recruited during baseline. At T2 and T3, only 26 (74%) jóvenes remained because 26% (9) refused to answer the survey instrument (see Table 7). This comparative analysis will be based on an N of 26 (74%) of the original sample with equal numbers of males and females. Age group 12-14 makes up 46% (12) of the sample and age group 15-19, 53% (14).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Point</th>
<th>N (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline (T1)</td>
<td>35 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2</td>
<td>26 (74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3</td>
<td>26 (74)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During baseline an inventory was done of the sex related topics the jóvenes identified as being discussed in their church. The same questions were asked at T2 and T3 (6-8 months later) in order to assess the jóvenes recollection of the topics discussed during the intervention. Due to the religious nature of the curriculum, topics such as birth control, specific methods of birth control, intercourse and HIV/AIDS, pregnancy and STD prevention were only discussed within the context of abstinence and Christian moral values, i.e. “Abstinence is the only safe sex.” Other topics such as menstruation and abortion were not discussed in the curriculum. These were included in the list to create variability and to avoid response bias. The context of the topics of what to look for in a mate, romantic relationships, and dating were discussed in terms of being aware
of tempting situations, how far they could go, what happens if they went too far, what are the Biblical principles regarding dating, and how the media influences their view of sex. Lastly, masturbation was discussed in terms of the Biblical principles and whether it is okay to do it. Table 8 shows the frequency of these topics reported over time.

### Table 8 - Topics discussed in church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>T1</th>
<th>T2</th>
<th>T3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masturbation</td>
<td>8 (31)</td>
<td>23 (96)</td>
<td>24 (96)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romantic relationships</td>
<td>11 (42)</td>
<td>22 (92)</td>
<td>19 (76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercourse</td>
<td>11 (42)</td>
<td>19 (79)</td>
<td>19 (76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dating</td>
<td>13 (50)</td>
<td>18 (75)</td>
<td>17 (68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstinence</td>
<td>8 (31)</td>
<td>15 (63)</td>
<td>19 (76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What to look for in a mate</td>
<td>10 (39)</td>
<td>10 (42)</td>
<td>10 (40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy</td>
<td>5 (19)</td>
<td>7 (29)</td>
<td>8 (32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS prevention</td>
<td>5 (19)</td>
<td>7 (29)</td>
<td>7 (28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STD prevention</td>
<td>5 (19)</td>
<td>5 (21)</td>
<td>6 (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menstruation</td>
<td>2 (7)</td>
<td>5 (21)</td>
<td>4 (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth control</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td>3 (13)</td>
<td>5 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abortion</td>
<td>4 (15)</td>
<td>3 (13)</td>
<td>2 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific methods of birth control</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td>2 (8)</td>
<td>3 (12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the end of the intervention time period, the jóvenes reported an increase in the discussion of the topics relevant to this intervention. The greatest increase between T1 and T2 was reported for topics such as pregnancy, with an increase of 10%, masturbation, an increase of 65% (p<.000), romantic relationships, an increase of 49% (p=.002), dating, an increase of 25%, intercourse, an increase of 37% (p=.005), and abstinence, an increase of 32% (p=.020).
At T3, six months after the end of the intervention time period, the frequency of relevant topics recalled, decreased some while the frequency of others increased. Dating decreased by 7%, romantic relationships by 16%, intercourse by 2% while abstinence increased by another 14% and masturbation by 0.2%.

Even though the changes between T2 and T3 were not found to be significantly different, it was found that the jóvenes continued reporting some of the topics discussed. These findings coincide with the topics that were discussed, in one form or another, during the intervention. The topics where there was no increase were topics that were not addressed during the intervention with the exception of what to look for in a mate. It is possible that no change was seen in reporting discussion of this topic because it was closely related to dating and romantic relationships.

Youth Reported Behavior

Making out

Within group comparison of this sample of 26 jóvenes across all three time points the data shows a small increase in the number of jóvenes making out. 12% (3) (1 female and 2 males) who at T1 reported never making out before, at T3 had done so. Given that in the TLW curriculum dating is not discouraged it is possible that this 11% (3) who never had a romantic encounter decided that they
could try making out. On the other hand, 8% (2) of those who had reported making out at T1, reported not ever making out at T3.

At T1, 52% (13) of the 26 jóvenes compared here reported making out. Of these 15% (2) reported not making out with anyone in the last six months prior to T1, 69% (9) reported making out with just one person, and 15% reported making out with two or more people.

When the jóvenes were asked “Is it okay to make out at your age?” at T1 almost 42% (11) of the jóvenes answered “yes” to this question (see Figure 12).

**Figure 12 – Is it okay to make out at your age?**

![Graph showing the percentage of yes responses over time](image)

At T2, however, it changed to 58% (14), an increase of 16% (3) and continued to increase by another 6% (2) at T3. This change may point out that making out became more acceptable. This is possibly due to the lack of explicit prohibition from the curriculum to be romantically involved with someone. It is possible that the jóvenes felt that as long as they are responsible and can exercise self control, it would be okay to perform this behavior at their age.

When these results are divided by age, there is an increasing acceptability of make out at their age (see Figure 13).
Figure 13 – Is it okay to make out at your age? (by age)

At T2 age group 16-19 increased their perception positively of making out by almost 11% (2) from T1 and another 6% (2) by T3. Age group 12-14 also increased their perception but not at the same rate the 16-19 age group. There was an increase of almost 5% between T1 and T2 and 3% between T2 and T3. According to the Wilcoxon signed rank the overall change in the jóvenes' perception on making out at their age was found to be significantly different between T1 and T3 (p=.034). The jóvenes were not only older by the time T3 was administered but the intervention also seem to have affected the jóvenes ideas and perception that is okay to make out and be romantically involved at their age.

The jóvenes were also asked to respond to the question: “At what age is it okay to make out?” However, not everyone responded to this question. From the 26 available for this analysis only 15 gave an opinion at T2 and 20 at T3.

At T1, 39% (10) of the jóvenes reported that age 19 or older was appropriate to make out. At T2, only 13% (2) of the jóvenes felt that age 19 or
older was appropriate to make out, a decrease of 25% (8) from T1. This percentage continued to decrease at T3 by another 8% (1).

Those who thought that the appropriate age for making out was between ages 16 to 18 did not change their opinion much over time. At T2 27% (4) reported that ages 16 to 18 was the appropriate age to make out, an increase of 4% (2) from T1. There were no changes at T3 from T2. The greatest change was found among those who reported that ages 12 to 15 was the appropriate age to make out. At T2 13% (2) of the jóvenes thought this was the appropriate age to make out, a decrease of about 6% (3) from T1. At T3, however, this had changed by almost 38% (5) from T2, with 50% (10) of the jóvenes expressing that the appropriate age to make out is between the ages of 12 to 15. According to the Wilcoxon signed rank test the changes in the jóvenes response between T1 and T3 were found significantly different (p=.018) where making out became more acceptable at age 12-15.

At T2 47% (7) of the jóvenes did not report a specific age at which they thought it would be okay to make out, this is an increase of almost 28% (2) from T1. Instead of reporting an age, the jóvenes gave other reasons which included “making out should happen in marriage, when mature, only if dating, when ready, depending or don’t know.”

It appears that at T1, age 19 or more was the age at which the jóvenes originally felt it was appropriate to make out. Once they were exposed to the Bible-based curriculum and making out was not necessarily prohibited, the
appropriate age at which one can make out changed with the majority of them not giving a specific age. At T3, however, 50% (10) of the jóvenes felt that the ages 12 to 15 was the appropriate age for making out. It seems that there was an acceptability of this behavior at an earlier age because of the curriculum's lack of prohibition for this behavior as long has it was performed responsibly and while exercising self-control not leading to premarital sex.

Masturbation

The frequency of young people reporting ever masturbating did not increase over the three time points. However, when asked if it was okay to masturbate at their age, according to the Cochran Q statistical test, significant changes were found (p=.012) in their view of age appropriateness. At T2 about 38% (9) thought it was okay to masturbate at their age, an increase from 12% (3) at T1. At T3 this number continued to increase to 42% (10) (see Figure 14).

**Figure 14 - Is it okay to masturbate at your age?**
Even though the jóvenes are not reporting changes in their behavior they think that is okay to masturbate at their age. During the intervention the associate pastor gave did not give the jóvenes a "correct" position regarding masturbation. The jóvenes, however, felt it was more okay to masturbate.

When we look at their responses by gender, female perception did not change as much as the males. According to Figure 15, 8% (2) of males and 4% (1) of the females felt that it was okay to masturbate at their age.

**Figure 15 - Percent of jóvenes who felt it was okay to masturbate at their age? (by gender)**

At T2, male perception changed showing an increase of 17% (4) from T1, while the females only increased by 9% (2). At T3, males did not show any change but the females increased by another 4% (1); 17% (4) of females felt it is okay to masturbate at their age. These findings are consistent with the idea that males find masturbation more acceptable or are more willing to admit to it than females. But as time went on, females became increasingly more positive about masturbation at their age.
At T1, 48.0% (12) of the jóvenes ages 12 to 14 and 40.0% (10) of the jóvenes age 16 and older felt that it was not okay to masturbate at their age. At T2, while the jóvenes ages 12 to 14 had a 6.3% (2) change in their opinion, jóvenes ages 15 and older showed more acceptability. They went from 40% at T1 to 20.8% (5) at T2 and remain the same at T3. This decreasing slope shows that as time went on masturbation became increasingly acceptable among jóvenes ages 16 and older.

In summary, there were no new jóvenes reporting masturbating and among those who practice masturbation there was a decrease in their frequency of masturbation per week. However, over time, there was a trend towards increased acceptability of masturbation.

**Sexual Intercourse**

As the baseline data showed, this group of jóvenes is not sexually active (with one exception). At T1 only 3 jóvenes (all males) reported ever having sexual intercourse. This remained consistent across T1, T2 and T3.

When the jóvenes were asked “at what age is it appropriate to have sex?” their responses affirms how they felt about sex at their age. At T1 96% (25) of the jóvenes said that is was not okay to have sex at their age. This dropped at T2 to 92% (22) only because 8.3% (2) of jóvenes felt that no age was okay to have sex. Instead, they said that sex should take place during marriage. At T3, their opinion was still the same with 96% (24) of the jóvenes saying that is not appropriate for them to have sex at their age and 4% (1) saying that it should be reserved for marriage.
Subjective Norms

During baseline it was found that as the nature of romantic relationships became more serious (moved toward marriage), the jóvenes felt less negatively about sex before marriage. They felt that best friends were permissive of sex before marriage. They also thought that parents felt the most negative towards sex than other groups. The jóvenes thought that, like their parents, the pastor felt negative about sex prior to marriage but especially about sex while a couple is engaged to be married. Finally, the jóvenes had a similar perspective of God, when compared to what they thought of their pastor, except that they thought God was more permissive, and very forgiving. In addition, the jóvenes felt that God viewed sex before marriage as less sinful than one might expect.

The data available for this comparative analysis of the jóvenes' subjective norms equaled 360 variables. For this reason the following analysis represents an overall score composed of the average of the mean of the jóvenes rating of sex across all aspects (good/bad, fun/not fun, appropriate/inappropriate, healthy/not healthy, sinful/not sinful, scary/not scary and enjoyable/not enjoyable). The aspect of forgiveness was excluded and analyzed separately because it was a big outlier; the jóvenes rated it more positively than all the other aspects of sex.

At T2, after the intervention was implemented, there was a decrease in the acceptability of sex before marriage. The mean value of the jóvenes rating of sex during the first date decreased from 1.5 at T1, to 1.33 at T2. At T3, six months
after intervention had taken place, the overall acceptability of sex had increased and the value was the same as T1, 1.5. Six month after the intervention had taken place the jóvenes’ opinion of sex on the first date had not changed compared to T1.

Figure 16 – Jóvenes opinion of sex over time.

The jóvenes’ opinion of sex while dating and while engaged to be married followed the same trend. At T2, for sex while dating the mean rating value was 1.56, a decrease from 1.8 at T1. At T3, however, the mean rating was 1.98. At T3, this average was well beyond the average reported at T1. The same trend was found for their opinion of sex while engaged. At T2, the mean rating was 2.16, a decrease from 2.38 at T1. At T3, the mean rating of 2.84 was reported, an increased beyond the value reported for T1.

As mentioned earlier forgivable/unforgivable was not included in the averages because the jóvenes rated it more positively than any of other aspect of
sex. With each time period the jóvenes opinion of sex before marriage became more forgivable. Figure 17 shows this trend.

Figure 17 - Jóvenes rating of how sex is forgivable before marriage.

The jóvenes began with a rating that was already representative of the church's teachings. As mentioned earlier, at T1 (baseline), their rating of sex before marriage was that it was forgivable, with God being the most forgiving followed by best friend. Also at T1, the least forgiving were the jóvenes and parents. Interesting enough, instead of this trend dropping at T2, like the other aspects of sex, Figure 17 shows that the jóvenes continued to rate sex before marriage to be very forgivable. Figure 17 also shows that once the jóvenes learned that sex is forgivable before marriage, then rating for themselves and everyone else became similar. According to the jóvenes everyone seems to be very forgiving of sex before marriage. At T3 the ratings mean values continue to increase, rating sex before marriage more forgivable than at T1 and T2. The
jóvenes thought the most forgiving person of sex before marriage at T3 was God and they thought that their parents were the least forgiving.

The concept of forgiveness is one of the major components of Christianity. As explained in chapter 2 of this thesis, Christians believe that God has provided forgiveness of sin through Jesus' death on the cross. It is believed that Jesus carried the sins of the world in His death. Christians are also taught that God grants forgiveness of sin to those who repent from them. This concept was shown in this data.

These findings are consistent with the teachings of Christianity in that the God of the Bible is a merciful, forgiving God. The jóvenes however felt that their parents would be the least forgiving possibly because of the expectations parents have toward their children. At T2, the jóvenes were able to understand the teaching of forgiveness by perceiving that everyone would be forgiving of sex before marriage. At T3, the jóvenes were able to retain the teaching of forgiveness but felt that their parents were again the least forgiving of all.

In summary, the jóvenes' perception of sex before marriage did not change. There was a trend where the jóvenes felt less positive of sex before marriage immediately after the intervention when compare to baseline. However, 6 to 8 months after the intervention (T3) the jóvenes opinion of sex was more positive than what they expressed at baseline. Also, the jóvenes felt increasingly positive about sex as relationships increased in seriousness.
Chapter 7 - Conclusion

Young people's involvement in sexuality can bring short term pleasure and long term pain. Sexuality has become increasingly dangerous in a time of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. While rates of teenage pregnancy have shown a reduction in the last decade, there is a significantly lower decline among Hispanic and Black teens. A large number of teens continue to experience unplanned and unwanted pregnancies that impact negatively on their lives, social relationships and careers. Most young people engage in sexual behavior at a point in time when their knowledge of safe sex is low, their attitudes and values towards sex are unformulated and the pressure to have sex is externally motivated by partners and their peer groups. Teenagers not only need to know the consequences of early adolescent sexuality but also how to avoid those consequences.

The desire to protect youth from the negative consequences of sexuality is universal. However, the approach to that protection varies widely by political and religious orientation, relationship to the young person and deep-seated beliefs and attitudes. Fundamental differences in the approach to sexuality among young people have created competing programs, mutual criticism and rigid policies. For example, supporters of abstinence-only education believe that teens can be kept from engaging in early adolescent sexuality. As a result, abstinence-only programs often do not provide information on how to prevent
pregnancy and STDs and sexuality is not freely discussed, since its overt discussion may motivate teens to think about sex and become sexually active. On the other hand there is the contrasting belief that teenagers cannot be kept from engaging in sex and thus there is a need for not only talking about abstinence but also about prevention through safe sex. These debates have lead to "abstinence only" versus "abstinence plus" versus "safe sex" programs and messages providing a wide variety of "official" and sometimes confusing positions, communications and values for consumption by young people.

At the same time, as one of the jóvenes pointed out, "sex is everywhere" and the influences of network TV, MTV, and peers are having an impact on teen sexuality. In our society, sex is no longer hidden and taboo. Sex is a central element exposed in many sitcoms (e.g. "Sex in the City" and "Desperate Housewives"), music videos, video games and TV ads. TV and the media are front row seats to a slanted presentation of sexuality to American teens as well as young people throughout the world.

While the schools have sexual education curricula, there is considerable controversy among parents, teachers, school board members and politicians concerning its content. School health clinics are required to play a limited role in the reproductive health of students. The schools have become a place for teen sex education, but more of it is happening in the hallways and bathrooms than in the classroom. Conversations about "what happened last night" and "how far have
you gone" may pressure young people to engage in sex in order to become popular and fit in with the crowd.

It is commonly agreed that young people should have increased knowledge about both sexuality and its risks and be helped to develop the maturity and values to appropriately fit sexuality into their lives. The dilemma centers on how such knowledge and values should be conveyed at different age levels. While education should start in the home, many parents are uncomfortable discussing sexuality with their children. The jóvenes stated that their families, for the most part, do not communicate effectively about sex.

If families do not educate their teens about sex, public health officials are left with the responsibility to protect teenagers from the negative effects of sexuality. However, the approaches taken by public health officials are not always received well by families, faith-based organizations and institutions because they may conflict with religious or cultural beliefs.

The ambivalence and ambiguities of adolescent sexuality are not diminished when we look at the relationship between organized religion and youth sexuality. Many religious institutions are perfectly happy to avoid any discussion of sexuality beyond the precept that sex should only take place in marriage. However, many clergy and religious leaders believe that with all the pressures teens face today, the church needs to take a more predominant role in sex education. Because of its ability to influence, religious institutions can empower teenagers to be in control of their sexuality. But even in churches,
mosques, and synagogues the questions continue to arise of how much content, what values are to be conveyed, how interactive should the curriculum be and whether young people be given the "correct" position or given the information upon which to make their own decisions.

**Overall Impact of the Intervention**

This thesis focused on the implementation of a sex education curriculum in the Hispanic Baptist Church. At HBC sexual education and discussion had been limited to messages from the pulpit and occasional discussions with the youth group. The implementation of this curriculum was the first long term formal exposure to a sexual abstinence program. The implementation of this curriculum, which focused on abstinence only in the context of the church and with a group of church youth (jóvenes), was not without its issues and dilemmas.

During the intervention the jóvenes had an opportunity to engage in open discussions about relationships, making out, masturbation and sex within the context of their faith. However, these discussions did not necessarily result in conservative views towards those behaviors. The overall frequency of making out among the jóvenes tended to decrease while exposed to the intervention. But there was a greater tendency to think that it was okay to make out at their age. The curriculum provided some guidelines for dating relationships but it did not prohibit teens from being romantically involved. This curriculum allowed the jóvenes to feel confident that they can make their own decisions regarding the
appropriate age at which they can make out, resulting in a more positive view of making out at an earlier age.

While the curriculum did emphasize "correct" positions and offer guidelines for dating relationships, the associate pastor believed in and conveyed a sense that the jóvenes had to work out their positions and values regarding masturbation. The jóvenes' frequency of masturbation decreased while exposed to the intervention but ultimately the jóvenes interpreted the associate pastor's teaching as allowing them to take a more permissive position on masturbation. Given that masturbation is considered a "grey" area in Christian sex education, the associate pastor's intent may have been to help the jóvenes come to a place where they could draw their own convictions based on the information given. It is possible that if the associate pastor would have given the jóvenes a "correct" position regarding masturbation they may have reduced the behavior frequency in the short-run but they would have missed the opportunity of being empowered to make their own decisions.

The presentation of messages and discussions of sexuality seemed to result in more positive views toward sex outside of marriage. The jóvenes were encouraged to think of sex as something good because it was created by God. But this positive view of sex was encouraged within the context of marriage. The jóvenes understood that there was no appropriate age to have sex and that it should take place in marriage. However, when given the opportunity to rate sex as positive or negative before marriage, a more positive view of sex resulted.
The jóvenes felt that as relationships become more serious, sex was more acceptable and forgivable before marriage. While the message was that sex before marriage was explicitly against Christian values, the jóvenes felt that God would forgive them.

The dilemma for sex education in the HBC is that on the one hand, sex outside of marriage is a sin against God, and on the other that Christianity's main teaching is that of a "savior" who forgives the sins of humanity. However this concept of forgiveness could be a double-edged sword. Forgiveness of sins has the potential of removing guilt from past mistakes, but at the same time, it is not meant to be a license to make those mistakes. Christianity teaches that God acknowledges that human-beings fail and when that happens there is provision for the forgiveness of those mistakes. "If we say we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and refusing to accept the truth. But if we confess our sins to Him (God), He is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong" (1 John 1:8). This means that the guilt associated with "sinning" is removed because God forgives.

On the other hand, forgiveness can also create a careless attitude where one can be absolved of mistakes with disregard to the possible consequences associated with those actions. This view of forgiveness is a potential danger because if the only reason keeping a teenager from engaging in sexual intercourse is God and at the same time God will always forgive those actions then there is no responsibility. This ecclesiastical dilemma is difficult for church leaders and clergy, let alone youth.
Implementing an intervention within the church had its positive and negative sides. On the positive side, the church is composed of large numbers of individuals and families with endless possibilities for access to these congregants. The church's authority and power to influence is enormous, making it an important place to educate and an effective location for generating positive behavioral change.

On the negative side educating within the church can take place only so long as it does not contradict Christian teachings. Collaboration and compromise between an outside party and the church is necessary in order to implement programs. These limitations made it difficult to measure the integrity of this intervention. For example, although the youth counselors were happy to teach the curriculum to the jóvenes, it was very difficult to get them to evaluate the sessions resulting in very few session observations. The congregation embraced the abstinence intervention but frequently moved the program to less desirable areas of the church to accommodate other programs.

In summary, this faith-based abstinence intervention provided the jóvenes the opportunity to engage in discussion of sex that would have otherwise not have been available. The intervention did not significantly change the behaviors, attitudes and subjective norms of the jóvenes. An increase in acceptability of sex before marriage was found but it did not significantly encourage nor discourage the jóvenes from engaging in sex before marriage. Given that these jóvenes were
not sexually active, it may suggest that there was already a strong commitment towards abstinence.

Study Limitations

This study, however, had several limitations that make the results difficult to allow full interpretation and generalization. These limitations included:

Sample Size. This study had an N of 35 jóvenes and only 26 of the jóvenes were available for T2 and T3. HBC had 80 jóvenes at the time of the study but only 35 jóvenes (or their parents) responded and participated in the study. This small sample made it difficult to show any effect size and changes over time.

Length of Intervention. A six week intervention is not enough time to effectively create behavior change. The data indicated that the jóvenes may need more than one short course to assimilate information. About 25% of the jóvenes were not able to recall or retain what they were taught. Most interventions related to behavior change last for 12 weeks. Because this intervention was only six weeks the time period between pre- and post-test was too brief. In addition to having a short intervention time period, no follow-up booster sessions were provided.

Control Group. Effective studies have control groups to compare to the experimental group receiving the intervention. A control group was not possible during this study because there is no other Hispanic Baptist church in the Springfield area similar enough to HBC to serve as a control and the investigator's time and resources were limited.
Bias. At the time of the intervention the author was also a youth leader at HBC. As a result, a potential for bias was present. Even though confidentiality measures were in place and the author could not have traced the data to anyone in particular, the jóvenes may not have been honest in their responses to the surveys knowing they were to be read by a youth leader.

Application of Results. Given the pilot nature of the project, generalizations regarding the findings of this study cannot be made for other racial or ethnic groups or for other Hispanic Christian churches.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research in the area of faith and abstinence education should first focus on assessing the impact of these programs using an experimental design. There currently no evaluation studies that have assessed the impact of church-based abstinence education. Evaluations should also include a control group, larger sample size and a cohort to measure the long term effects of these programs.

Churches have the ability to influence their communities and have access to families and adolescents. For this reason, public health agencies, community-based organizations and other state agencies should partner with communities of faith in delivering sex education. The increase in faith-based initiatives should be an incentive to develop effective programs and test the results of those programs.
Faith-based curricula should also include more comprehensive sexual education within the context of the Christian faith. With all the ambiguity surrounding the definition of abstinence, a clear and specific definition should be provided as well as approaches to equip youth to deal with the pressures to have sex from peers. A study by Howard and McCabe (1990) polled 100 teenage girls and found that 85% of them wanted to address how to say no to a boyfriend’s request for sex.

In addition, faith-based curriculums should include the involvement of parents in the process of education. Studies have shown that if adolescents communicate with their mother about sexual issues, then they are more likely to have conservative values (DiLorio et al., 1999). Family cohesiveness has been associated with an adolescent’s decision to delay the onset of sexual intercourse (Lammers et al., 2000).

A foundation for future collaborations has been built with the Hispanic Baptist Church. This relationship is an opportunity to bring in more abstinence education and provide long term reinforcement. The next step would be to implement a curriculum based on established behavior change theories that can complement the spiritual components of Christian teaching. While True Love Waits is a spiritually sound curriculum embraced by the Christian faith, it needs to be balanced with a more comprehensive and specific view of sexuality.

Sex education is and will continue to be very challenging. Regardless of what side a well meaning person might take, it is important to continue to fight
the battle against unwanted pregnancies, STDs and HIV that are robbing American teens of their bright futures. There are contributions being made from different sectors, including government, community based organizations, and academia. Many in the Hispanic and Black community value their churches and communities of faith. The most important finding from this project is that sexual education for youth is not an easy job, wherever it is done, and requires a partnership of many societal sectors to achieve success. The secular sectors of society need to more fully understand the crucial role that religious institutions can play in such programs. The secular supporter of sex education can no longer ignore the faith of the people and how faith can influence not only behavior but every aspect of ones life. As Pastor González of HBC says "...the church has a message... let the church give its message..."
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Appendix A

"True Love Waits" Curriculum
The Gospel of Sex Video
Session Aims - Students will:
- learn about common myths regarding sex, and discover God’s truth concerning sex
- consider their own attitudes about sex and God’s standards

Scripture Focus: Romans 6:2,12.

Preparation: Set up VCR/TV; video; copies of "Options" handout p. 17; pens/pencils.

Ask: What's the best gift you've ever received? What made it so special?

Leader's Note: Discourage "spiritual" answers, such as "God's love." For now get them talking about human gifts. Zero in on why a gift was good. Was it cool, fun to use, a token of love?

After you got it, what did you do with it? How did you treat this gift? (The idea is that, when we get a special gift, we treat it well, we honor it.)

Today we'll be talking about a very special gift God has given all of us—it's called sex. You can't go anywhere without getting some message from a billboard, TV show or magazine that says, "Do it, do it, do it." And then you come to church, where we tell you, "Don't do it, don't do it, don't do it." We need to move beyond the "do's" and the "don'ts" and make some sense out of this gift God has given. What does God want from us? How can we honor Him with our sexuality? Listen up for some good messages in today's video.

Leader's Note: SHOW VIDEO UNTIL IT SAYS "STOP THE TAPE."

If God created our sex drive... why are we supposed to wait? (Obedience to God—God also created guidelines and limitations; allows for the proper growth and expression of genuine love without the traps of a "physical" relationship; reduces the emotional and physical stress within a dating relationship; keeps a lot of "baggage" out of your future marriage relationship; gives us something to look forward to.)
What keeps you from having sex? (Fear of AIDS or other diseases; fear of pregnancy; "I'm not ready for it yet"; haven't found the right person — don't "love" anyone; "my parents would kill me"; or just because it's wrong outside of a marriage relationship.)

How can you argue with "Because God says not to?" Can any other reason be as strong? Those who say they just aren't ready yet are on the right track, but when will they be ready? God says you're ready for sex only after you're married—not before. Fear of disease, pregnancy, or parental wrath may be effective deterrents for now, but what happens when those fears are removed—when scientists invent the super condom or when you move out of the house? Premarital sex is still wrong, whether or not your parents find out.

SHOW THE REST OF THE VIDEO

The video talked about several "sex myths"—wrong ideas about sex. Can you remember any of the myths? Which of them stood out to you?

**Common Myths about sex**
- "Sex is bad. God hates sex."
- "If you have premarital sex, you will (a) get pregnant; or (b) contract a horrible disease and die."
- "If you've had sex, you're ruined for life. You can never be totally holy again."
- "If you really love the person, it's okay."
- "No one really understands us. We're special."
- "How could something that feels so good be a sin?"
- "Virgin is a dirty word."

Was it a surprise to you that some of the "sex myths" are things you might hear from Christians? How do you feel about that?

**Leader's Note:** Sometimes Christians do whatever it takes to scare kids out of having sex. The first three "myths" listed above are examples of this strategy. They are all half-truths, which makes them very misleading and dangerous.

**Case #1** - Suppose a girl you know came up to you and said, "My boyfriend and I had sex last night and it was the greatest thing. We are so much in love, it felt so right. That can't possibly be wrong, can it?"
How would you respond to such a question? (Let's assume first that you're a good enough friend that she really wants your opinion. The point is that she is basing her choices on feelings, and feelings can fade rather easily. You might remind her that last year she was "so in love" with another guy who turned out to be a real jerk. In the same way, her feelings for the current boyfriend might change, and she might regret her sexual intimacy with him. The point is that sex belongs within marriage, not outside of it. That's what God wants for us. To go against that is wrong, even if it "feels so right.")

Case #2 - A guy you know is boasting about his sexual experience from last weekend—and the weekend before that. The problem is, he claims to be a Christian. When you ask him about this, he says, "What's the big deal? Sure it's a sin, but God forgives me."

What can you say to that? (Paul said it in Romans 6:2, "We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?" God's forgiveness is available to us if we're truly sorry for our sins, but it's not a license to do whatever we want. Later in the same chapter, Paul says, "Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires" (6:12). That's what this guy is doing: letting sin take over.)

This is a crucial point. Maybe some of you have given in to temptation and you've had sex. Afterward, you have felt terrible about it, and you asked God to forgive you. If so, He has forgiven you, bringing you back into that close relationship with Him. But what if it happens again? God will forgive you again, if you come back to Him sorry for what you've done.

Then why not be like this guy, sinning and sinning and counting on God to forgive him? Well, there are a couple of reasons.
1. It hurts God when we insult Him like that. "Thanks for the advice, Lord, but I'm going to try this anyway."
2. It also hurts us. God's way is better for us. We saw in the video some examples of people regretting their bad choices. Whether it's disease or pregnancy or broken relationships, sex outside of God's plan has bad consequences.

But here's another problem: as you keep sinning, sin begins to take over in your life. It's the "Body Snatcher" syndrome. It becomes harder and harder to tell God you're sorry. You care less and less about what He thinks. You wind up far from God, and that's a miserable life.
So if you have strayed, come on back. God wants to forgive you. But you need to make a commitment to Him that you’ll do your best to follow His way in the future. Hand out the “Options” handout.

Chances are, you could agree with A, B, or C. I want you to choose one of those areas and assign yourself some homework. Each one has several “action points” that will help you deal with specific issues. Take this paper home with you and start taking these specific steps.

If sex is not a problem for you, good. But many people do have these struggles, and if you’re one of them, here are some helpful suggestions. Take a couple of minutes to look them over, and then I’ll close in prayer.

Sessions 2, 3 are optional. Only Session 1 uses the video directly in the teaching procedures.

Session 2 - Idol Thoughts

Session Aims - Students will:
- Learn to see our society’s preoccupation with sex as a form of idolatry.
- Learn the importance of avoiding idols and putting God first.
- Be challenged to put God first in their own lives.

Scripture Focus: Exodus 20:1-4; 1 Kings 19:14-18; Psalms 24:3-5; Hosea 2:5-8; 4:10-12; Matthew 6:24; John 10:10; Romans 1:20-25

Preparation: Gather magazines for advertisement activity; make copies of “Gotta Serve Somebody” handout p. 18; pens/pencils; chalkboard (optional).

Say, Sex. Sex. Sex. Sex. (You could write SEX in big letters on the board.) Now that I have your attention, let’s begin.
Advertisers learned a long time ago that sex sells. And it will sell just about anything, from beer to BMWs. Let’s see how pervasive this is.

Divide into groups of four. Have each group grab some of the magazines you brought and find examples of sex-based advertising. Ask them to think about what the ad is telling them about sex. Say, When your group has found four examples—and can explain them—raise your hands.

**Leader’s Note:** You’ll need to round up some magazines or newspapers. Obviously your goal is not to lead your kids into lust, so stay away from swimsuit magazines or lingerie catalogs. But you’ll be amazed at what you can find in Time, Sports Illustrated or Good Housekeeping. When one group has found four examples, ask them to explain them quickly. Have each group explain one of theirs.

Whether we know it or not, these ads aren’t just selling products, they’re selling sex, or at least an idea about sex.

**How would you summarize the ideas we’ve seen in our examples?** (If you don’t look sexy, you’re not worth much; sex is about being free and having fun; having sex is an instant, spur-of-the-moment decision that has little to do with commitment; sex makes life worth living.)

**Why is it so important? Why does sex get our attention so easily? Why do we think about it so much?** (It’s interesting, exciting, surprising, fun, forbidden, etc.)

Let’s change gears here. I’m going to give you an idea today that will change the way you think about sex. And we’re going to start with some Bible verses. Let’s turn to Romans 1:20. Have someone read the verse?

According to this verse, creation shows God’s invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature. This simply means that anyone can look at the created world and see that there is a Creator who deserves to be worshiped.

Let’s read on: Would someone read verses 21-23 out loud?

We already know that people should see the creation and worship the Creator. But what do they do instead? (They don’t glorify God or thank him, but they make idols to worship.)
What do these idols look like? (Like people, birds, animals, and reptiles.)
And if you’ve studied ancient cultures, you may have seen some of these images, carved in stone, that people worshiped.
Don’t miss verse 22. People thought they were wise, but they did foolish things. And certainly it does seem foolish to ignore the Creator and worship some statue of a reptile. Aren’t you glad no one in our society is dumb enough to have idols like that?
Not so fast. You see, idols weren’t all that these people worshiped. Someone read verses 24 and 25.
What else happened? (They went sex-crazy, “degrading” their bodies sexually.)
And notice how verse 25 sums it up: “They exchanged the truth of God for a lie.”
Do people today degrade their bodies sexually? Do they exchange God’s truth for a lie? Do they worship and serve created things—even their own bodies—rather than the Creator?

This is the story of our society. We may not have a lot of reptile statues around, but we are idol-worshippers. We worship money, success, celebrities—and we worship sex. You might say sex is one of our favorite idols.

When we say “idol,” what do we mean? What’s an idol? (Basically, an idol is something people worship, anything that takes the place of God in our lives.) Do people worship sex these days? How? (They think about it all the time. They praise it, saying how great it is. They sing about it. They try to become more and more sexy. They honor sexy people by going to their movies or buying their CDs.)

Ask someone to read Exodus 20:1-4?
You may recognize these as the first two of the Ten Commandments.
What is his first commandment? (“You shall have no other gods before me.” — In other words: “I’m the boss; Me First; I’m not just a god; I’m the only God.”)
What’s the second commandment? (No idols.)
God knew that people would be tempted to be like those we read about in Romans 1—worshipping images of birds and reptiles and things. So, right off the bat, He makes it clear — worship the Creator, not the creation.
Sex is a created thing, created by God as an expression of love within marriage. But people today are worshiping sex as if it is God. The temptation that Christians face is trying to have it both ways. Some are worshiping the idol of sex while, at the same time, attempting to worship God. They use phrases like: "I can be a Christian and still enjoy pre-marital sex" or, "What's wrong with a little sexual activity as long as my heart's in the right place?" and "I still love Jesus, I just like sex, too."

Have you ever heard those statements? Maybe you've even said them. In Matthew 6:24, Jesus said, "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other." Obviously, Jesus was talking about God and money, but the same principle applies to sex: You can't serve two masters.

Every day you have a choice to make. You will either serve the gods of this world—sex, money, fame—or you will serve the Lord. Like it or not, you can't do both. You have to choose. You can go along with all the others, talking about sex, thinking about sex, getting yourself in sexual situations, and maybe even having sex. Or, you can choose to follow Jesus.

**Turn to Hosea 2.**

Hosea is a book that deals with the Israelites who began worshiping a pagan god called Baal (sounds like Bailey). Baal was, quite literally, a sex-god. The people thought that Baal came down from the sky to have sex with the earth-goddess Asherah (AH-shur-AH) and that made the crops grow. It was Baal, they thought, who sent the rain. So when they needed rain, they worshiped Baal in the way they thought Baal would appreciate—they had sex. There were temples built to honor Baal, and in these temples women worked as prostitutes.

God felt as if His people were cheating on Him—like a wife would cheat on her husband. In fact, to make His point, God asked Hosea to do a very strange thing. He asked Hosea to marry a prostitute. Do not try this at home! God had a special purpose here, and it caused Hosea a lot of pain—the same pain God was feeling. Hosea's wife bore him children, but then she ran off to worship Baal, and have affairs with other men. She was doing the same things to Hosea that the whole nation of Israel was doing to God. Have someone read Hosea 2:5,6? Where did she think she got her
food and water and other gifts? (From her “lovers.” If we’re talking about Israel, this means from Baal and other false gods.) According to verse 8, where did she really get these things from? (From her husband, or from God.) This is a problem with the worship of idols. You think the idol is meeting your needs, but it really isn’t. God is the one who supports you. Somebody might say, “But if I don’t have sex, I won’t have any fun. How will I live? I won’t be cool anymore. Life will be boring.” That person is trusting in his god of sex to provide his basic need for excitement and joy. Not realizing that only God can provide genuine joy.

Have someone read Hosea 2:7.
How would you describe the situation of the woman described here? (Desperate? Longing? Undecided?) You may already see this among some of your friends who are into sex. They think that sex makes their lives more exciting. They find out, however, that the excitement doesn’t last. So, they keep chasing, wanting more and more—never quite being satisfied. And in the process they are running away from the joy of the Lord. You want excitement? Try following Jesus. Remember that Jesus said He came to give us “abundant” life (John 10:10).

Hand out the “Gotta Serve Somebody” handout.

As I said, you are faced with a choice, every day of your life. Take a look at the statements on this sheet. Fill in the word “sex” in each of the blanks. This will help you understand what I mean when I talk about “worshiping” sex. Are any of these statements true about you? Or, perhaps there is something else you could write in the blank. The fact is, anything that you have written, if it replaces the word “God,” you have allowed to become an idol in your life. Which kind of life do you want, one built on sex or one built on God? Which master are you going to serve?

1 Kings 19 concerns the prophet Elijah who was in a war against the religion of Baal. The queen herself had imported thousands of Baal-worshippers into the country, and they were leading the Israelites astray. You may remember the story of Elijah challenging the priests of Baal to a contest on Mount Carmel. Which side could call fire from heaven? Elijah won that contest, and it was a great victory, but we’re picking up the story a few days later. Elijah is by
himself on a desert mountain, and God comes to him and asks, "What are you doing here?"

Read 1 Kings 19:14?
How was Elijah feeling and why do you think he felt this way? (Sorry for himself; lonely; depressed. Elijah had just won a great victory for the Lord. Perhaps it was an emotional letdown that often comes after a great victory. Even though Elijah had won the contest, people were still worshiping Baal.) So, how does Elijah's situation relate to sex? Elijah's story provides 4 tips that will help you when you face a sex-worship battle.

Tip #1 — Watch out for let downs.
Let's say you find yourself in a highly charged situation. Maybe you're on a date with a person you really care about, and the lights are low and the music is jamming away, and you're tempted to go too far sexually. But you don't! You resist the temptation! Good for you. You may even feel fired up with the power of God. But the next day, the emotions fade. You begin thinking about all the "fun" you missed out on. At that point you're very vulnerable to temptation. It's the letdown after the victory.

Leader's Note: You may want to talk about avoiding these kinds of situations in the first place.

Have someone read verses 1 Kings 19:15-17.
What did God tell Elijah to do to in order for him to handle the situation? (God gave him stuff to do.)

Tip #2 — Get involved in God's work.
Throw your energy into positive ministry, so you don't dwell too much on temptation.
Now read what He says in verse 18.
What's He saying? (Elijah is not alone. There are still those 7,000 who remained faithful to God. That's not a majority, but it's a lot of people.)

Tip #3 — You're not alone.
If you stand up for God and reject the worship of sex that's going on all around you, you may feel lonely. People may think you're weird if you don't join in on those locker-room discussions. They may single you out, calling you "Virgin" as if that's some dirty word. But you're not alone. There are others, some right here in
this room, who share your commitment to God. There are some people who don’t worship the sex-god of our age. You can find strength and encouragement in that.

Tip #4 — Connect with one of the “7,000.” I mean, there are other faithful people around. Find one—someone of the same sex—and share your struggles. You can help each other make the right decisions.

As the video said last time, sex is not bad. And I don’t want you to get that idea. You are a sexual being. God made you that way. But sex is dangerous, and it’s biggest danger is that it can lead us away from God. A lot of people begin to worship sex in all the ways we just described. I’m challenging you to put sex in its place, and put God in first place.

Let’s turn to Psalm 24. Would someone read verse 3? The Psalmist is talking about the Temple, but also about the presence of God. We might say, “Who can enter into an intimate relationship with God?” Look at verse 4. “He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false.”

Do you want a dynamic, abundant relationship with the living, loving Lord? Then stop worshiping the idols of sex. Keep your hands clean and your heart pure. If you’ve sinned sexually, the good news is that Jesus washes your hands and your heart, but now you need to ascend that hill, get tight with God, worship Him and Him only.

Close by reading the promise of verse 5 and praying that God will show sins in the life of each student that they need confess and repent of. Pray that they will have the courage to follow through on what God is asking them to do with the idols in their lives.

Session 3 — Power Play

Session Aims: Students will:
- understand the Christian life as a life of true freedom and power as found in Romans.
- be challenged to avoid the bondage of sexual sin and live free in a way that pleases God.

**Scripture Focus** - Romans 3:8 (selected passages); Galatians 5:13-25

**Preparation:** Enlist student actors to be prepared to do the skit "Free Association" p. 20; copies of the "Voices" handout p.19; pens/pencils.

Say, We're talking about sex again. But we're going to look at a couple of key issues. One of them is the whole issue of freedom. What is it? How can we be truly free. Let's start by watching a skit on the subject.

What was the problem with Joe's idea of freedom?

Let's say Joe came to you and said, "My life's a mess. What can I do to turn things around?" What would you tell him?

Who do you think is freer, Joe or Stephanie? Ten years from now, who do you think will be freer?

Let them offer their opinions. You don't need to provide a "right answer," but you might want to steer the discussion in this direction: Joe thinks of freedom as doing whatever he wants whenever he wants; but God's idea of freedom is that we are empowered to be the people God created us to be.

When it comes to sex, a lot of people seem to think the way Joe does: Doing whatever they want whenever they want. It sounds like a great idea, except many people find themselves entrapped, imprisoned. There are the obvious issues of unwanted pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases. For many teenagers, these things have turned freedom into a kind of slavery. But sex itself can also become slavery. You may have seen this happen among your friends. Sex can consume people. They never get enough. They can't develop normal lives or normal relationships because sex is so important to them.

But here's another problem. Sometimes we Christians can become enslaved by guilt. A number of you feel guilty about sexual things you've done, even if you've never gone "all the way." So we're going to start with the good news: Whatever you've done, Jesus will forgive you if you ask.
Let’s turn to Romans 3:23. You may have heard this verse before, but do you know the next verse? Would someone read verses 23 and 24?

What percentage of the people in the world are sinners? (100%) What does it mean to be “justified”? (It means to be made right. An easy way to think of it is this: “JUST as I’D never sinned.”) How did this justification happen? (By grace, which means God gives it, we can’t earn it. And through the redemption of Jesus Christ. It was Jesus’ sacrificial death that accomplished this.) Someone read Romans 5:1. What is the result of being justified? (Peace with God.) That means that, after He forgives us, God doesn’t sit around reminding us of all the mistakes we’ve made. He’s cool with it.

Someone read Romans 5:8. Who did Jesus die for? (Us. Sinners.) Jesus just died for good people who withstand sexual temptation, right? (WRONG! He died for sinners.) But we have an interesting clue in this verse. “While we were still sinners.” Does that mean we aren’t sinners anymore? (Yes and no.) We’ll see more about this in a moment. The fact is, we still commit sin, even after we’re Christians. But it’s not quite as natural to us as it used to be. Jesus changes our nature, and that’s what we want to look at today.

Someone read Romans 6:1-2? Well, should we keep sinning so that God can keep forgiving us? (No way!) Why not? (We “died to sin.”) What does this mean? We’ll find out in the next few verses.

Read Romans 6:3-8. What is he saying here and what does this mean for the way we live? (When Christ died, He took a part of us—our sinful self—to the grave with Him. When He rose again, He brought us a new kind of life. Our old sinful self is dead, buried with Christ. We have a new identity with the risen Lord.)

Someone read Romans 6:11-13. Now that we have a new life in Christ, how should we use our bodies? (As instruments of righteousness, not for wickedness.)

Now someone read Romans 6:18-23? Being a “slave of righteousness” means putting your life in God’s control. It means you no longer call the shots—God does. What kind of death is this talking about? Does it always mean physical death? Can’t people sin and
keep living? (Death means to be separated from God. Sin often separates people from each other as well—death of a relationship. Sexual sin regularly leads to the “death” of relationships with both God and others. In the case of violent sin or habitual, uncontrolled sin, it can and often does lead to physical death.)

Okay, it sounds simple enough. Jesus has buried our sinful nature and we now have new identities. But there’s a problem. It’s a bit like Dawn of the Dead. Our sinful nature keeps climbing out of the grave and bothering us. We see more about this in Romans 7.

Would someone read Romans 7:18-25? This is something each of us has experienced. You want to do the right thing, but you don’t. It’s like you’ve got the angel on one shoulder and the demon on the other, whispering in your ears. We don’t need a big confessional here, but do any of you have stories about your own struggles with this sort of thing? How did you resolve them?

Verse 25 answers the question in verse 24. Jesus wins us the victory; He rescues us. He gives us the power to live righteously. Romans 8 is one of the most powerful chapters in the Bible. I encourage you to find some time, perhaps later today, to read it. For now let’s just look at a few key verses.

Someone read Romans 8:8-11?
If we are Christians, what are we controlled by? (The Spirit of God.) What is it saying about Jesus’ resurrection? (The Spirit that raised Jesus will give life to our bodies, too.) Let’s look at ourselves like we would a computer. Your body is hardware, the Spirit is software. What good is hardware without software? No good at all. The old software, our sinful nature, programmed our bodies to be selfish, to chase after evil desires (whatever they might be). But, if we’re Christians, that software is obsolete. We’ve had an upgrade. The Spirit of God has entered us, showing us a whole new way to live. Now every once in a while, the old software pops up and causes a glitch. But if we stay with the program, the Spirit will guide us to do right things.

Don’t miss this: You are programmed for righteousness. You can still go back to the old ways, but it’s like going back into DOS on a Windows system. Why would you? You have a new identity. Why go back to the old ways?
Hand out the "Voices" handout.
Divide into three groups. Each group will be assigned one of the sections of this sheet. Read it and then come up with a response to this person. We’ve just been reading Romans 6-8. Do these Bible verses have anything to say to these people? If you knew the person who was saying this, what would you tell them?

**Leader’s Note:** Maximum group size is about seven, so if you have more than 20 in the total group, break into more groups and double up on the assignments. Give them 5-8 minutes to work through this, then bring them together to report.

**Julie – Age 16**
First of all, Julie needs to know that God forgives her when she repents of her sin. She is clearly repentant, so she should accept and enjoy God’s forgiveness. Her virginity is gone, and that’s a shame, but that shouldn’t keep her from praying. (See John 8:11). She should also find an understanding Christian to talk with. If not her parents, perhaps a youth leader or Sunday school teacher. A wise Christian will recognize her repentance and encourage her. For future reference, she should be careful about being alone with guys in their homes (or any private place). Julie may have assumed that, since this guy was a “Christian,” he wouldn’t try anything. Guess again. Both partners have to be responsible to do what’s right—and help each other. Don’t let your boyfriend or girlfriend make sexual decisions for you.

**Jeff – Age 18**
This guy has swung to the other side of the forgiveness spectrum. He’s right, sort of, but his attitude is terribly wrong. Yes, Jesus does offer forgiveness. If we come to Him with sincerity, a truly repentant heart and a desire to turn away from sin, He washes us clean. But every time we make a sinful choice it makes it harder to come back to God. Romans 6 tells us that we have died to sin and we’re alive to God. Jeff should be striving to live in a way that pleases God, letting the Spirit guide his actions. That involves a certain sorrow for sin. It doesn’t mean that he has to be ridden with guilt, just that he needs to be truly sorry, and committed to a life of righteousness.

**Jennifer – Age 17**
Jennifer is wise to recognize a problem. Many don’t. This might be a good relationship that may even lead to a life-long commitment.
But she is noticing that the relationship is more about sex than anything else right now, and that bothers her. This can happen to well-meaning couples who let their passion get away from them. Sex is a powerful thing. It's a fire that can burn out of control. This is true even if the partners haven't gone "all the way." It's not a question of crossing a particular line, but "Have you let your desire for sexual pleasure take control of your relationship?" Specifically, it might be a good idea for this couple to test themselves by going without any physical contact for a month. No kissing, no hugging, no holding hands, just spending time together talking and enjoying each other non-physically. If you can't do this for even a month, it's a sign that your relationship is dominated by the physical. If you can, it's a good way to strengthen the non-physical aspects of your relationship.

It's not easy for you, I realize. You deal with situations like this all the time. You usually want to do the right thing, but sometimes you don't. And sometimes you don't know exactly where right becomes wrong. Yet it's a basic question of freedom. Sex can enslave people, when it's used as God never intended. But God sets people free. As a Christian you have been set free by the power of Christ. The question you need to answer is, how will you live in that freedom?

Let's take one more look at Scripture as we close. The passage is Galatians 5:13-25.

Leader's Note: Read this passage to the group, slowly and clearly. It's a powerful text. Let it sing.
Options Worksheet
(make copies of this and handout to participants)

A. I need to repent of my sexual sin, telling God I’m sorry, accepting his forgiveness, and trying to live better in the future.
   • In the next 24 hours, take a 15-minute break to spend time with God.
   • Read 1 John 1:9, Psalms 103:8-14, John 8:1-12.
   • Develop a one-sentence prayer to help you in future times of temptation. Memorize it.

B. I need to set some limits in my current relationship.
   • Set a time in the next week to talk about this.
   • Talk together about setting appropriate sexual limits that will honor God.
   • Develop a “time out” phrase or signal that either one of you can use when things start to get crazy.
   • Pray together. If you have sinned sexually with each other, confess this to God together. Brainstorm ways that you can help each other grow spiritually.

C. I think way too much about sex. I need to cleanse my thinking.
   • Identify the TV shows, CDs, movies, magazines that stimulate your sexual thinking. Over the next month, avoid these entirely.
   • Identify the friends that get you thinking about sex. If it’s a friend who keeps talking about sex, plan ways to change the subject (or avoid the friend for a while). If it’s an attractive person you’re lusting after, plan non-lustful ways of interacting with him or her.
   • Take 10 minutes to think about sex. That’s right: think about what you think about sex. What makes it such a tempting subject? What does it mean to you? Pleasure, success, maturity, a taboo? Does it really deserve your constant attention?
   • Then take 10 more minutes to talk with God about all of this. Read Psalms 51:10 and Romans 12:2. Try to come up with a one-sentence statement about sex that sums up what it should mean to you. (Something like “Sex is a great gift of God and I’ll use my sexuality to honor Him.”)
   • Memorize this statement and repeat it to yourself when your mind begins to drift toward sex.
Gotta Serve Somebody Handout

I think about _______ a lot.

As I go through the day, I see the presence of _______ in many things around me.

I hang out with other people who think and talk about _______.

My most important relationships are based upon _______.

I use my body for _______.

I depend on _______ to meet my basic needs.

When everything goes wrong, I can always count on _______.

The things I choose to watch, read and do usually have to with _______.

As I plan my future, I want _______ to play a major role.

Tips from Elijah

Watch out for _______. Get involved in _______.

You’re not _______. _______ with one of the "7,000."
Voices Handout

Julie — Age 16
I really liked this guy at school and he finally asked me out. He went to a different church, but he said he was a Christian, so I felt pretty good about this relationship. But after a couple of dates we started to get pretty involved physically, and then he started to ask me to go "all the way" with him. I was a virgin and I said I wasn't going to do that. But then came that night. He brought me back to his house when his parents were away. One thing led to another and—well, I'm not a virgin anymore. Right away, I was really sorry, but the deed was done. And I couldn't talk to anyone about it. That was the worst thing. My folks would kill me if they knew. My church friends would judge me, and my school friends wouldn't understand. The guy didn't want to talk about it. We broke up a week later. And now I'm, like, dead inside. It's hard to pray. I still go to church every Sunday, but feel like such a fake. I was a good Christian, and now I'm not, and I don't know what to do.

Jeff — Age 18
Yeah, I try to be good. I really do. But I've got this sex drive, see? If I'm out with a sexy girl, the engine starts revving and I can't turn it off. Sure, I've had sex, a bunch of times, and I know that's wrong. But what's the big deal? We're forgiven, aren't we? It seems to me the church doesn't know what it really believes. I mean, what's all this guilt about? Why should we ever feel guilty? If Jesus forgives us for our sins, then sin isn't that big a problem. I can do my thing, pray about it, and things are fine again. Right?

Jennifer — Age 17
My boyfriend and I have been dating for almost two years. I have never been so in love. We've talked about marriage and children and all that. It's not definite, but we think we're going to get married in the future. It may sound kind of silly, but we dated a long time before we even kissed. We're both Christians, and we want to honor God in our relationship. But we did start kissing, a lot, and we liked it, a lot. And then we started to do other stuff. I mean, there was always a line that we decided we wouldn't cross, but that line kept moving and moving. First base, second base—I don't even know where the bases are anymore. We are still virgins, technically. But it seems that we spend more and more time making out and less and less time talking. I still dream about marrying him, but I have to admit it's mostly because I want to have sex. I'm tired of waiting. Still, I feel kind of worried about where our relationship is going. It doesn't feel right anymore, and I don't know what to do.
Free Association Skit

STEH: meets JOE in front of a convenience store.

STEH: Hi, Joe. Is Joe, isn’t it?

JOE: That’s my name. Don’t wear it out. Heh, heh, heh.

STEH: I thought I recognized you. You were in my English class last year, weren’t you?

JOE: If you say so. I must have blocked it out. Bad vibes, ya know? That teacher had it in for me. Usedta yell at me for not doin’ my homework.

STEH: Well, if you didn’t do your—

JOE: I showed her. You can’t boss me around like that. So, I dropped out. Now she can’t get on my case no more.

STEH: I guess not.

JOE: You still go to that school?

STEH: Yeah, I’m graduating this year.

JOE: That school’s for losers. I mean, I had it up to here with all those stupid rules. Well, I’m free from those rules now. Free as a bird.

STEH: So where are you working?

JOE: Used to work here. Didn’t like it, though. Too many rules. Like, my boss used to yell at me for comin’ in late. Can you believe that? It’s a free country, isn’t it? But that’s not what my boss said. My ex-boss, mean. I didn’t need that, so I quit.

STEH: What did your parents say about that?

JOE: Oh, they don’t know anything about it. I moved out last summer. I just couldn’t stand it anymore. And you know what the problem was?

STEH: Too many rules?

JOE: I can see you’re on my wave-length. Like, no comin’ home at 4:00 in the morning. So I got outta there so fast, it made my head spin.

STEH: So, where are you living now?

JOE: Oh, here and there. Don’t want any landlords hasslin’ me for rent, ya know. Gotta be free. That’s what it’s all about. Freedom.

STEH: Well, it’s nice to see you again, Joe. I’ve got to go. Homework, you know.

JOE: Hey, you got any spare change? I could really use some help.

STEH: Here’s a dollar. It’s all I have right now. Bye, Joe. (She exits.)

JOE: Yeah, bye. (He raises a fist in a salute) Freedom! (He shuffles off.)
Until You Say I Do

A TRUE LOVE WAITS RESOURCE
SESSION TWO:

Flirting With Temptation

Sarah clutched her stuffed bear, rocked back and forth, and sobbed uncontrollably. In between sobs she asked, "Why did this happen to me?" Her parents stood by, helpless and heartbroken, knowing the answer but unable to speak.

Sarah was 14 years old, but she felt as if her life was already over. Again and again, she retold the situation—Gary was very cute and much older. They met through mutual friends in the neighborhood, and she saw right away that he noticed her. How exciting it seemed—this 23-year-old "man" dropping by her house, flirting with her, and finally, asking her to sneak out of her bedroom window at night to meet him. At first she told him, "No way!" but the fantasy filled her mind day and night.

Sarah had become a Christian just two months earlier. She was working hard at her grades. She was attending church and felt she could handle Gary even though her mother had already warned her not to go near him. To Sarah, this new relationship seemed to fit into her desire to become a more mature person.
The first night she sneaked out was so exciting and romantic. Nothing really happened except for some kissing and hand holding. Compared to what the other couples around them were doing, this seemed harmless to her. Sarah continued to slip out and go with Gary every chance she got. When they went to a party where everyone else was drinking, Sarah was proud of her ability to say no to the alcohol. Before long it was easy to tell her parents one thing, but end up with Gary and whatever his plan was for the evening. Sarah felt in control of life and bragged to her friends about how cool her new boyfriend was.

On this evening, though, Gary was different. He had already been drinking and was a bit rough in his kisses. He started driving recklessly and took Sarah to a deserted field where he announced, "It's time for you to follow through on your teasing and really grow up." That night Sarah became a victim of date rape and her fantasies turned into nightmares.

This is truly A DISASTER STORY.

In your opinion, how could Sarah have possibly avoided this entire nightmare?

Let's take a look at the process of temptation.
1. **THE BATTLE for your body BEGINS IN THE MIND.**

Girls fantasize about romance while boys dream about sex. Gary knew exactly what he wanted from Sarah, but she romanticized the relationship into something it was not. Be careful what plays on the small screen of your mind; it will be acted out on the big screen of life.

List some warning signs that Sarah should have paid more attention to in developing her relationship with Gary. How did her thoughts influence her?

David looked at Bathsheba taking a bath and the thought process was enough to topple a king described as "a man after his [God's] own heart" (1 Sam. 13:14). If somebody greater than you and me falls by giving in to fantasy, then we can fall too. Don't watch movies with sexual themes or scenes; don't read books that stir up sexual feelings and ideas; choose carefully who you hang with.

*Do not give the devil a foothold (Eph 4:27).*

2. **LOOK BEYOND the glitter of TV AND MOVIES by asking God to CHANGE YOUR "WANT TO'S."**
In 1 John 1:9 we are told to "confess our sins." Literally, we are being asked to "agree with" God about our sin, to have the same feeling toward it as He does. Sarah allowed herself to compare her sinful behavior by what others were doing instead of God's Word. This way it didn't seem so bad. The casual references to sex on television sometimes leaves us thinking that illicit sexual behavior is "normal."

Do you compare what you do by what others are doing, or do you compare what you do by God's Word?

- Others
- God's Word

While we flirt and fantasize with sexual sin, God abhors it. He absolutely hates it! If we submit our hearts to Him and ask Him to make us see sin as He does, we'll be strong enough to run away from, rather than be drawn to, sexual sin.

Pray and ask God to help you see sin as He does and to help you keep your thoughts away from sin.

3. Don't be fooled—it can happen to anybody.
Never let self-assurance blind you to the possibility of an attack. Sarah mistakenly believed she was above the temptation and could remain in control regardless of the circumstances around her.

Sarah was a Christian and attended church. What is one thing she could have done as a Christian to remind herself to make right decisions? How would it have helped her?
Check the items that Sarah could have done to help her from getting into this situation. Sarah could have...

☐ said “No Way!” and stood firm in her answer.
☐ obeyed her mother.
☐ honestly evaluated why a 23-year-old-man would be interested in dating a 14-year-old-girl.
☐ spent more time with her Christian friends.
☐ asked God to help her with the temptation she was facing and realized that God does not expect us to face temptation alone.
☐ read God’s Word to see what direction it could give her about this type of temptation.

Peter was warned personally about his temptation to deny Jesus.

Peter declared, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” And all the other disciples said the same (Matt 26:35).
Peter DID deny Jesus—three times, even though earlier he declared that he would not. (See Matt. 26:70, 72, 74.) Just as Peter let self-assurance blind him to the possibility of an attack, Sarah let it blind her to the possibility of an attack. It can happen to anybody, it happened to Peter and Sarah. It can happen to you.

So if you THINK YOU ARE STANDING FIRM, BE CAREFUL that you don't fall (1 Cor. 10:12).

4. You've got to BELIEVE! You've got to CHOOSE.
God will give you the power to overcome temptation. When Sarah’s mother warned her about Gary, God was providing Sarah with protection and escape from the temptation. If she had listened, she would have avoided great heartache.

God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it (1 Cor. 10:13).

In the space below, give an example of a time when you were tempted, but God gave you a way to stand up under the temptation and to not give in to it.
5. GET ACCOUNTABLE.
Pray for a friend of the same sex who will hold you accountable for your actions and pray for you daily. This could be a fellow student, a Sunday School teacher, or a friend, but you must be committed to the promise.

Two are better than one... IF ONE FALLS DOWN, HIS FRIEND CAN HELP HIM UP (Eccl. 4:9).

Sarah's new church friends were obviously not part of her social life. She went on Sundays but hung out with a different crowd during the week. Share your temptations openly, pray about them together, and ask God for strength to move forward.

Fill in the blank with the name of a Christian friend that will help you be accountable to God for your actions. Pray for your friend.

My friend ____________________ will pray for me and will encourage me to do what God teaches when I am faced with temptation.

America was feeling confident and in control as a superpower. In an intercepted message, it was revealed that there would be a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. The message was marked “routine” rather than “urgent.” The warning had been received, but it was ignored. Tragically the surprise attack happened and it began World War II.

Just like America ignored the message of the surprise attack, Sarah ignored all of the warnings in her relationship with
Gary. She felt confident and in control of the situation, but she was setting herself up for a surprise attack.

Many students set themselves up for a surprise attack in their dating relationships. They feel in control and ignore warning signs in the relationship. When the surprise attack suddenly comes, they simply aren't ready.

**Tom**

Tom was a jock in high school he had a few flings with girls but he was content and was on the straight path. He grew into a man, full of confidence and experience. He was active in student council and was the social success he always thought he was. He was respected for his stand. He believed in abstinence and the designated driver. But he didn't know how to tell everyone about it.

Tom kept himself busy in places where alcohol flowed and casual sexual acquaintances were "normal." Unfortunately, one night of giving in to drinking a few beers destroyed the witness Tom had spent months building. He had a night of sex he could barely remember with a girl he didn't even know. Destroying a two year relationship with a Christian girl he really cared for. The guys didn't miss Tom's actions, and bragged to each other that they had finally "won" the battle with Tom. Tom's spirit was crushed and he went into depression for weeks.
Do you think Tom was setting himself up for a surprise attack? Where did Tom begin to go wrong?

Tom was the victim of a surprise attack because he continued to walk the battlefield in a mode of "routine." The Bible warns us to set our guard in an "urgent mode."

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet. 5:8).

Satan doesn't give up in his assaults and plans his attack on three areas: The battle for the mind, the body, and the soul.

1. THE MIND
There are many forces that can assault your mind. A few of these are:

- Alcohol and drugs
  The command to be sober literally means "to build a wall of protection around" and "to have a mind free from intoxicants." Alcohol and drugs hurt the mind by causing lack of judgment and inability to think or care about con-
sequences. One look around the school campus and you can clearly see how alcohol and drugs break down the best of intentions.

Some FACTS about alcohol:

**Fact:** Alcohol-related accidents are the leading cause of death for people ages 16-24.¹

**Fact:** According to one study, 90% of all rapes involving college students occurred when the victim or the attacker was under the influence of alcohol.²

**Fact:** Half of all 16-19 year olds were more likely to have sex if they and their partner had been drinking.³

**Fact:** The U.S. standard for legal intoxication is .10% of blood alcohol level, but research shows that brain functioning is impaired at .05%.⁴

*You may have already known some of the Facts above, but reread the Facts and write the one that you are most surprised to learn.*
• Anger and hurt feelings
Allowing anger and hurt feelings to grow within you can have an overwhelming power over decisions. Lives have been ruined in an effort to “get even” or boost self-esteem. The Bible has a lot to say about anger and hurt feelings.

An angry man stirs up dissension, and a hot-tempered one commits many sins (Prov. 29:22).

Only fools insist on quarreling... It is hard to stop a quarrel once it starts, so don’t let it begin (Prov. 20:3b; 17:14, TLB).

Sinners love to fight (Prov. 17:19, TLB).

A fool gets into fights. His mouth is his undoing! His words endanger him (Prov. 18:6-7, TLB).

A rebel doesn’t care about the facts. All he wants to do is yell (Prov. 18:2, TLB).

More Scripture verses are in the Book of Proverbs about the consequences of anger, revenge, and holding grudges. For a right attitude, look up Proverbs 19:11 and 20:3a in your Bible and write them below.
• Sinful habits
Are you watching movies or reading materials that fill your mind with sexual ideas? That’s like pouring gasoline on a fire. You become your own worst enemy. Confess these today with a full heart of repentance and deal with the nagging enemies once and for all.


2. THE BODY
Be vigilant is translated “to be morally alert.” This is more than saying no to sexual advances. It is carefully thinking through where to go on a date; who to go with; what type of message you give through your behavior, talk, the clothes you wear; and what situations to be in.

Virtue is defined as “moral excellence.” How do you accomplish it? With great effort and intention. One well-known sports executive confided in me—“I have girls calling me, offering me sex constantly. As a Christian single, I have to daily confirm my moral goals to myself before the temptation comes. And, I run...a lot!” Stay physically active to keep your body’s appetites under control. Direct your energies into projects and goals. This is a life characterized by the control of natural appetites and a commitment to the purpose of God.
On a separate sheet of paper, write a dating plan of “moral excellence.” Include where you will go, the person you will go with, what you will say, do, wear, and think. Use this dating plan as your guide to guard against temptation.

3. THE SOUL

The enemy of our souls is, of course, the devil. This particular enemy is more dangerous than any army of soldiers because his attack is for all eternity. Peter emphatically stresses the urgency to cast all your anxiety upon him [God] because he cares for you (1 Pet. 5:7). If you have already experienced a surprise attack in your moral life, the experience of repentance and salvation is available to cleanse and heal you. In fact, the battle for your soul has already been fought and won when Christ died on the cross for your sins and was raised from death to sit at the right hand of God. Be sure today that you have received Christ as your personal Savior by committing your heart to Him and accepting the gift of His death on the cross. This can be done in five easy steps.

**Step 1:** Admit that you are a sinner. (Rom. 3:23)

**Step 2:** Believe that Jesus is God’s Son who died for your sins, was buried, and then raised from the dead. (Rom. 5:8)
Step 3: Commit your life to Him by asking Him to be the Lord of your life. (Rom. 10:9-10; Phil. 2:9-11)

Step 4: Pray for salvation. Dear God, I realize I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died for me on the cross and was raised from death to provide forgiveness and eternal life. Please save me as I turn from my sins to Jesus. Amen.

Step 5: Now you must stand up in celebration of the victory by living for Him and doing the will of God. Tell someone about the choice you just made.

Jesus warned Peter, “Satan has asked to sift you as wheat.” Satan also asked God for permission to test Job (Job 1:6-12). Temptations, my friend, are everywhere, and we must set a guard for the mind, the body, and the soul. It is eternally dangerous to flirt with temptation.

DON'T PLAY GAMES WITH STUFF THAT PLAYS FOR KEEPS.

Ask God to help you on life's battlefield of temptation to always be ready for any surprise attacks and to have and follow a plan for moral excellence.

3 "When Students Use Alcohol, Look Behind the Bottle," USA Today and AP, April 14.
SESSION THREE:

How Far Is
Too Far on a Date?

If you worked through the first two sessions and are still wondering how far is too far, you need to go back to session one again. (As in Monopoly®, you passed GO! but you didn't collect your $200.) Students who experiment sexually and justify promiscuity are using the wrong standard to start with. Sure, you're keeping your clothes on, but your hands are running everywhere. Does that make it right? Or your clothes are off, but you're not actually engaging in intercourse. Aren't you "technically" still a virgin?

Whoa, right there! You've missed the whole point. Remember, when you make a stand for virtue, you are pursuing moral excellence, not moral "maybe."

IT'S NOT WHAT YOU'RE DOING,
IT'S WHO YOU'RE BECOMING.
The Brakes Don't Always Work
I'll never forget Rosemary from down the street. We were both 15, and I thought she was the finest thing ever! Whenever she came out of the house, I'd race my motorcycle to her driveway, slam on the brakes and spray gravel all over her. I did this about five times thinking surely she'd be impressed even though she was black and blue from the stones! One day my grand display of power back-fired when the brakes failed. I gripped the bike and put all my energy into the brakes, but nothing happened. I skidded past Rosemary, through the next door neighbor's yard, and into the creek behind the house. Rosemary and the rest of the neighborhood had a great laugh as I pushed the motorcycle home, sloshing water and mud as I walked. I learned that day that in spite of good intentions, the brakes don't always work!

Write about an embarrassing experience you've had when you were trying to impress someone.

Once you begin riding on the immoral fast lane, you just might find out your brakes can't act fast enough. You can rationalize that you aren't going as

How Far Is Too Far on a Date? 35
fast as some others, but you’re still speeding and in danger of going out of control.

Girls and guys are different. Oh, you noticed! But in many ways other than just physical. Generally speaking, to a girl, intimacy involves hugging and snuggling. She loves to cuddle, to be held, and hear “sweet talk.” Much of her sexual needs are fulfilled in this way. But for a guy, this same hugging and snuggling is anything but contentment. Instead it is a beginning that longs to be completed in a sexual act. This, of course, can pose a great dilemma. She is happy kissing for an hour, he thinks this hour is just a warm up!

Yes, keeping your sexual feelings under control is difficult, but it is not impossible! However, if you allow yourselves to constantly snack on appetizers, soon your appetite will be craving the whole enchilada! Don’t get started making out when there is no possible way to please God.

How far is too far? Anything that stirs up sexual feelings in you that cannot be righteously fulfilled is too far.

Look at this chart from Josh McDowell found in the True Love Waits Bible (p 1105). Physical affection is a progressive process—one stage naturally leads to the next.
Abstinence
Holding Hands
Hugging
Casual Kissing

Prolonged Kissing
Light Petting
Heavy Petting
Intercourse

Let's go back to the beginning and think in the future tense. The goal is moral excellence. When you ask the question, "How far is too far?" you are really asking, "How far away can I stray without changing the goal?" Write your goal. See the goal with your heart. Now what should the question be?

"How can I keep moving toward the goal?"

Experimenting sexually with or without clothing can only move you away from your pursuit of moral excellence. In fact, when you pursue an intimate relationship with God, the Holy Spirit within you will caution you strongly when immorality takes over the mind.

The goal is MORAL EXCELLENCE. To achieve the goal, begin at the end—to stay strong, you have to WALK STRONG.
1. DEVELOP A LIFE OF PRAYER. Prayer is communication with God, the author and perfector of our faith (Heb. 12:2). Talk with Him daily about your goals, your dreams, your hopes. Jesus gave us examples of prayer.

Read John 17. Jesus knew His strength came through prayer. He was wise enough to share His struggles in prayer. Identify these points in His talks with the Father:

- Stated His goal
- Struggles in reaching the goal
- Discussion of events along the way
- Recommitment to truth

Read Matthew 6:9-13, Jesus gives us the direct command to pray. Write the corresponding verse to these elements of prayer:

- Praise—Matthew 6:
- Commitment to God's will—Matthew 6:
- Faith for God's provision—Matthew 6:
- Forgiveness of sin—Matthew 6:
- Power over temptation and the evil one—Matthew 6:
- Affirmation of truth—Matthew 6:
2. KNOW THAT GOD UNDERSTANDS WHAT YOU’RE GOING THROUGH. Remember that Jesus walked the earth as a man. He was a single man surrounded by popularity and rejection by family and friends. He definitely experienced temptation in the flesh and depression in the spirit. Don’t ever think He is asking too much of you. Remind yourself that He left heaven and came to earth for the purpose of experiencing your pain and giving His life that you might live forever.

We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin (Heb. 4:15).

“How can I find strength to overcome my inner struggles?” you ask. The answer to your question is found in Hebrews 4:16. Memorize it; use it daily.

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need (Heb. 4:16).
Read Hebrews 4:16. Rewrite the verse in your own words explaining what it means to you.

Reread Hebrews 4:16. Write the verse below. Now, practice until you can say the verse from memory.
3. BELIEVE THAT GOD IS ON YOUR SIDE.
Help is on the way. You can read God's promises throughout the Word. Now, decide. Do you believe them or not? Don't say you do, yet talk about helpless feelings to say no to sexual fantasies or actions. You can choose to be under the influence of the most powerful force on earth 24 hours a day. Think about the awesomeness of that! The Creator of the universe, the One who hung the moon, made the stars, and told the seas "Stop, you've gone far enough." This is your God who loves you and cheers for you.

Therefore He is able to save completely those who come to God through Him, because He always lives to intercede for them (Heb. 7:25).

**Read** Hebrews 7:25. In the list of characteristics below, check the characteristics of Christ that you see in Hebrews 7:25.

- [ ] trustworthy
- [ ] sincere
- [ ] helpful
- [ ] savior
- [ ] patient
- [ ] righteous
- [ ] eternal
- [ ] able
- [ ] consistent
- [ ] peacemaker
- [ ] caring
- [ ] pure
4. **CHOOSE ONE STANDARD: GOD.**

Decide today there will be no other standard for your pursuit of moral excellence. Society changes its moral code like fashion designers change styles—whatever the majority says is good. The human mind cannot produce an objective standard of truth and morality because it is influenced by individual experience, it changes, and it has a human time span. The real danger comes when we start to compare what we are tempted to do with what others are doing.

God’s nature and character define truth. God is truth. Everything we call moral, every good thing is from God. The reason some things are right and some things are wrong is because there exists a Creator, Jehovah God, and He is a righteous God.

God is the standard we need.

To what standard have you been comparing your behavior up until now?

- My own ideas of right and wrong
- My parents and what they say
- My friends and what they say
- My teachers and what they say
- My society and what it says
- Other ____________________________
Don't fall for the stuff being peddled in most sex ed. classes, on TV, or by your friends. They weaken the warning by saying, "You have to be emotionally ready for sex. Wait until you are older. It's OK as long as you are 'safe.'" Students can debate all day: "Am I ready? Am I old enough for sex?" Stop wondering. God doesn't beat around the bush. In fact, a misunderstanding is impossible:

It is God's will...that you avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable (1 Thess. 4:3-4).

ANY QUESTIONS ON THAT ONE?

X To what standard will you compare your behavior from now on?

☐ my own ideas of right and wrong
☐ my parents and what they say
☐ my friends and what they say
☐ my teachers and what they say
☐ my society and what it says
☐ my church and what it says
☐ God's standard
5. AIM FOR HOLINESS. The word holy is found 600 times in different forms throughout the Bible. Do you think we should check it out?

"Be holy, because I [Jesus] am holy" (1 Pet. 1:16).

Holiness is taken from the root word hale, meaning "wholeness, healthy, fulfilled." It is to be separated from sin and dedicated to God. This is truly God's plan for every life. We are told to make every effort to...be holy (Heb. 12:14) which means we need to seriously work at it.

How can we make every effort to develop holiness? The four steps toward holiness are:

1. Accept the challenge. Decide to train for holiness.

2. Know what is expected. Christians must know what is expected from holy acts that please God.

3. Obey the Instructor. Christians must follow God's instructions and directions.

4. Be a part of the team. Christians can bond and draw strength and help from other Christians in their search for holiness.

Who is our example? Jesus gave us many heroes and heroines in the Bible as well as stories of those who gave in to temptation. These can certainly offer wisdom and strength. We can pursue holiness because we have:

• The example of Christ: Be imitators of God (Eph. 5:1).
God is not asking us to do the impossible. He is asking us to respond to all that He is already doing in us and for us to help us be holy. He, the Father, is in us, His Son is in us, His Holy Spirit is in us—all working to make us more like God.

God has given you everything He has, for everything you need so you can walk with Him and be like Him. How are you responding to Him and what He has provided for you?

• The promise of Christ working in us: For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose (Phil. 2:13).

Holiness releases all He is into all we are, to bring us to all we can become, and all we can achieve. It's a choice, and it's a choice each of us makes. Will we believe Him?
It's a choice, and it's a personal choice. Will you believe Him?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

• The Holy Spirit to guide us: He will guide you into all truth (John 16:13).

Holiness is not just a set of rules and regulations. It's not taking out of life everything that brings happiness and joy. It's not a lot of restrictions and limitations. Holiness is God's total fulfillment in the one life God gave each of us. Holiness ensures God's best for us. But, lack of holiness guarantees loss, brokenness, emptiness, pain, incompleteness, sorrow, darkness, and death.

• The power of God available to us: Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us (Eph. 3:20).

Write praises to God...

...for making His power available to us.

...for giving more than we ask.

...for doing more than we ask.

...for working within us.
- The purpose of God: For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight (Eph. 1:4).

By God’s grace we are enabled to adopt a lifestyle of holiness, that is, obedience to the will of God. With His help, by guarding our minds and emotions, controlling our appetites and desires, we develop holy habits that will remain with us as we grow.

Habits affect character, and character affects the choices you make, and the choices you make will determine the shape and direction and outcome of your life. Holy habits of prayer, Bible study, and worship are essential in a life of holiness.

What habits are you creating in your life? Are they leading you toward your goal of moral excellence?
When you have a decision to make, who do you consult?

☐ God
☐ Your parents
☐ Your friends
☐ Other

What are you doing to cultivate a heart for God?

☐ Bible study
☐ Prayer
☐ Worship
☐ Other

When you choose to live your life in vital relationship with God in Jesus Christ, (a holy life) you can experience no limit to what God can do through you.
SESSION FOUR:

"Is Sex Wrong if You’re Really in Love?"

"Is sex wrong if you’re really in love?" (Enquiring minds want to know.) That’s a question I get asked often. Most people when they ask it say, “But we are really in love. We’re committed. This is true love. Surely this is different. I mean, I couldn’t even begin to put into words how our love is.”

RATIONALIZATION FACTOR

Ah, yes, the Rationalization Factor. The American Heritage Dictionary defines rationalize as “to devise self-satisfying but incorrect reasons for one’s behavior.” Contemporary language might say, “I do what I want because it is really what I want to do. I will find a way to explain it.”

The greatest example is when Satan asked Eve if she was sure of what God said. Maybe He really did not mean what He actually said. After all, maybe she misunderstood or God was mistaken.
She took this new information, weighed it against God's instruction, and decided God was trying to cramp her style. She rationalized that this fruit would benefit her and therefore it was a good thing for her, not a bad thing. She learned the hard way that God's instruction was to save her life not ruin it. (See Gen. 2:16–3:7.) (Now before you jump Eve's case, given the same set of circumstances, you would have probably done the same thing. Most of us do it everyday. We try to outsmart God with the decisions in our lives.)

Whether constructing a building or our lives, the first step is always the same—lay a solid foundation. Our foundation is not a thing, but a person, and His name is Jesus.

No one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3:11).

Take a look at Matthew 7:24-28. You know the story. Jesus compared those who heard Him and obeyed with those who heard Him and decided to do it their own way. See if you can match up the foolish and wise characteristics. Put a (F) for foolish and (W) for wise beside the correct description.

____ Does what Jesus said was right to do.
____ Seems to think sand is a good foundation.
____ Hears the words of Christ and disobeys.
____ Builds his life upon the rock of God.

50 Until You Say I Do
Pretty easy exercise, but it seems that this one is easy on paper, but we fail miserably when it comes to applying this to our lives. Stop building on the sand and build your life on the rock.

Sexual purity can only be determined by God's standard. So many students stand strong in many areas, but allow the area of sexuality to be their downfall. The winds howl, the floods come, and our moral houses crash. We are left devastated and lonely.

Review: God's standard for sexual immorality that you learned in Session Three, page 42. Write God's standard below.

Remember, we are to be holy, because our foundation, Jesus Christ, is holy. Now that we've got the foundation secure, let's talk about some practical issues. Many psychologists believe that the average female student falls in and out of love at least 10 times. The male student falls in and out of love about half as many times. Obviously, if you give yourself sexually to everyone you are “in love” with, you will be sexually and emotionally scarred, as well as spiritually bankrupted. As a result, the possibility of a fulfilling rela-
tionship with the mate God has chosen for you becomes less.

**A STEP FURTHER**

Go a step further. Now you're engaged, or at least thinking about it. Things are serious and you know for sure this is "the one." Now you're wondering—it's going to be just us two forever, why wait any longer? Surely God knows this is different. You can be sure He does know. Remember, God sees the future the way we see yesterday. God's intention is that you enjoy the gift of sexual intimacy; in fact, He is the creator of it. He asks that you wait until marriage. Why would He do such a thing? Who does He think He is? God! That's exactly who He is. And it is in our best interest not to forget it!

Take a look at three stories where they decided to take things into their own hands.

**MARIANNE**

Marianne grew up in the church where her dad was the pastor. She was in college before seriously dating, and now was engaged to Jeff, a wonderful Christian guy. Both had the same goals and dreams, both were committed to full-time Christian service. They stayed morally pure by mutual consent, but things started to heat up a bit after he gave her the engagement ring. They counted down the months to graduation and marriage and soon found themselves going farther and farther physically. They discussed it and decided this was natural since they were engaged and soon began having occasional sexual intercourse. Marianne got pregnant with five months left before the wedding. She cried as she thought how disappointed her parents would be, but reasoned she and Jeff could move up the wedding
date to avoid total embarrassment. Imagine how she felt when Jeff said he had begun having second thoughts a few months ago and didn’t think it was a good idea to get married after all.

JASON
Jessica and Jason had been dating for two months. Jason realized he was falling in love with Jessica. She was a Christian. She was active in her church. Jessica talked often to Jason about the Lord and how much she wanted to live a holy life. She told Jason about signing a True Love Waits commitment card at a rally last year. Jessica had made it clear that when she married she would only marry someone that was also committed to being sexually abstinent until marriage. Jason didn’t know how to tell Jessica that he already suffered from a sexually transmitted disease because of an earlier mistake. And he wasn’t sure he was as totally committed to being sexually abstinent as Jessica was. Jason knew that once he told Jessica of his earlier sexual activity she would never consider marrying him. He wished he had made a commitment to be sexually abstinent. Jason wished he had met Jessica earlier in his life. He was sorry that he couldn’t erase the past and that he would have to live with the consequences of his choices.

LINDA
I noticed Linda’s engagement ring and her obviously pregnant shape when she came to talk to me. She cried as she explained—“Don and I were so in love. My parents loved him; he was everything I ever dreamed about and prayed for. I was glad I had waited to give myself to this one man. As we counted down the days to the wedding, we began to feel married. Buying our rings, setting up the apartment, and planning for the future all solid-
ified our intentions. That’s why when we slept together that night it didn’t seem wrong. A few days later Don was killed in a car accident. He never knew that I was pregnant, and my child will never know his daddy. Please share my story with other students. I hope it will save them the pain and shame I live with.”

Are you thinking, Those are tragic stories, but we’re going to use birth control. There it is. Rationalization, again! The bottom line is—you don’t know what tomorrow holds. Only God does. He says wait, please! OK, you know what He says, but why does He say it? You can be sure the Creator has a good reason.

*Pick* one of the stories about Marianne, Jason, or Linda. Rewrite it using God’s standard for the individuals in the story.

Sexual intercourse provides a level of intimacy that cannot be compared. It is a gift created by God for your enjoyment. But because it is such a powerful pleasure, it can easily overtake the other areas of your relationship. This intense intimacy can be mistaken for love and stifle growth in a couple. Many couples look back in marriage and see that they never really got along great in between the sexual encounters before marriage. They didn’t really know the little things and habits about each other. They had become so distracted physically that they never introduced themselves emotionally or spiritually. God has a perfect plan and purpose for every area of our lives.
God has a plan and purpose for you—even on your dates. Stop sexual temptation from taking over by planning activities before you ever leave on the date. Let's practice doing that now. Use this time to plan a date.

**Set personal limits:** (Ask God to help you remember your commitment to sexual purity. Let your date know of your commitment.)

"I commit to sexual abstinence from this day until I enter a biblical marriage relationship."
Signed

**Set time:** (Set a time to start the date and a time to finish the date. Don't allow too much time alone—either in a car or at someone's house.)
Time: From: To:

**Plan activity:** (go out to dinner; movie; miniature golf; skating; mall; student group activity)
Activity selected:

**Consider a double or group date with Christian friends:**
Names of friends:
The Theft
I'm reminded of a trip to that my family made with me to Romania. My little girl brought a beautiful blue satin nightgown to give as a gift to whoever the Lord led her to that night. She sat in the stadium bleachers talking with people, taking in the sights, and excited about the service. One little girl plopped down beside her and stayed very close. She thought, This is the one, isn't she, Lord? She's the one I am to give the gown to. Just then, something odd happened. The little girl spotted the gown in our bag and tried to steal it! Can you imagine? She was trying to steal what was intended to be freely and graciously given.

The Gift
So many well-meaning couples end up stealing sexual pleasure instead of waiting to enjoy this wonderfully created gift. God's intention is that you present yourselves to one another on your wedding night as a special, pure gift of love. From there you will grow together, explore together, and experience the fullness of His creation together. Are you willing to trust in God's way rather than your own?

If you have committed eternity to Christ through salvation, then you must commit each day to Him. If you are expecting Him to bless you with a wonderful future, then you must be willing to live God's way today.
My steps have held to your paths; my feet have not slipped (Ps. 17:5).

Have you ever received a gift, but before you could open it, someone told you the contents of the gift in detail, spoiling your surprise? How did it make you feel? Were you disappointed? Were you less interested in it? Were you less excited about it? Why?

Read Psalm 37 below. When you commit to sexual abstinence, you are allowing God's Word to become real in your life. This decision is truly an act of faith in God's Word and should be sealed in prayer. This psalm gives instruction and tells of the gift God promises as a result of obedience to Him. (If you are in a relationship, read Ps. 37 together as you discuss your decision for sexual purity. Pray together.)
Trust in the Lord, and do good; dwell in the land, and enjoy safe pasture. Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this (Ps. 37:1-5).

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him (Ps. 37:7).

Read the verses; talk about them; and seal your commitment to God and to each other in prayer. This gift of patience and waiting may seem senseless to others, but presented to God it is a precious offering. If you are dating, be sure both of you are participating in this commitment. It takes two, baby! The decision must be made together.

Too many times, we focus our energy in a dating relationship on what we can’t do, instead of what we can do. Be creative with activities you can do.

Activities

**Exercise:** Walk, run, do aerobics, ride bicycles, lift weights, get outside and go crazy. Burn off some sexual tension.

**Volunteer:** Paint houses for the disabled or elderly. Feed the homeless. Become involved in providing meals for the
elderly. Baby sit for single moms. Direct some of that intense love to others.

**Plan Group Fun:** Group dates can be lots of fun and take pressure off of you and the other couples involved. Think about it—other couples are probably experiencing the same struggles.

**Attend Conferences and Concerts Together:** You'll come out with positive images and grow together emotionally, mentally, and spiritually.

**Take a Class:** Learn a craft, a language, or a new computer program.

**Start a Hobby:** Build and fly kites together. Take up painting, co-ed sports team, or ceramics. This gives you an outlet for creative energy.

**Study the Bible Together:** Grow in your faith and commitment to Christ. Do this in an area that is open and accessible to others. Some Bible studies have become sessions on the study of God's creation and I am not talking trees and grass here. Keep your eyes on the Creator and not His human creation during these Bible studies.

You have been presented with several activities. List others that you would like to add:
Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up (Eccl. 4:9,10).

Stay involved in what God is doing in your relationship, family, church, and community. Maintaining a proper perspective of Him being involved in our relationships will deliver us from much harm and frustration.

Remember, it is not wrong to be tempted. It is sin however, to give in to the temptation that comes our way.

Take a look at James 1:13-15 in your Bible. There is a great warning there. See the progression that temptation takes. Fill in the blanks.

When tempted, no one should say, _______ is tempting me.” For God cannot be _______ of evil, nor does he _______ anyone; but each _______ is tempted when, by his _______ evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives _______ to _______; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to _______.

His plan is perfect and His warnings are true. He wants the best for us and is our biggest fan.

Sexual purity—IT BEGINS IN THE HEART AND OVERTAKES THE MIND.

60 Until You Say I Do
Appendix B

Survey Instrument
TRUE LOVE WAITS

1. **What is your sex?** *(circle one)*
   - Male
   - Female

2. **What is your age range?** *(mark one)*
   - _____12-15
   - _____16-18

3. **How long have you been attending this church?** *(fill in)*  ____years  ____months

4. **What is your definition of sex?** *(write answer below)*

5. **Who would you go to (such as mom, dad, God, pastor, sister, brother, coach, counselor or teacher) if you have a question or concern about sex?** *(write answer below)*

6. **Are there any other people you would go to if you have a question or concern about sex?** *(please list as many people as you want)*

7. **Place an X next to all the following sex-related topics you have discussed in church:**
   - _____Menstruation
   - _____Pregnancy
   - _____Intercourse
   - _____Birth Control
   - _____Specific methods of birth control
   - _____HIV/AIDS Prevention
   - _____Prevention of other STDs
   - _____Masturbation
   - _____Homosexuality
   - _____Romantic Relationships
   - _____Abstinence
   - _____What to look for in a mate
   - _____Dating
   - _____Abortion

QUESTIONS CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE
8. **Place an X on the top two (2) (most effective) way to prevent pregnancy 100% (ALL) of the time? (choose only one)**

- [ ] Condoms
- [ ] Birth control pills
- [ ] Other forms of birth control

- [ ] Pulling out before ejaculation (before "coming")
- [ ] Abstaining from sex (no sex)

**Other:** _____________________________
please write in blank

9. **Place an X on the top two (2) (most effective) way to prevent the spread of STD 100% of (ALL) the time? STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) include gonorrhea, syphilis, chlamydia, herpes and AIDS. (choose only one)**

- [ ] Condoms
- [ ] Birth control pills
- [ ] Other forms of birth control

- [ ] Pulling out before ejaculation (before "coming")
- [ ] Abstaining from sex (no sex)

**Other:** _____________________________
please write in blank

10. **Do you think that you are responsible enough to be involved in a pregnancy at this time in your life?**

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

11. **Do you think that you are responsible enough to become a dad or a mom at this time in your life?**

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

QUESTIONS CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE
NOTE: Please answer the following questions even if you have never done the behavior asked.

12. Have you ever spent a long time “making out” (kissing, hugging or touching someone, in a romantic, intimate or sexual manner)? (check Yes or No and then follow the arrows)

No, go to question 13, (skip 12a & 12b) Yes, continue below

12a. How many different persons have you “made out” with in your life?

12b. In the last 6 months how many different persons have you “made out” with

13. How much time do you spend thinking about “making out”?
(choose best one answer)

I never think about it Hardly ever think about it
I think about a couple of times a week I think about it once or twice a day
I think about it on and off all day I think about it all the time

14. Do you think it is o.k. for people your age to “make out”? (check one answer)

No, people my age are too young to be “making out”
Yes, I think it is o.k. for people my age to be “making out”
Other: please write in blank
TRUE LOVE WAITS

15. **In general,** at what age (in years) do you think it is o.k. for people to “make out”? *(fill in)*

   _______ Years Old  _______ Don’t Know  ___ Other: ____________________________
   please write in blank

16. **In the next 6 months,** do you intend to “make out”? *(check one answer)*

   _____ Yes  _____ No

17. **Have you ever masturbated** (stimulation of sex organs)?
   *(check Yes or No and then follow the arrows)*

   ←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←←→
TRUE LOVE WAITS

20. In general, at what age (in years) do you think it is o.k. for people to "masturbate"? (fill in)

____ Years Old  ____ Don’t Know  ____ Other: __________________________
please write in blank

21. In the next 6 months, do you intend to "masturbate"? (check one answer)

____ Yes  ____ No

22. Have you ever had "sex" or "gone all the way" (had vaginal intercourse)? (check Yes or No and then follow the arrows)

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23. **How much time do you spend thinking about having “sex” (vaginal intercourse)? (choose best one answer)**

- ___ I never think about it
- ___ Hardly ever think about it
- ___ I think about a couple of times a week
- ___ I think about it once or twice a day
- ___ I think about it on and off all day
- ___ I think about it all the time

24. **Do you think it is o.k. for people your age to have “sex” (vaginal intercourse)? (check one answer)**

- ___ No, people my age are too young to be have “sex” (vaginal intercourse)
- ___ Yes, I think it is o.k. for people my age to have “sex” (vaginal intercourse)
- ___ Other: ___________________________

  please write in blank

25. **In general, at what age (in years) do you think it is o.k. for people to have “sex” (vaginal intercourse)? (fill in)**

- ____ Years Old  ____ Don’t Know  ____ Other: ___________________________

  please write in blank

26. **In the next 6 months, do you intend to have “sex” (vaginal intercourse)? (check one answer)**

- ___ Yes  ____ No

QUESTIONS CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE
TRUE LOVE WAITS

27. Give us your opinion about sex between people in different situations. (circle the mark closest to your answer)

For people on a first date, I think sex is ....:

| Good | | | | | | | | Bad |
| Fun | | | | | | | | Not Fun |
| Inappropriate | | | | | | | | Appropriate |
| Healthy | | | | | | | | Not Healthy |
| Not Sinful | | | | | | | | Sinful |
| Scary | | | | | | | | Not Scary |
| Enjoyable | | | | | | | | Not Enjoyable |
| Unforgivable | | | | | | | | Forgivable |

For people who are going together for a while, I think sex is ....:

| Good | | | | | | | | Bad |
| Fun | | | | | | | | Not Fun |
| Inappropriate | | | | | | | | Appropriate |
| Healthy | | | | | | | | Not Healthy |
| Not Sinful | | | | | | | | Sinful |
| Scary | | | | | | | | Not Scary |
| Enjoyable | | | | | | | | Not Enjoyable |
| Unforgivable | | | | | | | | Forgivable |

QUESTIONS CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE
TRUE LOVE WAITS

For people who are engaged to be married, I think sex is ......:

| Good | | | | | | | | Bad |
| Fun | | | | | | | | Not Fun |
| Inappropriate | | | | | | | | Appropriate |
| Healthy | | | | | | | | Not Healthy |
| Not Sinful | | | | | | | | Sinful |
| Scary | | | | | | | | Not Scary |
| Enjoyable | | | | | | | | Not Enjoyable |
| Unforgivable | | | | | | | | Forgivable |

28. Tell us what you think the Pastor thinks about sex between two people in different situations. (circle the mark closest to your answer)

For people on a first date, I think the Pastor thinks sex is ......:

| Good | | | | | | | | Bad |
| Fun | | | | | | | | Not Fun |
| Inappropriate | | | | | | | | Appropriate |
| Healthy | | | | | | | | Not Healthy |
| Not Sinful | | | | | | | | Sinful |
| Scary | | | | | | | | Not Scary |
| Enjoyable | | | | | | | | Not Enjoyable |
| Unforgivable | | | | | | | | Forgivable |

QUESTIONS CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE
TRUE LOVE WAITS

For people who are going together for a while, I think the Pastor thinks sex is .....

| Good      | | | | | | | | Bad    |
| Fun       | | | | | | | | Not Fun |
| Inappropriate | | | | | | | | Appropriate |
| Healthy   | | | | | | | | Not Healthy |
| Not Sinful| | | | | | | | Sinful |
| Scary     | | | | | | | | Not Scary |
| Enjoyable | | | | | | | | Not Enjoyable |
| Unforgivable | | | | | | | | Forgivable |

For people who are engaged to be married, I think the Pastor thinks sex is .....

| Good      | | | | | | | | Bad    |
| Fun       | | | | | | | | Not Fun |
| Inappropriate | | | | | | | | Appropriate |
| Healthy   | | | | | | | | Not Healthy |
| Not Sinful| | | | | | | | Sinful |
| Scary     | | | | | | | | Not Scary |
| Enjoyable | | | | | | | | Not Enjoyable |
| Unforgivable | | | | | | | | Forgivable |

QUESTIONS CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE
TRUE LOVE WAITS

29. **Tell us what you think your Best Friend thinks about sex between two people in different situations.** *(circle the mark closest to your answer)*

For **people on a first date**, I think my Best Friend thinks sex is .....

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For **people who are going together for a while**, I think my **Best friend** thinks sex is .....

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QUESTIONS CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE
TRUE LOVE WAITS

For people who are engaged to be married, I think my **Best Friend** thinks sex is .....

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**QUESTIONS CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE**
TRUE LOVE WAITS

For people who are going together for a while, I think God thinks sex is ......:

| Good     | | | | | | | | Bad |
|---------|------------|
| Fun     | | | | | | | | Not Fun |
| Inappropriate | | | | | | | | Appropriate |
| Healthy | | | | | | | | Not Healthy |
| Not Sinful | | | | | | | | Sinful |
| Scary | | | | | | | | Not Scary |
| Enjoyable | | | | | | | | Not Enjoyable |
| Unforgivable | | | | | | | | Forgivable |

For people who are engaged to be married, I think God thinks sex is ......:

| Good     | | | | | | | | Bad |
|---------|------------|
| Fun     | | | | | | | | Not Fun |
| Inappropriate | | | | | | | | Appropriate |
| Healthy | | | | | | | | Not Healthy |
| Not Sinful | | | | | | | | Sinful |
| Scary | | | | | | | | Not Scary |
| Enjoyable | | | | | | | | Not Enjoyable |
| Unforgivable | | | | | | | | Forgivable |

QUESTIONS CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE
31. Tell us what you think your **Parents** think about sex between two people in different situations. *(circle the mark closest to your answer)*

For people on a first date, I think my **Parents** think sex is .....:

| Good     | | | | | | | | | | Bad         |
| Fun      | | | | | | | | | | Not Fun     |
| Inappropriate | | | | | | | | | | Appropriate |
| Healthy  | | | | | | | | | | Not Healthy |
| Not Sinful | | | | | | | | | | Sinful      |
| Scary    | | | | | | | | | | Not Scary   |
| Enjoyable | | | | | | | | | | Not Enjoyable |
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For people who are going together for a while, I think the my **Parents** think sex is .....:

| Good     | | | | | | | | | | Bad         |
| Fun      | | | | | | | | | | Not Fun     |
| Inappropriate | | | | | | | | | | Appropriate |
| Healthy  | | | | | | | | | | Not Healthy |
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| Scary    | | | | | | | | | | Not Scary   |
| Enjoyable | | | | | | | | | | Not Enjoyable |
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QUESTIONS CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE
TRUE LOVE WAITS

For people who are engaged to be married, I think my Parents think sex is ......:

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<td></td>
<td>Not Enjoyable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Forgivable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

32. How honest have you been in your answers in this survey? (check one)

_____ Totally (100%) honest   _____ Somewhat honest  _____ Not honest at all

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME!