

## Restore Free to Be

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EDITOR: On Feb. 7, your paper ran the article "Abstinence program gets results." Here in Sonoma County, there has been a debate since last May regarding the Free to Be abstinence education program.

The randomized control study just published in the Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine confirms what many already know. Abstinence education delays teen sex without decreasing condom use. What is interesting about the study is that other approaches, including safe sex education, do not show the same results.

As an OB/GYN physician in the community for 35 years, I have seen the consequences of early teen sex all too often. These include sexually transmitted diseases, exposure to HPV, precancerous cervical dysplasia and unintended pregnancy.

Considering the over-sexualized culture today's teens must navigate and the pressures they face on a daily basis to be part of the crowd, keeping the Free to Be youth-led program in our public schools is more important than ever.

I hope your readers will join me in contacting school leaders and asking them to invite this powerful, impacting program back into Sonoma County classrooms. Our youth need all the support and encouragement we can provide for making healthy life decisions.

DR. LEN KLAY

Board member, Free to Be

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