

## PEI Youth Sexual Health Facts

- Of high school students, who have engaged in sex, 33% said they had unplanned sex while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Females between the ages of 15 - 19 years showed a very high incidence rate of chlamydia in the 2002 Provincial Health Report.
- Youth are the critical population group in the Atlantic Provinces in the area of Sexual Health.
- Critical issues for youth in sexual health are, unplanned pregnancy, STIs, and sexual violence.
- Youth tell us they feel alienated in the adult world on this subject. That support is very limited, in schools, in access to medical health services and in the community in general.
- PEI has the least sexual health services in the Atlantic Region.
- Youth, when asked what is the top sexuality and reproductive health issues for youth, stated, unplanned pregnancy, STIs and feelings of invincibility blind them to making safe decisions.

### SOURCES:

*Environmental Scan of Sexual and Reproductive Health in the Atlantic Provinces*, Joan M. Campbell, April 1999 and Drug Use Survey of PEI Student, Dalhousie University, 2002

## Members of the PEI Caucus on Youth Healthy Sexuality

- Adventure Group
- AIDS PEI
- Boys & Girls Club of Charlottetown
- CARAL: Canadian Abortion Rights Action League
- Department of Education, Family Life & Guidance Counselors Divisions
- Department of Health - Public Health Nursing - Public Health Evaluation Division
- Department of Education
- EPWIC: East Prince Women's Information Centre
- Interministerial Women's Secretariat
- Kings Region Child and Family Services
- Parents Representation
- PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women
- PEI Rape and Sexual & Assault Crisis Centre
- PFLAG: Parents & Friends of Lesbians & Gays
- Queens Region Public Health Nursing
- SAGE: Survivor Advocacy Group for Empowerment
- UPEI Nursing Department
- Youth Representatives

We believe creating common ground and a comfort zone are the keys to establishing a safe, healthy, fun and non-judgmental environment for youth to develop healthy sexuality.

## PEI Caucus on Youth Sexual Health



### Youth-Led Sexual Health Policy on PEI Project

A project of  
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The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official views of Health Canada.

## Background

Health Canada published the *Environmental Scan of Sexual & Reproductive Health in the Atlantic Provinces* in 1999. Most urgent findings pointed to youth unplanned pregnancy, youth STI's and youth sexual violence. Also, PEI's sexual health services and education ranked the lowest in the Region.

### What We Mean by Healthy Sexuality

Sexuality is "...an integral part of the personality of everyone: man, woman, and child. It is a basic need and an aspect of being human, from the very young to very old, that cannot be separated from other aspects of human life. It is in the energy that motivates us to find love, contact, feel warmth, and intimacy; it is expressed in the way we feel, move, touch and are touched; it is about being sensual as well as sexual. It is the capacity to control and enjoy sexual and reproductive behavior in accordance with a social and personal ethic. Sexuality influences thoughts, feelings actions and interactions and thereby our mental and physical health. Since health is a fundamental human right, so must sexual health also be a basic human right.." For a more complete definition please visit

[www.wnpei.org](http://www.wnpei.org) Source: A compilation of World Health Organization's definitions.

Our work reflects Health Canada's Sexual Health Guidelines and the World Health Organization's definitions on youth sexual health.

## PEI Caucus on Youth Sexual Health

In 2000, The Caucus was formed and continues to consists of youth, parents, community and government representatives from across the Island. The Caucus is working to promote healthy sexuality through partnerships, community capacity building and public policy changes.

**Guiding Belief:** Healthy sexuality is a key component of overall health and well-ness, beginning at birth and continuing through the life cycle.

### Key Activities Completed:

- Youth Focus Groups - Needs Assessment.
- Research and Presentations on findings
- Obtained many resources and teaching tools.
- Hosted a two-day Policy Process Workshop.
- Hosted two Chocolate Houses to dispel myths and have open dialogue among youth, parents and youth-professionals.

### Reports/Documents:

- *Perception and Attitudes of PEI Youth, Parents and Professionals About Sexuality*
- *Sexual and Reproductive Health for Youth: Best Practices*
- *Let's Talk ... about Sexual and Reproductive Health: Symposium Proceedings*

## Current Project

### Youth-Led Sexual Health Policy on PEI

The goal of this project is to develop youth leadership skills so they can have a voice in influencing changes to public policy that addresses the inequities that affect their sexual health.

### The Objectives of this project are:

- to continue to enlarge our provincial network of partners and advocates of youth sexual health policy,
- to develop youth leadership skills to influence sexual health public policy, and
- to provide opportunities for youth-led activities that will give them a voice with policy makers across PEI.

If you would like to get involved or find out more about this project, please contact Jinny Greaves, Project Coordinator, by phone at 368-5040 or by Email at [wnpei@wnpei.org](mailto:wnpei@wnpei.org).

We agree with strong consensus that families, schools and communities are the most important influences on child and youth development.