

1

SHARES

[ShareTweet](#)

378 views

Hannah Hale | hhale3@radford.edu

The majority of people who attended public school received some type of sex education.

Unfortunately, the standards of sex education are not consistent throughout the United States. Considering the rise in sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), it seems that the instruction received is not absorbing or registering with young people.

It is crucial to understand sexual health to protect yourself and others from STDs.

Most people who dismiss sex education have not heard the statistics.

According to the American Sexual Health Association, one in two sexually active persons will get a sexually transmitted infection (STI) by the age of 25.

As for HPV, or genital warts, 80 percent of sexually active people will contract these STDs in their lifetime, and certain strains can cause cancer.

Those are just two statistics out of hundreds for all the STDs that exist, and new ones develop every year. The American Sexual Health Association also reports that only 12 percent of people between age 15 and 25 were tested in the last year.

You can contract an STD through any sexual contact. This means oral, vaginal, and anal sex or any genital contact in general. Protecting yourself from these diseases is not incredibly difficult.

First, always discuss STDs and sexual history before you have sex with someone. It is best not to wait in the heat of the moment to ensure honesty and clear communication. If you cannot discuss sexual health with your partner, you probably should not be having sex in the first place. Everyone deserves a respectful and safe partner, so do not settle for less.

Second, always wear a condom. Condoms protect you from many, but not all, STDs, so they are your most straightforward route to safer sex. There are hundreds of different condoms out there

on the market to try, so do not make feeble excuses that they “do not feel as good” or “they are too expensive.” The Student Health Center has a bowl of free condoms outside of their office.

Third, educate yourself on the facts concerning STDs and get tested every three to six months depending on your sexual activity.

I cannot stress getting tested enough!

Many people infected with an STD will not show any signs or symptoms, so getting tested is the only way to know if you need treatment.

It should be noted that taking care of your sexual health is not just about you. You can get sued if you give someone an STD without disclosing it first. For example, Charlie Sheen, according to CNN, was sued by his ex-fiance for allegedly exposing her to HIV without telling her.

Educating yourself about STDs is not about inciting fear of sex or shaming those who are sexually active. It is about knowing how to have safer sex no matter how sexually active you choose to be.

Sex is natural, normal, and healthy as long as you are aware and proactive. There are so many resources available online and on campus, including monthly free STD testing at the Student Health Center, so **it is easier than ever to be smart about your sexual health.**

Photo credit: (nationaleservice.net)