

CONE HEALTH FOUNDATION

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH: CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS

Cone Health Foundation supports access to comprehensive, evidence-based health information and services so individuals can make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing. We recognize reproductive health services and education are essential components of quality health care for individuals and their families and that all people have the right to control their health and body and to be free from coercion.

Cone Health Foundation believes that every woman should have the ability to make her own informed choices regarding her reproductive life within the dictates of her own belief system.

We believe that all members of our community should have access to affordable, evidence-based, medically accurate, and effective reproductive health services of their choosing, regardless of race, ethnicity, geographic location, sexual identity or sexual orientation.

Through leadership, collaboration, and monetary investments, Cone Health Foundation actively supports efforts to expand access to, and improve the quality of, essential reproductive health services, with a special focus on access to effective contraceptive methods, comprehensive sexual health education, and family planning advocacy.

Access to comprehensive and evidence-based reproductive health services has been shown to have a multigenerational, positive health impact and provides many benefits to individuals, their families, and their communities. When individuals, and in particular women, have accurate information and fewer barriers to care, health outcomes are better.

Long term and community benefits of reproductive health services include:

- ◆ Reducing unintended pregnancies;
- ◆ Reducing the incidence and prevalence of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and related rates of cancer and infertility;
- ◆ Reducing pre-term births and infant mortality;
- ◆ Improving educational attainment;
- ◆ Improving health equity;
- ◆ Improving mental health;
- ◆ Serving as an opportunity to connect individuals to additional health services; and,
- ◆ Helping to address child/family poverty and other important determinants of health and well-being.

Relevant Terminology

Comprehensive: A curriculum or program that includes information and strategies to help adolescents both be or stay abstinent and use condoms and/or contraceptives when sexually active. Such programs are skills-based, and focus on medically accurate information to help adolescents exercise responsibility regarding sexual relationships during adolescence and for the rest of their lives.

Evidence-based: Programs that have been rigorously evaluated in peer-reviewed studies and have shown to be effective at achieving the desired results. “Evidence-based” is used interchangeably with “science-based.”

Medically accurate: Verified or supported by the weight of research conducted in compliance with accepted scientific methods; and published in peer-reviewed journals, where applicable or comprising information that leading professional organizations and agencies with relevant expertise in the field recognize as accurate, objective, and complete. [1]

Reproductive health: Implies that people are able to have a responsible, satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so. Implicit in this are the rights of men and women to be informed of and to have access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of fertility regulation of their choice, and the right of access to appropriate health care services that will enable women to go safely through pregnancy and childbirth and provide couples with the best chance of having a healthy infant. [2]

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1. U.S. Government Printing Office. PUBLIC LAW 111 -117 --DEC. 16, 2009. Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010. Available at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-111publ117/pdf/PLAW-111publ117.pdf>. Accessed: July 26, 2017

2. World Health Organization: Reproductive health. Accessed: July 26, 2017