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UK Sex-Ed Backfire: Survey Reveals Increased Pregnancy Rates in Teens Subjected to Program

LONDON, UK, March 15, 2004 (LifeSiteNews.com) - A new survey conducted in the UK has revealed that teenage pregnancy rates are highest in areas that have been most aggressive in promoting sex education. The report revealed that explicit sex education and providing condoms to young girls simply encourages them to become sexually active.

The report, titled *Sex Education or Indoctrination?*, was conducted by the UK's Family Education Trust, as revealed in the Telegraph yesterday.

Official figures reveal that teenage pregnancies rose in Britain by an annual rate of 800 from 38,439 in 2001 to 39,286 in 2002, despite the £15 million being spent to counter the situation. The pregnancies led to 17,682 of the children being aborted in 2001.

The number of cases of sexually transmitted diseases has also risen by an alarming 62 percent between 1997's 25,143 cases and 2002's 40,821 cases.

In a bid to counter Western Europe's highest teenage pregnancy rate -- one in ten babies born are to teenage mothers -- the UK government implemented the Teenage Pregnancy Unit in 1999. The goal of the Unit is to reduce teenage pregnancies by 50 percent by 2010, and 15 percent by the end of 2004. The Family Education Trust analysis revealed that the Teenage Pregnancy Unit strategy involves explicit sex education by nurses in schools, during which teachers are often not present; free condoms; and sending girls a birthday card on their 14th birthday inviting them to a confidential medical examination without consent from their parents.

Valerie Riches, author of the report, said that "The Government's teenage pregnancy strategy is based on the premise that it is unrealistic to expect young people to abstain from sex. They have embarked on a damage-limitation exercise dependent on condom use and the use of the morning-after pill. The figures show, however, that it might be wiser to support the majority in abstinence and demonstrate to the minority the physical, emotional and psychological benefits of delaying sex until marriage."

Riches criticized the Teenage Pregnancy Unit's resources, produced by the UK's Family Planning Association, including a guide called "4 Girls", that informs teenagers on how to obtain contraception. Another pamphlet tells girls "Contraceptive advice and supplies are free to everyone. It doesn't matter how old you are . . . there's no right age to have sex." She told the UK Telegraph that "The Family Planning Association sows confusion in a child's mind about right and wrong and presents only one moral absolute - the use of condoms."

The report also highlights the success of the abstinence-promotion program in the US, which has realized a 10 percent reduction in teenage pregnancy rates.