

All Students Need Comprehensive Wellness Education, Not Just “High Risk” Kids

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When I received my schedule for second semester I read that I would need to take a “Wellness 2” class, and I scoffed at that idea. Being a “straight A” student, in addition to having a nurse for a mother, I assumed that there was nothing a health class could possibly teach me that I hadn’t already learned. I thought wellness would only be about contraceptives, STIs and drug use. After talking to my counselor, she informed me I had to take the class because I needed one more health class, so reluctantly I went to class. Little did I know that I would learn various practical skills and be given applicable and appropriate information that I could relate and apply to my own life. All students need comprehensive wellness education to insure that every kid gets the adequate information to make their own healthy choices, and this applies to all range of students.

Comprehensive wellness education cannot just tell kids what choices to make in order to be healthy. A course should provide education about all outcomes of a choice and how to handle it, consequences and benefits, and resources. Case in point: As Mrs. Ebbs, my Wellness 2 teacher, began the nutrition unit, she had us organize food in what we thought were “most nutritional value” to “least nutritional value.” She then provided each group with a pamphlet where we then had to find the answers and reorganize our work. In this unit, I learned so much applicable information to which I have been able to access what I eat, and how it affects me.

Another misconception I had about wellness classes was that “all that sex-ed” stuff did not apply to me, because I did not choose to participate in that sort of stuff. Much to my surprise, I learned so much more in that unit than I ever had expected. Aside from the information about contraceptives, birth control, STIs etc which had been taught to me since middle school, our class focused mostly on learning about relationships and the ability to deal with each other and our significant other. This unit in the course made me think of what I would do if I was ever faced with a situation where I would need to say “no” and/or protect myself. In helping me have a plan thought out for hypothetical situation, I was able to be more prepared for what life could throw at me. Actually, a few weeks after this unit, a friend of mine began to pressure me to take our relationship further than I was comfortable with. Even though I was really nervous, because I had a plan in mind, I had some basic refusal skills that helped me get out of a very awkward situation.

I could continue to elaborate on how necessary comprehensive education is, and it would further point out the same concept: When you provide students with accurate information, offer them reliable resources, they are more likely to make their own healthy decisions. Honor-roll students and high risk kids included.