



For Immediate Release  
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Contact: Susan Pedo  
518.436.8408, x212

## **High School Students from Across New York State Meet with Legislators in Albany to Advocate for Comprehensive Sex Education**

*Healthy Teens Act Passes Assembly by a Vote of 127-15*

**Albany, NY** – Teens attending the *Youth Leadership Conference* in Albany are calling for the passage of the **Healthy Teens Act** (A.6619, S.5121). This important legislation will provide resources to fund age-appropriate, medically accurate sex education for New York State's young people. The Assembly overwhelmingly passed the **Healthy Teens Act** yesterday, April 3, by a vote of 126-15. As part of the *Get the Facts NY* campaign, more than 100 students from Albany, Buffalo, Ithaca, New York City and other parts of the state are meeting with their legislators at the Capitol today.

New York's **Healthy Teens Act** would enable school districts, school-based health centers and community organizations to apply for grants to develop and implement programs that provide students with medically accurate information and stress the value of abstinence while not ignoring those who have had sex. In New York, more than 4 out of every 10 students have had sexual intercourse before they graduate from high school.

Because sex education, or the lack of it, is an issue that directly affects the health lives of young people, it is important that Albany's lawmakers hear what they have to say. Below are some points of view of young people from around New York State on why it is important to support comprehensive sex education and to pass the **Healthy Teens Act**:

- **Thays Barcelos**, a peer-educator from **Planned Parenthood of New York City** states, "If you are not telling teens what they need to know, it is like you are lying to them. You are putting their lives in danger."
- "A lot of health risks come along with sexual relationships," says **Jessie Bonney-Burrill** of **Planned Parenthood of the Southern Finger Lakes in Ithaca**. "With comprehensive sex education, teenagers will be better equipped to deal with these issues."
- **Michael Burgevin**, also from **Planned Parenthood of the Southern Finger Lakes**, believes that "Comprehensive sex education is essential in society. With a culture so sexualized, it is imperative that we take care of young people so that they can be safe in the world we live in today."
- According to **Christina Gray** from **Planned Parenthood of Buffalo and Erie County**, "A lot of parents don't talk to us about sex, so we go to our friends and the media for information, which is usually wrong."
- "Teachers are always bringing up the media and that it is not giving us accurate information," says **Tamara Jackson** from **Planned Parenthood of Buffalo and Erie County**. "So my question is, if the media isn't giving us accurate information, then why aren't you?"
- **Will Thenos, Jr.**, also from **Planned Parenthood of Buffalo and Erie County** thinks that, "We are doing kids a disservice if they don't know how to protect themselves. That is like going into war and not knowing about a bullet proof vest."

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*Get the Facts NY seeks to support the right of every young person to access the information and develop the skills necessary to make safe and responsible choices about his or her sexual health. Get the Facts NY advocates for medically accurate, age-appropriate sex education for all youth in New York State.*