

## Feature Sheet-Janet Parshall Commentary

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Bio: Janet Parshall is the host of *In the Market*, which airs here on Moody Radio Chicago from 4-6 pm each weekday.

More Info: <http://www.moodyradio.org/inthemarketwithjanetparshall/>

There is some very troubling news coming from the office of the Administration of Children and Families, an agency within the Health and Human Services Department.

A federally funded survey done in 2009 asked parents and teenagers whether they agreed, somewhat agreed or somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement:

“Having sexual intercourse is something only married people should do”

Here’s how the parents answered: 47.6 % strongly agreed, 22.2 % somewhat agreed, 17.8% somewhat disagreed and 12.3 % strongly disagreed. That’s the moms and dads – they ones charged to guide and direct children in making wise and healthy decisions about their lives. The survey indicates that only 7 out or 10 parents think sex outside of marriage is a bad idea. 7 out of 10 – what does that say about the children they are raising? Why, for the sake of our children, is it not 10 out of 10?

Well, here is what the survey found among teenagers: 38.5% strongly agreed that sex is ONLY for marriage, 23.0% somewhat agreed. But most troubling is the revelation that 21.5% somewhat disagreed and 17.1% strongly disagreed. That means that just barely half of those surveyed – 53.5% - think sex outside of marriage is wrong.

This data is truly a ‘good news – bad news story.’ First, the bad news. Statistical numbers generally make our eyes glaze over until we start to really understand what the numbers mean. If nearly half of our teens think sex outside of marriage is a good idea, imagine how that translates into increased numbers of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. Some of these STD’s can leave a person sterile, create perpetual pain or be a precursor to cancer. HIV turned to full blown AIDS can potentially cause death. Imagine also the numbers of unplanned pregnancies – which would translate into a marked increase in the numbers of abortions.

But now the good news – and there is good news to be found among these numbers. When 7 out of 10 parents think sex should be something kept within the bonds of marriage – there can be no ambiguity that, when it comes to sex education, parents are asking that abstinence be taught, and not, in the words of Planned Parenthood, “comprehensive” sex education.

The survey also revealed that teens involved in abstinence programs were more likely to talk with parents about these crucial issues. Study after study has consistently shown that adolescents *want* their parents to give them guidance in these areas. Truth be told, if Mom and Dad *don’t* talk with their children, they will get the information somewhere else – and the odds are it will be the *wrong* kind of advise.

Also of note is the indicator that families that go to church on a regular basis had better parent-child communication and teenagers were more likely to make wiser and healthier choices.

Our government currently spends more on comprehensive sex-ed than on abstinence-based education, which is why this 2009 information is just now surfacing. The government is NOT funding what parents want or what teenagers need.

But the take-away for us as parents is that it costs us nothing to tell our children the protective truth of saving sex for marriage - nothing except the cost of commitment to be the parents God has called us to be.

That's my opinion. For Moody radio, I'm Janet Parshall