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### From the Experts

#### *It's Just A Kiss*

by Betty Barsley-Marra

Samantha, a sophomore in one of my classes, stopped on her way out to ask if she could come by after school to talk. As the teacher of Human Sexuality classes, it was not unusual for students to have personal questions for me. While I always encouraged students to talk with their trusted adults at home, I offered my willingness to coach them through challenging discussions because I was well aware that some students did not believe they had a trusted adult at home. Being a trusted adult is not automatic, trust is built over time and can be tremendously fragile and difficult (sometimes impossible) to repair once broken, but more on that later.



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### In the News

#### Promiscuity Propaganda: Access to Information and Services Does Not Lead to Increases in Sexual Activity



Socially conservative policymakers and activists routinely assert that making sexual and reproductive health information and services more available promotes promiscuity. Their argument often focuses on the timing of sexual initiation, but can also include behaviors such as increased sexual frequency or sex with more partners. There are two related assumptions underpinning this claim: One, the availability of information or services related to sexual and reproductive health

signals to young people (and especially young women) that society approves of

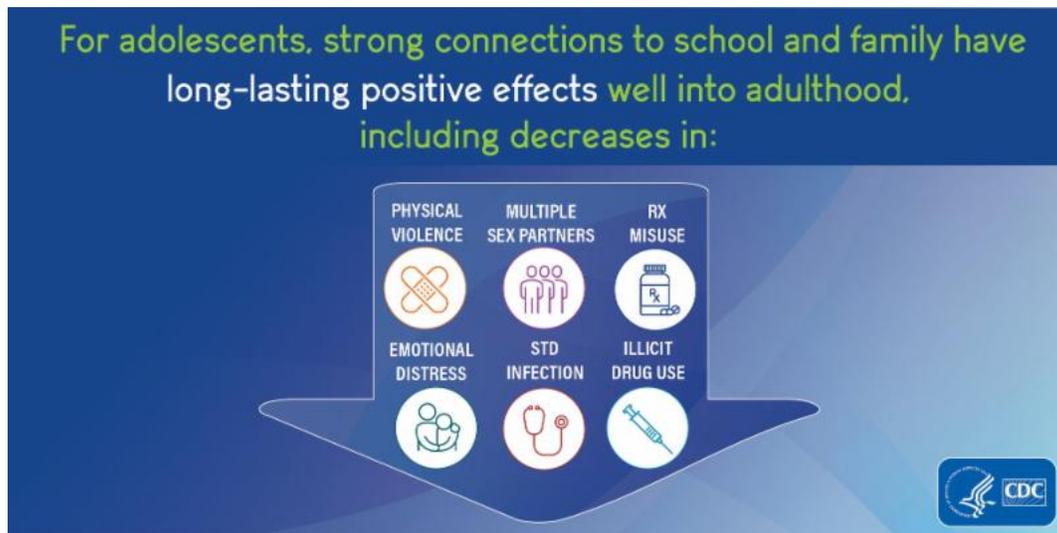
them having sex and will prompt them to initiate sex. The second, closely related assumption is that being able to obtain such knowledge or services will allow people to reduce the perceived negative consequences of sex and incentivize them to have intercourse for the first time, more frequently or with more partners.

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## In the News

### *Center for Disease Control and Prevention:* Adolescent Connectedness Has Lasting Effects



Connectedness refers to a sense of being cared for, supported, and belonging, and can be centered on feeling connected to school, family (i.e. parents and caregivers), or other important people and organizations. School and family connectedness are linked to reductions in multiple health risk behaviors during adolescence.<sup>1</sup>

Youth who feel engaged and supported at school and at home are less likely to experience negative health outcomes later in life related to mental health, violence, sexual risk, and substance use.

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## Program Updates

### *Puberty II - Navigating Changes*

Beginning Fall 2019 we'll be offering schools a second puberty program that focuses more on the social and emotional changes that occur during puberty (a complicated topic as many parents will attest). We start exploring the concept of respect (for themselves and others), harassment, identity, types of communication and



even include how and when to apologize. This program is available as a follow-up to our Puberty I program which covers "the basics"...but includes content that we've heard loud and clear is necessary for our students.

## Meet the Team

### Kirsten Taylor - *Health Educator*



Kirsten joined Robert Crown as a Health Educator in the Fall of 2018. As a Health Educator, Kirsten strives to provide students with science-based content in a fun and relatable way. Kirsten is a double-alumni of East Carolina University with a Master of Arts in Education in School Health Education and a Bachelor of Science in School Health Education. She is excited to be part of the RCC team and share her passion for health education with the students we serve.

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