

## Aban Aya Youth Project Evidence of Failure

The Aban Aya Youth Project (Aban Aya) is a four-year program for students in 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade that discusses sex education, drug and alcohol avoidance and conflict resolution. Written primarily for African American students, the curriculum covers both abstinence and contraceptive use. Two versions of the program were evaluated: a school curriculum only and a school curriculum with additional parent and community components.

### Key Points Related to the Aban Aya Curriculum and its Evidence of Failure

ABAN AYA	School Curriculum Only	Parent/Community Component added
Impact study conducted by an independent evaluator?	NO	NO
Follow-up at least 12 months after the program to show post-program duration of effect?	NO	NO
MEASURES		
Pregnancy rates	Not measured	Not measured
STD rates	Not measured	Not measured
Sexual initiation	Not measured	Not measured
Consistent condom use	Not measured	Not measured
Unprotected sex	Not measured	Not measured
Number of sex partners	Not measured	Not measured
Condom use frequency or use at last sex	No significant effect	Boys only, at program's end
Recent sex	No significant effect	Boys only, at program's end
Dual benefit short-term (increase condom use and abstinence)	No significant effect	Boys only, at program's end
Dual benefit long-term (12 months post-program)	Not measured	Not measured

According to the report, *Re-examining the Evidence for Comprehensive Sex Education in Schools: Part One - Research Findings in the United States*, by Stan Weed and Irene Ericksen of The Institute for Research and Evaluation (IRE), the **Aban Aya curriculum has not shown sufficient evidence to be considered an effective, evidence-based program for the students it was designed to serve**: the school curriculum had no significant effects and the addition of a parent/community component had no impact on girls, only boys, and only at the end of the program, with no evidence of effects sustained after the program's end.

The IRE analysis found:

1. **The evidence for Aban Aya was not produced by an independent evaluator**, meaning outcome studies were conducted by one of the program designers or administrators, in other words, by an individual or group who would benefit from the finding of positive program effects.
2. Although Aban Aya is labeled a “teen pregnancy prevention program,” **pregnancy rates were not even measured**.
3. While Aban Aya purports to teach youth to practice abstinence, the program evaluation showed **no evidence of effect on delay of sexual initiation** (not measured) and only a subgroup effect on recent sex, a less-protective indicator of teen abstinence, produced by the ancillary parent/community component of the program.
4. Effects of Aban Aya on teen sexual initiation, consistent condom use, pregnancy rates and STD rates were not measured. In other words, none of the most-protective program outcomes were measured.
5. Effects of Aban Aya on less-protective indicators for the intended population were nil or minimal. The rates of unprotected sex and number of sex partners were not measured and there were only subgroup effects (for boys but not girls) on the frequency of condom use and the rate of recent sex, which were only produced by adding the parent/community components.
6. CSE’s so-called “comprehensive” strategy involves teaching both condom use and abstinence (two very different messages) in the same classroom. However, Aban Aya, **failed to produce an effect on both of these outcomes for the intended population. The main program component showed no effects, and the parent/community component showed short-term effects for boys but not girls**. In fact, **the dual benefit** was not measured at 12 months after the program. Thus, for Aban Aya, effectiveness at the purported dual benefit of CSE—increasing both teen abstinence and condom use—was not demonstrated.

**Summary.** In spite of being included on the Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) program’s list of programs “showing evidence of effectiveness,” **Aban Aya has not demonstrated any success at reducing teen pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)** in school populations in the United States. Moreover, it has not shown success at increasing rates of teen abstinence or condom use for the intended population, but has only produced subgroup effects through an ancillary program component, with no evidence that even these results were sustained beyond the end of the program.