

My Future Is My Choice

Lack of Evidence of Effectiveness

<i>My Future Is My Choice</i>	Stanton, et al., 1998 ¹	Fitzgerald, et al., 1999 ²
Study conducted by independent evaluator?	NO , study was by the program author	NO , study was by the program author
Follow-up measures at least 12 months after the program?	YES , measures at 6 & 12 months after program	NO , the follow-up measure was at 6 months
OUTCOMES:		
Pregnancy	Not measured	Not measured
STDs	Not measured	Not measured
Sexual Initiation	Females, not males, at 12 months after program	NO EFFECT
Consistent Condom Use	Not measured	Not measured
Condom Use At Last Sex	NO EFFECT	Negative Effect
Unprotected Sex	Not measured	Not measured
Number of Sex Partners	NO EFFECT	NO EFFECT
Recent Sex	NO EFFECT	NO EFFECT
Dual Effect: Condom Use & Abstinence	NO EFFECT	NO EFFECT

Key Findings

Two studies of *My Future Is My Choice* have been conducted, both by the program’s developers. According to a published research review by *The Institute for Research & Evaluation (IRE)*,³ **these two studies have not produced sufficient evidence to label *My Future Is My Choice* an effective school-based program.** Neither of the studies controlled for sizable baseline differences in outcomes between the program and control groups in the outcome analysis. The first study found reduced sexual initiation for girls but not boys after 12 months, and reported no post-program impact on teen condom use, recent sexual activity, or number of sex partners. However, at pre-test the program group was 11 percentage points higher than the control group on condom use, while at the 12-month follow-up the control group was 2 percentage points higher. This was a 13-point change in favor of the control group, suggesting a harmful program impact on condom use that likely would have been statistically significant had a more appropriate analysis been utilized. The second study reported a statistically significant pre-test difference in male condom use of 19 points in favor of the program group, but the statistical significance dissipated after 6 months, almost entirely due to a decline in condom use by the program males from 87% to 79%, compared to a drop from 68% to 67% for the control group males. The difference in these changes in the wrong direction, combined with the loss of statistical significance, is indicative of an adverse program effect, according to researchers at IRE.

Summary. *My Future Is My Choice* has shown little evidence of effectiveness in school classrooms—it failed to reduce sexual initiation, recent sex, or number of sex partners for the intended population.

In addition, it appears to have caused harm by reducing rates of condom use—a behavior targeted by the program—at least for teen boys. These findings negate its claim to be an effective program.⁴

1. Stanton BF, Li X, Kahihuata J, Fitzgerald AM, Neumbo S, Kanduumbe G, Ricardo IB, Galbraith JS, Terreri N, Guevara I, Shipena H, Strijdom J, Clemens R, and Zimba RF. (1998). Increased protected sex and abstinence among Namibian youth following a HIV risk-reduction intervention: a randomized, longitudinal study. *AIDS*, 12:2473–2480.
2. Fitzgerald AM, Stanton BF, Terreri N, Shipena H, Li X, Kahihuata J, Ricardo IB, Galbraith JS, DeJaeger MA. (1999). Use of Western-Based HIV Risk-Reduction Interventions Targeting Adolescents in an African Setting. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 25:52–61.
3. Ericksen IH, Weed SE. (2019). "Re-Examining the Evidence for School-based Comprehensive Sex Education: A Global Research Review." *Issues in Law and Medicine*, 34(2):161-182.
4. See: Gottfredson DC, Cook TD, Gardner FEM, Gorman-Smith D, Howe GW, et al. (2015). Standards of Evidence for Efficacy, Effectiveness, and Scale-up Research in Prevention Science: Next Generation. *Prevention Science*, 16(7), 893–926. Retrieved from http://www.preventionresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Standards-of-Evidence_2015.pdf