

## *Safer Choices*

### **More Evidence of Failure than Success**

<i>Safer Choices</i> -CSE	Coyle, et al., 2001 <sup>1</sup>
Study conducted by independent evaluators?	<b>NO</b> , the study was by the program authors
Follow-up at least 12 months after the program to show duration of effect?	<b>YES</b>
<b>OUTCOMES:</b>	
Pregnancy	Not measured
STDs	Not measured
Sexual Initiation	<b>NO EFFECT</b>
Consistent Condom Use	Not measured
Condom Use At First Sex	<b>NO EFFECT</b>
Condom Use At Last Sex	<b>Increased after 12 months</b>
Unprotected Sex	Not measured
Number of Sex Partners	<b>NO EFFECT</b>
Recent Sex	Not measured
Dual Effect: Condom Use & Abstinence	<b>NO EFFECT</b>

### **Key Findings**

One impact study has been done of *Safer Choices* school-based comprehensive sex education (CSE), conducted by the program’s developers/authors.<sup>1</sup> According to a published research review by *The Institute for Research & Evaluation*,<sup>2</sup> **this study showed mixed evidence of effectiveness for *Safer Choices***. Twelve months after the two-year program there was no increase in teen condom use at first intercourse, but condom use at last intercourse increased significantly. There were no other positive impacts on teen risk behavior: *Safer Choices* did not reduce teen sexual initiation, frequency of sex, use of alcohol or drugs during sex, or testing for STDs. (The study did not measure impact on pregnancy or STDs.)

**Summary.** *Safer Choices* has shown mixed evidence of effectiveness in school populations—its impact on teen condom use was contradictory, and it did not reduce other targeted risk behaviors: sexual initiation, frequency of sexual activity, or use of drugs/alcohol during sex. Furthermore, there is no *independent* evidence of program impact; the one study was conducted by the program’s author and marketer. (*Safer Choices* is marketed by ETR, an offshoot of Planned Parenthood.)

1. Coyle KK, Basen-Enquist KM, Kirby DB, Parcel GS, Banspach SW, Collins JL, et al. (2001). Safer Choices: Reducing Teen Pregnancy, HIV and STDs. *Public Health Reports*, 1(16), 82–93.
2. 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.