

Youth Get SexInfo Via Text Messages

New S.F. Service

Apr. 24 - BCN - SexInfo, a service that disseminates sexual health information via text messages, is the new way the San Francisco Department of Public Health is trying to educate and assist youth who have questions about sex.

San Francisco youth can access the service from most cell phones by sending a text with the message, "SEXINFO," to the SexInfo number, 36617. Youth with Metro PCS phones must send the same text to (917) 957-4280 to access the service.

Information is then provided to the user who has questions on various sexual subjects such as "What is gonorrhea?" and "What should I do if the condom broke?" or "Where do I go if I think I might be pregnant?"

The service allows youth to get answers in "a safe and private and way," according to Deb Levine, Executive Director of Internet Sexuality Information Services, Inc.

The names, addresses, telephone numbers, and business hours of local clinics are also provided to the user.

When tested, the SexInfo text messaging service responded within seconds of sending an inquiry.

SexInfo is considered to be a pioneer in the sexual health industry, according to the San Francisco Department of Public Health. It was developed by Internet Sexuality Information Services, Inc., a non-profit organization based in San Francisco, and engineered by Hip Cricket, a leading provider of full service mobile marketing services.

The San Francisco Department of Public Health has adopted the SexInfo program in response to the rising rates of gonorrhea and chlamydia among African-American youth in San Francisco.

The program will also make it easier for young people to get tested and treated quickly for sexually transmitted infections, according to Dr. Jeffrey D. Klausner, director of the health department's STD Prevention and Control branch.

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