

Survey report: High-schoolers don't know how to make babies

A third of high school students recently surveyed don't know where babies come from, according to a poll by Ho Chi Minh City university students.

The questionnaire asked 173 students (aged 17-18) from two HCMC high schools, "Where do babies come from?"

Over 23 percent said the anus, 9.8 percent said they didn't know, and 0.6 percent said the navel.

A girl from Nguyen Hue High School said, "I think a baby comes from its mother's anus, since the vagina is too small."

Another said, "When I was a child, my mom used to tell me babies came from parents' armpits."

Many of the students polled also showed little knowledge of birth control.

Instructor Vu Toan, who guided the survey, said that though the students live in what is often dubbed the "information age," many of them lacked even basic knowledge about reproductive health.

"Some live in a very passive environment where parents don't pay attention to providing their children with knowledge about sex," he said.

"When 'sensitive' topics like sex and reproductive health are brought up, parents often just brush them off irresponsibly...it's time that the whole society adopted a more honest view."

According to the pollsters, the reproductive health naiveté demonstrated in teenagers may partly account for an increasing number of abortions, sexual abuse cases and transmissions of sexual diseases.

"The reason students don't know much about this subject is that it has not been incorporated into curricula," said a teacher from Gia Dinh, one of the two schools surveyed.

The pollsters said that when parents and teachers neglect to teach teenagers about sex, youngsters often turn to other sources, such as the media and peers, to learn about such risky issues.

About the Author

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Thanh Nien Daily

Source: <http://www.canthocity.com>