



Massachusetts Family Institute  
*Dedicated to Strengthening the Family*

August 22, 2012

Honorable Mayor Domenic J. Sarno  
Chairman, SPS School Committee  
1550 Main St.  
Springfield, MA 01103

Dear Mayor Sarno:

As President of the Massachusetts Family Institute, I am calling on the Springfield School Committee to reverse your recently announced policy of distributing condoms to Middle and High School students. Making condoms available to children as young as twelve years old is an infringement on the rights and role of parents. In addition, it trivializes the importance of risk avoidance for students as they mature.

All adults are responsible for protecting the innocence of children, which is needed for their healthy emotional development. The words "children" and "sexual activity" should not even be in the same sentence. I am sure you take seriously, as I do, the dangers to children who are enticed or coerced into sexual activity. Distributing condoms to children just starting Middle School will teach them that sexual activity at their tender age is OK. This will only serve to lower inhibitions and make them less resistant to older, more sexually aggressive students or even predators. This flawed policy amounts to an abandonment of children by those who are supposedly pledged to protect them.

I strongly encourage you to use a program of abstinence education for your students instead. As the attached [Washington Post report](#) cites concerning recent studies, abstinence education equips students in ways that condoms simply cannot, by teaching about relationship and refusal skills, body image issues, emotional bonding, teen pregnancy and the benefits of marriage. Nationwide, fewer than 47 percent of students have ever engaged in sexual intercourse, and just one-third say they are "currently sexually active." In contrast to contraceptive-based sex education claims, teens are capable of abstaining from sex; they just need the right motivation and support. Children need and deserve directive education – education that points them to a specific outcome. If sexual education is taught in a condom-plus-abstinence format, the message is mixed and nondirective. Students will be left confused as to the best health choice.

The school should partner with parents to clearly send the message that the best choice is to wait. Passing out condoms to these young students is like handing out permission slips for sex. Please don't send the wrong message.

Sincerely,



Kris Mineau  
President