

## Sex-positive movement contributes to kids' health

Kudos for publicizing (and in a positive light) the growing sex-positivist movement (Friday). Asked in private, most people will tell you that sex is pleasurable, that good sex brings them closer to their partners and makes them feel good about themselves and that responsible sexual practices save the health of their bodies and that of their relationships.

Yet far too many politicians, religious leaders and others espousing "family values" use sexual awareness, health and pleasure as the scapegoat for everything that is immoral and dangerous in society. Most often, those attitudes reveal hypocrisy (the conservative Christian caught with a prostitute), jealousy (if I can't enjoy sex, you can't either) and homophobia.

We've seen what happens when we shame children and adults for their sexual curiosity and their sexual differences, and what happens when we try to keep them sexually ignorant

- rampant spreading of sexually transmitted diseases, discrimination against gays and lesbians, teens who run away or commit suicide because their parents reject them when they come out and the dangerous proliferation of abstinence-only sex education, which keeps kids uninformed about how to protect themselves from unwanted pregnancy and STDs, how to make healthy decisions in their sexual relationships and, yes, how to enjoy and respect their sexuality throughout their lives.

Sexuality is a lifelong gift and should always be treated as such through education, nurturing and freedom.

**Christianne Walker**  
*Seattle*