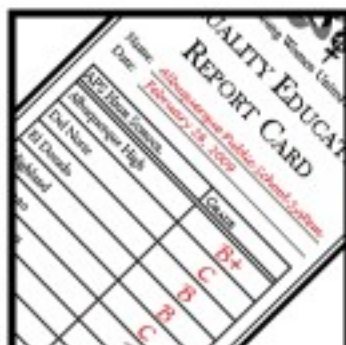
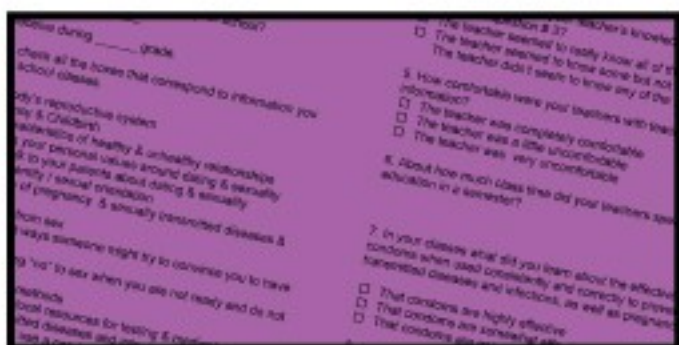


Circle of Strength's Sexuality Education Peer Survey Report



Young Women United



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Young Women United (YWU) is an organization created by young woman of color and our allies focused on changing the relations of powers in Albuquerque. We come together to support each other, educate ourselves and our communities and take action to reduce violence, improve health and build the power of our communities . We aim to build a strong community based on mutual respect, personal and communal growth, and friendship in which each member is both a teacher and learner.



Circle of Strength is a leadership development and community organizing program for teenage (13-19) women in Albuquerque.

Youth Introduction

In 2003 many of Albuquerque's Public Schools were teaching an Abstinence only curriculum through contracting a group called Best Choices, among others. Best Choices, along with other faith based groups, were going into schools and giving students scientifically incorrect information on contraceptives, condoms, abortion, adoption, and other topics surrounding students' options around their sexual health. Young Women United's Circle of Strength members were among the APS students receiving this skewed information. Many of the members had also suffered the impact that misinformation had led to. At this time New Mexico had the third highest teen pregnancy rate in the nation. One out of six pregnant women in the New Mexico was a teenager. Many teen mothers don't have the opportunity to finish high school leading to poverty. The Circle of Strength decided to take action and look into who decides what is taught, how it's taught, and at what grade levels, as a result of seeing so many of their friends and family suffer the consequences of inaccurate information.

The first step in COS's (Circle of Strength) new campaign for sexuality education was to ask other APS students about the information that they received in school. Questions asked surrounded how the students who were receiving the information felt about what they were being taught. This was achieved through informal surveying and canvassing. The survey included questions about what was happening specifically in the classroom and there was space at the end for any comments or personal experiences to help elaborate.

After completing the surveys we used the information to take action and mobilize people around the issue. Gathering support from other community organizations and members we were able to get attention focused on our concerns. We took the support of community and the evidence of surveys showcasing actual student voices to the school boards and the legislature. In 2006 we created a memorial. That same year NM PED develops Standards & benchmarks for New Mexico's Health Education. A year later New Mexico became the 15th state to refuse federal abstinence money!!

Since 2006 the goal has been to hold the schools and principals accountable. In 2009 after informally surveying students once again about the information they received we created and presented a report card for each school. Many students reported well on their school, unfortunately though, some schools received unsatisfactory grades even though the new standards and benchmarks had been in place for nearly 3 years. We aim to inform the schools with bad grades of the benchmarks and urge them to follow them. Our campaign has come to a place where we are watchdogs of implementing the policy in APS regarding the sex education that is supposed to be taught.

As past, & present students of Albuquerque Public Schools, we identified a number of issues, researched & strategized. Our solution: Comprehensive Sex education. After gaining so much progress within our state and support for comp sex ed, we need to ensure the implementation of our State's Health Education standards & benchmarks.

Executive summary:

We created the first-ever student report card by conducting youth surveys to voice their opinions by evaluating the performance of sexuality education in the schools. We decided to use a report card format since that is the way we're most familiar with getting feedback. We understand that a single letter grade is not so helpful if you don't know why or how you got it. So we created a report card and added a space for comments. We created our own criteria and came up with guidelines for what the students would be evaluating their schools on, so that the schools would get evaluated not just by personal opinions, but by how knowledgeable and comfortable they are in teaching sex ed, to demonstrate how well they create a supportive and positive learning environment.

Amount of surveys collected from each School :

Albuquerque High 25	Highland 144
Valley 18	Volcano Vista 22
El Dorado 49	West Mesa 26
Sandia 32	Manzano 18
Cibola 8	Rio Grande 48
Del Norte 30	La Cueva 3
New Futures 25	

Criteria considered for grade:

Standard related content & activities learned
Knowledge / comfort of teachers
General student rating of sex ed in their school

Findings include:

4 APS schools received a B

B= Adequate - Albuquerque High B + , Highland High B, EL Dorado B, New Futures B

Majority of students reported learning at least 75% of standard content
75% of students felt that their teacher was both knowledgeable and comfortable teaching the subject
75% or more students felt that their school offered good sex education
Schools that met 2 out of the 3 above categories received a B

Student comments:

"Schools needs teachers to teach us that sex is not bad and disgusting, but something that everyone does at one point. They need to give us more information on ways to protect ourselves from pregnancy and disease. Because telling us not to do it isn't going to stop us. My teacher played games with us and cracked jokes so we were more comfortable" - albq high student

"My teacher was very comfortable and open when she presented the information, and I think that made the class relax."- el dorado student

"I thought it was good that the teacher provided an opportunity to write questions on a slip of paper, placed them in a hat, and had them anonymously drawn out and answered. That way we could be totally comfortable w/asking a question" – el dorado student

"Our teacher was very educated on sex and everything that follows. He made it very clear on the subject" – Student from highland

5 high schools received a D

D= Poor -Valley, Sandia, west Mesa, Volcano Vista

Majority of students reported learning 50% or lower of the Standards content
50% or lower felt their teacher was knowledgeable and comfortable teaching the subject
50% or lower felt their school offers good sex ed
Schools that met 2 of the 3 above categories received a D

Student Comments:

"stop teaching religion"- sandia student

"it is usually very one-sided-abstinence only."- sandia student

"My teacher wasn't comfortable talking about this stuff."- valley student

3 APS high schools received a C,

C= Fair - Rio Grande, Manzano

Schools that received a C, received reports that were between 75%- 50% in 2 or more of the 3 categories

Student Comments:

"it was taught from the book by a basketball coach. he didn't care, was just teaching the week of it. we didn't do much work. "– Student from Rio Grande

"I've mostly learned about sex on the streets."- Student from Rio Grande

Sample Sex ed Survey

1. Are you in school?

Yes, which School? _____

What Grade? _____

No

2. Have you received Sex education in your school?

Yes, What Grade? _____

No

Will receive during _____ grade.

3. Please check all the boxes that correspond to information you learned in school classes:

- Your body's reproductive system
- Pregnancy & Childbirth
- The characteristics of healthy / unhealthy relationships
- Exploring personal values around dating & sexuality
- How to talk to your parents about dating & sexuality
- Gender identity / sexual orientation
- Prevention of pregnancy & sexually transmitted diseases & infections
- Abstinence from sex
- The different ways someone might try to convince you to have sex
- Practice saying "no" to sex when you are not ready and do not want to
- Contraceptive methods
- Information on local resources for testing & medical care for sexually transmitted diseases and infections, & pregnancy
- How to correctly use a condom
- Role- plays to practice telling someone that you will not have sex without a condom

4. How would you rate your teacher's knowledge of the information presented in question # 3?

- The teacher seemed to really know all of the information
- The teacher seemed to know some but not all of the information
- The teacher didn't seem to know any of the information

5. How comfortable were your teachers with teaching the above information?

- The teacher was completely comfortable
- The teacher was a little uncomfortable
- The teacher was very uncomfortable

6. About how much class time did your teachers spend on sex education in a semester?

7. In your classes what did you learn about the effectiveness of condoms when used consistently and correctly to prevent sexually transmitted diseases and infections, as well as pregnancy?

That condoms are highly effective

That condoms are somewhat effective

That condoms are not effective at all

8. On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the basic tone of the sex information that you have received?

1- Sex is natural & healthy

2

3

4

5- Sex is dirty and dangerous

9. How would you overall rate the sex education you received in your school?

Good

Okay

Bad

10. Do you think we need more sex education in schools?

Yes

No

11. Do you support Sex education that is comprehensive, meaning it includes information on condoms & contraception or do you support abstinence only until marriage programs which does not provide accurate information on condoms & contraception?

Comprehensive sex education

Abstinence only programs

12. Do you have any stories, comments, or suggestions that you would like to share about the sex education in your school?

You can decide if you wanna give us a little more to know:

RACE/ETHNICITY

GENDER

_____ Latina/o

_____ Female

_____ black

_____ Male

_____ White

_____ Trans

_____ Native American/Hawaiian/Alaskan (Tribe: _____)

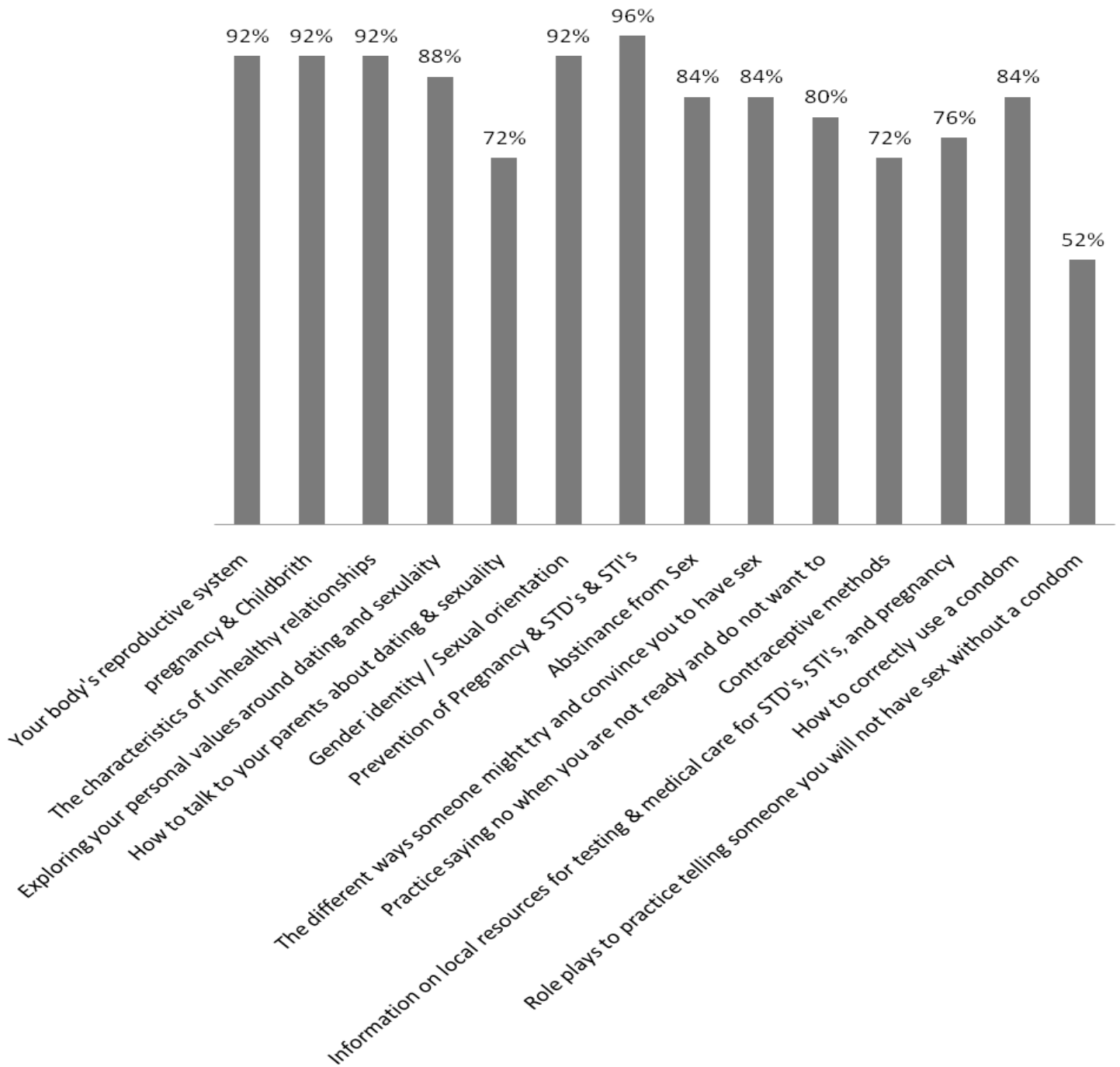
_____ Asian (Country/Culture: _____)

_____ Mixed

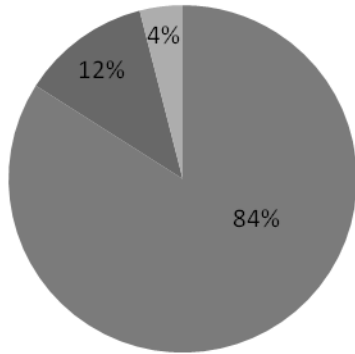
_____ Other: _____

Albuquerque High B+

Information learned in School Classes

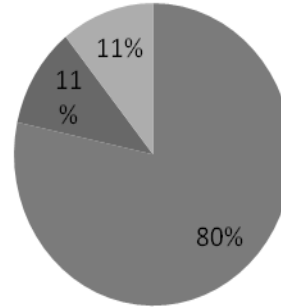


How would you rate your teacher's knowledge of the above information?



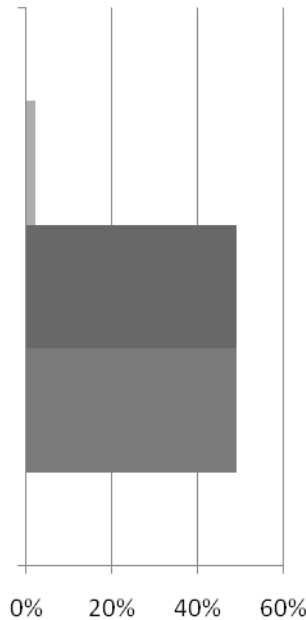
- 84% said the teacher seemed to really know all of the information
- 12% said the teacher seemed to know some but all of the information
- 4% said the teacher didn't seem to know any of the information

How Comfortable were your teachers in teaching the above information?

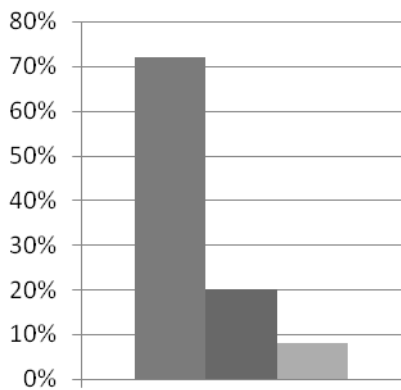


- the teacher was Completely Comfortable
- the teacher was Somewhat uncomfortable
- the teacher was Very uncomfortable

what did you learn in school about the effectiveness of condoms?

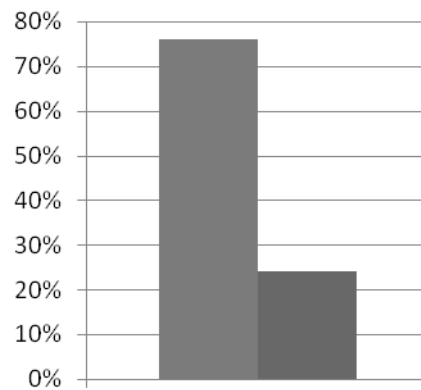


- condoms are not effective at all
- condoms are somewhat effective
- condoms are highly effective



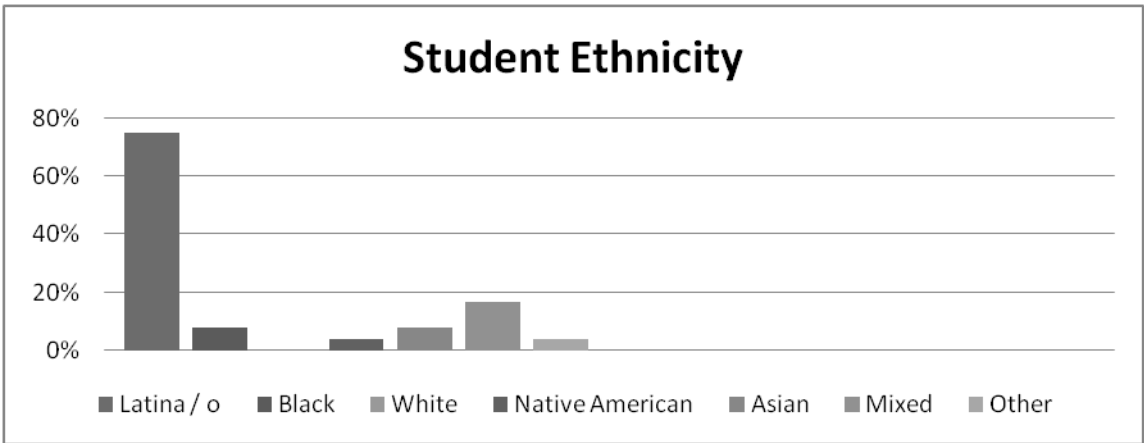
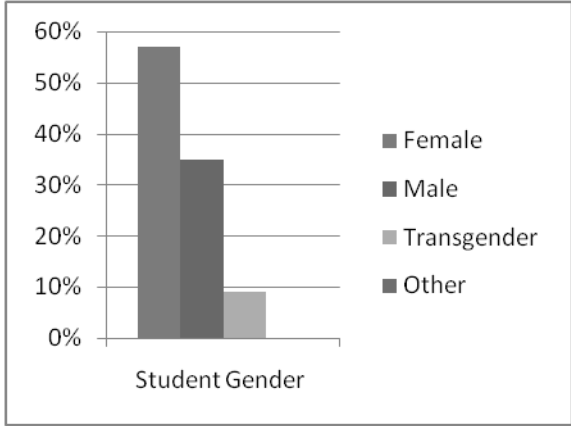
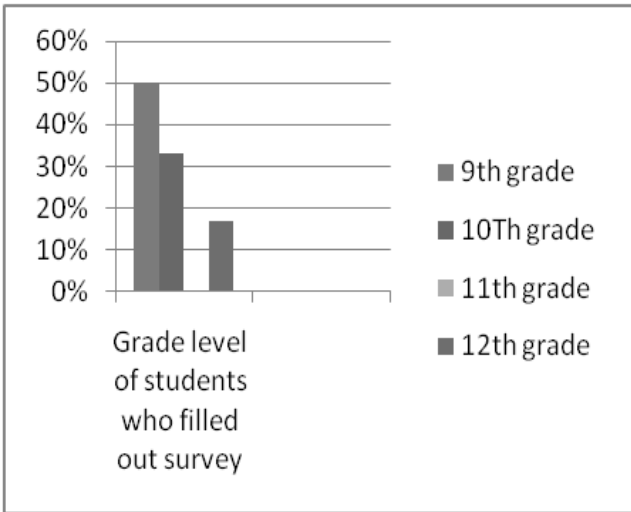
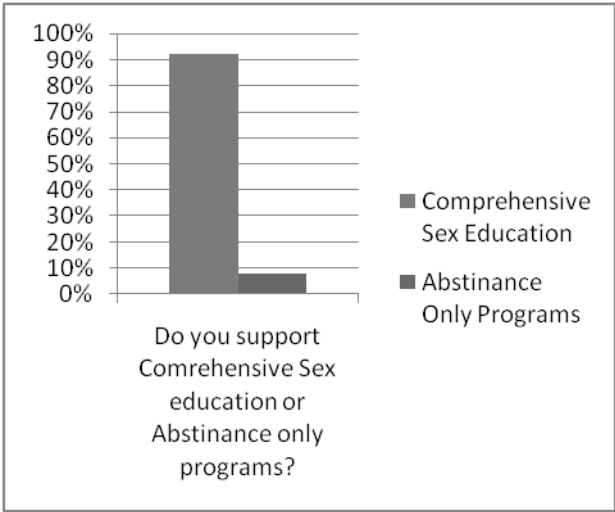
How would you rate the sex ed in your school?

- Good
- Okay
- Bad



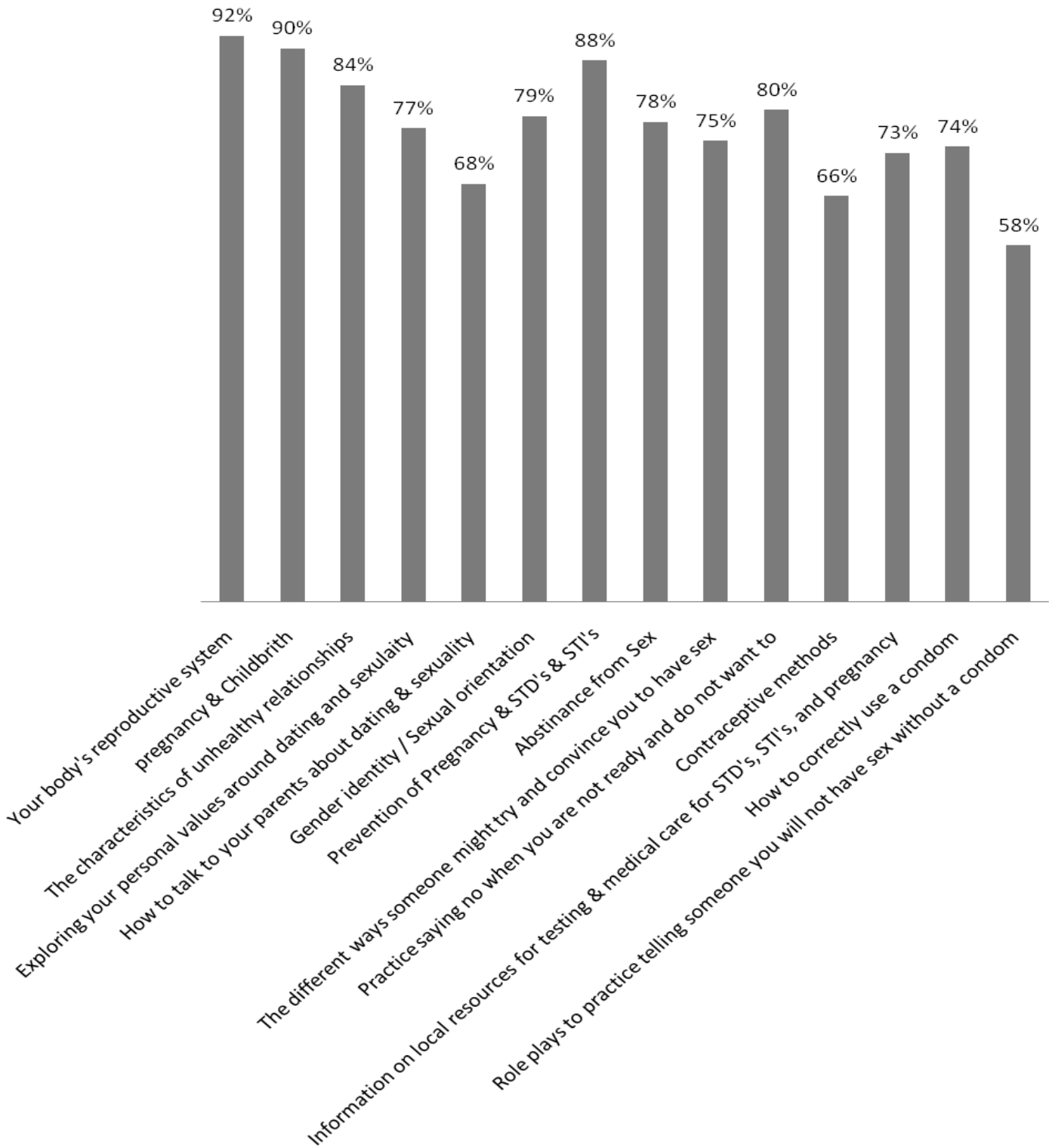
Do you think we need more sex ed in school?

- Yes
- NO

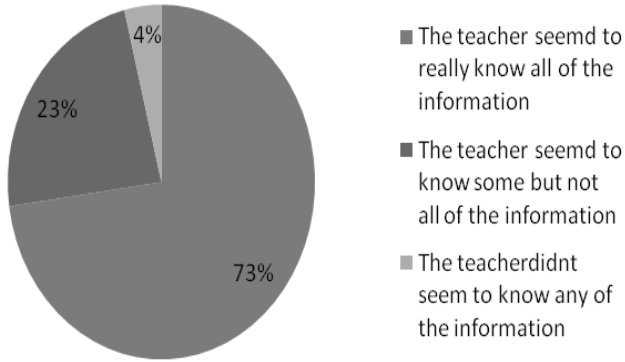


Highland High School

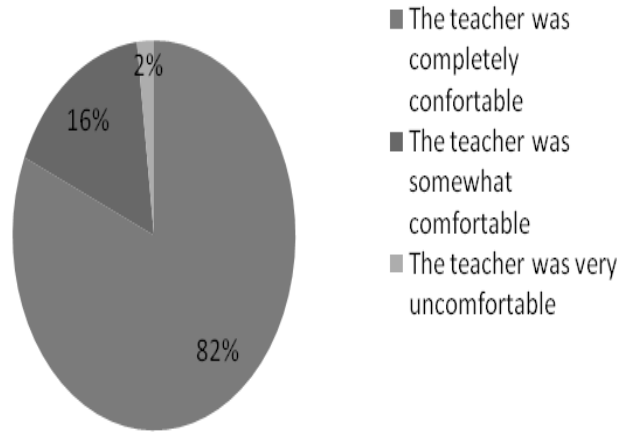
Information learned in School Classes



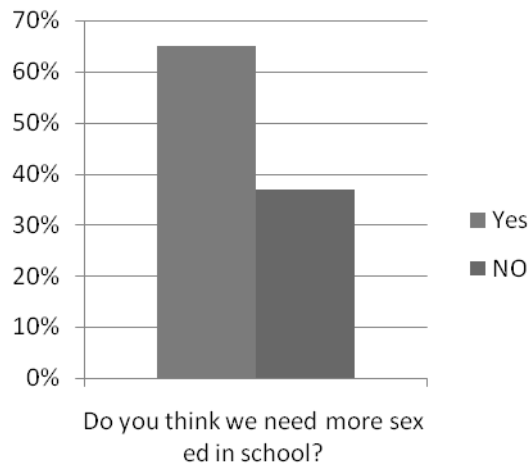
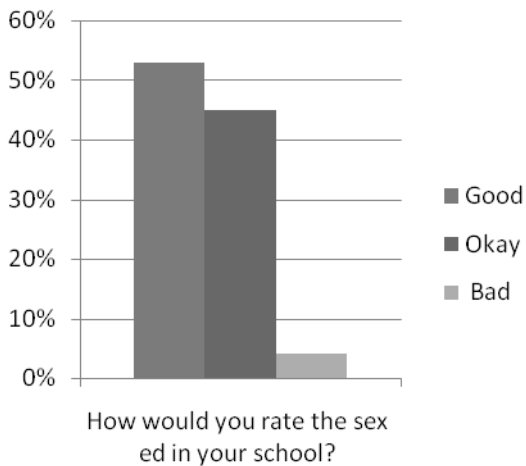
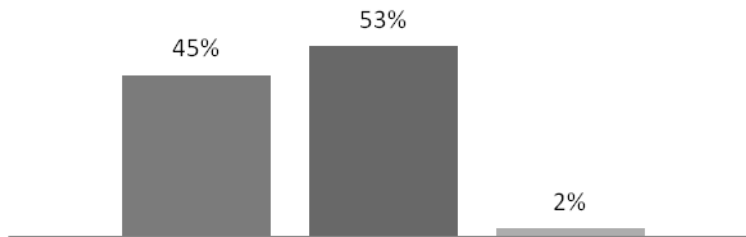
How would you rate your teacher's knowledge of the above info?

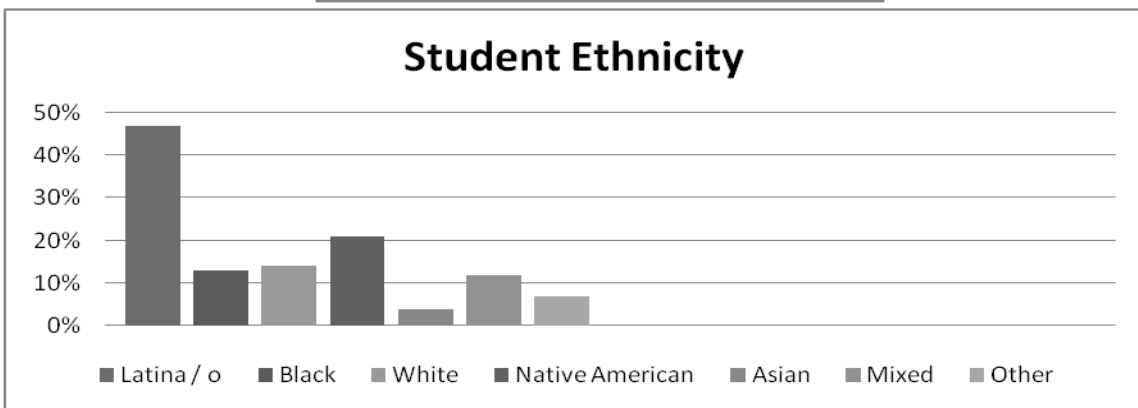
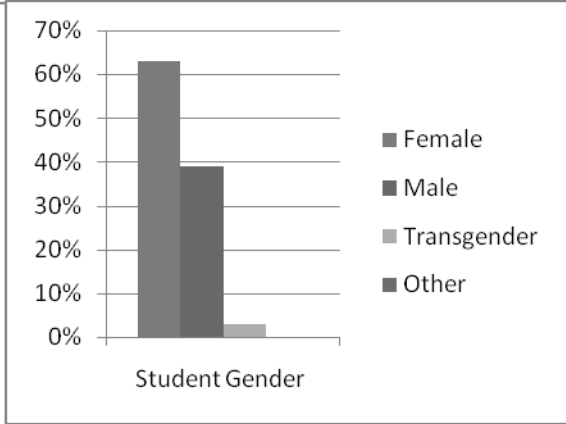
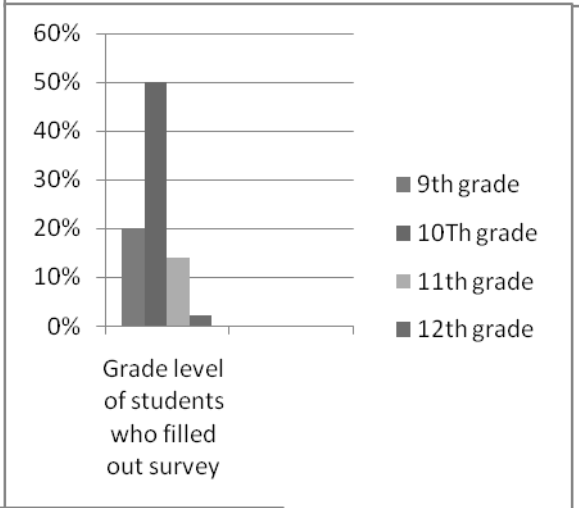
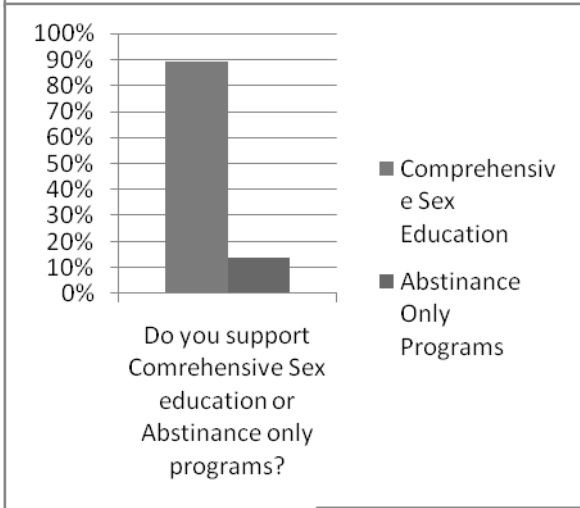
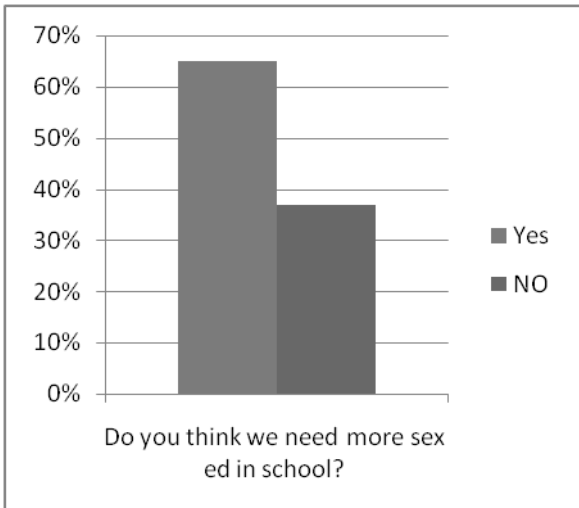
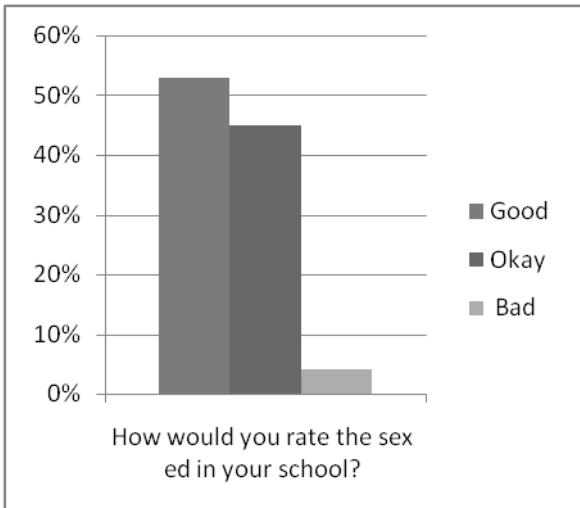


How Comfortable were your teachers in teaching the above information?



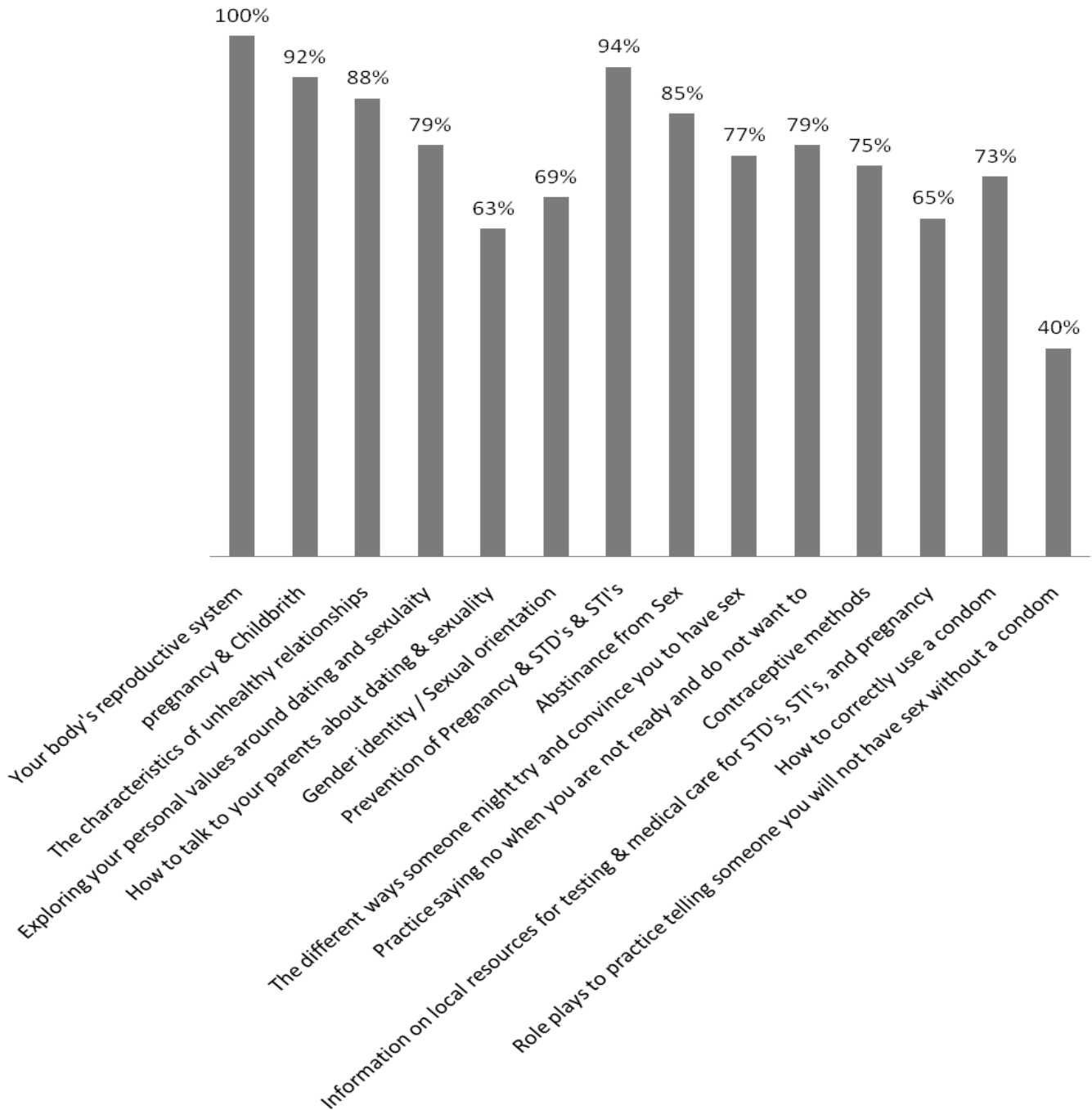
What did you learn in school about the effectiveness of condoms



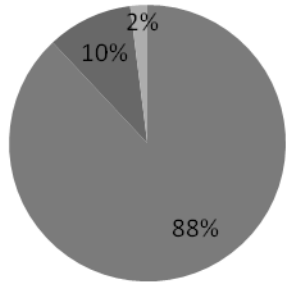


El Dorado High School

Information learned in School Classes

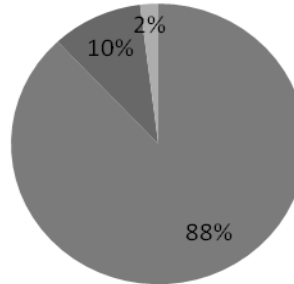


How would you rate your teacher's knowledge of the above info?



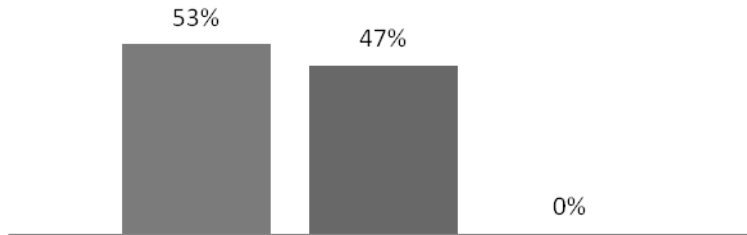
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How Comfortable were your teachers in teaching the above information?

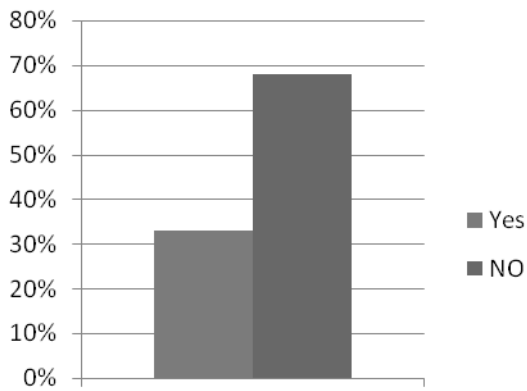


- The teacher was completely comfortable
- The teacher was somewhat comfortable
- The teacher was very uncomfortable

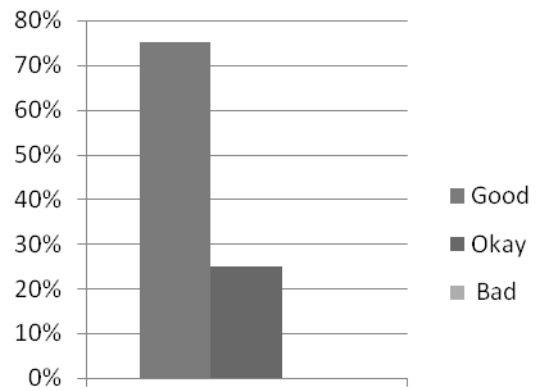
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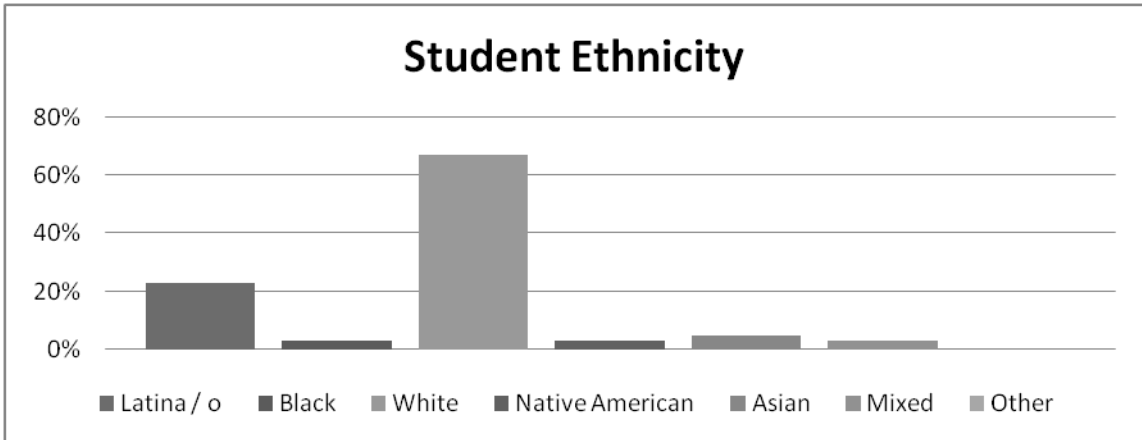
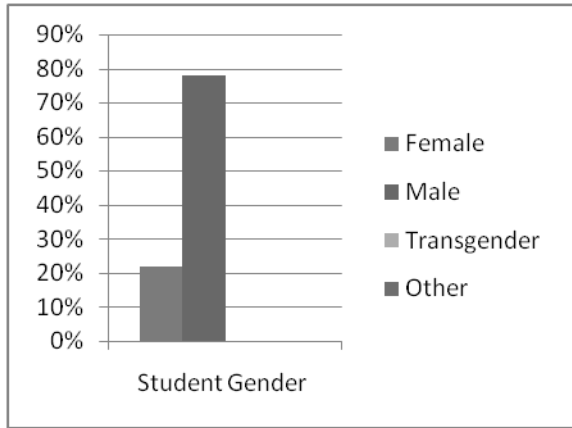
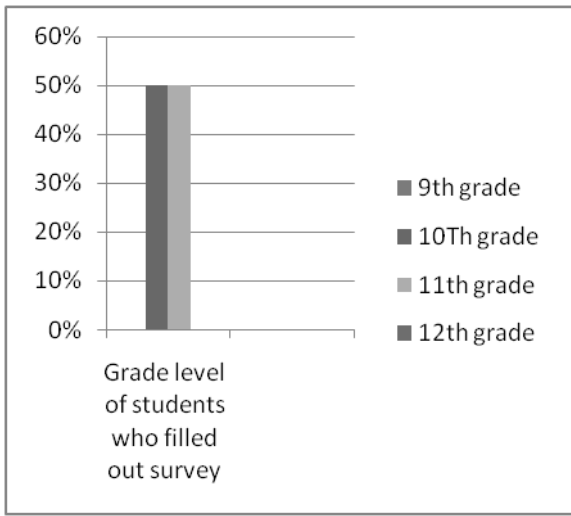
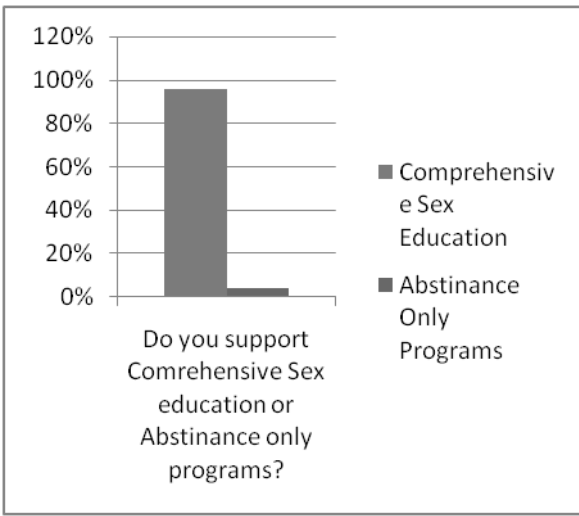
What did you learn in school about the effectiveness of condoms?



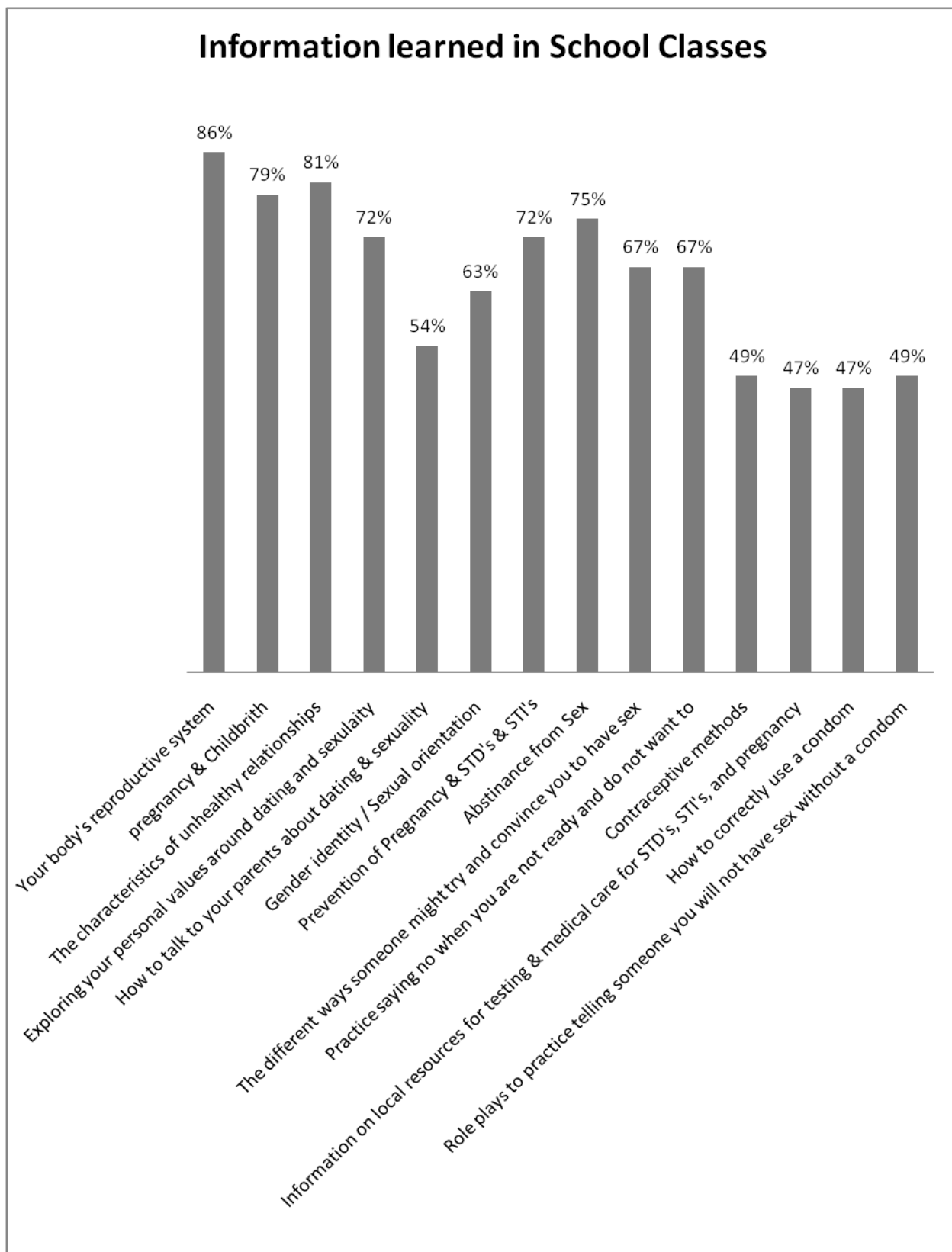
Do you think we need more sex ed in school?

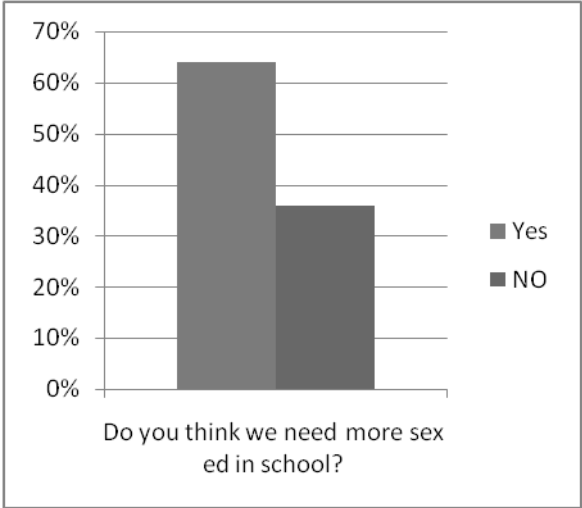
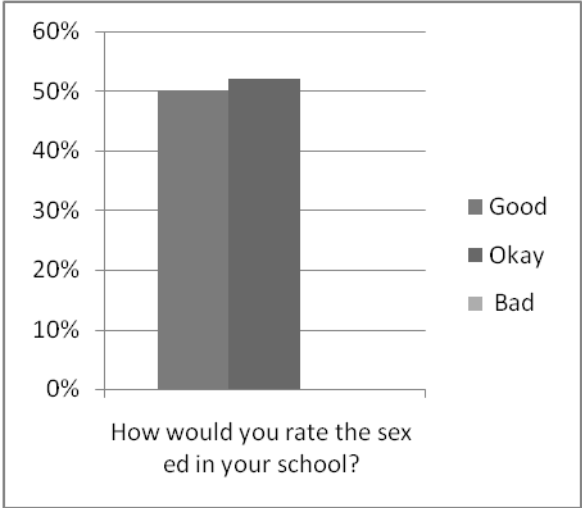
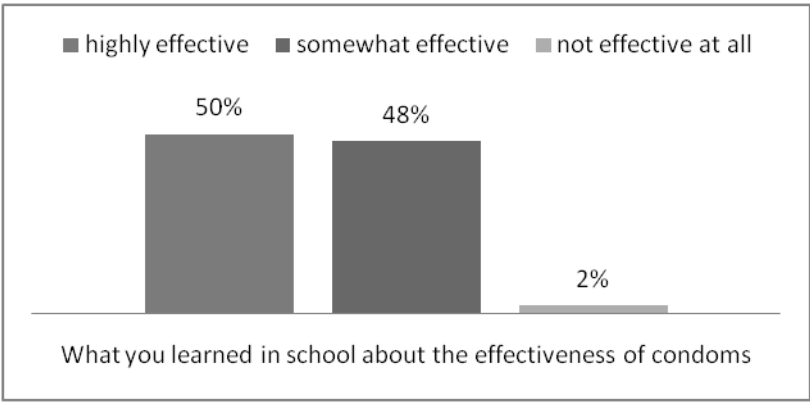
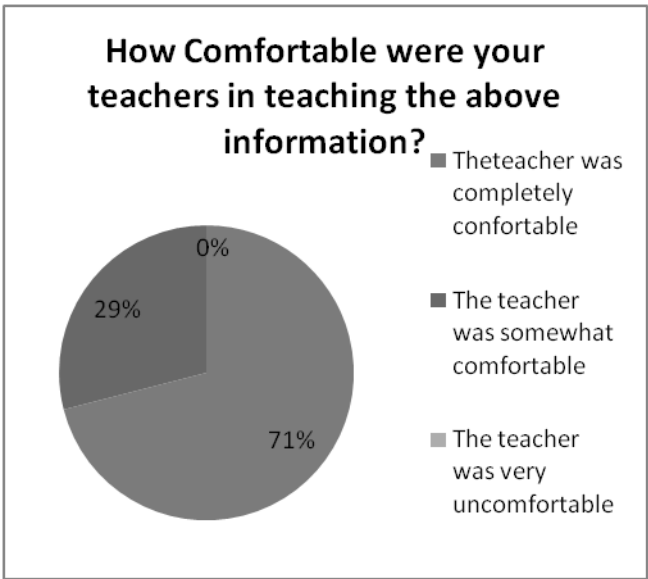
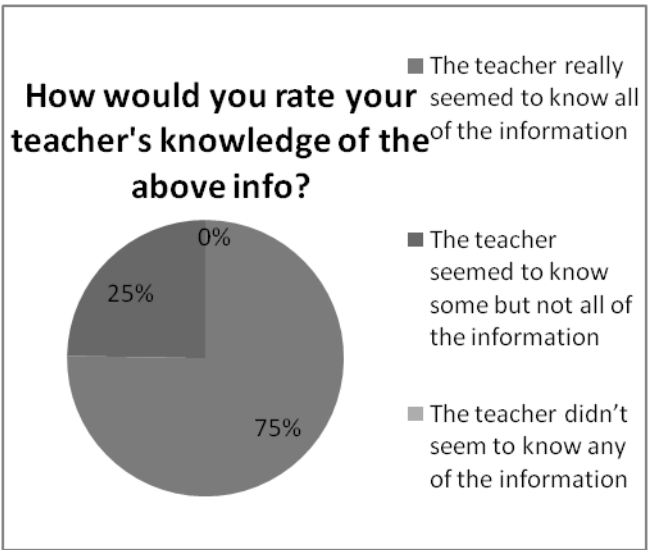


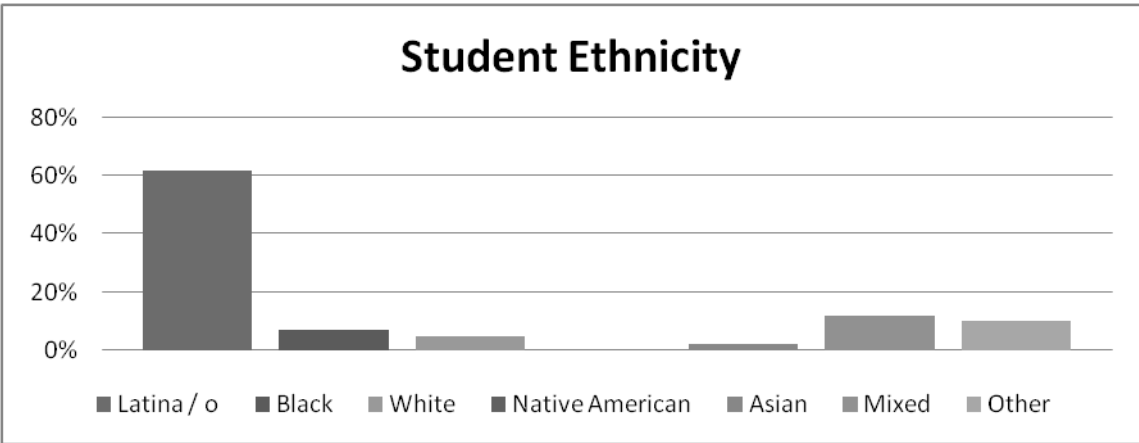
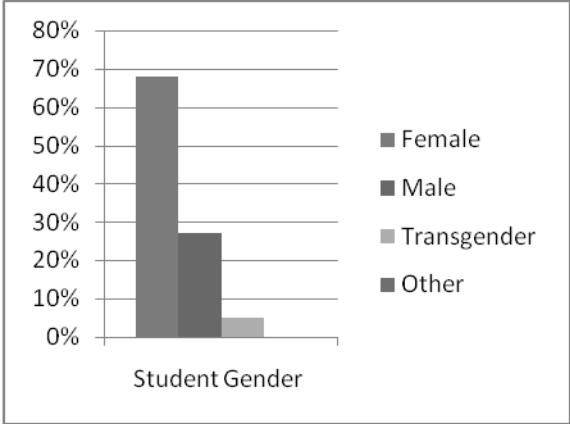
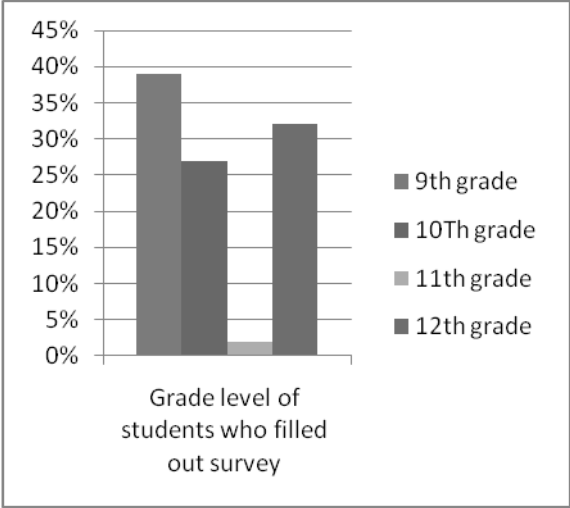
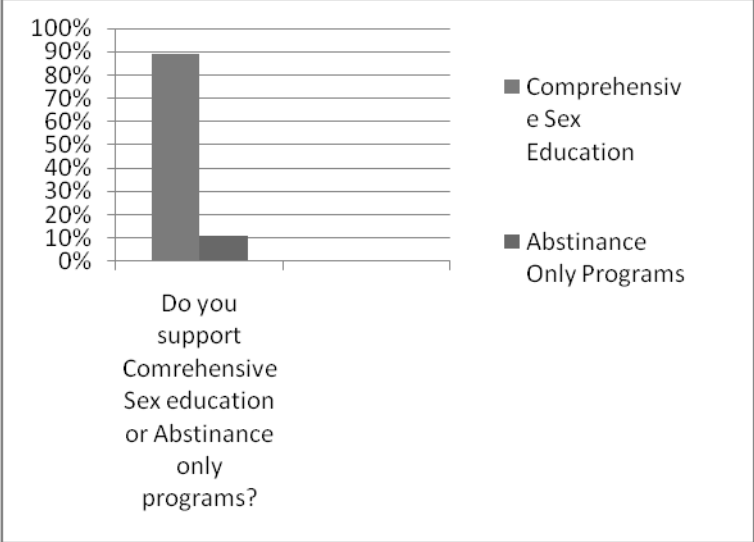
How would you rate the sex ed in your school?



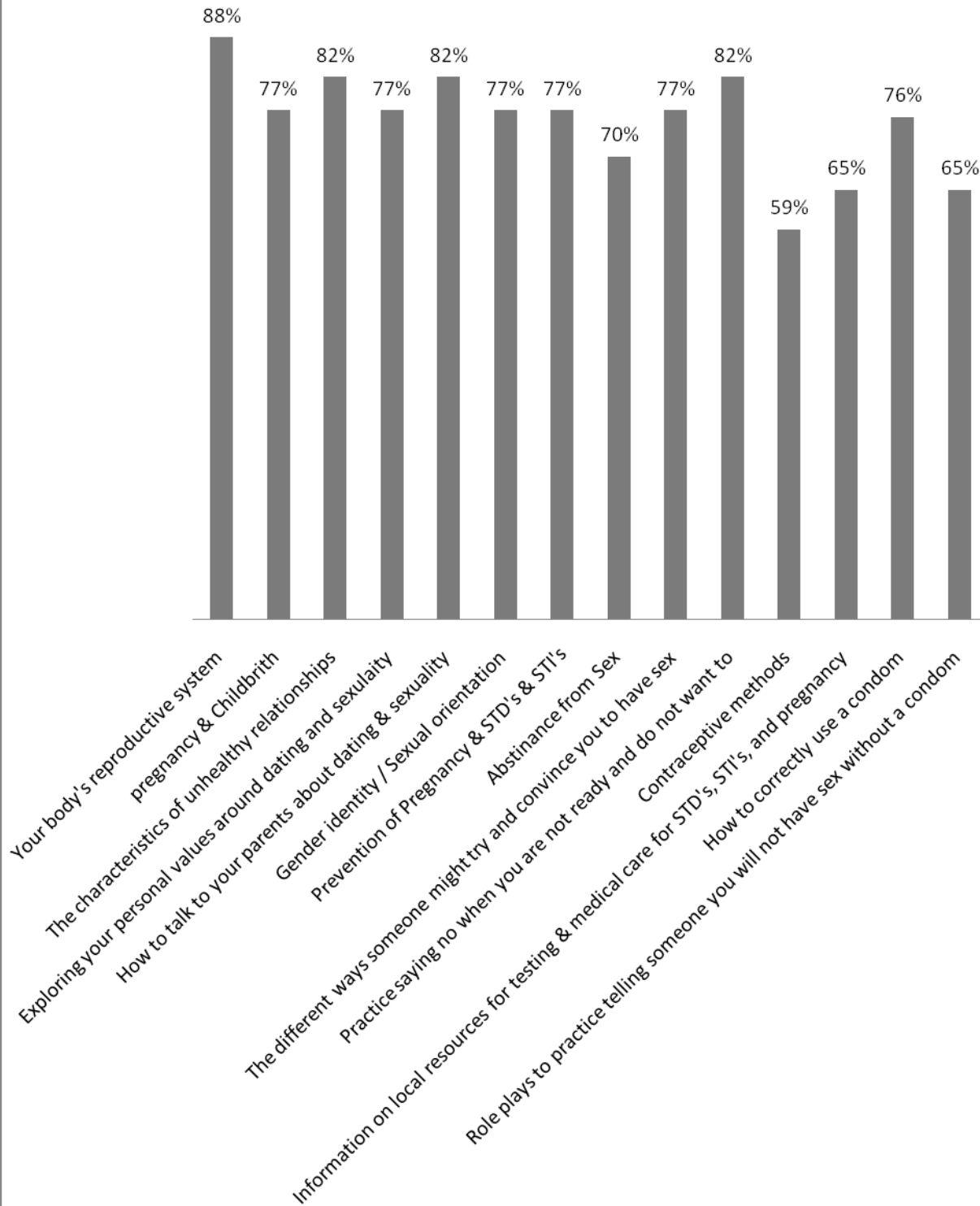
Rio Grande High School

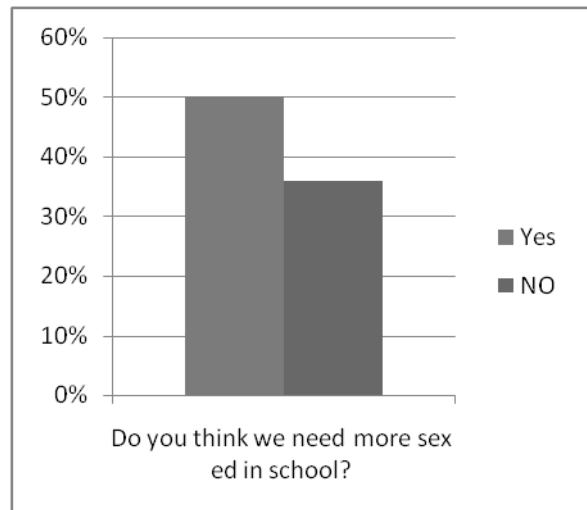
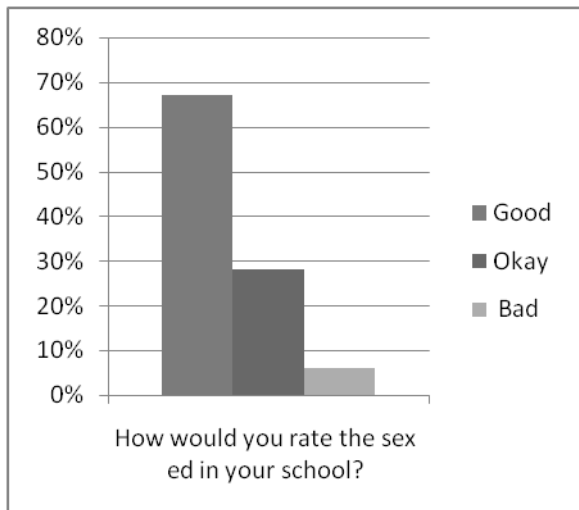
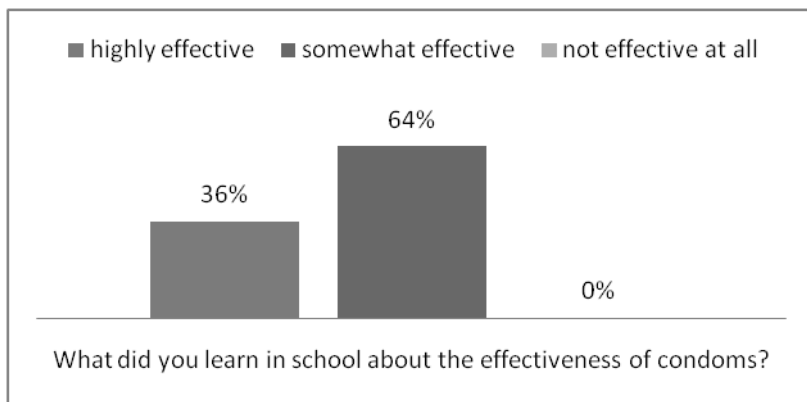
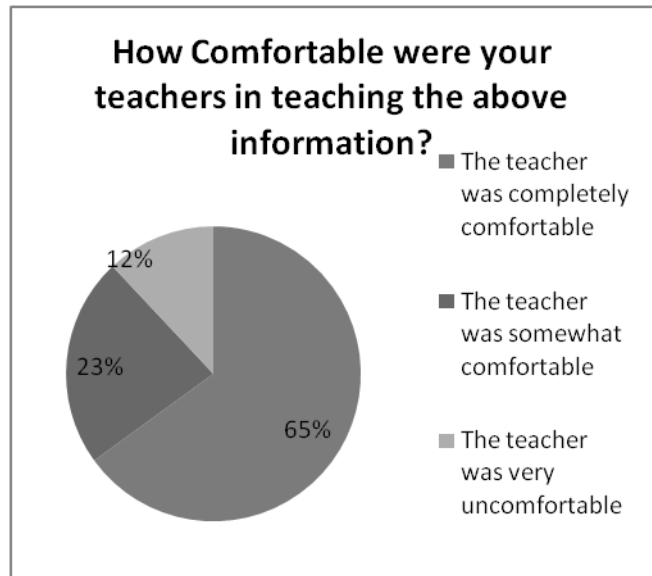
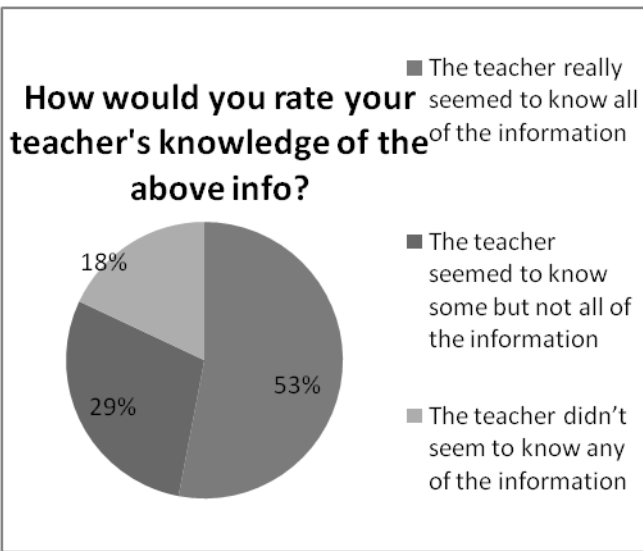


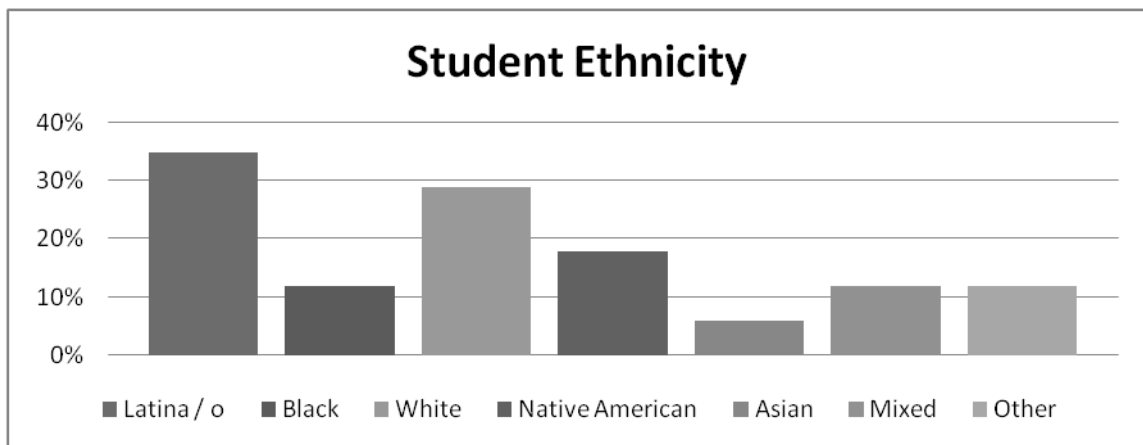
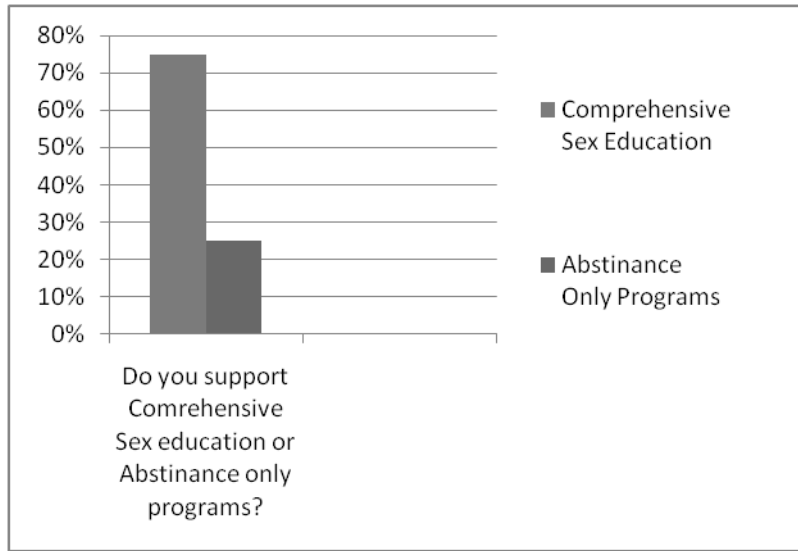
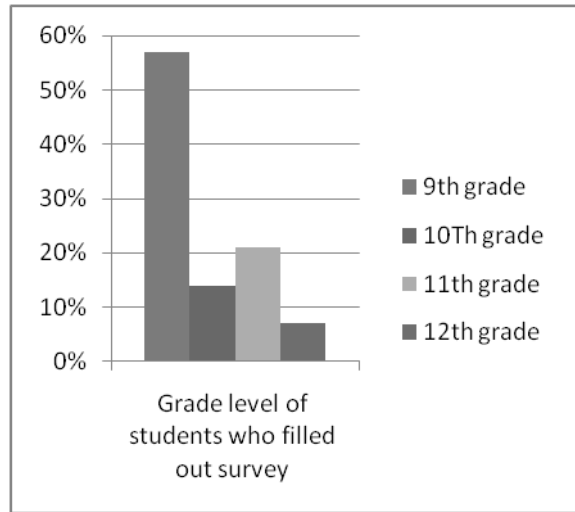
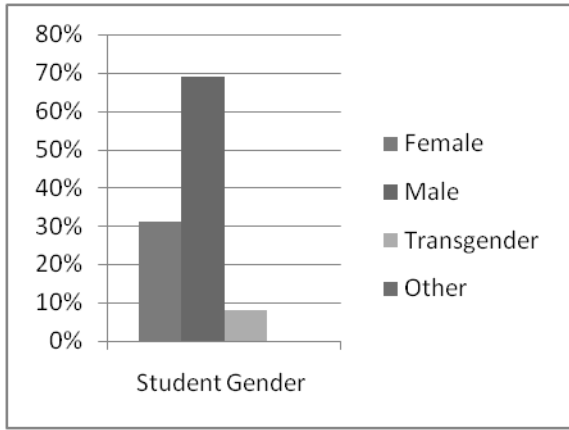




Information learned in School Classes

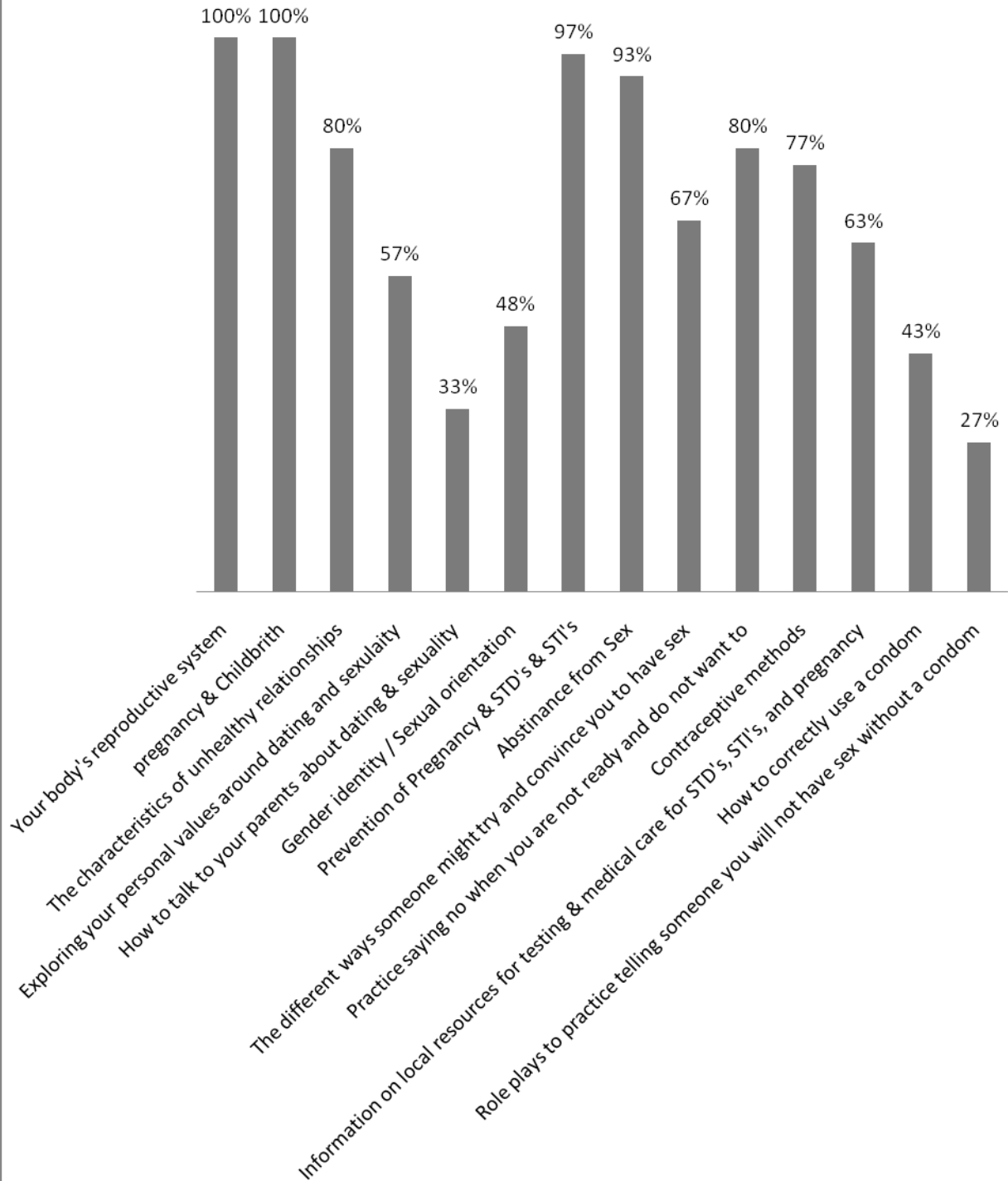


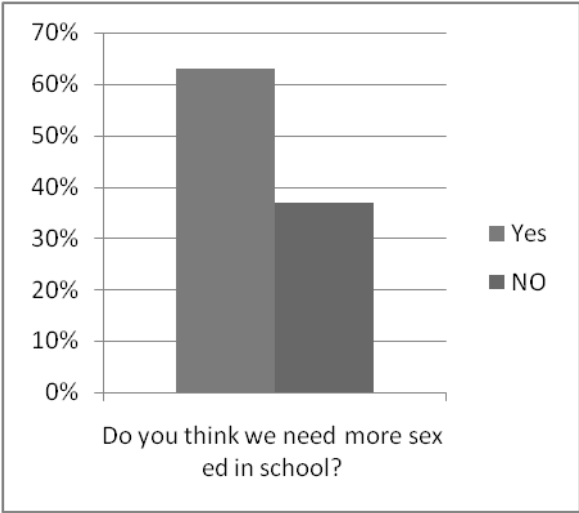
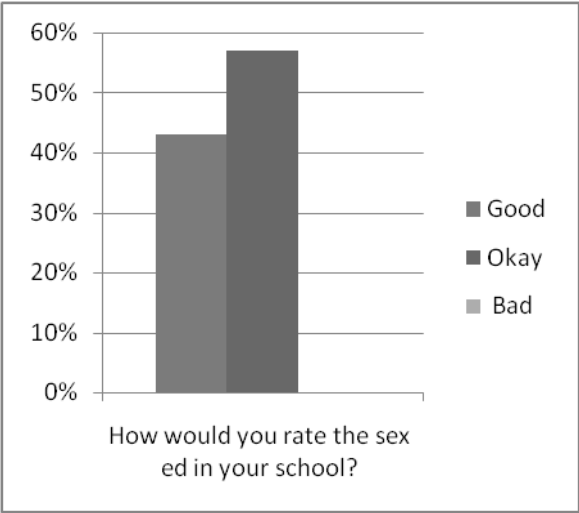
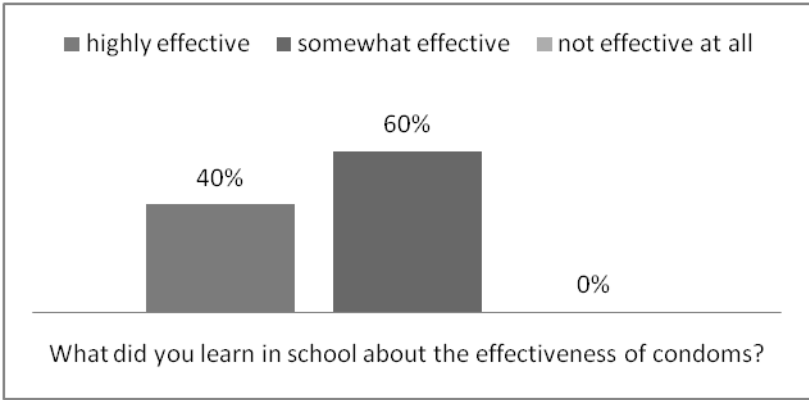
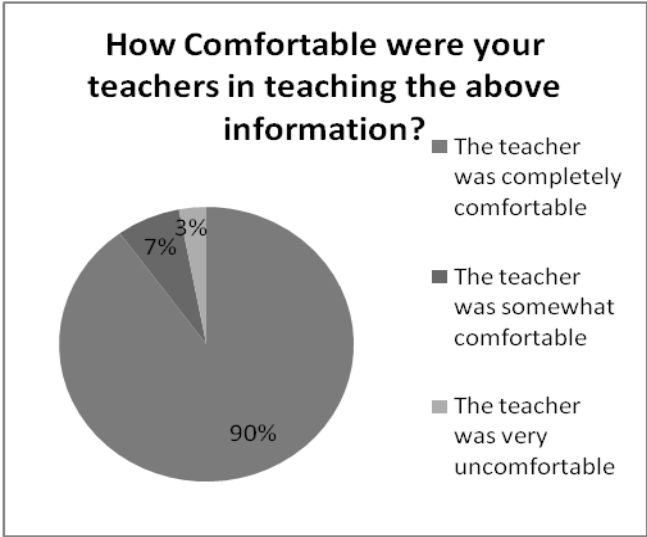
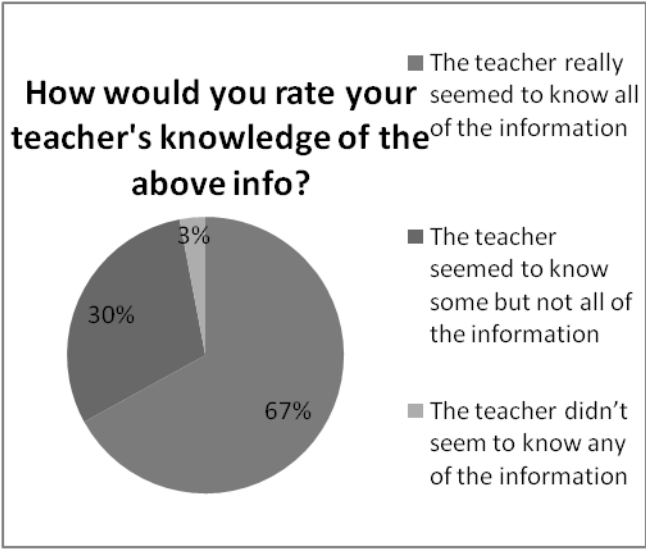


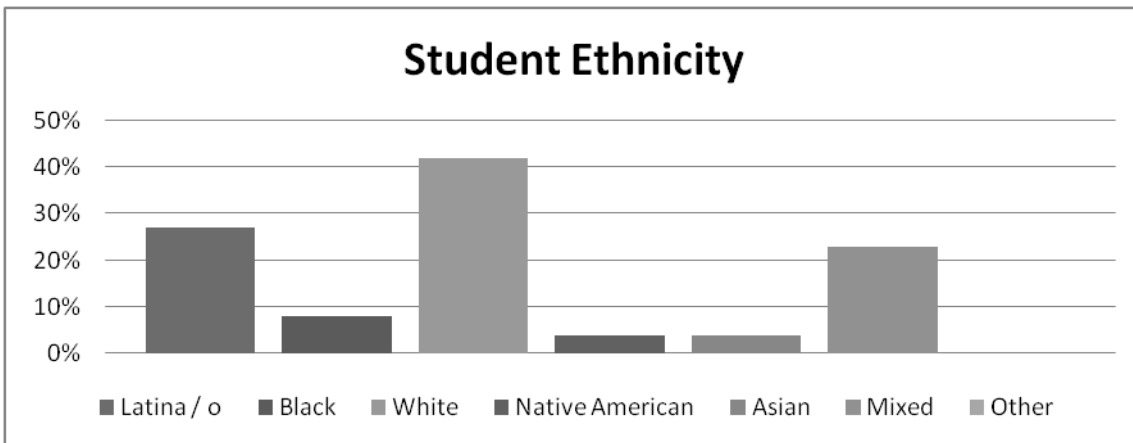
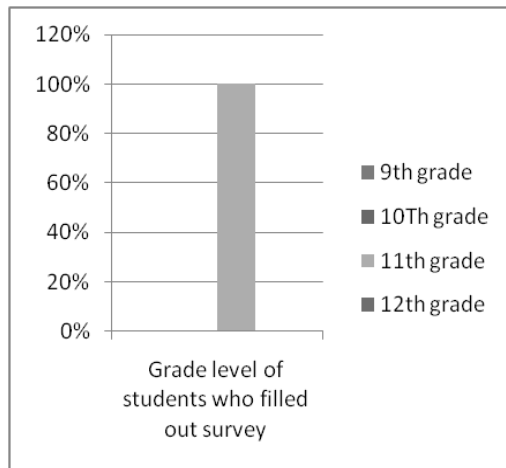
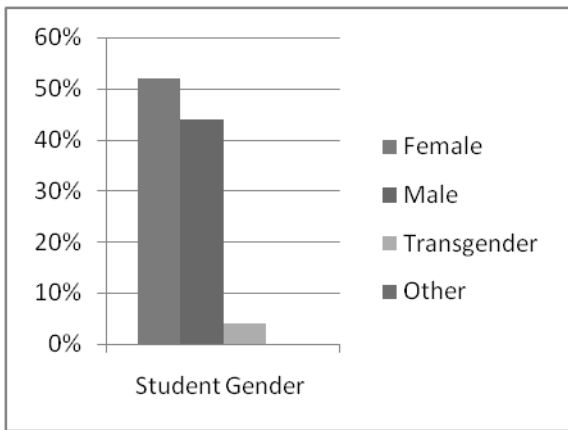
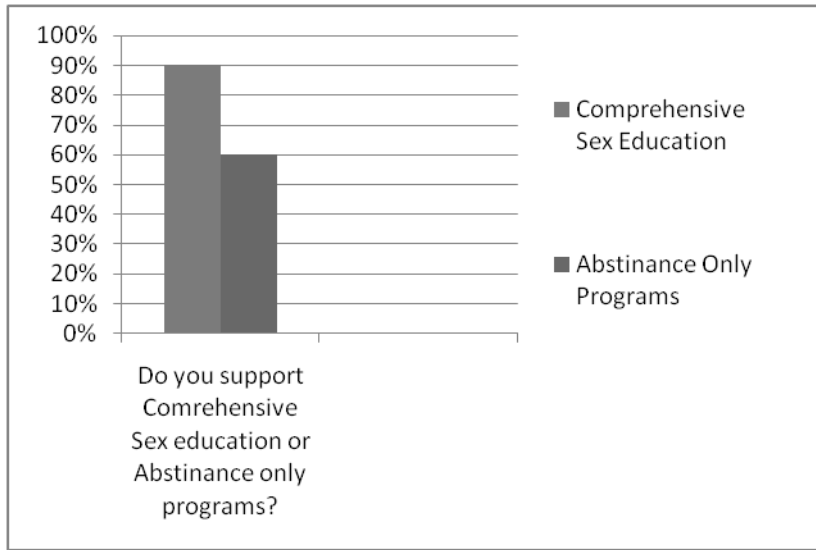


Del Norte high School

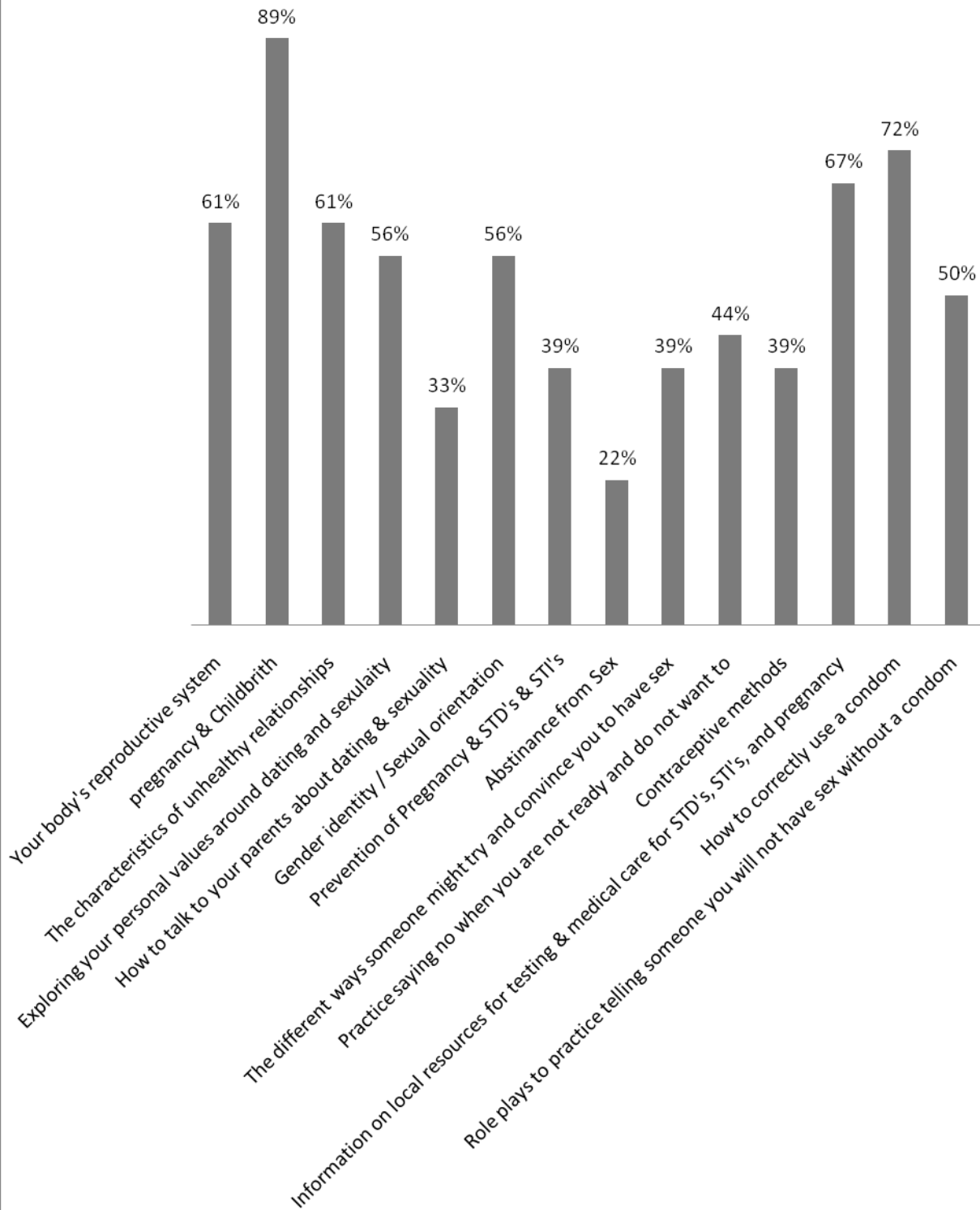
Information learned in School Classes

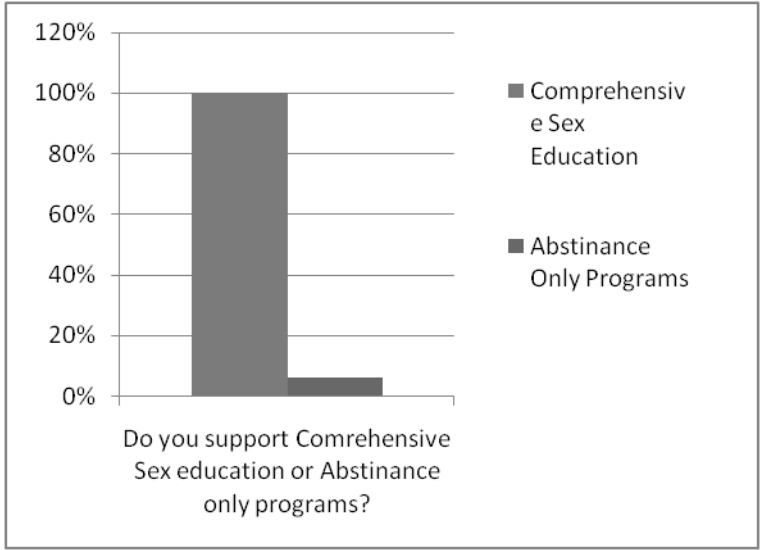
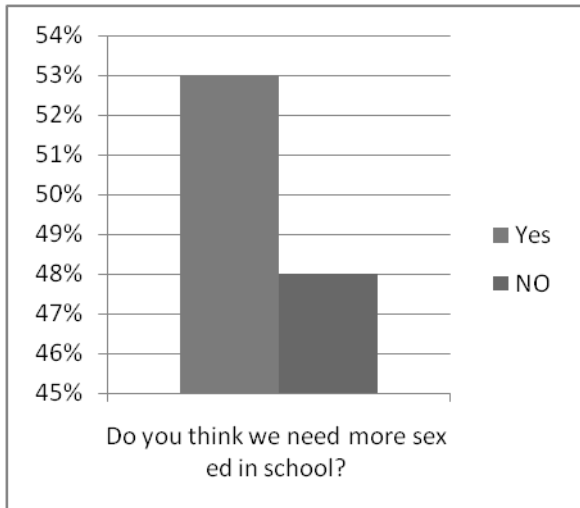
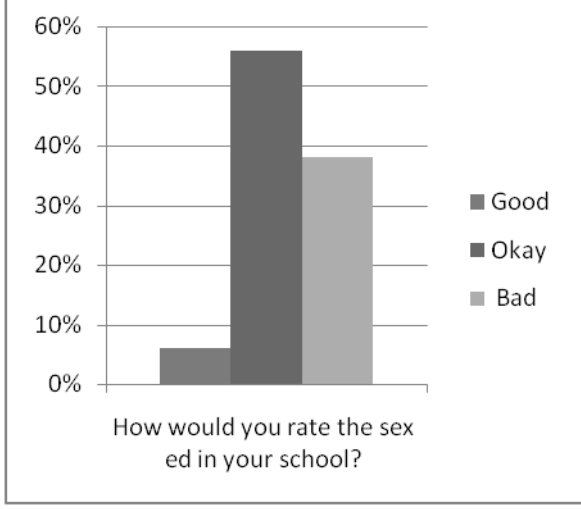
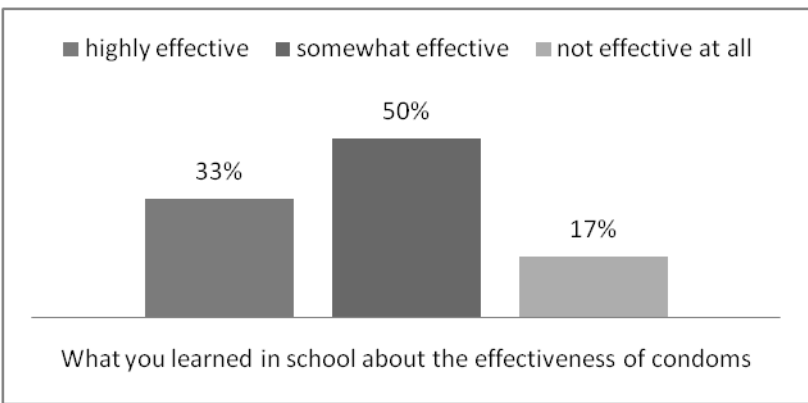
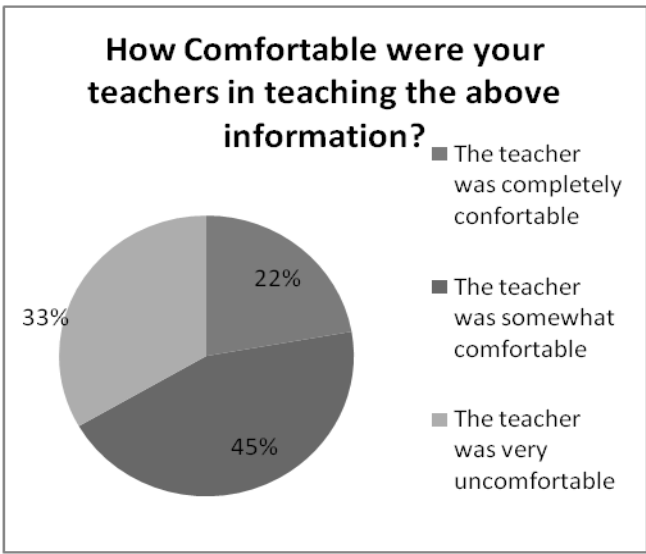
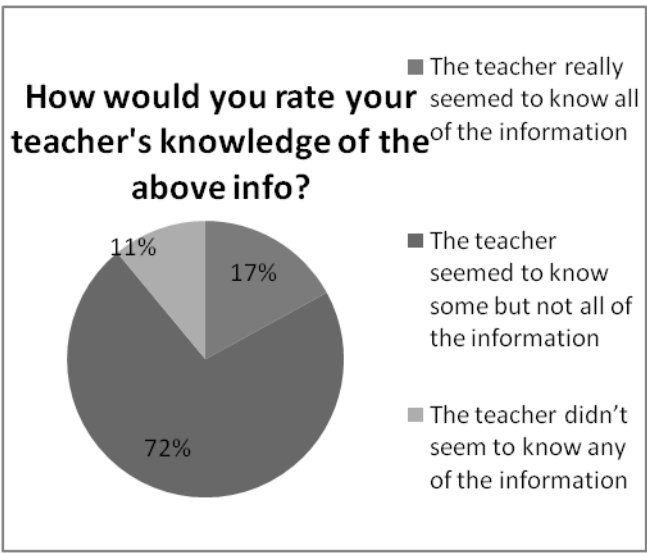


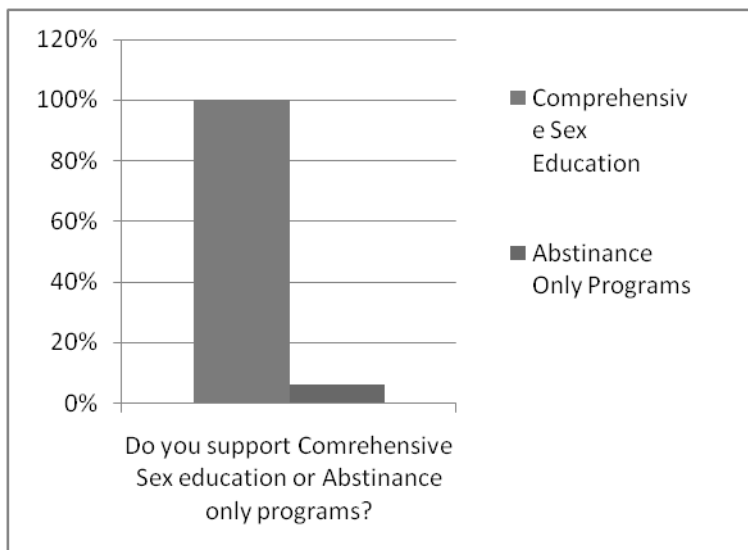
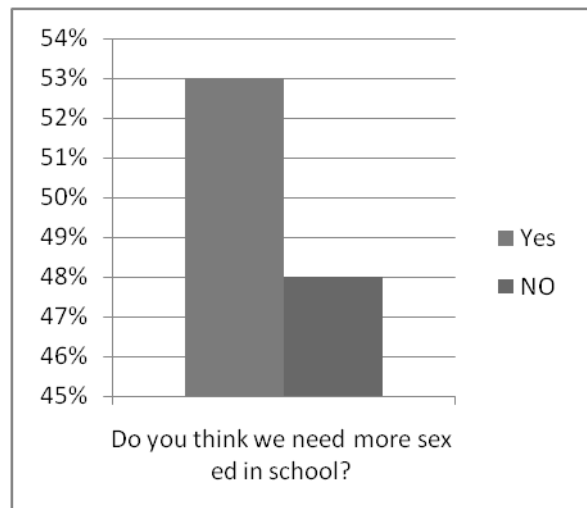
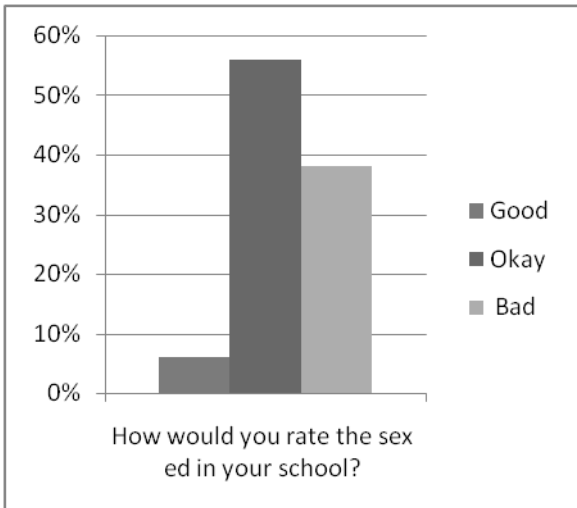
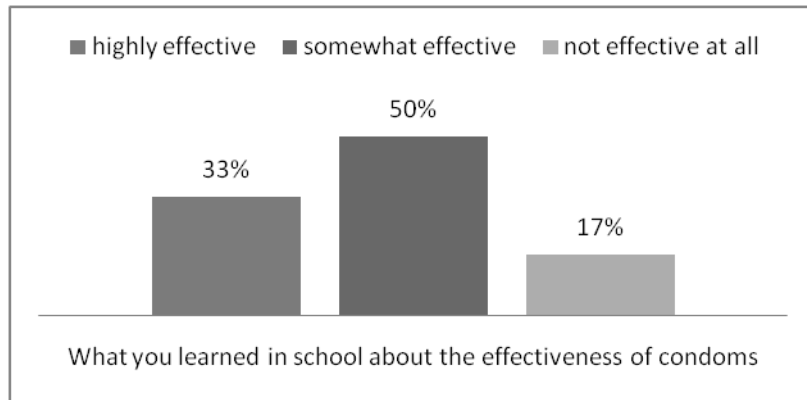


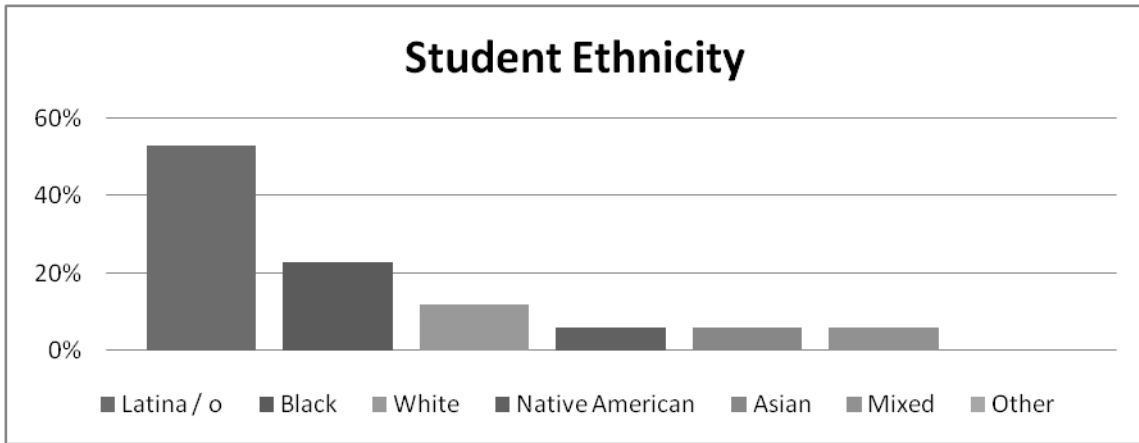
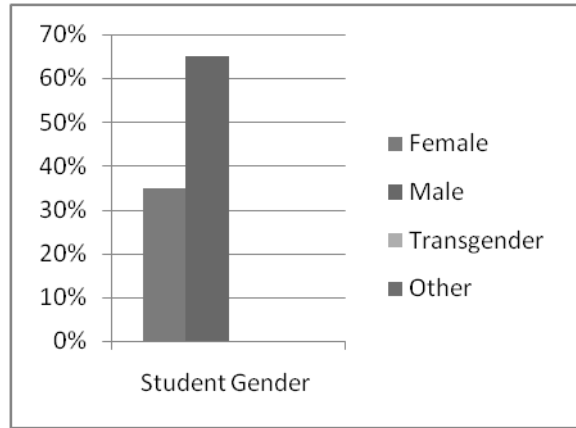
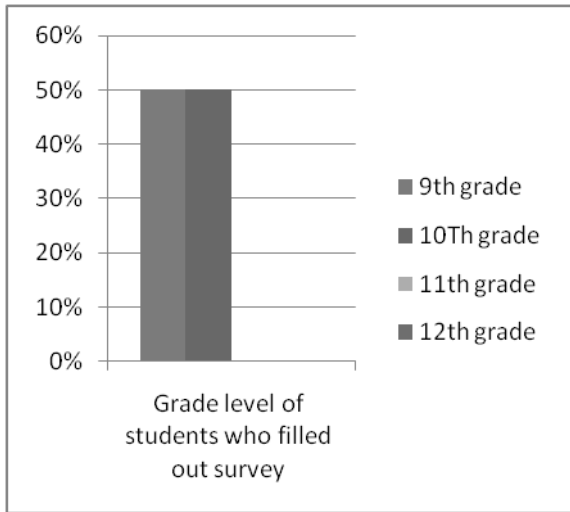


Information learned in School Classes

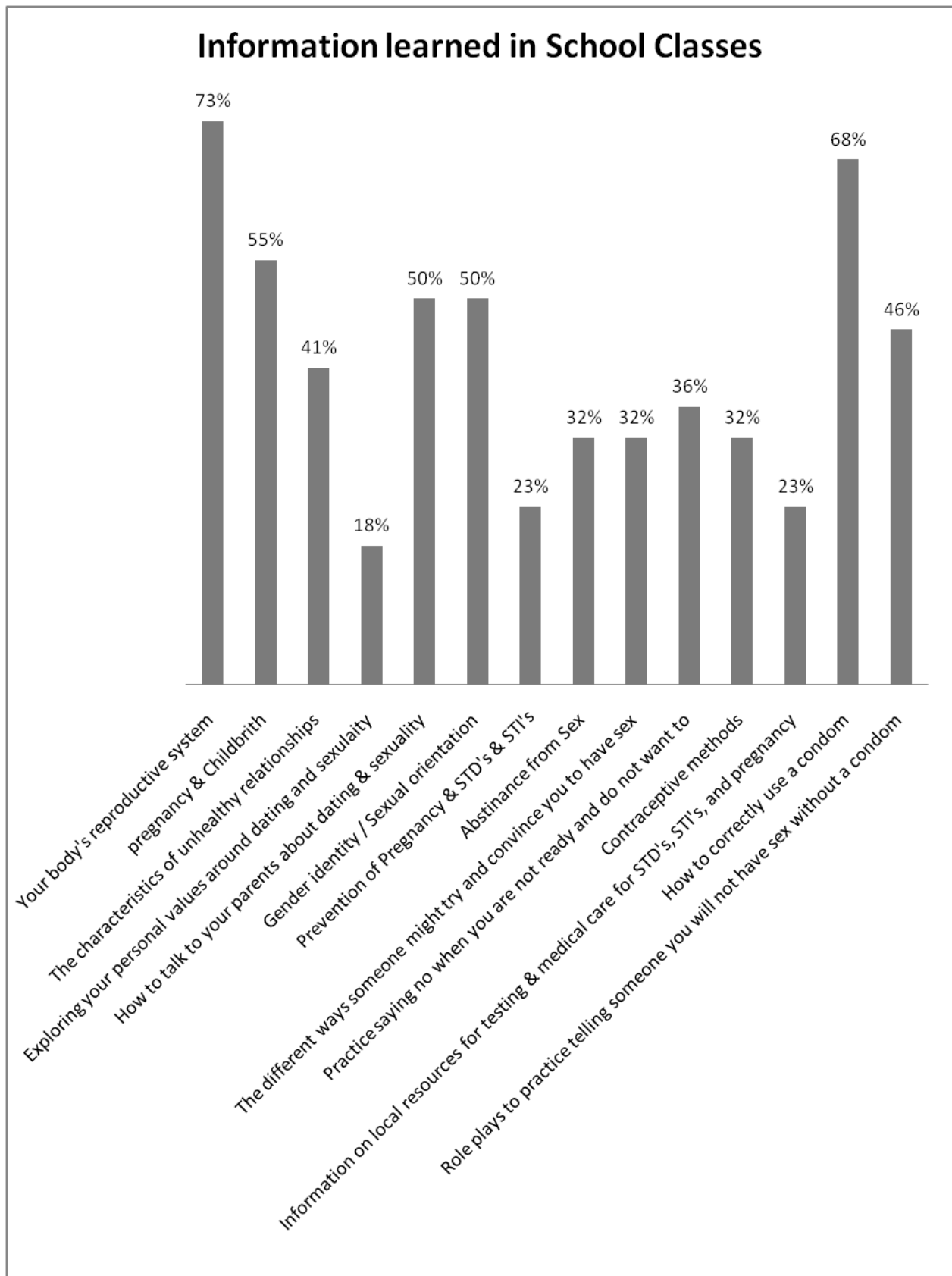


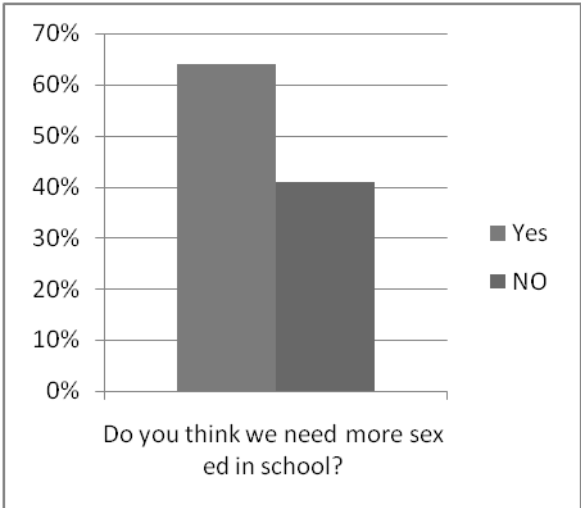
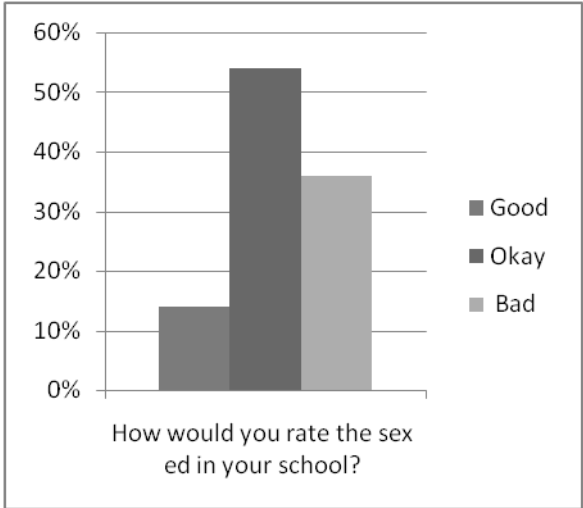
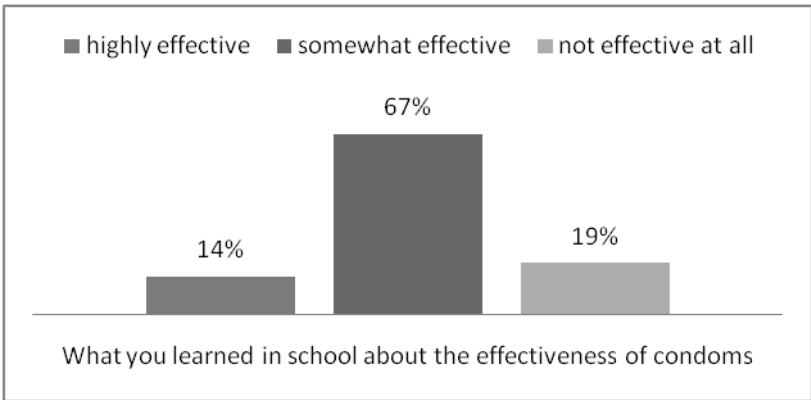
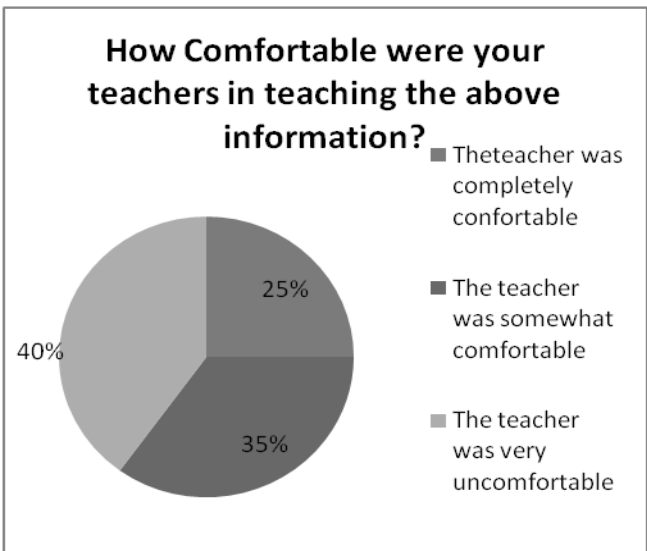
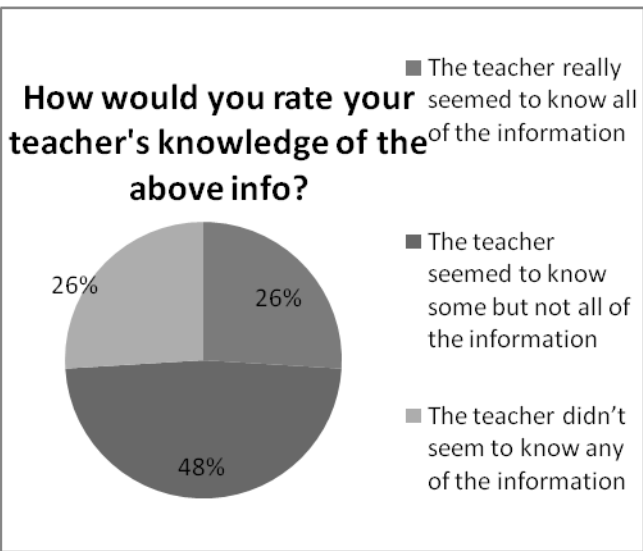


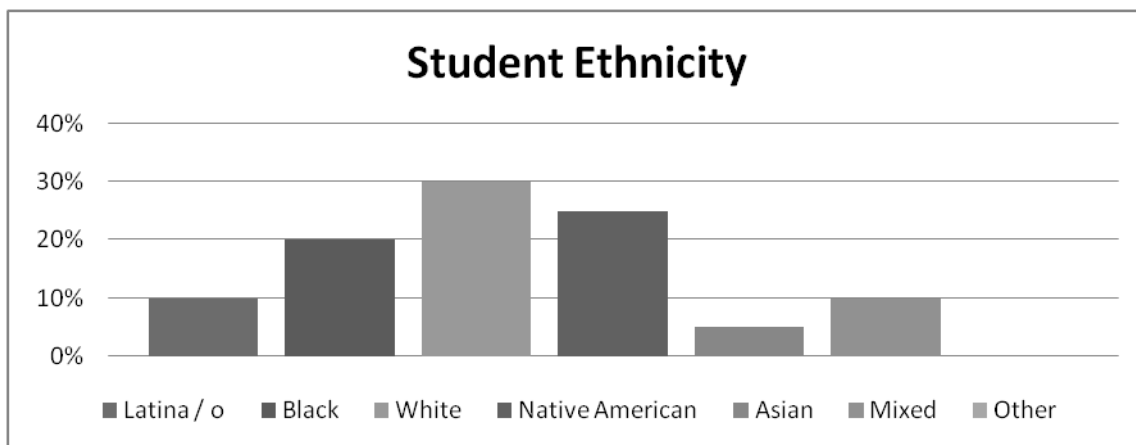
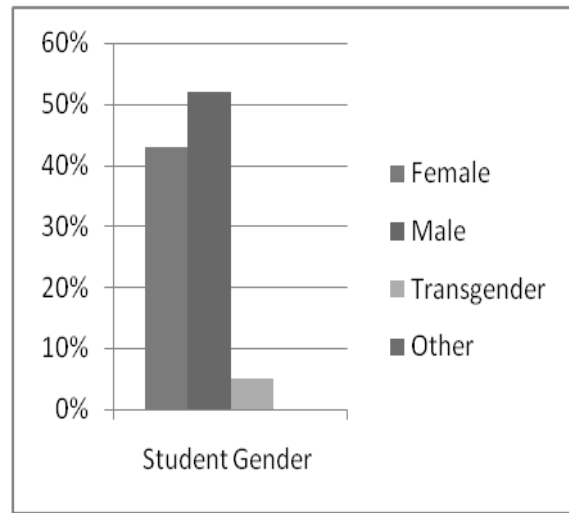
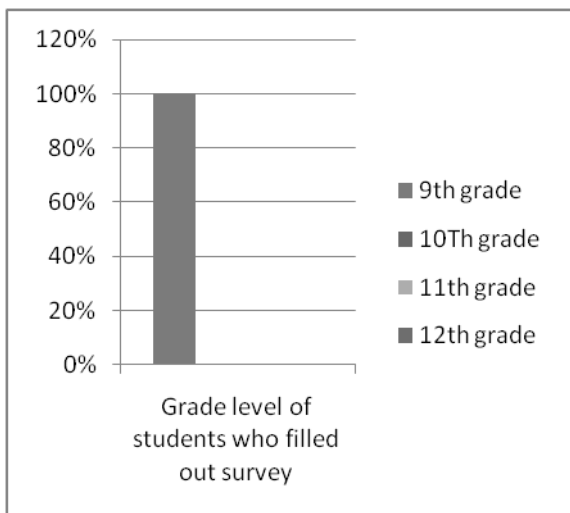
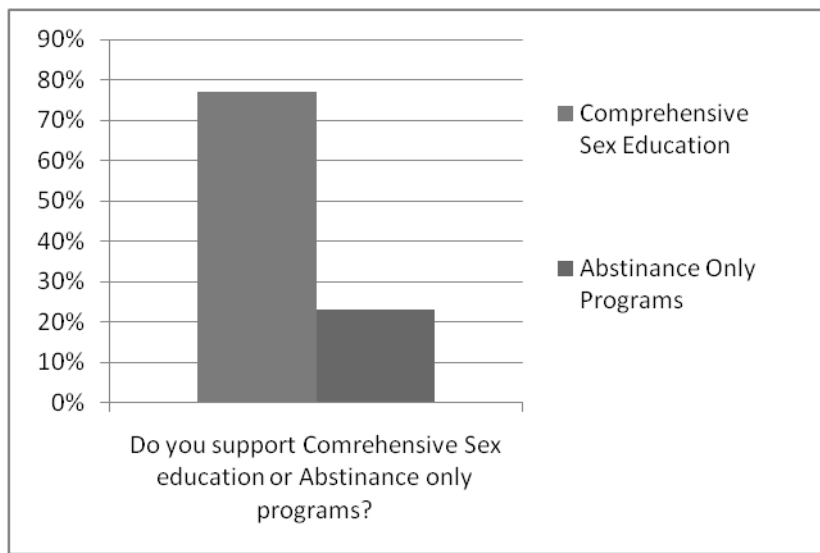




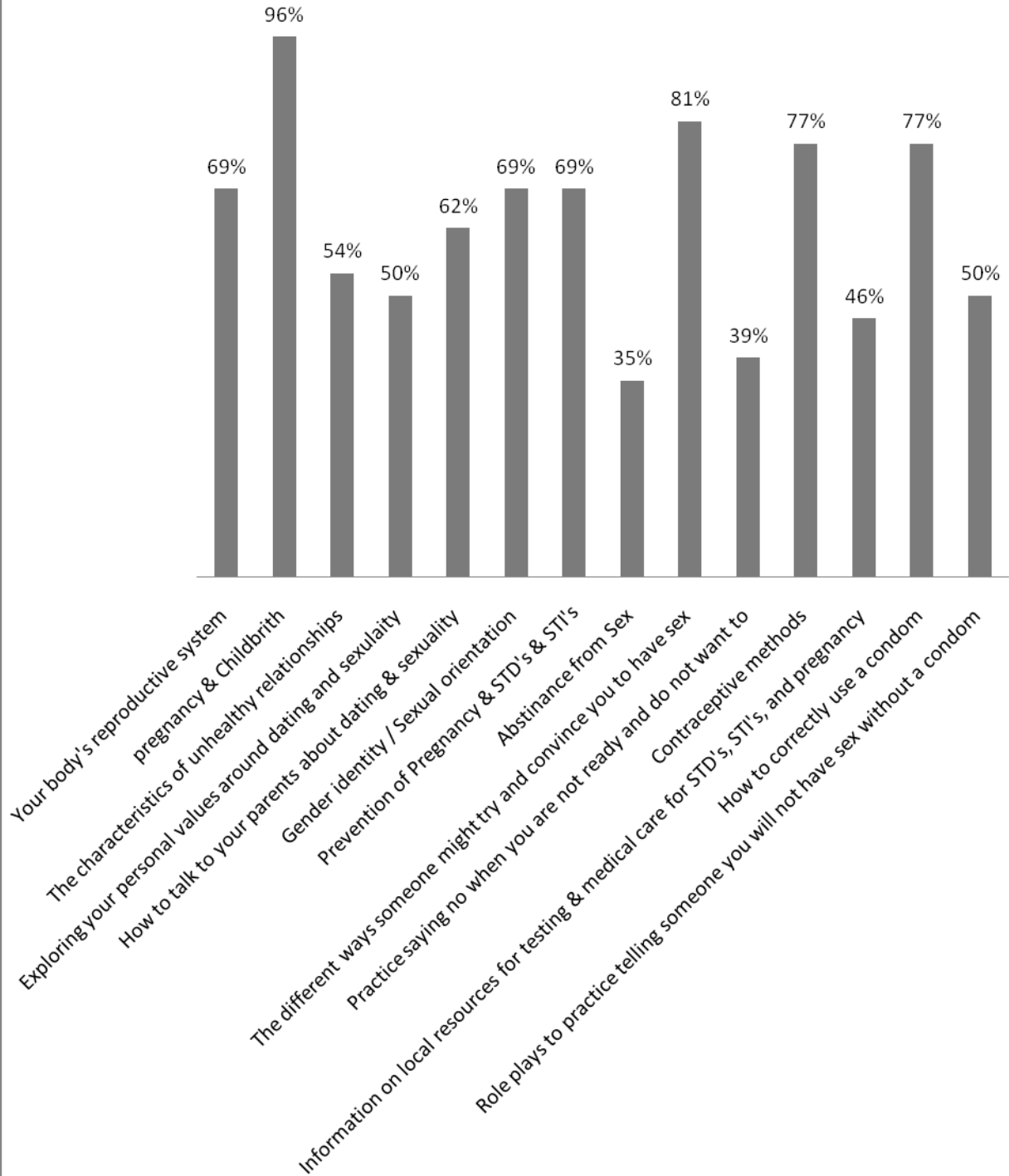
Volcano Vista High School

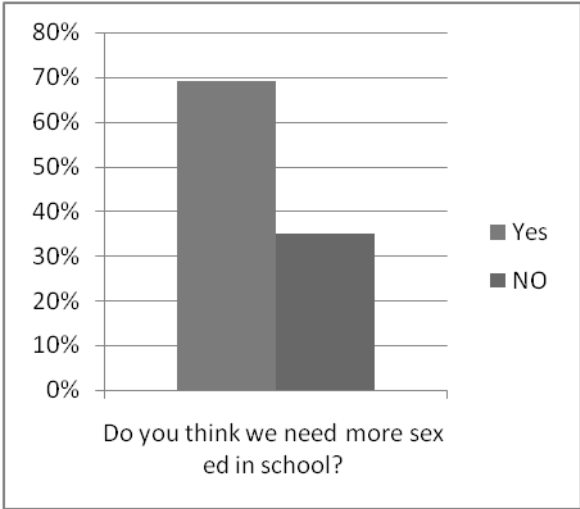
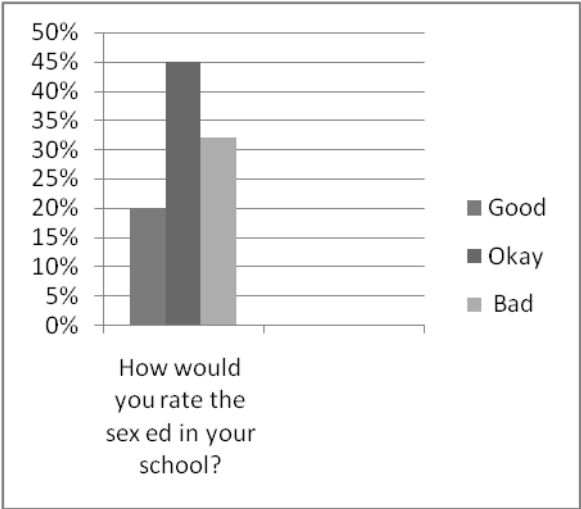
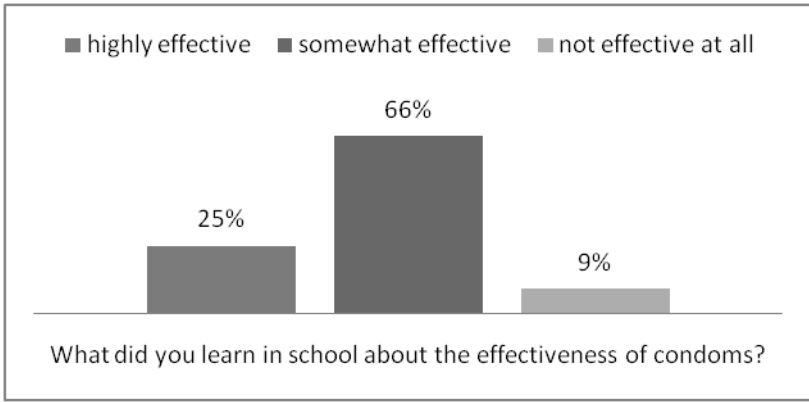
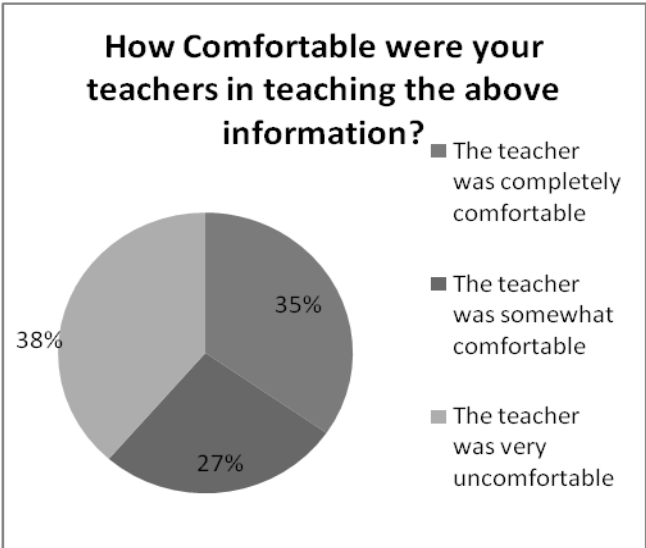
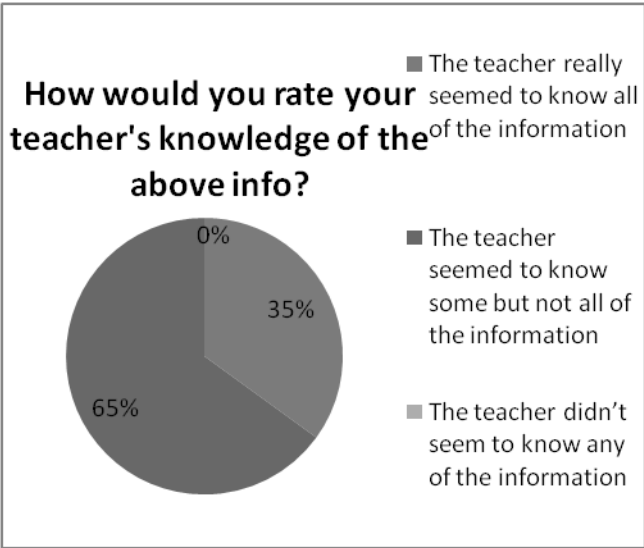


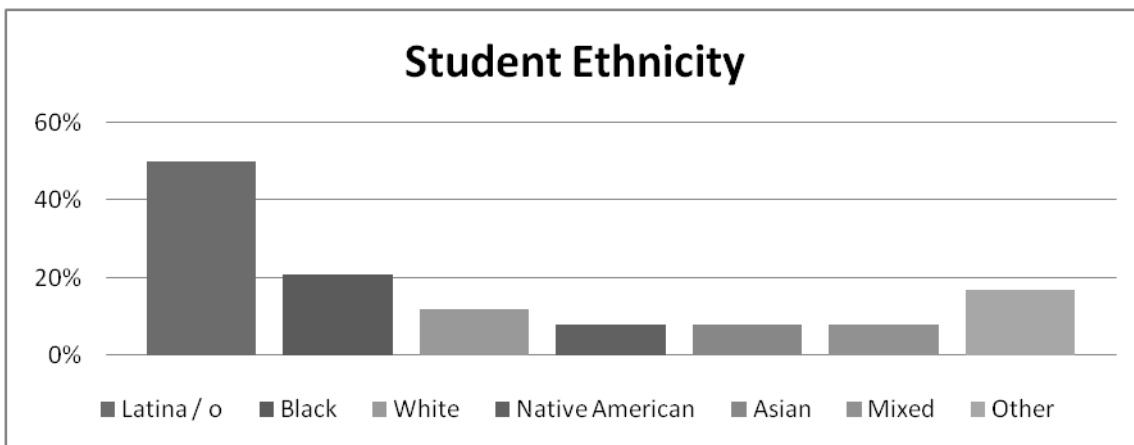
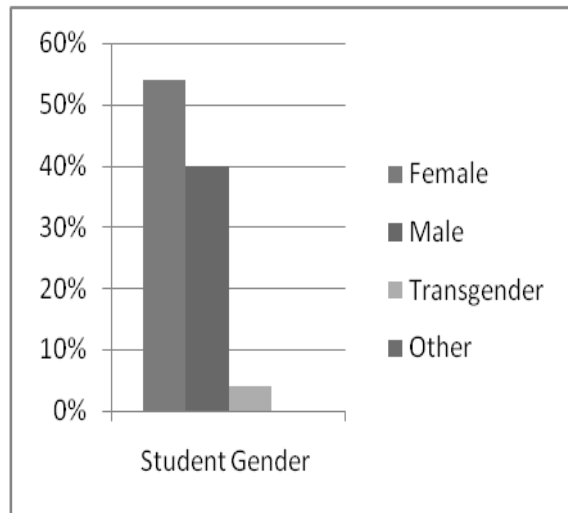
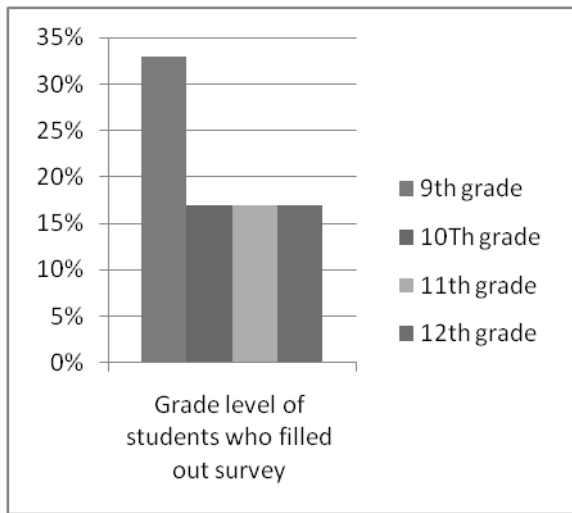
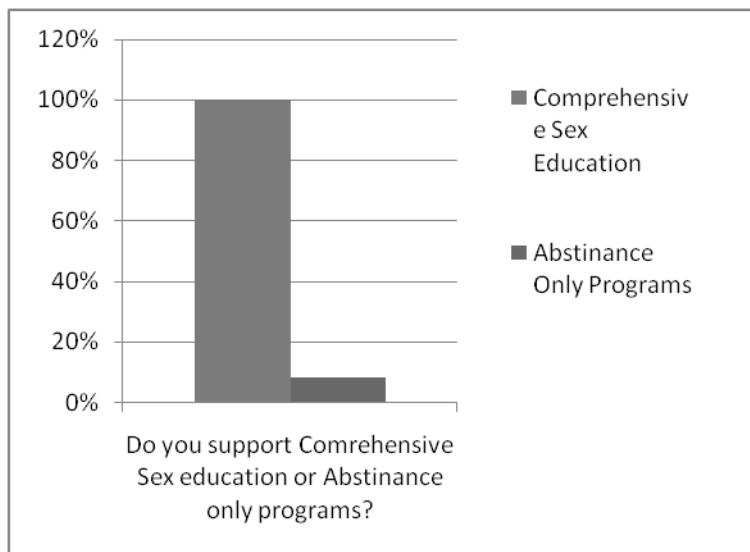




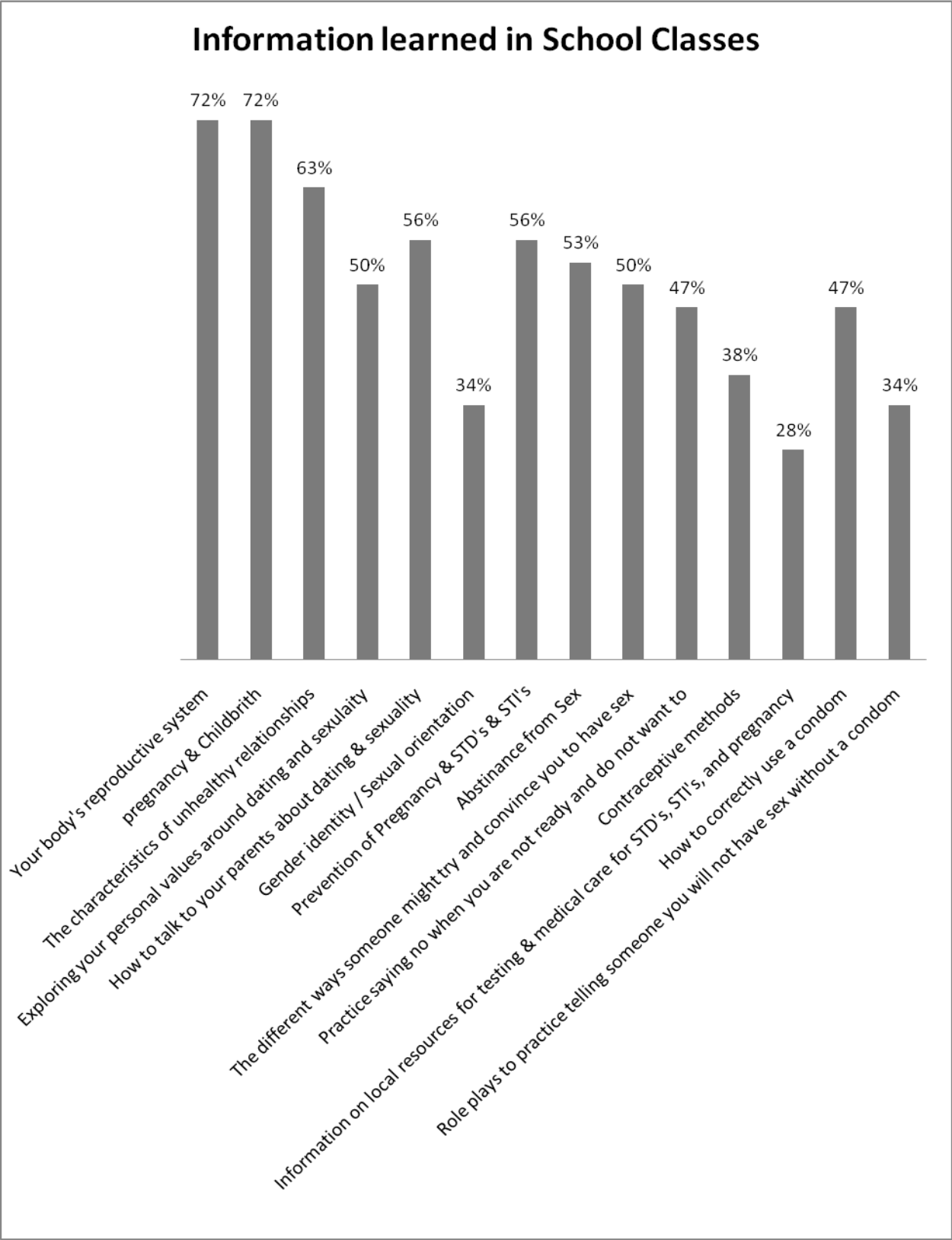
Information learned in School Classes



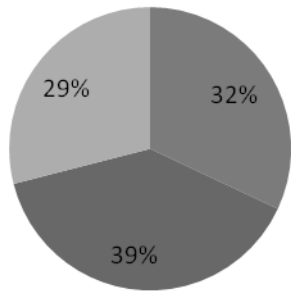




Sandia High School

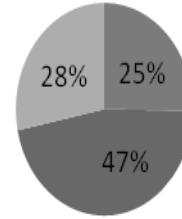


How would you rate your teachers knowledge of the above information?



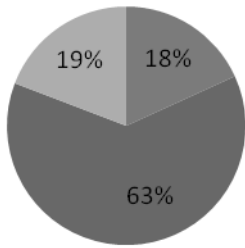
- my teacher seemed to really know all of the information
- my teacher seemed to know some but not all of the information
- my teacher didn't seem to know any of the information

How Comfortable were your teachers in teaching the above information?



- Completely Comfortable
- Somewhat uncoftrtable
- Very uncoftrtable

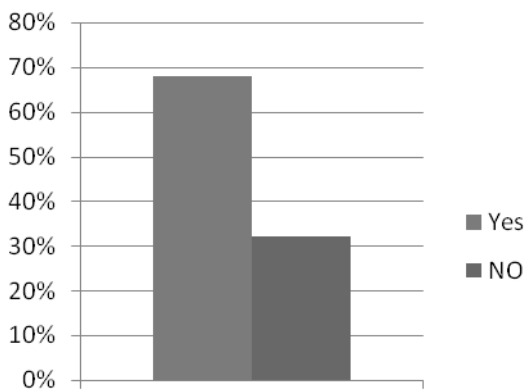
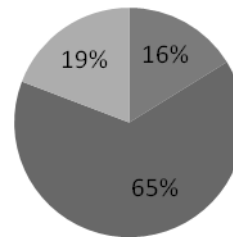
This is what I learned about the effectiveness of condoms



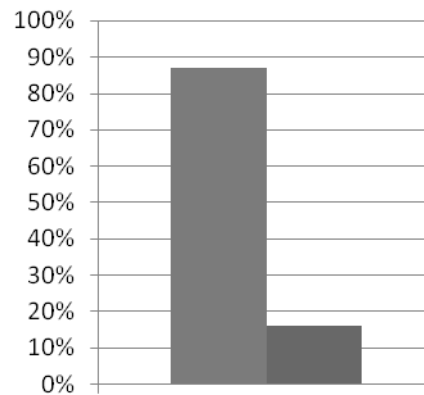
- condoms are highly effective
- condoms are somewhat effective
- condoms are not effective

How would you overall rate the sex ed at your school ?

- Good
- Okay
- Bad

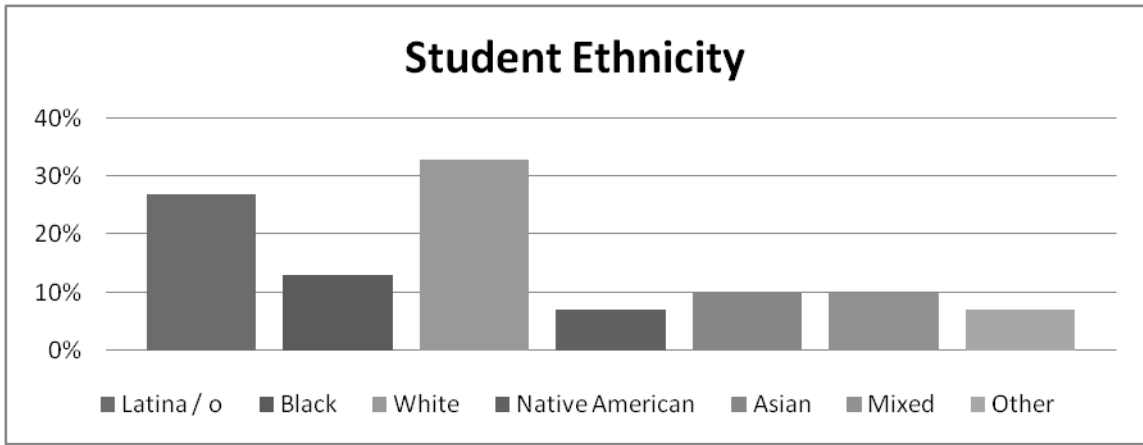
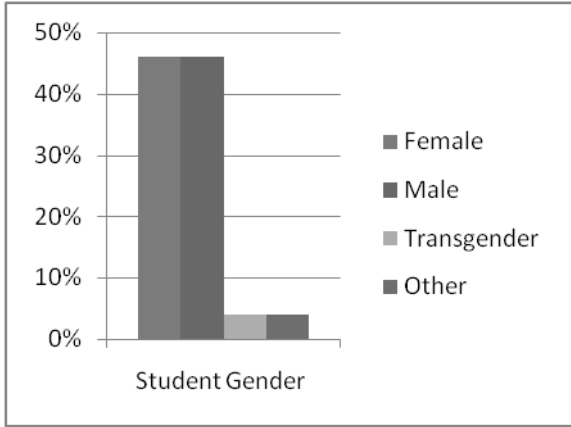
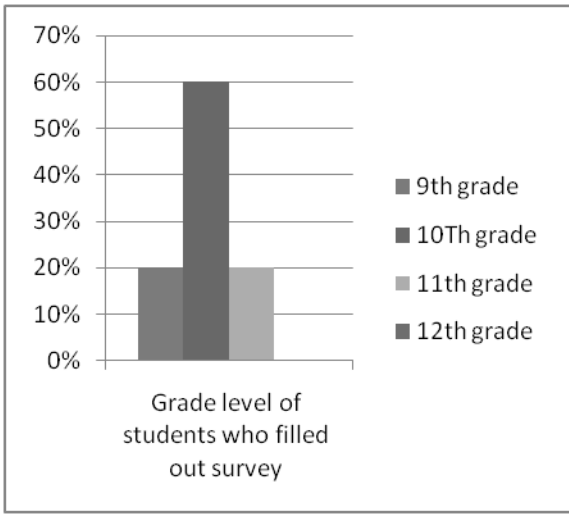


Do you think we need more sex ed in school?

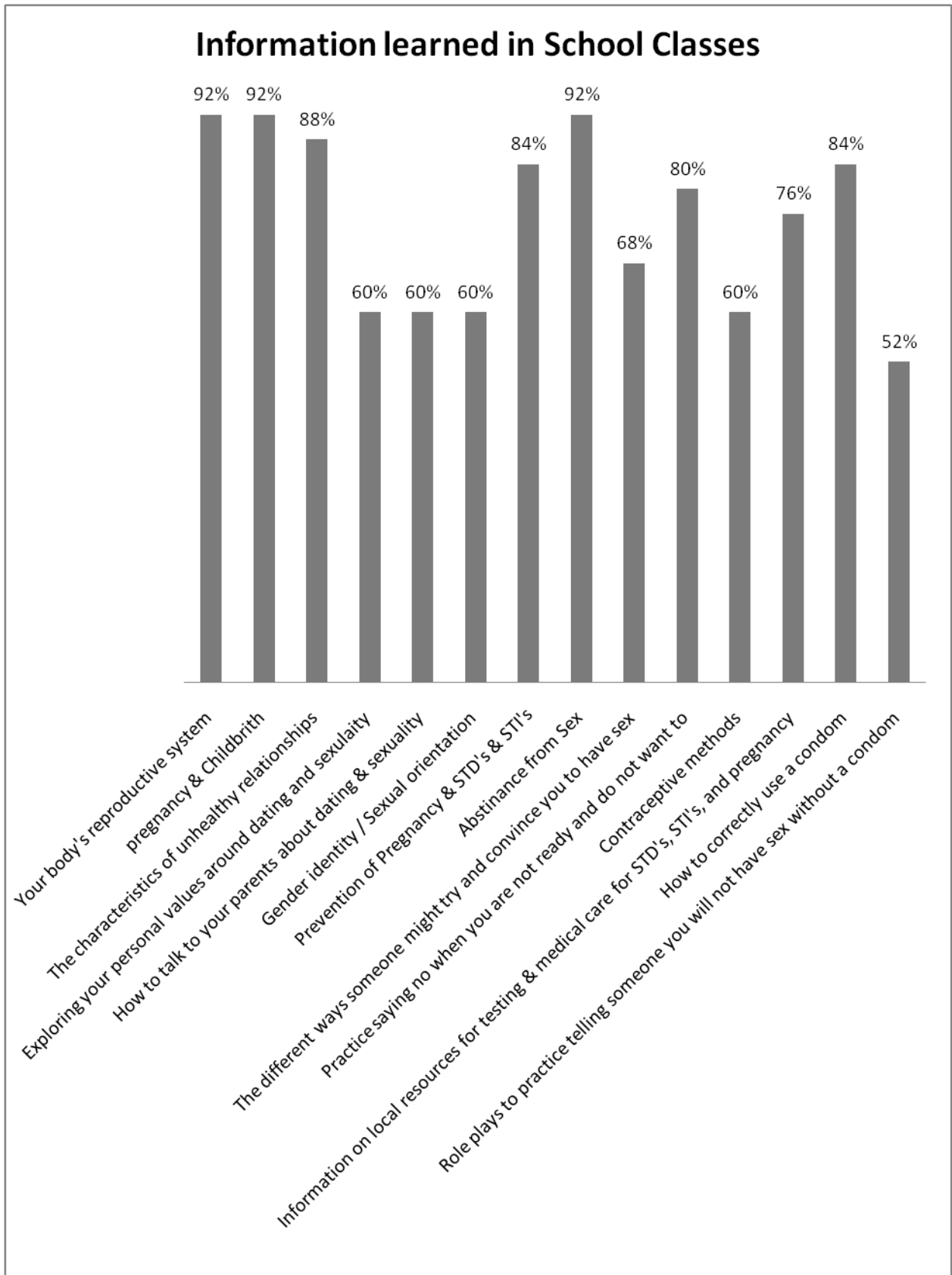


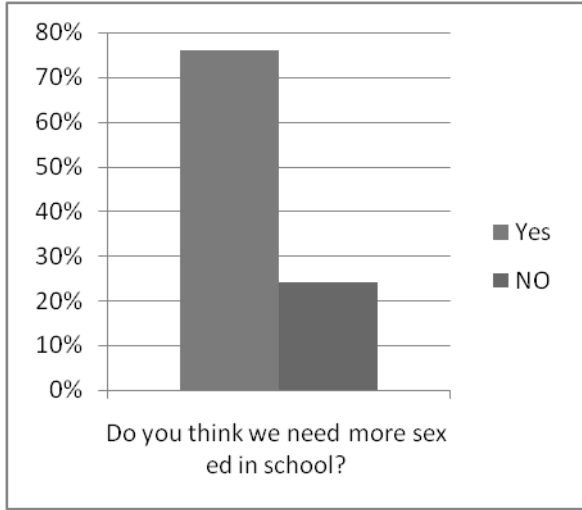
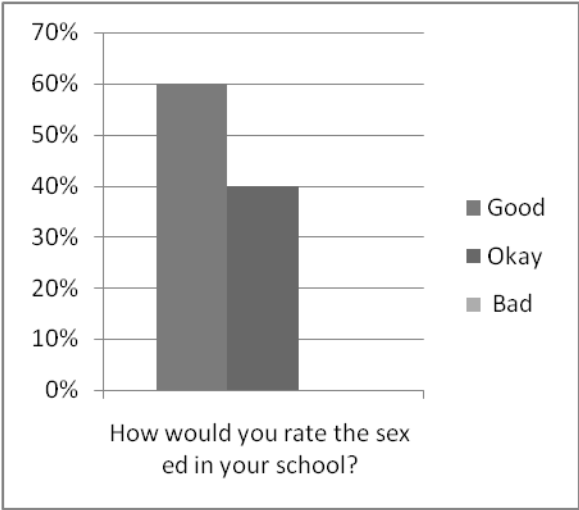
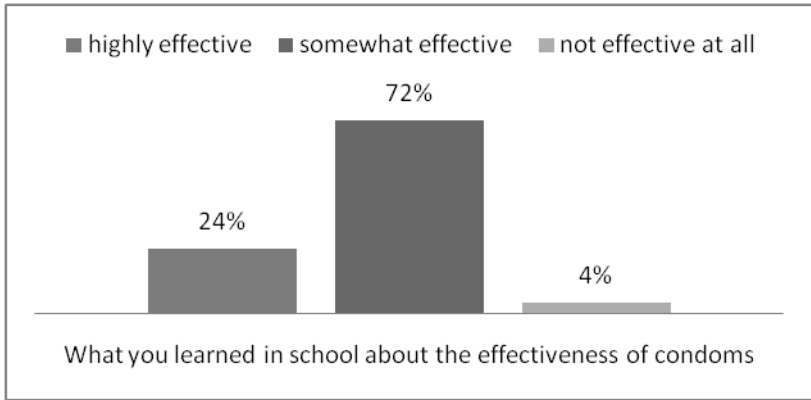
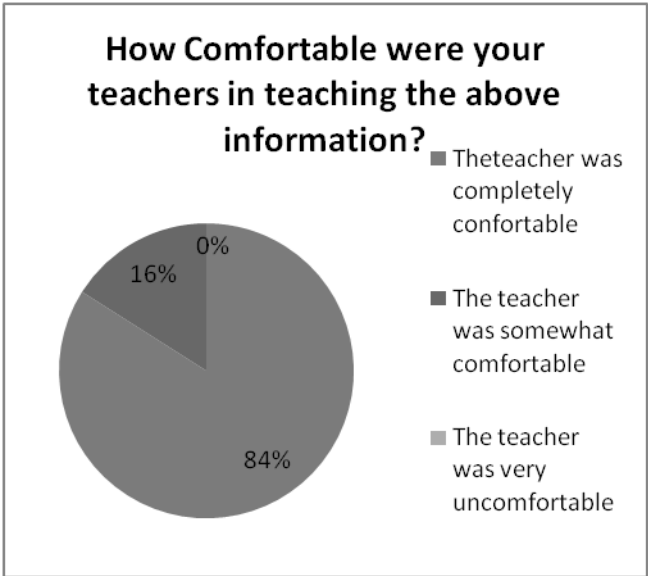
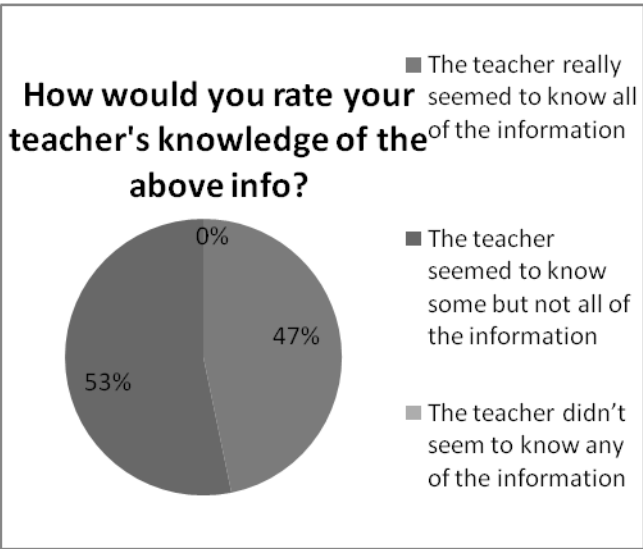
Do you support Comprehensive Sex education or Abstinence only programs?

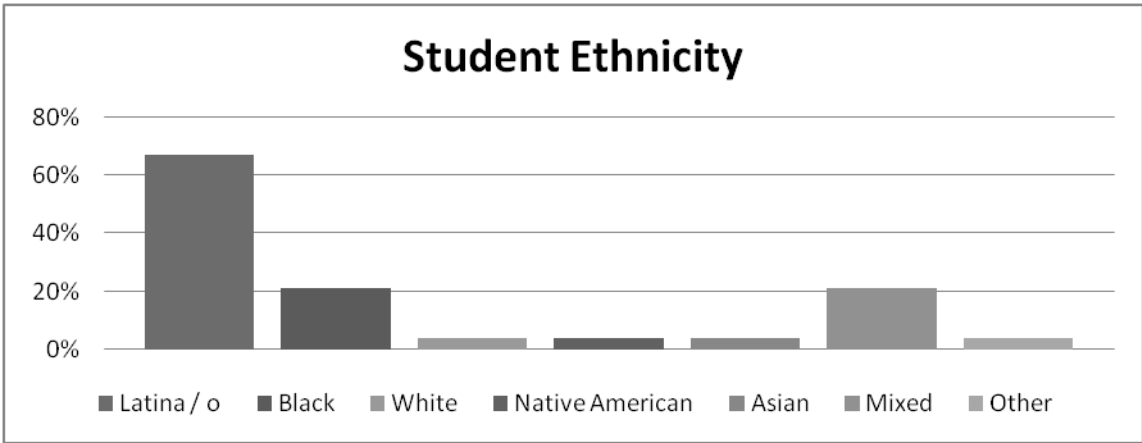
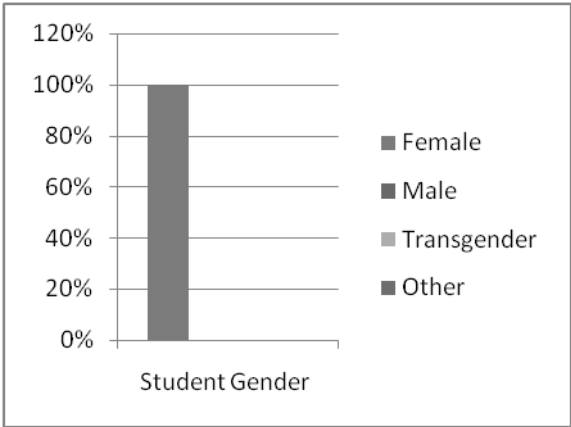
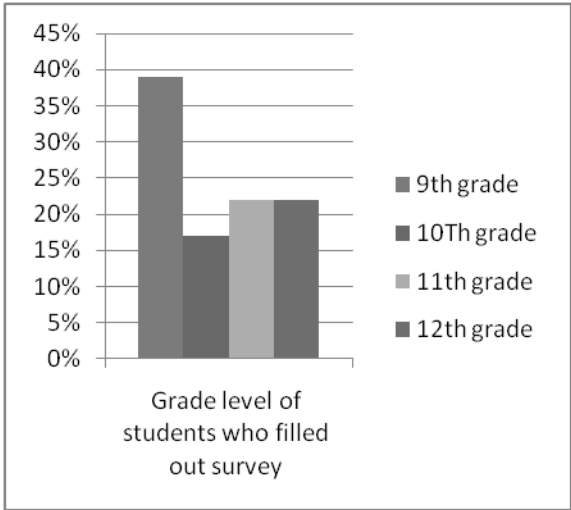
- Comprehensive Sex Education
- Abstinence Only Programs



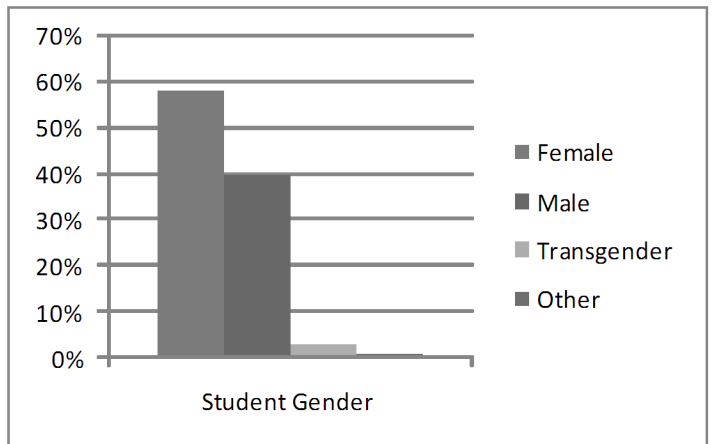
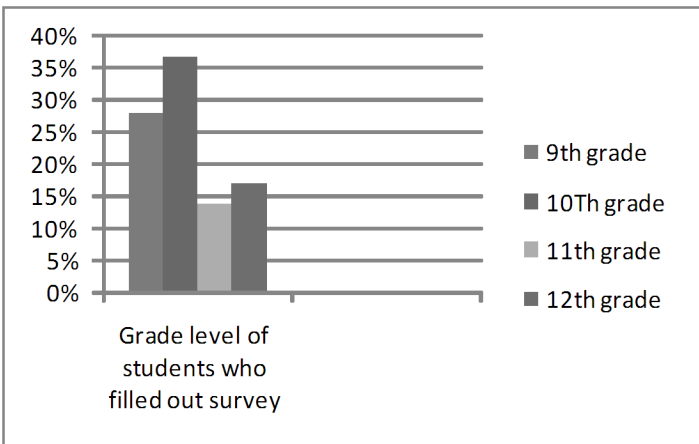
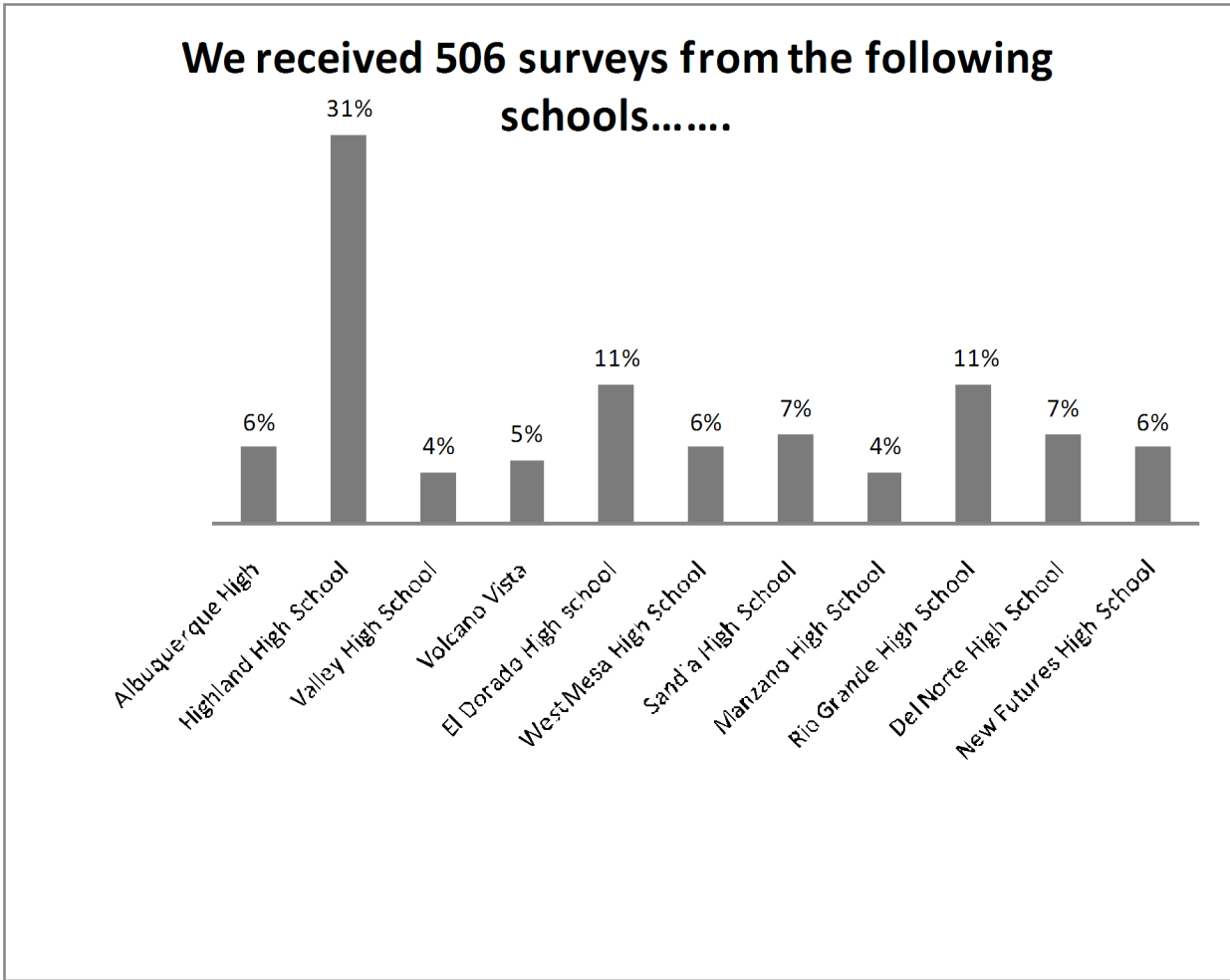
New Futures





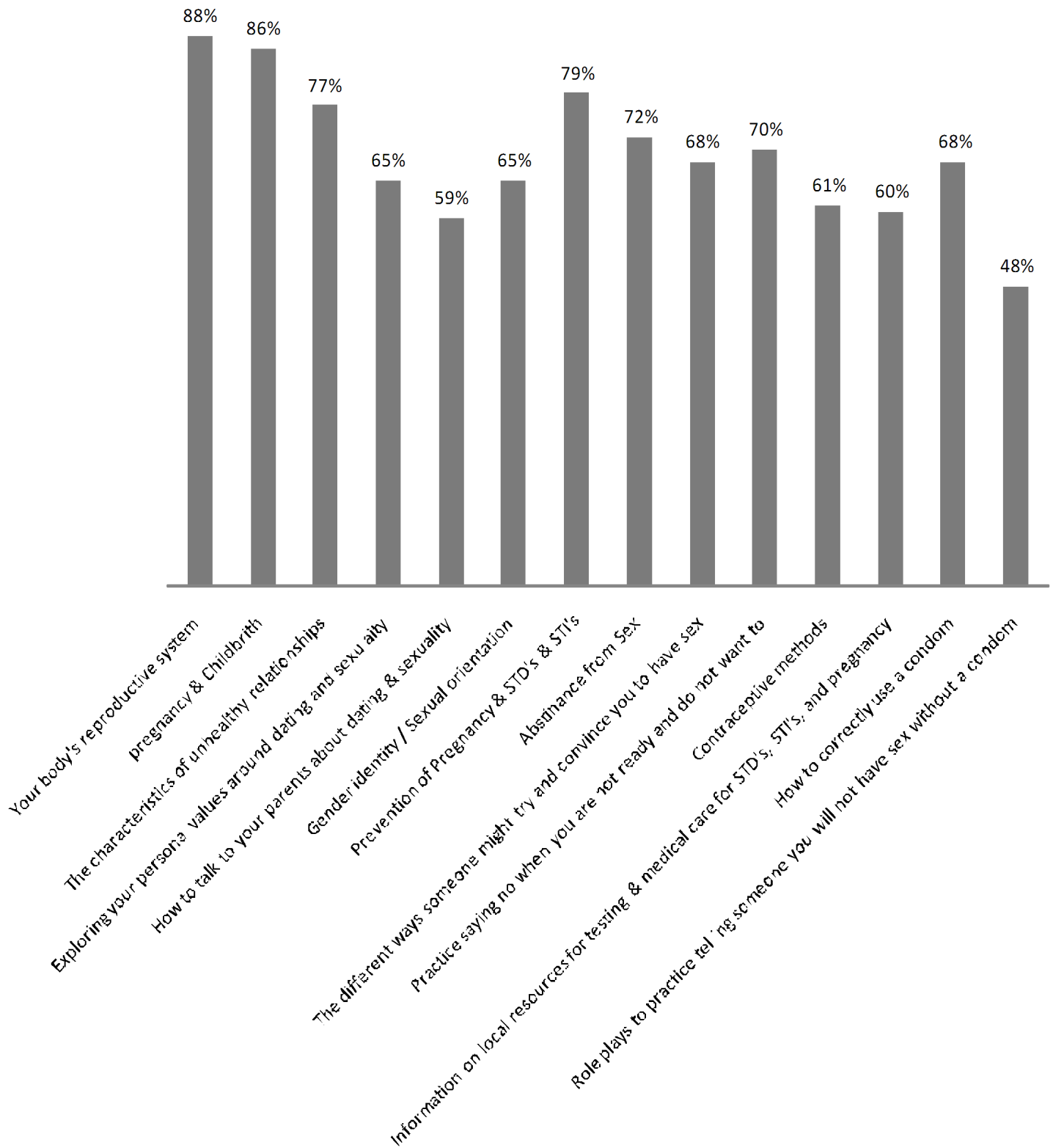


Overview of all the High Schools we surveyed.....

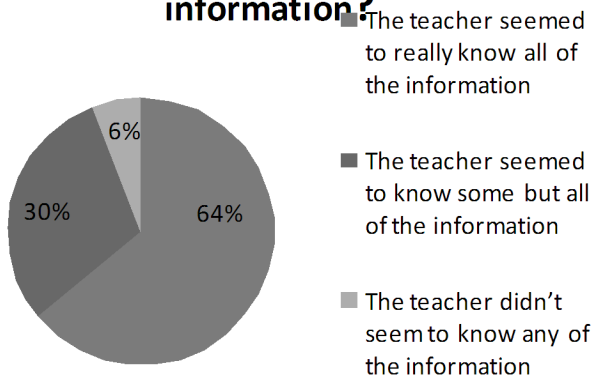


Takin a look at the district as a whole.....

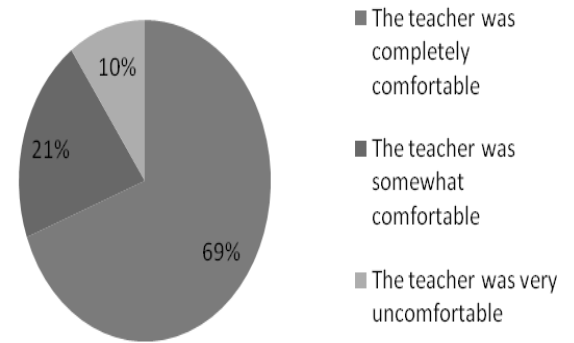
Information learned in School Classes



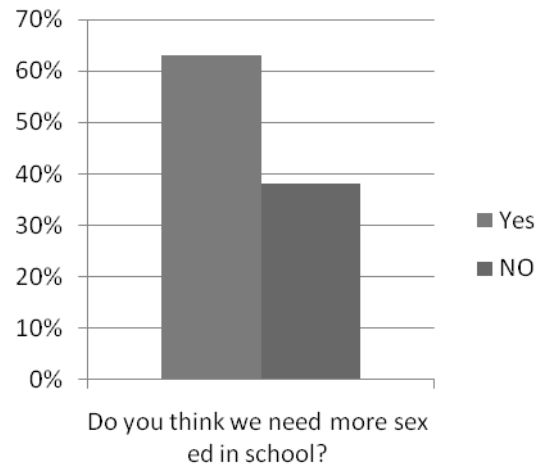
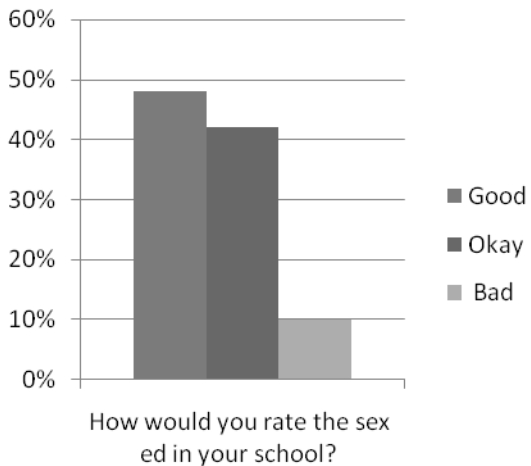
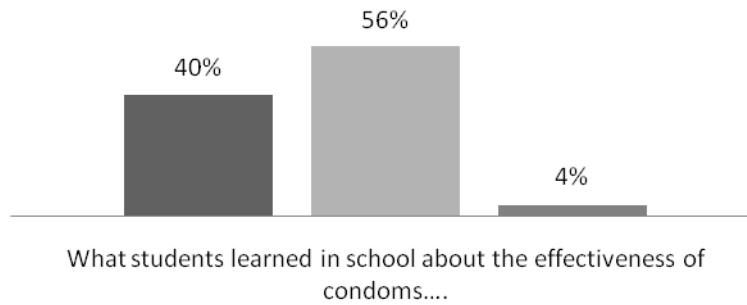
How would you rate your teacher's knowledge of the above information?

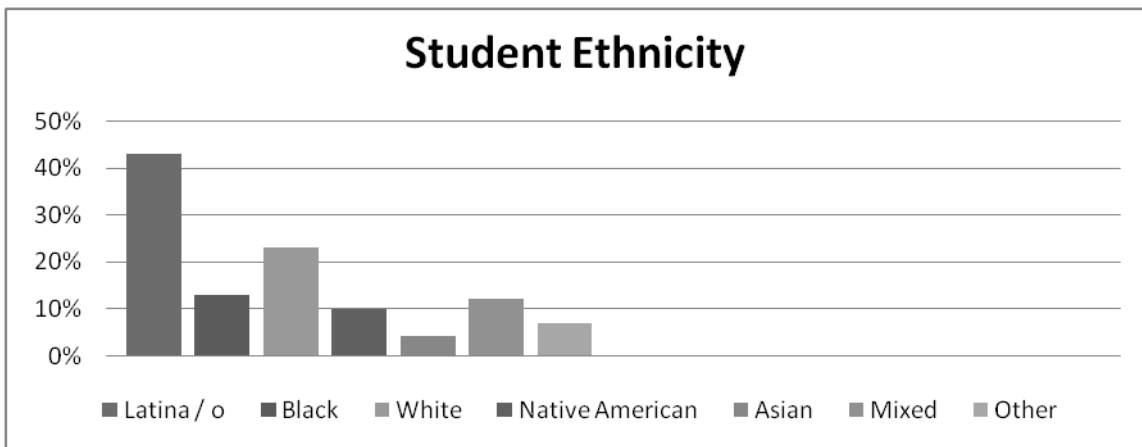
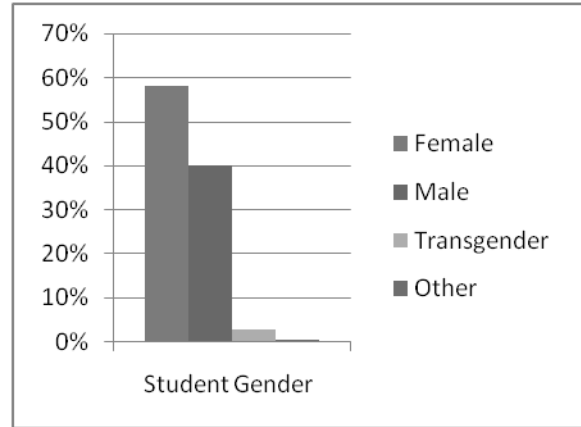
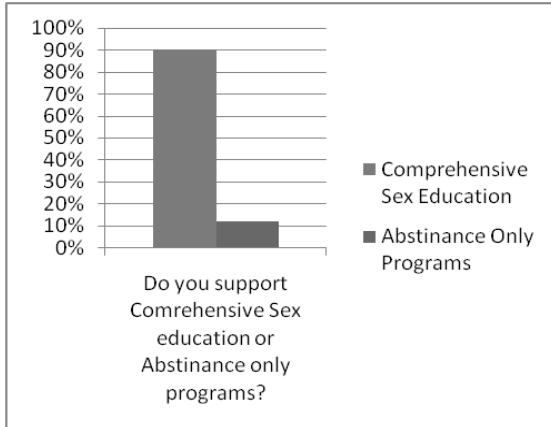


How Comfortable were your teachers in teaching the above information?



What students learned in school about the effectiveness of condoms...





Recommendations for these Schools Include:

Better utilize and enforce existing programs such as: School Health Advisory Council, Healthy Schools Report Card ,AIMS, etc.

To ensure more student and parent involvement, ask each school to host a parent night, to educate parents on what is being taught and allow for feedback.

Create a health education standards and benchmarks pamphlet to be distributed in all schools, to help remind educators, principals, and even school board members of the New Mexico State Standards and benchmarks.

Utilize / partner with community resources available for Sex Ed, such as: Young Women United, New Mexico health training institute, Planned Parenthood, Self Serve, New Mexico Aids Services.

Encourage participation in a citywide health educators best practices convening.

Methodology:

We wanted to know which schools had indeed implemented our states standards and benchmarks for health ed. We got over 500 students to tell us their opinions. These surveys were conducted strictly peer to peer. The purpose of this survey is to create awareness, to bring attention to this subject, and most importantly to create community dialogue on how we can truly come together in the best interest and health of our students. We know that survey answers generated peer to peer can look different than surveys generated by the state, district, or authority figure. We honor the voice that peer surveys represent.

We used survey monkey to conduct our survey. YWU youth organizers, adults staff, members and volunteers all helped input survey data into survey monkey! YWU youth organizers then analyzed the results, researched existing tools and programs within APS, and proceeded to develop recommendations for schools. Once all of the data was inputted and analyzed YWU staff then wrote the final report.

We acknowledge that our data is not fully representative of each school, based on the amount of surveys received, but it does provide our community an opportunity to hear what is happening in our different schools from a genuine youth perspective, and opens dialogue to move us toward what we believe, is our State's common goal, which is ensuring our youth are prepared to make informed & educated decisions regarding sexual health. Most importantly it will encourage our community to get involved in assuring our State Standards and Benchmarks for health Education are **SUCCESSFULLY** implemented, routinely monitored and enforced!

Conclusion:

When students are given the opportunity to voice their opinions about the problems and solutions to the educational crisis, they develop solutions that have a unique and critical perspective. We need to find ways to respond to the needs and insights of young people who want to have agency in their education. Students, like teachers and parents, want their experiences to be validated and valued. For Albuquerque schools to truly meet the needs of their students, we must support students to lead the efforts to make education work for all students. This report is a model that we recommend be led by students to assess current challenges and progress made toward meeting education requirements.

Upon release of this report card, the following community commitments were generated:

One APS school board member committed to trying to get this issue and this report card on the agenda for an APS school board meeting as well as following up with schools who scored low.

Community member committed to getting to know local schools better to see what's being taught.
Community member committed to organizing more media coverage around this issue.

Community member committed to Collaborating with other parents/ grandparents, create awareness and keep the dialogue going.

Community member committed to Being a resource on policy within state.

Community member committed to encouraging folks to Call on members of congress & tell them to end funding for abstinence only!

Community member committed to being a resource for medical information.

Next Steps:

Young Women United will follow up with each school to present recommendations and available resources. We hope to meet with health educators and principals from each school, and invite all to participate in e health educators best practices convening. We will continue to distribute this report to those interested as well as present to APS Health & Wellness Department, district School Health Advisory Council, Research Department, and School Board of Directors.

Acknowledgements:

Much appreciation to the youth for their dedication, vision and hard work to make this project come to life and to the staff who supported them.

Young Women United members, volunteers and Circle of Strength youth organizers who developed the report card survey questions, made classroom presentations, collected over 500 surveys, entered the data, analyzed the results and wrote the introduction:

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