Dear Friends,

As my first year as executive director of Answer comes to a close, I look back on the past 12 months with an enormous sense of pride over what our phenomenal staffs—adult and teen—have accomplished, especially in this trying economic environment. It is no exaggeration to say that we could not have done any of it without your invaluable support.

This is a very exciting time at Answer and in the field of comprehensive sexuality education—mainly because we have a president who has already taken steps to eliminate most federal funding for failed abstinence-only-until-marriage programs. While exciting, this is no guarantee that federal dollars will be spent on comprehensive sexuality education programs—which makes our role that much more important.

We have many great plans to expand the organization’s national role. Central to these plans is the Future of Sexuality Education process, an ongoing collaboration between us, Advocates for Youth and SIECUS to create a blueprint for school-based sexuality education in the United States. (See left-hand page.)

Answer’s role in the future of sexuality education in the US is to expand our efforts to help educators and other youth-serving professionals effectively teach comprehensive sexuality education to young people. This expansion includes:

- Increasing the use of our teen-written resources—Sex, Etc. magazine and Web site, Sexetc.org—and training educators and other youth-serving professionals how to use these resources in their work.
- Increasing our national presence by providing more keynote addresses and workshops at conferences.
- Turning up the volume on teen voices in sexuality education advocacy work with our Your Voice, Your Rights advocacy campaign on Sexetc.org.
- Providing more extensive technical assistance to school districts and state-based organizations working with school districts nationwide.

There is so much more for us to do—thousands of teens who still don’t know that we’re a safe place for their questions about sexuality; thousands of educators who need our support not only to teach accurately and effectively, but also to advocate at their schools and agencies to have sexuality addressed in the first place. The entire staff stands ready to take on this challenge. We had an amazing year this past year, and are looking forward to what the new one will bring in this next chapter in Answer’s long, impressive history.

Speaking of this next chapter—and the future—no one represents the future of our work, let alone of the entire world, than the young people to whom we remain so dedicated. For this reason, we have invited some of our current and former teen staff to write this year’s annual report. We hope you enjoy reading their perspectives as much as we have!

On behalf of Answer and the young people and educators we reach every year, we thank you for helping us do our important work. We hope you will continue to join us in our mission to provide and promote sexuality education to young people and the adults and parents who teach them.

Warmly,

Elizabeth Schroeder, Ed.D., M.S.W.
Executive Director

A Letter from the Executive Director

I’m Chelsea Biemiller, a former Sex, Etc. teen editor who’s now a junior at Drexel University. I was honored to be one of the youngest participants at a key Future of Sexuality Education (FOSE) meeting this year in Philadelphia, which was attended by national funders and leaders in the comprehensive sexuality education field. It was a highlight of the year for FOSE, a grant-supported strategic partnership between Answer, Advocates for Youth and SIECUS that is framing the future direction of school-based comprehensive sexuality education in the United States.

There was an incredible range of professionals at the two-day meeting—from sexuality educators to funders to representatives from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. I enjoyed hearing their wide array of opinions and insights. We didn’t always agree about what strategies would work best, but our common goal was never lost: to provide accurate sexuality education to all young people in America.
Hello, my name is Elizabeth Marchetta, and I’m a former Sex, Etc. teen editor. My passion for sexual health issues was ignited as a teen editor, and it influenced my decision to major in public health in college. Since graduating, I’ve served in the Peace Corps in South Africa, where, among other things, I helped a 70-plus-year-old South African woman become more comfortable talking about sexual health.

Change has been seen all over America in the past few years, and it is also present at Answer, where we continue to adapt our programs to meet the needs of our increasingly savvy teens and the adults who teach them. Our national Sexuality Education Training Initiative provides teachers and other youth-serving professionals with the knowledge and skills they need to educate and empower young people to make healthy sexual decisions. More than 5,000 of these professionals participated in Answer trainings this year (see “Answer by the Numbers” on page 5).

The U.S. teen birth rate has begun to climb again. We still have among the highest teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease rates in the industrialized world. Homophobia and sexual violence are ever-present, especially among teenagers. So it has never been more critical to teach about healthy, respectful sexuality to young people.

Nora Gelperin, M.Ed., director of training and education since 2003, oversees Answer’s innovative and diverse training program. Training venues include open-enrollment workshops, in-service trainings, keynote sessions at national and regional conferences, the Training Institute in Sexual Health Education (TISHE) and Online Professional Development (OPD) workshops. Topics covered at these trainings range from puberty, healthy relationships and body image to teaching sexuality to developmentally disabled students.

I asked Nora to share highlights of her department’s work this year. She cited the national recognition we have received as the leader in sexual health teacher training.

“It’s been wonderful to hear Answer repeatedly referred to as the ‘go to’ organization for teacher training by educators, colleagues and funders alike,” Nora says. Educators say that our open-enrollment workshops and in-service trainings are not only dynamic and rewarding, but have also made them better able to help their students.

“Using the services of Answer has given my staff the tools and confidence to educate our students in the most creative way. The workshop information is up-to-date, the activities engaging and the instructors are some of the most dynamic family life educators I’ve ever worked with,” says a high-school health education supervisor.

The reaction to keynotes Answer staff delivered was also extraordinary, with one national conference organizer saying, “[You were] an engaging and skilled presenter. Participants felt challenged, energized and affirmed in the good work they do.”

Our leadership role continues with the growth of our OPD workshop series, an online training program for educators and other youth-serving professionals launched in 2008. It’s one of the first online programs in the nation to focus on sexuality education.

“Online professional development removes many of the obstacles that have historically prevented educators from participating in our workshops, including those who previously could not have attended due to geographical limitations,” Nora says.

We’ve now enrolled participants in OPD from 29 states and countries like Switzerland, England and Australia.

Answer trainer Teri Tomatich, M.Ed.—the instructor on our first OPD module, “Sexuality ABCs (Abstinence, Birth Control and Condoms)—praises its unique benefits: “Teachers are able to explore different strategies for addressing situations that may come up in a classroom.”

Our training program will continue to expand its OPD offerings by launching the second module, “STD Basics,” this year.

“We recognized that many teachers are thrust into the classroom without taking any prior human sexuality course,” says Nora. “We needed to meet their needs by providing a foundation in human sexuality so that they can become educated on the very topic they are responsible for teaching. The OPD modules are excellent refreshers for seasoned professionals, too, who aren’t always able to stay updated on the latest sexual health information.”

Our 2009 Training Institute in Sexual Health Education (TISHE) continued our tradition of providing the gold standard in intensive sexual health training for educators and other youth-serving professionals. Thirty-two participants from twelve states were trained for a week by our core staff trainers in West Cornwall, CT. We estimate that each participant will reach 250 students per year, using all the new information, innovative strategies and skill builders they learned at TISHE.
Media Coverage


Links to these and other media appearances can be found online at: answer.rutgers.edu/page/answerinthenews

Answer Staff

Answer by the Numbers

Training

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Training</th>
<th>Number Provided</th>
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<tr>
<td>In-service Workshops</td>
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<td>102</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training Institute in Sexual Health Education</td>
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*This does not include the magazine’s frequent multiple uses in classrooms, or the fact that 48% of teen readers surveyed last year reported passing along their copies to friends.

Sex, Etc.

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<table>
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*This does not include the magazine’s frequent multiple uses in classrooms, or the fact that 48% of teen readers surveyed last year reported passing along their copies to friends.

Back row: Dan Rice, Alex Medina, Maryhelen Druban, Melissa Harris, Todd Slawsky, Lucinda Holt, Susan N. Wilson, Judy Long. Front row: Jeannie Martin, Nora Galperin, Elizabeth Schroeder, Rana Baray, Joyce Szabo

Pictured are members of the Sex, Etc. teen staff and guests at Answer’s annual fundraising breakfast; over 150 people attended the event, held on September 25, 2008 at Jasna Polana in Princeton, NJ.
Hi, I’m Cynthia Lam. I’m just a typical 15-year-old. I listen to the latest songs, stress out about school and spend way too much time on Facebook. But when my friends and family think of me, they don’t usually associate me with these activities; instead, they associate me with Sex, Etc.

My job as a Sex, Etc. teen editor is a top priority, and so is my role as a comprehensive sexuality education advocate. I’m just an ordinary teen, but with your support and encouragement, we can do extraordinary things together.

We are a team of 18 dynamic high school students from the New York–New Jersey metropolitan area. We are a diverse group of athletes, class presidents, activists, comedians and musicians with unique talents. Yet we all share one goal: comprehensive sexuality education for young people everywhere.

Every month, we meet with Answer’s sexual health professionals and adult editors to publish Sex, Etc., our colorful, 20-page magazine with articles about contraceptives, relationships, body image, sexually transmitted diseases, gender identity and sexual orientation. We also help produce Sexetc.org, our interactive sexuality education Web site, with articles, videos, forums, polls and weekly chats with sexuality experts.

We spend countless hours at meetings, laughing, talking, discussing and debating health news as we develop new story ideas. Ultimately, we build strong relationships. As 17-year-old editor Lila Philion says, “Sex, Etc. is not just about sex...it’s about teamwork, sincerity and encouragement.”

Hi, I’m Anita Modi, and I’m a 17-year-old Sex, Etc. teen editor. I joined Sex, Etc. because even though my sexual health naiveté has had its advantages—who needs to know all of the slang terms for “vagina,” anyway?—I felt lost about important teen sexual health topics. American society is so sexualized, yet honest sexual health information is hard to find. Sex, Etc. allowed me to work with other teens to provide all teens with much-needed information. Sex, Etc. is our magazine and Web site, but it wouldn’t be possible without the support of many others.

Every year, Answer publishes three issues of Sex, Etc., which is written by teens for teens about sexual health, for tens of thousands of young people nationwide. While the Sex, Etc. Web site, Sexetc.org, is an even vaster resource than the magazine, there’s something special about holding the print version in your hands.

Sex, Etc. is a magazine written by teens who are interested in topics that lots of adults would shy away from. It’s written by teens who take the time to research the facts about sexual health to dispel myths, answer questions and share stories for and with their peers.

Comprehensive sexuality education has been recognized as a growing need for teens. We ask questions about sexual health that our parents would have been hushed for in years past. Sex, Etc. serves to help all teens.

And it’s not just teens who read the magazine. Suzanne Sarner, director of the School-Based Youth Services program of Sussex County in Sparta, New Jersey, says that teachers in her program use Sex, Etc. to teach portions of the health curriculum. “This has enabled the teacher to reach students in a different way than just by lecture or textbook,” she says. Students visiting the counselors’ offices at Ms. Sarner’s facility pick up Sex, Etc. in order to get their questions answered. It gives them “permission” to speak freely about sexual health-related issues in a forum that is professional, but still teen friendly, she says.

Seventeen-year-old Sex, Etc. reader Zane acknowledged the hesitancy teens feel about asking sexual health-related questions, and emphasized that accurate sexual health information isn’t usually discussed at the dinner table. “I was glad to see that someone was making an effort to put out some really good information that doesn’t come from our parents. Many teens are having sexual relations, and they don’t know about proper condom use and other methods of birth control,” he says.

Zane’s lucky. He was actually introduced to Sex, Etc. by his stepmother, who is comfortable answering his questions honestly. Other teens aren’t as lucky. That’s where Sex, Etc. comes in. “It really helps me to understand that I am not alone, and that there are other people like me going through the same issues,” says Zane, adding that his favorite aspect of Sex, Etc. is its underlying message: “It’s OK to be who you are, and if you are having a problem, someone can help you.”

Those “someones” are fellow teens just as concerned about sexual health issues—and just as willing to speak up.

Answer continued its long-standing partnerships this year with MTV and the Kaiser Family Foundation on its Think campaign, and the Internet Sexuality Information Services (ISIS) on a sexual health portal project for MySpace.
My name is Matthew R. Farrell. I’m 18 and at the end of my first year as a Sex, Etc. teen editor. I joined Sex, Etc. because I wanted to get accurate sexuality education to teens who don’t have access to it.

Sexetc.org is different than Sex, Etc. magazine because it has no geographical limits. We reach teens in all 50 states and all over the world. One teen who exemplifies our reach is 15-year-old Janita Zhang from China.

“After being able to enjoy the Web site with my boyfriend, I feel a lot safer knowing that he and I both have a good understanding of sex,” she says.

Janita is just one of the many teens whose lives have been changed for the better by Sexetc.org.

I spoke with many teens and adults who fell in love with the site and became frequent users. Why? The reasons are as varied as the people themselves—from Janita, who feels “safe and comfortable” using Sexetc.org, to 17-year-old Meredith, from New York, who says that our site “teaches you more than your average class does. ... I would be lost without it.”

Teens told me that they come to the site with questions. If Sexetc.org were nothing more than a Q&A, it would still profoundly affect their lives. Our forums section gives teens a place to ask questions without being judged, and they know they will get accurate, helpful answers.

Fifteen-year-old Becky, from New York, told me how important the privacy and overall comfort of Sexetc.org is to her.

“As a closeted teen who’s having trouble coming to terms with myself, I find the GLBT forum very interesting, because I can read other peoples’ stories and respond to them,” she says.

This year, we launched our online teen advocacy campaign Your Voice, Your Rights, which gives teens a platform to tell the truth about sexuality education in their schools. It also helps teens learn how to use their real-life experiences to change sex ed nationwide.

“Teaches you more than your average class does...I would be lost without it.”

The campaign includes teen-created profiles, where they share information about sexual health and sex ed in their communities.

Highlights of teen profiles include a 16-year-old bisexual teen from Indiana, who writes: “Once I realized that I was bisexual, I began to get on my siblings for using insults like ‘gay’ and ‘fag.’ My mother was curious as to why, I simply told her I found them insulting. She explicitly asked me if I was gay. I told her no. She said that was good, because there was no way she could raise a gay child. I died a little inside that day... Sex, Etc. literally saved my life.”

Sexetc.org is a great resource for educators, too. Elizabeth Oliveros, a high-school health teacher in Sun Valley, California, told me how Sexetc.org provides her with valuable classroom materials—from articles to videos. She says her students “respond very well” to them. (As a high school student, I believe that creating anything students “respond very well” to is indeed a monumental feat!)

As one of few sources of good online sexual information, Sexetc.org continues to be a bastion of truth in a sea of misinformation.
**National Advisory Board**

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*Horary Board Members  
*Former Oxy, etc. teen contributor

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**Financials**


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This is not an audited financial statement. Answer is a component of the Rutgers University Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology. It shows the Rutgers University Foundation's 501(c)(3) status and its expenditures are monitored by Rutgers Division of Grants and Contracts Accounting.

*Our annual fundraiser was postponed from FY09 to FY10.*

**Several one-time consulting fees (e.g., evaluation and transition assistance) created an increase in administrative costs.**

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**INCOME**

- Foundations, Corporations and Other Organizations: $829,000, $782,100
- Government: $194,672, $150,338
- Individual Donors: $207,019, $228,842

**EXPENSES**

- Personnel: $114,521, $736,259
- Teen-to-Teen Project: $228,653, $190,104
- Administration: $21,600, $107,460
- Development: $17,016

**TOTAL**

- $1,264,718, $1,281,601

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**Acknowledgments**

We would like to thank the following for their support:

**FUNDERS**

- Anonymous (2)  
- Mary Oren's Barden Foundation  
- Education Foundation of America  
- The Ford Foundation  
- The Fund for New Jersey  
- E.H. Gannettrust Grove Foundation  
- George Gund Foundation  
- Harriett Pain Foundation  
- Horizon Foundation for New Jersey  
- The Huber Foundation  
- The Hyde and Watson Foundation  
- Franklin D. Roosevelt Foundation  
- John Mckee Fund  
- The Monmouth Foundation  
- New Jersey Department of Education  
- New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services  
- New Jersey Department of Human Services  
- Governor's Council on the Prevention of Mental Illness and Developmental Disabilities  
- New Jersey Department of Human Services  
- School-Based Youth Services  
- Newark Public Schools  
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  - Susan N. Wilson*  
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  - Margaret Canin  
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  - Bob and Harriet Mann  
  - Margaret Mansfield  
  - Lisa Smukler  
  - Tim Lipson and Marcella Mann  
  - Barbara Ja  
  - Ed Dippold  
  - Appl  
  - Clair Mann  
  - Seth Mann  
  - Katharine  
  - Adele Mann  

**TOTAL** $1,264,718, $1,281,601

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*Members of Our Children, Our Future Giving Society, who have made a commitment to Answer the Call through a planned gift. For more information about this, please contact Judy Long, Director of Development.

**These names have been carefully reviewed; however, if your name has been misspelled, omitted or listed incorrectly, please accept our apologies and let us know.**