Who We Are

Answer is a national organization dedicated to providing and promoting comprehensive sexuality education to young people and the adults who teach them. For more than 25 years, Answer, part of the Center for Applied Psychology at Rutgers University, has been committed to supplying resources, advocacy, training and solutions in support of honest and balanced sexuality education for young people and the adults in their lives.

Our Beliefs. We believe that knowledge about human sexuality is helpful, not harmful, and that young people offer an essential and unique perspective. We believe that teens are responsible decision makers, and that all young people benefit when parents and other adults work in partnership with them. We respect and embrace diversity and believe that speaking out to create a sexually literate and informed society makes a difference.

Our Mission. Answer’s mission is to provide and promote comprehensive sexuality education to young people and the adults who teach them. We fulfill our mission through two primary programs:

- **The Teen-to-Teen Sexuality Education Project**, which uses the power of teen-to-teen communication to provide millions of teens with the information they need to make responsible decisions about sex. The cornerstone of the project is our *Sex, Etc.* national magazine and Web site, Sexetc.org.

- **The Sexuality Education Training Initiative**, which helps teachers and other youth-serving professionals create dynamic and effective educational experiences for young people.

Our Reach. Answer reaches hundreds of thousands of teens every year with honest, accurate sexual health information and resources. Our *Sex, Etc.* Web site, Sexetc.org, receives 25,000 unique visitors every day and two million page views per month. We train more than 2,500 adult educators and youth-serving professionals each year, who in turn educate youth with potentially life-saving sexual health information.

Our Accomplishments. Answer positively impacts the lives of hundreds of thousands of teens throughout the United States. By maximizing the impact of teen voices and training thousands of youth-serving professionals, we dramatically improve the way young people receive sexuality education in the U.S. In recognition of our efforts to involve teens in the national dialogue about teen pregnancy prevention and sexuality education, Answer has received honors from the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy and Advocates for Youth. National press coverage of our programs has come from ABC, CBS, NBC, *The New York Times*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *Seventeen* and other print, broadcast and online media.

Our Future. As Answer looks to the future, we seek to unite young people and adults in support of honest sexuality education. Together, we will continue to provide the answers that young people want and need to make responsible, informed decisions about sexuality.
How We Began

Answer, formerly known as the Network for Family Life Education, was largely shaped during the 20-year tenure of Susan N. Wilson, M.Ed., who currently serves as its senior advisor.

Ms. Wilson’s strong interest in sexuality education began when she served on the New Jersey State Board of Education from 1977 to 1981. During a presentation on teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, she asked at what age young people should learn about their bodies. With that simple question, Ms. Wilson became an instrumental force behind a state mandate requiring family life education in all New Jersey public schools.

In 1981, Ms. Wilson helped found the Network for Family Life Education, initially to protect and facilitate the new educational mandate, and she served as executive coordinator from 1984 to 2004. Elizabeth Schroeder, Ed.D., M.S.W., is the current executive director of Answer.

Since our founding, we have provided professional development opportunities in sexuality education for teachers and other youth-serving professionals through our Sexuality Education Training Initiative. In 1994, we began using the power of peer-to-peer communication to offer sexuality education directly to teens through our national Teen-to-Teen Sexuality Education Project, which features our award-winning Sex, Etc. national magazine and Web site, Sexetc.org. In May 2005, we changed our name to Answer to reflect our commitment to providing honest, accurate answers about sex to teenagers and adult professionals.

Over the years, Answer has grown from a state organization to a national one, and we have received significant honors and media attention. Even more importantly, however, we have provided valuable sexuality education resources to millions of teenagers and the adult professionals who serve them.
Answer’s Sexuality Education Training Initiative

Answer has been helping educators create meaningful classroom experiences regarding sexuality for more than 25 years through our Sexuality Education Training Initiative. Each year, this program provides more than 2,700 educators and other professionals with the tools they need to openly and honestly discuss information about sexuality with young people and effectively respond to their questions. These resources include:

- **Open-Enrollment Workshops.** We offer more than 30 open-enrollment workshops a year for K–12 teachers and youth-serving professionals. Topics include puberty, love and relationships, oral sex, sexual orientation, self-esteem, sexual violence, abstinence, sexually transmitted diseases and information about sexuality targeted to a variety of grade levels. Sample titles include “Baby Steps: Teaching about Family Life in Grades K-2” and “Beyond the Birds and the Bees: Teaching about Puberty in Grades 5-6.” Our trainers also make presentations on adolescent sexual health issues at numerous national and regional conferences.

- **In-Service Programs.** Answer trainers travel to school districts and agencies across the country to facilitate these workshops, which are tailored to appropriate grade levels and specific needs. Our trainers also make presentations on adolescent sexual health issues at numerous national and regional conferences.

- **Training Institute for Sexual Health Education (TISHE).** At this annual intensive residential summer institute, staff and participants live together for five days—creating an immediate and concentrated learning community—to address the depth and breadth of sexuality education. Answer trainers use both whole (plenary) and small-group workshops to ensure that participants understand the content and to rehearse the skills they need to deliver that content. Attended by educators from across the United States, the intensive training experience combines informative programming and skills-building activities. More information can be found on the TISHE Web site at www.tishe.org.

- **Online Professional Development.** Answer’s Online Professional Development (OPD) course provides educators and other professionals with the opportunity to participate in an active learning community online. Research consistently shows that OPD can provide an educational experience comparable to—or better than—learning in the classroom. Our first OPD course, “Sexuality ABCs: Abstinence, Birth Control and Condoms,” launched in January 2008. It uses podcasts, videos, threaded discussions and animation to help professionals who teach middle and high school students learn the latest on adolescent sexual behavior and contraception.

For more information about the Sexuality Education Training Initiative, please contact Todd Slawsky, M.Ed., Answer’s training coordinator, at 732-445-7929, ext. 237, or tslawsky@rci.rutgers.edu.
Answer’s Teen-to-Teen Sexuality Education Project

Teens across the country tell us they feel they have no one to whom they can turn for accurate and honest answers about sexuality. Responding to this need, Answer developed the Teen-to-Teen Sexuality Education Project. This resource uses the power of teen-to-teen communication and positive peer pressure to provide millions of teens with a healthy outlook on sexuality, help them reduce their risky behaviors and give them the information they need to make responsible decisions about sex. The Project’s components include:

- **The Sex, Etc. National Magazine.** Written by the Sex, Etc. teen editorial staff with assistance from national contributors, our award-winning, national magazine covers numerous sexual health topics. The staff brainstorms ideas and writes stories with fact-checking and editing assistance from Answer staff. Published three times a year since 1994, the magazine is available by subscription and distributed through schools, clinics, health centers, libraries and community organizations.

- **Our Web Site, Sexetc.org.** With more than 25,000 unique visitors per day and two million page views per month, the Sex, Etc. Web site, Sexetc.org, is one of the most popular online sexual health sites for teens. The site features 16 topic areas plus the following:
  - Stories written by the Sex, Etc. teen editorial staff and national contributors
  - An “Ask the Experts” section where teens can receive answers to their questions
  - A “Take Action” section where teens can learn to advocate for comprehensive sexuality education
  - Spotlights on teens who are making a difference
  - Weekly chats and Forums
  - A glossary of more than 400 sexual health terms

  Sexetc.org is a 2008 and 2007 Webby Awards Official Nominee, a 2005 FREDDIE Award winner for Adolescent Health and a 2007 and 2004 World Wide Web Health Award winner.

- **National Youth Media Partnerships.** To extend our reach to a broader audience of young people, Sex, Etc. partners with some of the top media outlets in the nation. We are a national partner with MTV and the Kaiser Family Foundation on its award-winning Think: Sexual Health campaign. Our teen editors write a monthly column for the campaign.

Together, these resources not only respond to young people’s critical need for comprehensive sexuality education, but also help them feel dignity about their attitudes and beliefs regarding sexuality.
What Do Teens and Adults Say about Sex, Etc.?

Teens Say...
“I’m 16 and I’ve been thinking about having sex with my boyfriend of one-and-a-half years, but after reading the information about sex on your site, I’ve decided to wait until I’m really ready (marriage!?). Thank you so much for this site! It truthfully answers questions I would feel uncomfortable asking someone face-to-face.” —Evelyn, 16, Oregon

“Thank you for your story. I had never heard about HPV. I did not know that you can get cervical cancer from this STD. I didn’t know that you can get this even if you and your partner use a condom, so thank you very much.” —Tangelena, 18, Tennessee

“Your site does a great job of answering FAQs and explaining anything and everything teens need to know about sex. It’s very helpful and I am sending this site to a few of my close friends, because I feel that it’s very important to learn anything you can as early as possible. THANK YOU!” —Leslie, 17, New Jersey

“Your Web site is very interesting. As a guy, it’s sort of embarrassing asking your parents questions about sex. And in 7th grade, it’s a lot of peer pressure, because I already know about 20 classmates who aren’t virgins, and I have three friends, girls my age, who have been raped. It’s tough in this world, and I thank you for making this site.” —Nathan, 16, Washington

Adults Say...
“Your teens are doing much better than almost any adults in speaking to the real needs of adolescents. Instead of adult moralizing, Sex, Etc. demonstrates the ability of adolescents to think responsibly about values and behaviors. It’s unique—a perfect resource for education in a democracy.” —Peggy Brick, Sexuality Education Consultant, New Jersey

“This is a very good Web site. I am a life skills teacher and always looking for new resources to use in the classroom. Your site is user friendly and the information is very practical. The stories are an added bonus, and I’m sure my students will relate to the teenagers in them. Thanks a great deal.” —Tania, Life Skills Teacher, Alabama

“Your Web site is a wonderful resource for teens who are interested in these topics but feel overwhelmed by all the information out there on the Internet. Having a site that is maintained by teens gives other teens a sense of security about the information provided. It also helps them feel secure, knowing that there are others out there with the same problems or questions. You’re doing a great job! Thank you!” —Greta, Sexuality Education Teacher, Illinois

“When I shared Sex, Etc. with my tenth-grade health classes, the students asked me a million questions, and some other students in the school came to see if they could read a copy in their study halls! Sex, Etc. is a wonderful tool in the classroom and beyond.” —Sandy Kaleno, Health Educator, Pennsylvania
Recent National Press

“Sex Ed Is Lacking, but Which Programs Are at Fault?” by Shannon Donohoe and Erica Peterson. Medill Reports. June 4, 2008. A piece that examines the national sexuality education debate and includes the perspective of Sex, Etc. managing editor Lucinda Holt, M.A.


“Sex Ed: A Thing of the Past?” by Siri Agrell. The Globe and Mail (Canada). March 14, 2008. This story asks the question, “Now that kids can go online and learn about pregnancy and penis size on their own, are the squirm-inducing classes doing any good?” Featuring Rana Barar, M.P.H., Answer’s Program Manager, and the Sex, Etc. Web site.


“Let’s Talk about Sex,” by Laura Beil. Reader’s Digest. March 2008. A feature story that urges parents to “get their heads out of the sand and get real with their kids about sex.” Featuring quotes from two Sex, Etc. teen editors.


“How to Talk to Kids,” This American Life. October 7, 2007. The seminal radio program produced and hosted by Ira Glass features seven Sex, Etc. teen editors on talking to parents about sex. Sex, Etc. is featured in Act II. Click here for the free podcast of Act II and here for details on the entire episode.
Answer Staff Biographies

ELIZABETH SCHROEDER, ED.D., M.S.W.
Executive Director
Elizabeth Schroeder, Ed.D., M.S.W., became the executive director of Answer in September 2008 and supervises all aspects of its programs, finances and staff. Prior to joining Answer, Dr. Schroeder had a ten-year relationship with the organization as a training consultant for its Sexuality Education Training Initiative and a sexual health expert and Medical Advisory Board member for its National Teen-to-Teen Sexuality Education Project.

An internationally recognized trainer, consultant and author in the areas of sexuality education, youth development, curriculum and counseling, Dr. Schroeder has an extensive knowledge of sexuality education programs, policies and politics; national and international connections with key organizations and individuals; and a passion for Answer’s work in comprehensive sexuality education. Since 2000, Dr. Schroeder has trained thousands of youth-serving professionals, adolescents and parents in the United States and overseas. She has presented at national conferences and written extensively about sexuality and relationship issues.


Dr. Schroeder has received numerous honors throughout her career, including the American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors and Therapists’ Schiller Prize, for her approaches to teaching Internet safety to youth, and the national Mary Lee Tatum Award, which is given annually to “the person who most exemplifies the qualities of an ideal sexuality educator.” She currently chairs the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS) Board of Directors and has served on numerous local and state task forces and committees.

She holds a Doctorate of Education in Human Sexuality Education from Widener University and a Master’s in Social Work from New York University.
SUSAN N. WILSON, MS.Ed.
Senior Advisor
Susan N. Wilson, MS.Ed., served as executive coordinator of Answer (formerly the Network for Family Life Education) for 23 years and is now Answer’s senior advisor. She is a state and national leader in the fight for effective sexuality education and the prevention of adolescent pregnancy. She has received numerous awards for her work, and has authored many articles on sexuality education and appeared on numerous shows. Currently, Ms. Wilson serves on the Board of Trustees of the Princeton Area Community Foundation, working as project coordinator of its Community Experience Partnership: Engaging Older Adults for Civic Good. She was named one of two Progressive New Jerseyans of the decade by New Jersey Policy Perspective, and was named a Policy Fellow at the Institute for Women’s Leadership at Rutgers University’s Douglass College.

NORA GELPERIN, M.Ed.
Director of Training and Education
Nora Gelperin, M.Ed., oversees Answer’s Sexuality Education Training Initiative. She is also founder of the organization’s annual Training Institute in Sexual Health Education (TISHE), and a sexuality expert for the weekly live chats on the Sex, Etc. Web site, Sexetc.org. Ms. Gelperin develops, markets and conducts training workshops for teachers and community agency staff in New Jersey and nationwide. Previously, Ms. Gelperin was an adjunct instructor of Human Sexuality at Temple University and Montclair State University, and a community educator with the Planned Parenthoods of Western Washington and Greater Northern New Jersey. She earned her Master of Education in School Health Education degree from Temple University. Ms. Gelperin has written curricula for the Teen PEP manual, Discussion Guides for Sex, Etc. and numerous articles on adolescent sexual health.

RANA E. BARAR, M.P.H.
Program Manager
Rana E. Barar, M.P.H., oversees all planning, implementation and monitoring aspects of Answer’s national Teen-to-Teen Sexuality Education Project, which is comprised of the Sex, Etc. magazine and Web site, Sexetc.org. She is also responsible for the integrated marketing strategy for the magazine, Web site, strategic partnerships and campaigns. Prior to joining Answer, Ms. Barar was senior program officer for the Averting Maternal Death and Disability (AMDD) Program at the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University. After finishing her M.P.H. in population and family health in 2006, Ms. Barar took over the administrative management of the AMDD Program, specifically focusing on strategic planning and launching AMDD’s new look and Web site. She has a strong background in international relations, which has been enhanced by her substantial experience in Europe, Russia and Africa.
JUDY LONG
Director of Development
As Answer’s director of development, Judy Long is responsible for implementing the organization’s fundraising strategy for foundations and individual donors. A graduate of DePauw University and a published author, Ms. Long brings strong writing and editing skills to the position from her years as a children’s book editor in New York and as a grant writer. Her prior development experience includes fundraising for the Morris County (NJ) Park Commission and, most recently, for the New Jersey Historical Society.

ELLEN PAPAZIAN, M.A.
Senior Editor
Ellen Papazian is senior editor of the Teen-to-Teen Sexuality Education Project’s main components—the Sex, Etc. national magazine and Web site, Sexetc.org. She also manages its strategic partnerships with MTV, gURL.com, Scenarios USA and other national youth media outlets. Prior to joining Answer, Ms. Papazian spent three years as associate managing editor of Ms. magazine. She was also a freelance researcher for Ms., Out and Working Woman magazines. A graduate of New College at Hofstra University, Ms. Papazian was granted their 2001 Young Alumnus Award. She holds a master’s degree in English from Rutgers University.

LUCINDA HOLT, M.A.
Managing Editor
Lucinda Holt, M.A., manages Sex, Etc.’s teen editorial staff and national contributors and edits the Sex, Etc. national magazine, the Sex, Etc. Web site, Sexetc.org, and the teen editors’ column for MTV’s think: Sexual Health campaign. Prior to joining Answer, Ms. Holt worked as a freelance editor. She has also worked for Condé Nast Publications and such youth organizations as Prep for Prep and the Columbia University Liberty Partnership Program. Ms. Holt graduated magna cum laude from Amherst College and holds a Master of Arts in Anthropology degree from Columbia University. Her essay appears in the anthology What Your Mama Never Told You: True Stories about Sex and Love (Graphia Books).

DAN RICE
Program Coordinator
Dan Rice is responsible for the ongoing maintenance, development and content initiatives for the Sex, Etc. Web site, Sexetc.org. He is also a trainer for Answer’s Sexuality Education Training Initiative and provides sexual health training to the Sex, Etc. teen editorial staff. Prior to joining Answer, Mr. Rice was coordinator of a drop-in center for LGBTQ teens, where he gained experience in crisis-intervention counseling. He has also been a community educator in public schools to raise awareness of sexual orientation issues. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Wagner College.
TODD S LAWSKY, M.Ed.
Training Coordinator
Todd Slawsky, M.Ed., coordinates the logistics of Answer’s Sexuality Education Training Initiative, which trains more than 3,000 participants per year. He has been a resident director for Rutgers Cook College, where he promoted a secure environment for college residents and conducted a series of educational programs to teach residents about topics relating to sexuality education, safety, study habits and communication. Mr. Slawsky has also worked as the assistant director of the Rutgers Student Legal Information Center, where he developed programs to educate students about the most common types of legal problems. He holds a Master of Education in Learning and Teaching degree from Rutgers University’s Graduate School of Education.

MELISSA WASHINGTON HARRIS
Publications Coordinator
Melissa Washington Harris is responsible for Sex, Etc. subscription outreach and for marketing Sex, Etc. magazine at conferences, workshops and other events. Prior to joining Answer, Ms. Harris was an account executive for a boutique public relations firm in New Jersey. She was also an editor at Essence and Sesame Street Parents magazines. Her writing has appeared in Vibe and Heart & Soul as well as Finding Our Way, a teen health book for girls. Most recently, Ms. Harris taught a freelance writing course at an adult learning center. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism from Howard University.

ALEX MEDINA
Web Associate
Alex Medina updates content for the Sex, Etc. Web site, Sexetc.org, and publishes the weekly Sex, Etc. e-newsletter. He also maintains Sex, Etc.’s presence on social-networking sites, like MySpace, Facebook and YouTube. Mr. Medina researches Web 2.0 technology and follows current trends in popular teen culture. Previously, he was an intern at Answer. He discovered Answer while he was an undergraduate Peer Advisor on Sexuality and Queer Issues at Rutgers University and participated in a panel discussion for the Sex, Etc. teen editorial staff. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Psychology from Rutgers University.