



# FIRST CHOICE

WOMEN'S MEDICAL CENTER



Dear Friend,

In May, I had the chance to sit in a middle school classroom here in our city and watch Khandi, our school program director, teaching part of our sexual risk avoidance curriculum.

One of her lessons is called Strong Foundations, and in that lesson, she teaches students the steps to building a healthy relationship. But before she jumps into that part, she leads off with a conversation about marriage.

I sat mostly unnoticed in a desk on the far side of the classroom, just observing. Khandi looked out at her group of seventh grade students and asked: "Who of you would like to get married one day?"

One child raised their hand.

I was stunned. Only one? I tried to imagine my own seventh grade classroom, and what would have happened if someone had asked us that question. There might have been one child who wouldn't have raised their hand, but overwhelmingly, I'm sure we would have answered yes.

## What is Sexual Risk Avoidance Education?

SRA is an approach to sex education based on primary prevention, an established public health model used to promote wellness and eliminate risk. The goal is to equip youth in making healthy choices about sex, relationships, and marriage. The SRA standard is to teach youth to avoid sexual risk by reserving sexual activity for marriage. This is what we once called abstinence education.

Fortunately, Khandi was able to roll with it, and quickly got the conversation going with the students, having them come up with a list of pros and cons to marriage. By the end of it, she joked with them, "It sounds like maybe you do really want to get married after all."

But this was an important moment for me, giving new perspective. This was the third school we were able to serve with sexual risk avoidance education in the 2023-24 school year. And this situation solidified the importance of this new arm of our ministry. I realized, more than ever, just how deeply our children need to see God's good design for marriage and sex, even if we can't explicitly call it that. They need adults who

can share truth, and who can be role models, because they haven't seen it at home.

## CURRENT IMPACT

2023-2024



3 middle schools



600+ students

## FUTURE GOALS

2024-2025



5 middle schools



1000+ students

### From Our Middle School Students...

"I liked talking about boundaries."

"I learned that condoms and birth control cannot always protect you 100 percent."

Sexual risk avoidance is more than going into schools and telling kids they need to wait to have sex. It's teaching them about self-esteem, identity, future goals, healthy relationships, communication skills, marriage, sexual health, and so much more. Ultimately, SRA education is our first tool as we fight against abortion. When young people understand that there is a design and plan for sexuality intended for their good, the number of unplanned pregnancies will go down.

Over the course of the school year, Khandi had the opportunity to present to more than 600 middle schoolers. Prospects are bright for her to be in front of even more students in the upcoming school year. We have seen God open doors and give us favor, and we have seen Him working in the hearts of the students as well.

"This type of education is near and dear to my heart, because I didn't have this growing up," Khandi says. "The topic of sex was very hush-hush in my household. My education was 'don't do it.' If I had even a fraction of the education our students receive, I most likely would've made different choices."

We are asking you to consider a special gift this summer that will help us gear up for even more impact in the 2024-25 school year. There are so many voices trying to shape the minds of our young people, especially regarding their sexuality. Your support allows our voice to be among them. We will continue to speak a message of hope and of health, and ultimately of God's good plan and design!

"Providing SRA education is a way of showing our students that people care, not only about their physical health, but their emotional and spiritual health as well," says Khandi. "SRA education is a whole person concept."

We could not do this without you, so please know, we value your partnership!

Blessings,



Bethany Garth  
Executive Director



Khandi recently attended Ascend's National Conference in Nashville, Tenn., on Sexual Risk Avoidance Education. She found the conference helpful for developing different ideas on engaging with students and encouraging young people to reach their potential. Khandi shared her biggest takeaway was speaking truth with love and asking the Lord to be present in every conversation. She believes that the Lord's presence and seeking His wisdom will have the biggest impact on our city. **Your support makes opportunities like these possible—thank you!**



**SCAN HERE** to make your gift online! Your support today makes a difference for so many students in our community.