



## **MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT S. 1342 / A. 2856**

The New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NYSCASA) supports the goals of S.1342/ A. 2856, the Healthy Teens Act. This bill provides an amendment to the public health law and the state finance law, in relation to establishing the age-appropriate sex education grant program, the Healthy Teens Act.

Studies have shown that intensive educational programs along with parental involvement will enable young people to make responsible decisions regarding sexual activity, and encourage them to protect themselves and their partners.

When children are approached to engage in sexual contact, a stronger sense of self and knowledge on appropriate touches could prevent abuse from occurring. Also, a child would be better equipped to report such advances. Furthermore, in the event an assault does occur, the child would be better able to describe what took place.

Positive sex education and information on healthy relationships could also reduce the amount of youth dating violence, including sexual violence, in New York State. Recent national surveys indicate:

- Over 50% of all rapes are of adolescents, the majority of which are perpetrated by acquaintances or dates.
- A survey of more than 6,000 students on 32 college campuses found that 27.5% of college-age women said that they had experienced rape or attempted rape.

By providing our young people with sex education that is medically accurate, age appropriate and focused on healthy relationships, we can equip them with the tools they need to help prevent sexual violence.

Please join the New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault in supporting the passage of this very important piece of legislation in the Senate and Assembly, S.1342/ A.2856 The Healthy Teens Act.