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## “The Glove Affair” — Scared Yet?

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*The Los Angeles Times* reports that teenagers are now attending “condom parties” known as “Glove Affair.” At least some area schools — including middle schools — are hosting the parties.

Writer Randy Hoder described the parties, with particular reference to the party her own eighth-grade daughter (age 13) attended:

*The truth is, when Emma arrived home the previous Saturday night clutching a goody bag from Glove Affair; my liberal credentials were instantly tested. One by one I pulled the following from her white plastic sack: a condom; pamphlets on masturbation, oral sex and intercourse; the “Rubber Bible,” featuring alternative names for prophylactics, such as “\*\*\*\*\*” and “\*\*\*\*\*”, and an information wheel labeled “Condom Comebacks,” which included a list of excuses boys might make for not wearing a condom and possible rejoinders a girl could offer.*

*Him: “It doesn’t feel good.” Her: “I’ve got moves rubbers can’t stop.”*

*I tried to play it cool. As it turned out, I was a little too cool. While standing in the kitchen with my daughter and her friend, getting all the post-party gossip, I absentmindedly reached into the bag and handed my 8-year-old son a squishy red toy that resembled one of those ubiquitous M&M candy guys. The girls burst out laughing. “What’s so funny?” I asked. They snatched the trinket from my son and turned it upside down. Printed there was the web address *stophthesores.org*. This was no candy icon; it was a toy syphilis lesion, bright red, with feet. Scared yet?*

I am not sure which should concern us more — the schools cooperating in these sexual indoctrination programs for 13-year-olds, or parents like this who think the idea has merit?

More:

*Oakwood School in North Hollywood, where my daughter is in eighth grade, has been holding Glove Affair since 2000. In reality, it’s not a “condom party” but a fundraiser for L.A. AIDS-prevention groups. This year, about 500 teens attended — half from other middle and high schools across the city. The aim is for kids to understand that having sex is serious business and to help them become utterly at ease with condoms, right down to unrolling them correctly and learning to check the expiration date.*

*Mickey Morgan, a social studies teacher at Oakwood who helps organize the event, says that’s especially important for girls “so that it’s not awkward for them to talk about safe sex with boys — when the time comes.” There are those, of course, who argue that all of this explicitness will do nothing but lead teenagers to engage in sex. And I admit, there’s a part of me that remains a little queasy over the graphic nature of Glove Affair.*

*But as schools wrestle with the question of how much information is too much, many health experts insist that the answer is clear: At a time when HIV and teen pregnancy are so prevalent, educators can’t do enough to demystify condoms, even for eighth-graders who may be just beginning to explore their sexuality.*

Remember the “Glove Affair” the next time someone tells you that concerns about sex education programs are exaggerated.

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