

once.  
 long the vaccine lasts, so you might have to get it more than  
 had sex. But MERCK also says that they don't know how  
 MERCK says its extremely effective in girls who have not yet  
**Does this vaccine work?**  
 brand new to the market.  
 the potential effects from this vaccine might be because it is  
 about the long term effects just yet. No one knows what all  
 effects to this drug. **HOWEVER**, there is no information  
 The real answer is that there are no known dangerous side  
**What are the long term effects? Is it safe?**  
 other HPV strains.  
 HPV that cause Cervical Cancer. **BUT** you **CAN** still get  
 If you decide to get the Gardasil vaccine, then it would  
 work to make sure that your body did not catch the kinds of  
 NOT protect you from getting all possible HPV strains.  
 cer. There are **MANY** other types of HPV—this vaccine **WILL**  
 4 types of HPV that are most likely to cause Cervical Can-  
 the two low and high risk which are the  
 This vaccine treats the four strands that our  
 develop from a virus called HPV (Human Papillomavirus)

The vaccine is built to help you avoid getting  
 CERVICAL CANCER. Cervical Cancer can  
 Gardasil is a vaccine that was invented by the  
 Pharmaceutical Company MERCK.

**LET'S START WITH THE BASICS:**

Young Women's Empowerment Project  
 and  
 Committee on Women Population and  
 the Environment

want YOU to ask some questions about

**Gardasil...**

...before its mandated in your  
 school or state....

The purpose of this pamphlet is to raise  
 critical questions and offer some insight  
 that will help girls and women decide  
 about whether or not Gardasil is the  
 right CHOICE for your body.

We talked to girls, young women and  
 adult allies for nearly three months  
 about their feelings about Gardasil  
 and School Mandates.

We asked questions like.....

- Why is this vaccine mandated? How did the mandates happen so quickly? Is this drug really safe? Is this drug really the best way to help keep girls safe from Cervical Cancer?
- What if you don't want this vaccine— can you still prevent cervical cancer? What do you do if you want this vaccine and cant get it in your state? What do you do if you don't want this vaccine to be mandated in your state? What is the connection between money, marketing and health?



FOR MORE INFORMATION  
 ABOUT SELF CARE AND  
 VAGINAL HEALTH TIPS IF  
 YOU CANT OR DONT WANT  
 TO GO TO THE DOCTOR - FLIP  
 THIS PAGE OVER

Getting regular Pap tests is the only long term tested way  
 that we **know** prevents cervical cancer. About 13,000  
 women in America will find out they have cervical cancer  
 this year by getting a **PAP SMEAR**.  
 oping.

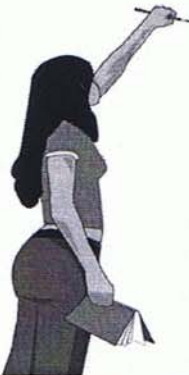
Treatment can prevent most cases of cervical cancer devel-  
 abnormal cervical cells that can turn into cancer cells.  
 cal cancer is very high. Pap tests also can find infections and  
 cancer in women. If caught early, the chance of curing cervi-  
 It can find the earliest signs of cervical cancer - a common  
**Why do I need a Pap test? A Pap test can save your life.**

(unhealthy) cervical cells, or cervical cancer.  
 Pap test can tell if you have an infection, abnormal  
 checks for changes in the cells of your cervix. The cervix is  
 the lower part of the uterus that opens into the vagina. The  
**What is a Pap test?** The Pap test, also called a Pap smear,

**POWER OF THE PAP**

...YWEP and CWPE believe in the

So what else can I do to keep myself safer?



**Here are some reasons why Gardasil might be a CHOICE for you**  
 -If you are involved in the sex trade or sexually active and you don't want your parents to find out, you could get this vaccine from your doctor without Parental permission.  
 -If you are between ages 12-26 and are NOT sexually active, this vaccine might be right for you because it works best for those who have not yet had sex

**YWEP and CWPE respect all girls and women who do what they have to do to SURVIVE.**

PLEASE OPEN THIS BOOKLET FOR  
 MORE THOUGHTS ABOUT GARDASIL  
 AND HOLISTIC SELF CARE OPTIONS!!  
 CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITES  
 THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN  
 POPULATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

**WWW.CWPE.ORG** A PROJECT OF THE TIDES  
 CENTER

**THE YOUNG WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT  
 PROJECT WWW.YOUREPRICELESS.ORG**

## YWEP AND CWPE HAVE LOTS OF UNANSWERED QUESTIONS ABOUT GARDASIL AND MERCK

### HERE ARE SOME OF OUR CONCERNS

**\*\*Why is Gardasil being mandated so QUICKLY?** This vaccine was on the market for 6 months when it became mandated in Texas. By comparison, the vaccine for Hepatitis B was on the market for almost 20 years and very well tested before community based organizations pushed for the mandate. Because this has happened so fast, there are no real answers about the long term impact on girls and women's health and well being.

**\*\*Why is this vaccine ONLY for girls and women?** Boys and Men are carriers of HPV. Boys and Men can get anal warts (caused by HPV) and anal cancer. They can also transmit HPV to girls, women and boys & men. Why girls are being targeted for this vaccine— especially when it has clearly not had enough testing.

**\*\*Why is this vaccine being mandated in Schools when most schools refuse to do SEX education & condom distribution?** The first state to mandate this vaccine was Texas. Texas does not allow sex education or condoms in schools. We feel like giving this vaccine without offering girls information about their bodies and sexually transmitted diseases removes the possibility for empowerment and autonomy to make a CHOICE. Texas' state mandate also controls access to school (if you don't get it you can't attend the sixth grade) which implies the state knows best about our bodies and lives. This has never worked for the safety and security of women and girls.

**\*\*What is the REAL connection between MERCK and Politicians?**

MERCK has made donations to political campaigns (such as Governor Perry in Texas) and spent lots of money on marketing to push this vaccine. We are skeptical of this alliance. MERCK stands to gain a lot of money from this vaccine being mandated in schools because it means that states will have to buy the drug. MERCK can also use these mandates to further their research about the long term effects.

### SELF CARE TIPS

Did you know its possible to do your own examination of your vagina and cervix?

You can also go to this website for detailed steps for doing your own self exam: <http://www.fwhc.org/health/selfcare.htm>

You can check out your vagina with a mirror and flashlight to see what's going on even if you don't have a speculum. Sit down on the floor and spread your legs in front of a mirror. Spread your labia with your fingers and use the flashlight to help you see inside.

If you have a grey, green or yellow discharge you might have an infection. A white discharge is normal.

Get familiar with the way you smell and the color of your vagina so that you can catch signs of infection quicker. An acidic smell is normal. If your smell is stronger than usual, you might have an infection.

### TAKE ACTION! ASK YOURSELF WHAT DO MY SISTAS NEED? HERE ARE SOME IDEAS



- Create a safe space to have an open conversation about Gardasil and HPV. Find out how what the girls and young women think in your neighborhood or community!
- Write your senator and ask that the legislation to mandate this vaccine be stopped until the long term effects are clear!
- Get information about Safer Sex and STD's and educate yourself and your Sistass about how to stay safe. Check out [positive.org](http://positive.org) for great information.
- Gardasil costs & availability varies from state to state. Find out where girls can get it if they want it in your area! Check out: <http://www.ncsl.org/programs/lis/lrl/50statetracking.htm>

