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Disney's ABC Family Creates Web Series Promoting Contraceptive Use

Disney's ABC Family has coproduced a three-part Web series promoting contraceptive use among sexually active young adults, which it plans to make available online after it airs a forthcoming episode of its comedy series "Baby Daddy."

The July 31 installment, titled "Text Anxiety," deals with a pregnancy scare involving a girl (played by guest star Lacy Chabert) who takes a pregnancy test -- then struggles to keep it a secret from her boyfriend, Danny, played by Derek Theler.

A day after the show airs, the webisodes will appear on the show's website. The minute-long segments feature the show's characters talking about contraceptives in an approachable, humorous way (one features a poker game in which condoms are used as table stakes). The digital series is sponsored by Bedsider.org, a free online resource for information about birth control methods and how to access different forms of contraception.

"A group of cool, single twentysomething friends -- one of whom already has a child from an unplanned pregnancy -- is a natural backdrop for conversations about contraception," said Lawrence Swiader of Bedsider.org. "For Ben, Tucker, Danny and Riley -- and for millions of real people like them -- using birth control is just a part of everyday life."

Amy Kramer, senior director of entertainment media for the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, said the organization had worked extensively with ABC Family, helping to develop online discussion guides to accompany another series, "The Secret Life of the American Teenager," which deals with teen pregnancy. The organization also worked with the writers on a recent episode of "The Fosters," a new ABC Family series about a multiethnic foster family.

"We've worked for 15 years doing integrated content with shows when they talk about our issues," Kramer said. "Sex and pregnancy -- those things are pretty common on TV. We've been trying to get more coverage of contraception and how that plays out in sexual relationships."

The "Baby Daddy" episode provided just such an opportunity, Kramer said, "to see that normal, cool, fun people talk about birth control."

The ABC Family comedy series updates the 1980s film "Three Men and a Baby." In its most recent incarnation, the central character, Ben (played by Jean-Luc Bilodeau), finds his life as a 20-something bachelor bartender turned upside down when he comes home one day to discover a baby girl on his doorstep.



Stars of the ABC Family show "Baby Daddy," from left, Jean-Luc Bilodeau, Tahj Mowry, Chelsea Kane and Derek Theler, participate in a series of webisodes that promote contraceptive use. The three-part series is sponsored by Bedsider.org. (Ron Tom / ABC Family / March 20, 2013)