

# State Profiles FISCAL YEAR 2017

## A PORTRAIT OF SEXUALITY EDUCATION IN THE STATES

SIECUS is pleased to publish the 15<sup>th</sup> edition of the *SIECUS State Profiles*. The fiscal year (FY) 2017 edition of the *SIECUS State Profiles* includes individual profiles for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the outer United States territories and associated states. This 15<sup>th</sup> edition contains information from FY 2017 (October 1, 2016–September 30, 2017).

As in recent years' editions, the overall status of states' policies, health data, and federal programs in the FY 2017 *SIECUS State Profiles* illustrates the progress advocates and educators have made in improving sexuality education law, policy, and implementation. Yet, this year's *SIECUS State Profiles* also shows an all too prominent function of abstinence-only-until-marriage (AOUM) programs in schools and communities. Although there has been a rebranding of certain AOUM programs as "Sexual Risk Avoidance Education," the original intention of AOUM programs remain – to focus on a limited aspect of prevention and deprive young people from receiving information and education they have a right to and need to lead healthy lives.

Abstinence-only-until-marriage programs disproportionately impact the most marginalized and vulnerable populations of young people, including young people of color and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning (LGBTQ) youth. These programs often provide misleading or inaccurate information which deepen health disparities in communities.

One way to minimize these disparities is through comprehensive sexuality education, which would provide young people in grades K-12 with opportunities to learn information, explore their attitudes and values, and develop healthy life skills. Instruction that is age- and developmentally appropriate, science-based, culturally inclusive, and medically accurate that covers a broad set of topics related to sexuality, including human development, healthy relationships, decision-making and communication skills, sexual behaviors and health, and society and culture not only recognizes the diversity of young people but also respects their rights to explore their values and beliefs, and promotes honest, accurate information that builds a foundation for young people's lifelong health and wellbeing. We must continue to advocate for adolescent sexual health promotion—including advances for comprehensive sexuality education and opposition to AOUM programs—at the state and federal level and ensure that all young people have access to high-quality sexuality information and education.

By the end of FY 2017:

- Years of dedicated federal funding for comprehensive sexuality education: 0
- Years of continued dedicated federal funding for abstinence-only programs: 35
- \$2.05 billion in federal funds spent since 1982 on abstinence-only programs that intentionally withhold life-affirming and lifesaving information.
- Federal funding for abstinence-only programs: \$90 million.
  - Title V state AOUM program – 37 states, one territory, and one associated state
  - Competitive AOUM grant program, now called "sexual risk avoidance education"– 14 states

- Federal funding for other programs which contain components of comprehensive sexuality education:
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH) – 49 states, District of Columbia, and three territories.
  - Office of Adolescent Health’s (OAH) Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program (TPPP) – 32 states and one territory
  - Family and Youth Services Bureau’s (FYSB) Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) – 50 states, the District of Columbia, and six territories and associated states

This annual publication clarifies how federal funds for adolescent sexual health promotion and AOUM programs are being utilized and implemented across the country and provides the information educators and advocates need to continue to learn and strategize with each other to advance sexuality education. At the same time, SIECUS recognizes that many schools and communities are advancing sexuality education without the assistance of federal funds. It is SIECUS’ hope that we can collectively build from all of these best practices and varying models of success to advance sexuality education and support the lifelong health of young people in our nation.

Each FY 2017 SIECUS State Profile includes:

- Current laws and policies related to sexuality education;
- Adolescent sexual health data including race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation breakdown (as available);
- Information on the recipients and their use of federal DASH, TPPP, PREP, Title V state AOUM program, and the competitive AOUM grant program funding; and
- Contact information for the state or territory’s DASH, TPPP, PREP and Title V AOUM state grant program coordinators.

In addition, the *SIECUS State Profiles* also includes a federal funding overview of the year’s trends at the federal and state levels, including a historical summary of federal funding for adolescent programs related to sexual health and AOUM programs; a table of the states’ laws related to sexuality education; and description summaries of the curricula or programs used across the country. The *SIECUS State Profiles* has remained a unique tool for knowledgeable and empowered advocacy efforts among educators, advocates, and policymakers to advance comprehensive sexuality education. We encourage supporters of comprehensive sexuality education to use the *SIECUS State Profiles* in their efforts to inform, shape, and improve sexuality education policies and practices.

The diligent research for this edition of the *SIECUS State Profiles* would not have been possible without SIECUS staff Taissa Morimoto, Jennifer Driver, Jaspreet Chowdhary, and Zach Eisenstein; former SIECUS staff Jesseca Boyer; and the assistance of Kelsey Van Nice, whom we would like to thank for their valuable contributions. We are also appreciative of our many state partners with whom we work each year to make certain that the *SIECUS State Profiles* provide the most accurate picture possible. As always, it is our great pleasure to work with these dedicated organizations, professionals, colleagues, and friends.

Thanks are also due to the Guttmacher Institute for their research on sexuality education laws and policies and to Advocates for Youth and ETR Associates for their research on evidence-based curricula, as well as The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy for their state factsheets, all of which were consulted during the drafting of this publication.

Finally, to our many donors, who support our work and believe in the rights of all people to access quality sexuality education, we extend our thanks. We are also particularly grateful to The Ford Foundation, The F.M. Kirby Foundation, and the WestWind Foundation for their support in this undertaking.

SIECUS is committed to helping advocates in states and communities secure sexuality education policies and programs that are based on sound science, public health expertise, and ensure the rights of all people. We hope that the *State Profiles* will be of great value in our collective efforts.

Please contact us if you have any questions or would like to offer suggestions on how the *SIECUS State Profiles* can better help you advocate for comprehensive sexuality education and lifelong sexual health for all.

Sincerely,



Chitra Panjabi  
President & CEO