



ALABAMA

Alabama received \$4,355,467 in federal funding for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2004.¹

Alabama Sexuality Education Law

Alabama Code sets minimum requirements for what must be taught in sexuality education classes. Among other things, classes must teach that:

- Abstinence from sexual intercourse is the only completely effective protection against unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) when transmitted sexually, and
- Abstinence from sexual intercourse outside of lawful marriage is the expected social standard for unmarried school-age persons.

Further provisions state that:

- Course materials and instruction that relate to sexual education or sexually transmitted diseases should be age-appropriate;
- Statistics used must be based on the latest medical information that indicate the degree of reliability and unreliability of various forms of contraception, while also emphasizing the increase in protection against pregnancy and protection against sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV and AIDS infection, which is afforded by the use of various contraceptive measures; and
- Classes must emphasize, in a factual manner and from a public health perspective, that homosexuality is not a lifestyle acceptable to the general public and that homosexual conduct is a criminal offense under the laws of the state.²

Parents may exempt their children from sexuality education and/or STD (Sexually Transmitted Disease)/HIV education classes. This is referred to as an “opt-out” policy.

See Alabama State Code Section 16-40A-2 and the *Resolution to Provide Information to Students to Prevent the Spread of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome Disease in the Public Schools of Alabama*.

Recent Legislation

Bill Would Ban Use of Public Funds for “Promotion” of Homosexuality

House Bill 30, introduced in December of 2004, would prohibit any state agency or public entity from using public funds or facilities to purchase electronic materials or activities that “sanction, recognize, foster, or promote a lifestyle or actions prohibited by the sodomy and sexual misconduct laws of the state.” This ban would extend to library books and textbooks. Any public employee who violates this law would be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

This legislation is meant to extend Alabama’s current restriction on the inclusion of homosexuality (except when discussed in relation to its illegality under Alabama’s sodomy laws) in sexuality education classes.

In 2003, the United States Supreme Court handed down a decision in *Lawrence v. Texas* which declared state laws criminalizing homosexual behavior to be unconstitutional.

Events of Note

SIECUS is not aware of any recent events related to sexuality education in Alabama.

Alabama’s Youth: Statistical Information of Note³

- In 2003, 58% of female high school students and 56% of male high school students in Alabama reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 45% of female high school students and 48% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2003, 4% of female high school students and 14% of male high school students in Alabama reported having had sexual intercourse before age 13 compared to 4% of female high school students and 10% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2003, 19% of female high school students and 23% of male high school students in Alabama reported having had four or more lifetime sexual partners compared to 11% of female high school students and 18% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2003, 46% of female high school students and 38% of male high school students in Alabama reported being currently sexually active (defined as having had sexual intercourse in the three months prior to the survey) compared to 35% of females and 34% of males nationwide.
- In 2003, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 16% of females and 24% of males in Alabama reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 21% of females and 30% of males nationwide.
- In 2003, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 63% of females and 61% of males in Alabama reported having used condoms the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 57% of females and 69% of males nationwide.
- In 2003, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 20% of females and 13% of males in Alabama reported having used birth control pills the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 21% of females and 13% of males nationwide.
- In 2003, 6% of female high school students and 3% of male high school students in Alabama reported ever having been pregnant or gotten someone pregnant compared to 5% of female high school students and 4% of male high school students nationwide.

- In 2003, 86% of high school students in Alabama reported having been taught about HIV/AIDS in school compared to 88% of high school students nationwide.
- In 2000, Alabama's abortion rate was 16 per 1,000 women ages 15-19 compared to an abortion rate of 24 per 1,000 nationwide.⁴
- In 2002, Alabama's birth rate was 55 per 1,000 women ages 15-19 compared to a teen birth rate of 43 per 1,000 nationwide.⁵

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

Alabama received \$975,583 in federal Title V funding in Fiscal Year 2004. The Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage grant requires states to provide three state-raised dollars or the equivalent in services for every four federal dollars received. The state match can be provided in part or in full by local groups. The state match in Alabama is made up of a combination of state allocation (\$300,000) and local grantees' contributions. The Alabama Department of Public Health, Bureau of Family Health Services oversees this program and partners with the governor's office to distribute the funding.

The enumerated goals of the Alabama Abstinence-Only Education Program (AAEP) are to:

1. Reduce the pregnancy rate among teens 15 to 17 years of age
2. Reduce the occurrence of STDs among teens 15 to 19 years of age
3. Reduce the abortion rate among teens 15 to 17 years of age
4. Reduce the live birth rate among unmarried teens 15 to 17 years of age
5. Reduce the occurrence of sexual activity among teens 15 to 17 years of age

Alabama distributes federal Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage grants to local sub-grantees, including boards of education, youth development centers, and family resource centers. Through these programs, AAEP claims to have reached approximately 34,000 youth ages 17 and younger in 26 of Alabama's 67 counties.

Ten percent of the funding has been set aside for two separate evaluations to be conducted by Auburn University. One of these focuses on community-based projects and one will focus on the program's media campaign. The evaluation of the community based organizations occurs yearly and focuses on both process and outcome evaluation. On an outcome level, it measures participants' exposure to abstinence messages, attitudes about abstinence, rates of sexual intercourse, rates of teen pregnancy, STD rates, and rates of teen births. The evaluation of the media campaign is designed to determine if the campaign is reaching the target audience and to what extent the audience has heard the message.

The planning and implementation of the original Title V grant in Alabama was overseen by the State Advisory Committee (SAC), which was comprised of 10 groups, five of which had conservative and/or anti-choice views. These groups included the Alabama Eagle Forum, the Alabama Family Alliance, Alabama Sav-A-Life, and the Alabama Baptist Convention.

Special Projects of Regional and National Significance—Community Based Abstinence Education (SPRANS—CBAE)⁶ and Adolescent Family Life Act (AFLA) Grantees

There are five SPRANS—CBAE grantees in Alabama: the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), Alabama State University, Edge Regional Medical Center (*Abstinence in Motion Project*),

Madison County Schools, and University of South Alabama. There is one AFLA grantee in Alabama: Alabama State University.

The Alabama Department of Public Health distributes its SPRANS–CBAE funding to six sub-grantees.

The *Abstinence in Motion (AIM) Project* targets seventh and ninth graders, reaching about 450 students per year. According to an article in the *Troy Messenger*, “*AIM*, however, doesn’t stop with adults bringing the anti-premarital sex message to children. The program lets kids tell other kids about the consequences of premarital sex—teen pregnancy, low self-esteem and sexually transmitted diseases.”⁷

AIM uses the *Reasonable Reasons to Wait* curriculum. According to SIECUS’ review of this curriculum, *Reasonable Reasons to Wait* includes gender biases, fear- and shame-based messages, and medical inaccuracies. A few examples are listed below:

- “AIDS can be transmitted by skin-to-skin contact.”⁸
- “Teenagers who engage in irresponsible sexual activity may have to endure serious short- and long-term consequences. Premaritally sexually active teens may suffer from infection, physical and emotional pain, infertility, and miscarriages.”⁹
- Answer: “Emotional effects of premarital sex that condoms can NEVER protect.”
Question: “What is guilt; rejection; or a broken heart?”¹⁰

Alabama State University is partnering with the Gift of Life Foundation to work in twelve junior high and high schools in Montgomery County. During their in-classroom instruction, teachers will use one of the *Choosing the Best* curricula and pledge cards. SIECUS reviewed *Choosing the Best LIFE* and found that it names numerous physical and psychological consequences of premarital sexual activity, suggests that sexually active teens will never have a happy future, and implies that only teens with low self-esteem and poor judgment become sexually active. For example, *Choosing the Best LIFE* states: “relationships often lower the self-respect of both partners—one feeling used, the other feeling like the user. Emotional pain can cause a downward spiral leading to intense feelings of lack of worthlessness.”¹¹

Federal and State Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2004¹²

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes SPRANS–CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Length of Grant		
Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH)	\$975,583 federal \$300,000 state	Title V
DUAL GRANTEE	\$661,902	SPRANS–CBAE (Implementation Grant)
2001-2004		
www.adph.org/ABSTINENCE		

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Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes SPRANS-CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Alabama Cooperative Extension System DUAL GRANTEE		Title V sub-grantee SPRANS-CBAE (through ADPH)
Boligee 2000, Inc.		Title V sub-grantee
Circle of Care Center for Families DUAL GRANTEE		Title V sub-grantee SPRANS-CBAE (through ADPH)
Crittenton Youth Services DUAL GRANTEE		Title V sub-grantee SPRANS-CBAE (through ADPH)
Dale County Abstinence Advocacy Council		Title V sub-grantee
Huntsville City Schools DUAL GRANTEE		Title V sub-grantee SPRANS-CBAE (through ADPH)
Lee County Youth Development Center		Title V sub-grantee
Sex & Family Education (SAFE) DUAL GRANTEE www.sexandfamilyeducation.org		Title V sub-grantee SPRANS-CBAE (through ADPH)

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Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes SPRANS-CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Troy Regional Medical Center & Charles Henderson Child Health Center DUAL GRANTEE		Title V sub-grantee SPRANS-CBAE (through ADPH)
Alabama State University 2004-2007 DUAL GRANTEE 2004-2005	\$740,211 \$225,000	SPRANS-CBAE (Implementation Grant) AFLA
Edge Regional Medical Center (<i>Abstinence in Motion Project</i>) 2002-2005	\$533,925	SPRANS-CBAE (Implementation Grant)
Madison County Schools 2002-2005	\$421,606	SPRANS-CBAE (Implementation Grant)
University of South Alabama 2003-2006	\$797,240	SPRANS-CBAE (Implementation Grant)

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Coordinator

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Alabama Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

AIDS Action Coalition of Huntsville,
Alabama
PO Box 871
Huntsville, AL 35804
Phone: (256) 536-4700

Alabama Civil Liberties Union
207 Montgomery St., Suite 825
Montgomery, AL 36101
Phone: (334) 262-0304

Planned Parenthood of Alabama
1211 27th Pl. S
Birmingham, AL 35205
Phone: (205) 322-0111
www.ppalabama.org

Alabama Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Alabama Citizens for Life
PO Box 184
Montgomery, AL 36101
Phone: (334) 666-6805

Alabama Policy Institute
402 Office Park Dr., Suite 300
Birmingham, AL 35223
Phone: (205) 870 9900
www.alabamapolicyinstitute.org

The Alabama Pro-Life Coalition
Education Fund, Inc.
PO Box 590008
Birmingham, AL 35259
Phone: (205) 795-1231
www.aplcef.org

National Physicians Center for Family
Resources
PO Box 59692
Birmingham, AL 35259
Phone: (205) 870 0234
www.physicianscenter.org

Newspapers in Alabama

Birmingham Post-Herald
Holly Lang
Health & Medicine Editor
PO Box 2553
Birmingham, AL 35202
Phone: (205) 325-3144

The Birmingham News
Carla Crowder
Education Reporter
PO Box 2553
Birmingham, AL 35202
Phone: (205) 325-2460

The Birmingham News
Dave Parks
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The Decatur Daily
Ken Retherford
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The Dothan Eagle
Linnea McClellan
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The Gadsden Times
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The Huntsville Times
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Mobile Register
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Montgomery Advertiser
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Times Daily
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Florence, AL 35630
Phone: (256) 740-5743

The Tuscaloosa News
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Tuscaloosa, AL 35401
Phone: (205) 722-0230

¹ This refers to the fiscal year for the Federal Government which begins on October 1 and ends on September 30. The fiscal year is designated by the calendar year in which it ends; for example, Fiscal Year 2004 begins on October 1, 2003 and ends on September 30, 2004.

² In 2003, the United States Supreme Court handed down a decision in *Lawrence v. Texas* which declared state laws criminalizing homosexual behavior to be unconstitutional.

³ Unless otherwise cited, all statistical information comes from: Jo Anne Grunbaum, et. al., "Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance—United States, 2003," *Surveillance Summaries, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 53.SS-2 (21 May 2004): 1-95, accessed 28 January 2005, <<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs/>>.

⁴ *U.S. Teenage Pregnancy Statistics: Overall Trends, Trends by Race and Ethnicity and State-by-State Information* (New York: Alan Guttmacher Institute, February, 2004), accessed 28 January 2005 at <www.guttmacher.org>.

⁵ *National Vital Statistics Reports 52.10* (Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics, 2003), 48, accessed 4 February 2005, <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/births.htm#stat%20tables>>.

⁶ In FY 2004 SPRANS—CBAE was administered within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau. In FY 2005 this funding stream was moved to HHS' Administration for Children and Families and is now referred to simply as Community Based Abstinence Education (CBAE).

⁷ AIM Program Targets a Need for Education, *The Troy Messenger*, 22 February 2004, accessed 21 February 2005, <<http://www.troymessenger.com/articles/2004/02/22/opinion/edit84.txt>>.

⁸ Maureen Gallagher Duran, *Reasonable Reasons to Wait: The Keys to Character-Teacher's Guide* (Chantilly, VA: A Choice to Wait, 2002), 19.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 32.

¹¹ Bruce Cook, *Choosing the Best LIFE-Student Workbook* (Marietta, GA: Choosing the Best Inc., 2000), 9.

¹² SIECUS was unable to obtain exact funding amounts for all grantees.