



# SIECUS

State Profile

## CONNECTICUT

***Community-based organizations in Connecticut received \$599,800 in federal funds for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2007.<sup>1</sup>***

### **Connecticut Sexuality Education Law and Policy**

Connecticut does not require schools to teach sexuality education, but does require that schools teach human growth and development and disease prevention. Connecticut law also states, “Each local and regional board of education shall offer during the regular school day planned, ongoing and systematic instruction on acquired immune deficiency syndrome, as taught by legally qualified teachers.”

The Connecticut State Board of Education is charged with developing sexuality education curriculum guidelines that “shall include, but not be limited to, information on developing a curriculum including family planning, human sexuality, parenting, nutrition and the emotional, physical, psychological, hygienic, economic and social aspects of family life, provided the curriculum guides shall not include information pertaining to abortion as an alternative to family planning.” However, Connecticut statute also states that the instruction must be left to the discretion of local or regional boards of education.

Parents or guardians may remove their children from sexuality education and/or STD/HIV education classes with written notification. This is referred to as an “opt-out” policy.

See Connecticut Statutes Chapter 194 Sections 10-16b-f, and 10-19a-b.

### **Recent Legislation**

#### *Healthy Teens Act Introduced*

Assembly Bill 5591, introduced in February 2008 and also known as *An Act Concerning Healthy Teens* would have required the Department of Education to implement a “healthy teens education grant program.” Under this program, “local and regional school boards of education” that have shown a history of teen health education programs would have applied for grants to “provide medically accurate health education.” The bill died in the House Committee on Appropriations.

#### *Legislation Helps Sexual Assault Victims Obtain Emergency Contraception*

Senate Bill 1343, introduced in February 2007, requires all licensed healthcare facilities to provide sexual assault victims with emergency contraception if requested. This requirement extends to Catholic healthcare facilities as well. The bill was signed by the Governor on May 16, 2007 and is now law.

#### *Bill Prohibits Deprivation of Rights on Account of Sexual Orientation*

Senate Bill 1109, introduced in January 2007, prohibits “depriving an individual of rights, privileges, and immunities secured or protected by the state or federal laws or constitutions because of [his/her] sexual orientation.”<sup>2</sup> Such a deprivation of rights is deemed a class A misdemeanor, and becomes a class D

felony if property is damaged in an amount exceeding \$1,000 or the violator purposefully attempts to conceal his/her identity. The bill was signed by the Governor and put into law on October 1, 2007.

*Bill Would Allocate \$500,000 towards AIDS prevention*

House Bill 5077, introduced in January 2007 and referred to the Committee on Public Health, would have provided \$500,000 to the Department of Public Health for statewide AIDS prevention initiatives. The bill failed to move past the committee and died.

**Events of Note**

*Proper Investigation May Yields Exoneration in “Pop-Up Porn” Case*

*June 2007; Norwich, CT*

In June 2007, a judge granted a new trial to a substitute teacher setting aside her January 2007 conviction on four felony counts of injury or risk of injury to, or impairing the morals of, children for which she faced up to 40 years in prison.

The charges stem from an incident on October 19, 2004, when the teacher was working as a substitute at Kelly Middle School in Norwich, Connecticut. During class, the computer she was using was flooded with pornographic images of “naked men and women, sexual acts, and bodily fluids.”<sup>3</sup> At least ten minor students testified to having seen the images, while several claimed that she attempted to push their faces away from the screen.<sup>4</sup>

At trial, the substitute claimed that she was the victim of malware, malicious software that caused uncontrollable pornographic pop-ups. The prosecution admitted that it had never checked the computer for malware, yet it insisted that she was intentionally surfing the internet for pornographic material during class. A defense expert found malware on the computer that had been in place for more than a month, long before the teacher had arrived at the school, but was barred from testifying at trial.

After the trial, the computer was sent to a state laboratory, where technicians found evidence that may contradict what a state computer expert told the jury. The judge ordered a new trial because of the possibility that the expert’s testimony was inaccurate and because the defendant’s own expert had been barred from testifying.<sup>5</sup> It is unclear if and when the new trial will take place.

*Group Uses Law to Uphold Right to Hate Speech*

*April 2007; Danbury, CT*

Citing the First Amendment, the Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) pressured the Danbury High School principal to revoke her ban on “ex-gay” pastor Valerie Pinnex. Under threat of legal action, the school administrator permitted the speaker to engage students.

The controversy began as a response to the National Day of Silence, a nation-wide event where LGBT students and their allies remain mute to bring attention to homophobia in schools. Some students at Danbury High participated in the event. The school’s Bible Study group, however, held a counter event to which they invited Pinnex who discussed how she was a Born-again Christian and denounced her former lesbian lifestyle.

The principal originally cancelled the event because she considered it “too controversial.”<sup>6</sup> The ADF Legal Counsel, however, believed that administrators cannot ban assemblies simply because they are “controversial.” He explained, “according to the law, a school cannot allow students to promote one viewpoint and then prohibit promotion of another viewpoint.”<sup>7</sup>

This incident came one month after another anti-gay activist called for parents to keep their children home on the National Day of Silence.<sup>3</sup>

**Connecticut's Youth: Statistical Information of Note<sup>8</sup>**

- In 2007, 42% of female high school students and 43% of male high school students in Connecticut reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 46% of female high school students and 50% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, 4% of female high school students and 8% of male high school students in Connecticut 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 2007, 10% of female high school students and 15% of male high school students in Connecticut reported having had four or more lifetime sexual partners compared to 12% of female high school students and 18% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, 33% of female high school students and 30% of male high school students in Connecticut reported being currently sexually active (defined as having had sexual intercourse in the three months prior to the survey) compared to 36% of female high school students and 34% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 59% of females and 67% of males in Connecticut reported having used condoms the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 55% of females and 69% of males nationwide.
- In 2007, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 30% of females and 22% of males in Connecticut reported having used birth control pills the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 19% of females and 13% of males nationwide.
- In 2007, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 23% of females and 34% of males in Connecticut reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 18% of females and 28% of males nationwide.
- In 2007, 92% of high school students in Connecticut reported having been taught about AIDS/HIV in school compared to 90% of high school students nationwide

**Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding**

The Department of Health in Connecticut would have been eligible for \$344,944 in federal Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funds in Fiscal Year 2007. 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 may be provided in part or in full by local groups. Had Connecticut taken the funds, the state would have been required to match the money with \$258,708. However, the state did not apply for these funds. In fact, since Fiscal Year 2006, the state has not applied for funds based on recommendations from state health officials and a lack of groups interested in conducting abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in the state. Therefore, the state did not match funds nor were there any programs supported by this funding stream during Fiscal Year 2007.

CONNECTICUT

**Community-Based Abstinence Education (CBAE) and Adolescent Family Life Act (AFLA) Grantees**

There is one CBAE grantee in Connecticut: Opportunities Industrialization Center of New Britain (OIC NB). There are no AFLA grantees in Connecticut.

Along with its “Abstinence Education” program, OIC NB conducts training in customer service, basic computer usage, life coping skills, and employment preparation.<sup>9</sup> OIC NB lists one program coordinator/lead educator and three abstinence educators on its website, and also states that the program is offered to 12–18 year olds in New Britain. Young people ages 12–17 are required to have parental permission in order to enroll in OIC NB’s abstinence-only-until-marriage program.<sup>10</sup>

**Federal and State Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2007**

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee  Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes Title V, CBAE, AFLA, and other funds)
Opportunities Industrialization Center of New Britain  2006–2011	\$599,800	CBAE

**Adolescent Health Contact<sup>11</sup>**

Barbara Pickett  
Maternal and Child Health Unit  
Connecticut Department of Health  
410 Capitol Ave., MS #11 MAT  
PO Box 340308  
Hartford, CT 06106  
Phone: (860) 509-8057

**Connecticut Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education**

ACLU of Connecticut  
32 Grand St.  
Hartford, CT 06106  
Phone: (860) 247-9823  
[www.acluct.org](http://www.acluct.org)

GLSEN Connecticut  
P.O. Box 2405  
Stamford, CT 06906  
Phone: (203) 288-2399  
[www.glsen.org/connecticut](http://www.glsen.org/connecticut)

NARAL Pro-Choice Connecticut  
135 Broad St.  
Hartford, CT 06105  
Phone: (860) 524-1086  
[www.pro-choicect.org](http://www.pro-choicect.org)

Planned Parenthood of Connecticut  
345 Whitney Ave.  
New Haven, CT 06511  
Phone: (203) 865-5158  
[www.ppct.org](http://www.ppct.org)

CONNECTICUT

**Connecticut Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education**

Connecticut Right to Life Corporation  
PO Box 2343  
Waterbury, CT 06722  
Phone: (203) 757-5213  
[www.ct4life.com](http://www.ct4life.com)

Family Institute of Connecticut  
77 Buckingham St.  
Hartford, CT 06126  
Phone: (860) 548-0066  
[www.ctfamily.org](http://www.ctfamily.org)

**Newspapers in Connecticut<sup>12</sup>**

*Connecticut Post*  
Newsroom  
410 State St.  
Bridgeport, CT 06604  
Phone: (203) 333-0161  
[www.connpost.com](http://www.connpost.com)

*The Day*  
Newsroom  
47 Eugene O'Neill Dr.  
New London, CT 06320  
Phone: (860) 701-4372  
[www.theday.com](http://www.theday.com)

*The Hartford Courant*  
Newsroom  
285 Broad St.  
Hartford, CT 06115  
Phone: (860) 241-6200  
[www.courant.com](http://www.courant.com)

*Journal Inquirer*  
Newsroom  
306 Progress Dr.  
Manchester, CT 06040  
Phone: (860) 646-0500  
[www.journalinquirer.com](http://www.journalinquirer.com)

*New Haven Register*  
Newsroom  
40 Sargent Dr.  
New Haven, CT 06511  
Phone: (203) 789-5730  
[www.nhregister.com](http://www.nhregister.com)

*The News-Times*  
Newsroom  
333 Main St.  
Danbury, CT 06810  
Phone: (203) 744-5100  
[www.newstimes.com](http://www.newstimes.com)

*The Norwalk Advocate*  
Newsroom  
75 Tresser Blvd.  
Stamford, CT 06901  
Phone: (203) 750-5325  
[www.norwalkadvocate.com](http://www.norwalkadvocate.com)

*Norwich Bulletin*  
Newsroom  
66 Franklin St.  
Norwich, CT 06360  
Phone: (860) 887-9211  
[www.norwichbulletin.com](http://www.norwichbulletin.com)

*Record-Journal*  
Newsroom  
11 Crown St.  
Meriden, CT 06450  
Phone: (203) 317-2245  
[www.myrecordjournal.com](http://www.myrecordjournal.com)

*Waterbury Republican-American*  
Newsroom  
389 Meadow St.  
Waterbury, CT 06702  
Phone: (203) 574-3636 ext. 1443  
[www.rep-am.com](http://www.rep-am.com)

## CONNECTICUT

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<sup>1</sup> 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 2007 begins on October 1, 2006 and ends on September 30, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Connecticut Public Act No. 07-62.

<sup>3</sup> Lindsay Beyerstein, "Questionable Conviction of Connecticut Teacher in Pop-up Porn Case," *AlterNet.org*, 19 January 2007, accessed 25 January 2007, <[www.alternet.org/rights/46925/](http://www.alternet.org/rights/46925/)>.

<sup>4</sup> Greg Smith, "Teacher Guilty in Norwich Porn Case," *Norwich Bulletin*, 8 January 2007, accessed 29 January 2007, <<http://www.norwichbulletin.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070106/NEWS01/701060312/1002/NEWS17>>.

<sup>5</sup> Erika Morphy, "Teacher Gets Retrial in School Pop-Up Porn Case," *Tech News World*, 7 June 07, accessed 20 May 2008, <<http://www.ecommercetimes.com/rsstory/57740.html?welcome=1211908911>>.

<sup>6</sup> "Conservative Christian Law Group Threatens Schools Barring Anti-Gay Speakers," *365Gay.com*,

9 April 2007, accessed 17 April 2007, <[www.365gay.com/Newscon07/04/040907schools.htm](http://www.365gay.com/Newscon07/04/040907schools.htm)>

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Unless otherwise cited, all statistical information comes from: Danice K. Eaton, et. al., "Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance—United States, 2007," Surveillance Summaries, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report 57.SS-4 (6 June 2008), accessed 4 June 2008, <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>.

<sup>9</sup> "Home: Unlocking Doors for Employment Opportunities," Opportunities Industrialization Center of New Britain, Inc., accessed 22 January 2008, <<http://www.oicnb.org/index.php>>.

<sup>10</sup> "OIC Programs: Abstinence Education," Opportunities Industrialization Center of New Britain, Inc., accessed 22 January 2008, <[http://www.oicnb.org/abstinence\\_education.php](http://www.oicnb.org/abstinence_education.php)>.

<sup>11</sup> SIECUS has identified this person as a state-based contact for information on adolescent health and if applicable, abstinence-only-until-marriage programs.

<sup>12</sup> This section is a list of major newspapers in your state with contact information for their newsrooms. This list is by no means inclusive and does not contain the local level newspapers which are integral to getting your message out to your community. SIECUS strongly urges you to follow stories about the issues that concern you on the national, state, and local level by using an internet news alert service such as [Google alerts](#), becoming an avid reader of your local papers, and establishing relationships with reporters who cover your issues. For more information on how to achieve your media goals visit the SIECUS [Community Action Kit](#).