



CONNECTICUT

Connecticut received \$982,484 in federal funding for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2005.¹

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 requires that, “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 the local or regional board 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 10-19.

Recent Legislation

Legislation Requiring Parental Notification of Family Life Program Introduced

House Bill 5514, introduced in January 2005 and referred to the joint Committee on Education, would require school districts to notify the parent of any student who is eligible to participate in a family life program. This legislation died at the end of the 2005 legislative session.

Bill Would Require Review of Sex Education Programs

Senate Bill 363, introduced in January 2005 and referred to the joint Committee on Education, would require school districts to review their sex education programs in order to guarantee that the program is comprehensive and includes “abstinence, human development, relationships, sexual health, and sexually transmitted diseases.” This legislation died at the end of the 2005 legislative session.

Bill Would Mandate Parenting Education, Including Family Life Education

Senate Bill 1177, introduced in March 2005 and referred to the Joint Select Committee on Children, would require schools to include parenting education in existing curricula. This parenting education would include health and family life education. This legislation died at the end of the 2005 legislative session.

Events of Note*Sexuality Education Curriculum Changed After Parents Complain*

November 2004; Bristol, CT

The Bristol Board of Education made several revisions to the health education curriculum after inviting comments from parents. The school district decided to allow area parents to review the middle school health curriculum after receiving complaints from a group of concerned parents. In Spring 2004, a group of parents attended several school board meetings to argue against portions of the middle school's curriculum that discussed abortion. They requested that parents be included in the curriculum revision process, which was taking place for the first time in eight years. Some of the parents consulted with an attorney and argued that lessons about abortion taught in the "life skills" courses were in violation of state law.

At the time, the school replied by explaining that the course in question was not a requirement and that parents could choose to remove their child from the course. The school then notified parents again of the lessons being taught and reminded them of their right to remove their child.

In October 2004, however, the school district decided to allow parents to review the curriculum at each of the three middle schools. The district then revised the curriculum accordingly. According to the Director of the Office of Teaching and Learning, "thirty-one written comments were received....Revisions were made."²

Although the initial complaints revolved around teaching abortion, one change to the curriculum involved videos that provided information on contraception. Parents complained that the information on contraception sent a mixed message. One parent exclaimed, "how are we going to teach abstinence when we show videos showing other options? The students who viewed these videos said they were all about birth control and not about peer pressure."³ In response, the board of education voted to end the use of the videos.

Parents will be notified about all of the changes to the curriculum and materials by mail.

Connecticut's Youth: Statistical Information of Note⁴

- In 2005, 45% of female high school students and 47% of male high school students in Connecticut reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 46% of female high school students and 48% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2005, 2% of female high school students and 9% of male high school students in Connecticut reported having had sexual intercourse before age 13 compared to 4% of female high school students and 9% of male high school students nationwide.

- In 2005, 12% of female high school students and 17% 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 17% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2005, 91% of high school students in Connecticut reported having been taught about AIDS/HIV in school compared to 88% of high school students nationwide.
- In 2000, Connecticut's abortion rate was 30 per 1,000 women ages 15–19 compared to a teen abortion rate of 24 per 1,000 nationwide.⁵
- In 2002, Connecticut's birth rate was 26 per 1,000 women ages 15–19 compared to a teen birth rate of 43 per 1,000 nationwide.⁶
- In 2003, teens ages 15–19 accounted for 34% of 41,882 cases of Chlamydia reported in Connecticut.⁷
- In 2003, teens ages 15–19 accounted for 24% of 15,093 cases of gonorrhea reported in Connecticut.⁸

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

Connecticut received \$330,484 in federal Title V funds in Fiscal Year 2005. 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. In Connecticut, the match is provided by the sub-grantees.

Connecticut's Department of Public Health is responsible for Title V funding and allocates approximately \$90,000 for a media campaign. The remaining funds are given out to three sub-grantees or spent on various support systems. The three sub-grantees are Child and Family Agency Incorporated, Greater Bridgeport Adolescent Pregnancy Program, Inc., and Windham Board of Education.

According to the Department of Public Health's website, "the purpose of this initiative is to provide a non-fear-based Abstinence-Only education to youths, targeting those aged 9–14." Connecticut has chosen to focus on sections A, C, G, and H of the federal government's 8-point definition of "abstinence education." This means that any funded program must:

- Ha[ve] as its exclusive purpose teaching the social, psychological, and health gains to be realized by abstaining from sexual activity;
- Teach that abstinence from sexual activity is the only certain way to avoid out-of-wedlock pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and other associated health problems;
- Teach young people how to reject sexual advances and how alcohol and drug use increase vulnerability to sexual advances; and
- Teach the importance of attaining self-sufficiency before engaging in sexual activity.

The media campaign, titled *Not Me, Not Now*, includes an interactive website, which features games (with no clear abstinence message or focus), newsletters, and a question and answer section. The Q and A section answers the question, "What are the emotional consequences of sex?" by stating that, "You want to wait? Right on, save yourself the heartbreak, degradation,

and embarrassment that comes after sex without commitment.”⁹

Community-Based Abstinence Education (CBAE)¹⁰ and Adolescent Family Life Act (AFLA) Grantees

There is one CBAE grantee in Connecticut: Network Connecticut (Catholic Charities and Family Services). There are no AFLA grantees in Connecticut.

Network Connecticut (Catholic Charities and Family Services) coordinates a CBAE grant that is used in the dioceses of Bridgeport, Hartford, and Norwich. This program targets young people ages 12–18 and uses the following curricula: *The Choice Game*, *Sex Can Wait*, and *Abstinence: Pick and Choose Activities*.

Federal and State Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2005

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes Title V, CBAE, and AFLA)
Connecticut Department of Public Health www.dph.state.ct.us/BCH/Family%20Health/aoe2.htm	\$330,484 federal	Title V
Child and Family Agency Incorporated www.cfapress.org	\$100,000	Title V sub-grantee
Greater Bridgeport Adolescent Pregnancy Program, Inc. www.gbapp.org	\$50,000	Title V sub-grantee
Windham Board of Education	\$50,000	Title V sub-grantee
Network Connecticut (Catholic Charities and Family Services) 2003–2006	\$652,000	CBAE

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Coordinator

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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

Connecticut Civil Liberties Union
32 Grand St.
Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: (860) 247-9823
www.cclu.org

GLSEN Connecticut
PO Box 2405
Stamford, CT 06906
Phone: (203) 288-2399

NARAL Pro-Choice Connecticut
135 Broad St.
Hartford, CT 06105
Phone: (860) 524-1086
www.ctnaral.org

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

Connecticut Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Connecticut Right to Life Corporation
PO Box 2343
Waterbury, CT 06722
Phone: (203) 757-5213
www.ctrl.com

Family Institute of Connecticut
PO Box 260210
Hartford, CT 06126
Phone: (860) 548-0066
www.ctfamily.org

Newspapers in Connecticut

The Advocate
Suzanne Sorrentino
Community News Editor
75 Tresser Blvd.
Stamford, CT 06901
Phone: (203) 299-5522

Connecticut Post
Sev Rinaldi
Health & Medicine Editor
410 State St.
Bridgeport, CT 06604
Phone: (203) 330-6309

Connecticut Post
Linda Lambeck
Education Writer
410 State St.
Bridgeport, CT 06604
Phone: (203) 330-6218

The Day
Carol McCarthy
Community News Editor
47 Eugene O'Neill Dr.
New London, CT 06320
Phone: (860) 442-2200

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The Hartford Courant

Robert Frahm
Education Editor
285 Broad St.
Hartford, CT 06115
Phone: (860) 241-6535

The Hartford Courant

Nancy Schoeffler
Health & Medicine Editor
285 Broad St.
Hartford, CT 06115
Phone: (860) 241-6462

Journal Inquirer

Don Michak
Medical/Health Reporter
306 Progress Dr.
Manchester, CT 06040
Phone: (860) 646-0500

New Haven Register

Abram Katz
Health & Medicine Editor
40 Sargent Dr.
New Haven, CT 06511
Phone: (203) 789-5719

The News-Times

Nancy Hutson
Community News Reporter
333 Main St.
Danbury, CT 06810
Phone: (203) 731-3339

Norwich Bulletin

Fran Kefalas
Medical/Health Editor
66 Franklin St.
Norwich, CT 06360
Phone: (860) 887-9211

Record-Journal

Martin Waters
Community News Reporter
11 Crown St.
Meriden, CT 06450
Phone: (203) 235-2232

Waterbury Republican-American

Robyn Adams
Community News Staff Writer
389 Meadow St.
Waterbury, CT 06702
Phone: (203) 574-3636

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 2005 begins on October 1, 2004 and ends on September 30, 2005.

² Katherine Marcotte, "Sex Ed Classes' Videos Removed," *Bristol Press* (CT), 4 November 2004, accessed 7 January 2004, <http://www.ctcentral.com/site/news.cfm?newsid=13291729&BRD=1643&PAG=461&dept_id=10486&rft=8>.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Unless otherwise cited, all statistical information comes from: Danice K. Eaton, et. al., "Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance—United States, 2005," *Surveillance Summaries, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, vol. 55, no. SS-5 (9 June 2006): 1-108, accessed 8 June 2006, <<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>>.

Connecticut did not participate in the complete 2005 YRBS.

⁵ *U.S. Teenage Pregnancy Statistics: Overall Trends, Trends by Race and Ethnicity and State-by-State Information* (New York: Guttmacher Institute, February 2004), accessed 28 January 2005, <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/state_pregnancy_trends.pdf>.

⁶ *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>>.

⁷ *Chlamydia Cases by Age at Diagnosis, Connecticut 1999-2003*, Connecticut STD Control Program (2004), accessed 7 February 2005, <http://www.dph.state.ct.us/BCH/infectiousdise/STD_2003/std_chal_table10.htm>.

⁸ *Gonorrhea Cases by Age at Diagnosis, Connecticut 1999-2003*, Connecticut STD Control Program (2004), accessed 7 February 2005, <http://www.dph.state.ct.us/BCH/infectiousdise/STD_2003/std_gc_table10.htm>.

⁹ *Teen Interactive*, Not Me, Not Now, accessed 21 February 2004, <<http://www.notmenotnow.org>>.

¹⁰ In Fiscal Year 2004 SPRANS—CBAE was administered within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau. In Fiscal Year 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).