



GEORGIA

Georgia Sexuality Education Law and Policy

Schools in Georgia are required to teach sexuality education and sexually transmitted disease (STD)/HIV-prevention education. Georgia law mandates that the state Board of Education determine minimum guidelines that sexuality education programs must satisfy. The guidelines created by the board require instruction to “emphasize abstinence from sexual activity until marriage and fidelity in marriage as important personal goals.”¹ In addition, the guidelines state that sex education instruction should address peer pressure and promote “high self-esteem, local community values, and abstinence from sexual activity as an effective method of prevention of pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and acquired immune deficiency syndrome.”² Local school boards are largely responsible for deciding the specific subjects this education must cover, the grade level in which topics are introduced, and for determining what is age-appropriate.

The Georgia Department of Education has also established *Quality Core Curriculum (QCC) Standards* for grades kindergarten through 12. The QCC health education standards suggest education resources, topics, and curricula for teaching STD- and HIV/AIDS-prevention education in grades six through 12. Beginning in grade six, the health education standards address STDs, HIV, and abstinence.³ In grades seven through 12, the standards also address pregnancy and STD-prevention methods.⁴

Parents or guardians may remove their children from all or part of sexuality and/or STD/HIV education by sending written notice to the school. This is referred to as an “opt-out” policy.

See Georgia Code Annotated §§ 20-2-143, Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-1-.12, and the Georgia Department of Education *Quality Core Curriculum Standards*.

Recent Legislation

Prevention First Act Introduced

Senate Resolution 281, also known as the *Prevention First Act*, was introduced in February 2009. The *Prevention First Act* was intended to help reduce unintended pregnancy, prevent the spread of sexually transmitted infections, and support healthy families by improving women’s health. It would have expanded accessible, preventative healthcare services and education programs. Initiatives would have included implementing comprehensive, medically accurate sex education programs that teach about abstinence, contraception, and sexual health to young people. The bill died in committee.

Legislation Requiring Sexuality Education to Include Dating Violence Prevention

Senate Bill 217, introduced in March 2009, would have mandated that sexuality education curricula for grades eight through 12 include information on preventing dating violence in order to ensure that students are equipped with adequate information about healthy relationships and warning signs that a relationship may become violent. The state Board of Education would have been charged

with determining the topics addressed in each grade level. The bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Education and Youth, where it died.

A Bill to Create a Women’s Reproductive Health Legislative Oversight Committee

Senate Bill 223, introduced in March 2009, would have created a joint committee of the Georgia House and Senate dedicated to matters regarding reproductive health, including sexuality education. The committee would have been empowered to review and evaluate all state and federally funded programs and health care providers that offer services related to reproductive health. The organizations subject to the committee’s oversight would have included “family planning programs and teen clinics that promote abstinence skills education and counseling, sex education, contraception, access to health care... pregnancy education and counseling, and any other reproductive health education.”⁵ The bill passed the Senate but died after being sent to the House.

Georgia’s Youth: Statistical Information of Note⁶

- In 2009, 89% of high school students in Georgia reported having been taught about AIDS/HIV in school compared to 87% of high school students nationwide.

Georgia Youth Sexual Health Statistics

Teen Pregnancy, Birth, and Abortion

- Georgia’s teen pregnancy rate ranks 8th in the U.S., with a rate of 80 pregnancies per 1,000 young women ages 15–19 compared to the national rate of 70 pregnancies per 1,000.⁷ There were a total of 24,990 pregnancies among young women ages 15–19 reported in 2005, the most recent year for which data are available, in Georgia.⁸
- Georgia’s teen birth rate ranked 9th in the U.S. in 2005, with a rate of 52.7 births per 1,000 young women ages 15–19 compared to the national rate of 40.5 births per 1,000.⁹ In 2006, there were a total of 16,548 live births reported to young women ages 15–19 in Georgia.¹⁰
- In 2006, the U.S. teen birth rate increased for the first time in 15 years by 3% from 40.5 to 41.9 births per 1,000 young women ages 15–19, after having steadily declined between 1991 and 2005.¹¹ In contrast, Georgia’s teen birth rate increased 3% between 2005 and 2006, from 52.7 to 54.2 births per 1,000 young women ages 15–19.¹²
- Georgia’s teen abortion rate ranks 18th in the U.S., with a rate of 15 abortions per 1,000 young women ages 15–19 compared to the national rate of 19 abortions per 1,000. In 2005, there were a total of 4,346 abortions reported among young women ages 15–19 in Georgia.¹³

HIV and AIDS

- Georgia ranks 6th in cases of HIV infection diagnosed in the U.S. among all age groups. In 2007, there were a total of 1,059 new cases of HIV infection diagnosed in Georgia.¹⁴
- Georgia ranks 4th in cases of HIV/AIDS diagnosed among young people ages 13–19 out of the 34 states with confidential, name-based HIV infection reporting. In 2007, there were a total of 162 young people ages 13–19 diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in Georgia.¹⁵
- Georgia’s AIDS rate ranks 7th in the U.S., with a rate of 19.7 cases per 100,000 population compared to the national rate of 12.5 cases per 100,000.¹⁶
- Georgia ranks 5th in number of reported AIDS cases in the U.S. among all age groups. In 2007, there were a total of 1,877 new AIDS cases reported in Georgia.¹⁷

- Georgia ranks 6th in number of reported AIDS cases in the U.S. among young people ages 13–19. In 2007, there were a total of 29 AIDS cases reported among young people ages 13–19 in Georgia.¹⁸

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

- Georgia ranks 17th in reported cases of Chlamydia among young people ages 15–19 in the U.S., with an infection rate of 21.12 cases per 1,000 compared to the national rate of 19.51 cases per 1,000. In 2008, there were a total of 14,343 cases of Chlamydia reported among young people ages 15–19 in Georgia.¹⁹
- Georgia ranks 12th in reported cases of gonorrhea among young people ages 15–19 in the U.S., with an infection rate of 6.48 cases per 1,000 compared to the national rate of 4.52 cases per 1,000. In 2008, there were a total of 4,399 cases of gonorrhea reported among young people ages 15–19 in Georgia.²⁰
- Georgia ranks 4th in reported cases of primary and secondary syphilis among young people ages 15–19 in the U.S., with an infection rate of 0.08 cases per 1,000 compared to the national rate of 0.04 cases per 1,000. In 2008, there were a total of 56 cases of syphilis reported among young people ages 15–19 in Georgia.²¹

Comprehensive Approaches to Sex Education

SIECUS is not aware of any examples of model programs, policies, or best practices being implemented in Georgia public schools that provide a more comprehensive approach to sex education for young people.

We encourage you to submit any updated or additional information on comprehensive approaches to sex education being implemented in Georgia public schools for inclusion in future publications of the SIECUS State Profiles. Please visit SIECUS' "Contact Us" webpage at www.siecus.org to share information. Select "state policy" as the subject heading.

Federal Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs

The Governor's Office for Children and Families and community-based organizations in Georgia received \$9,986,442 in federal funds for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2009.²²

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until Marriage Funding

- Georgia received \$1,467,206 in federal Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funding in Fiscal Year 2009. Due to the expiration of the grant program on June 30, 2009, three months prior to the end of the federal fiscal year, the state received three quarters of the total funding allocated for the full fiscal year.
- The Georgia Governor's Office for Children and Families distributes federal Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funds to 22 sub-grantees, including ten community-based organizations, four faith-based organizations, four school districts, two local governments, one abstinence-only-until-marriage industry leader, and one university.
- The Title V abstinence-only-until marriage grant required states to provide three state-raised dollars or the equivalent in services for every four federal dollars received. The state match could have been provided in part or in full by local groups.
- In Georgia, sub-grantees contributed to the match through a combination of direct revenue and in-kind services.

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Community-Based Abstinence Education (CBAE) Funding

- Public and private entities in Georgia received \$6,975,277 in CBAE funding for Fiscal Year 2009.
- There are 14 CBAE grantees in Georgia, including six community-based organizations, five faith-based organizations, two school districts, and one local government.

Adolescent Family Life Act (AFLA) Funding

- Public and private entities in Georgia received \$1,543,959 in AFLA funding for Fiscal Year 2009.
- There are four AFLA grantees in Georgia, including three community-based organizations and one university.

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Curricula Used by Grantees

Some abstinence-only-until-marriage grantees in Georgia use commercially available curricula. These include, but are not limited to:

- *ASPIRE: Live your life. Be free.*
- *Choosing the Best*
- *Heritage Keepers*
- *WAIT Training*

To read reviews of abstinence-only-until-marriage curricula commonly used by federal grantees please visit the “Curricula and Speaker Reviews” webpage of SIECUS’ Community Action Kit at www.communityactionkit.org.

Federal Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2009²³

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee	Title V	CBAE (Length of Grant)	AFLA (Length of Grant)
Governor’s Office for Children and Families www.children.georgia.gov	\$1,467,206 (federal grant)		
African American Golf Foundation	\$85,000 (sub-grant)		
Augusta Partnership for Children, Inc. www.augustapartnership.org			\$344,439 (2007–2012)
Bainbridge College www.bainbridge.edu	\$78,856 (sub-grant)		

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Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee	Title V	CBAE (Length of Grant)	AFLA (Length of Grant)
Ben Hill County Schools www.ben-hill.k12.ga.us	\$122,250 (sub-grant)		
Carrollton Housing Authority www.carrolltonhousingauthority.com		\$345,308 (2006–2011)	
Choosing the Best, Inc. www.choosingthebest.org		\$600,000 (2008–2013)	
Communities In Schools of Burke County	\$62,573 (sub-grant)		
Communities In Schools of Georgia www.cisga.org			\$700,000 (2008–2013)
Communities In Schools of Laurens County, Inc. www.cisl.org	\$52,054 (sub-grant)		
Crowned for Victory, Inc. www.crownedforvictory.org		\$510,728 (2007–2012)	
Diamond in the Rough www.ditr.org	\$48,303 (sub-grant)		
Dodge County Board of Education www.dodge.k12.ga.us	\$60,929 (sub-grant)		
Emory University www.emory.edu			\$299,520 (2004–2009)

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Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee	Title V	CBAE (Length of Grant)	AFLA (Length of Grant)
Friends of Cobb County Commission on Children and Youth www.therealmajority.com		\$600,000 (2008–2013)	
Future Foundation www.future-foundation.com		\$428,677 (2006–2011)	
Girls Incorporated of Columbus and Phenix-Russell www.girlsinc-columbus.org	\$60,196 (sub-grant)		
Henry County Board of Commissioners www.co.henry.ga.us	\$85,000 (sub-grant) \$63,750 (sub-grant)		
Heritage Community Services, Inc. www.heritageservices.org	\$41,781 (sub-grant)		\$200,000 (2004–2009)
Hope House of Savannah	\$40,000 (sub-grant)		
Housing Authority of the City of Tifton www.tifton.net/tiftonhousingbd	\$15,741 (sub-grant)		
McDuffie County Partners for Success www.gafcp.org/fcnetwork/mcduffie	\$51,674 (sub-grant)		

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Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee	Title V	CBAE (Length of Grant)	AFLA (Length of Grant)
Metro Atlanta Youth for Christ www.atlantayfc.org	\$56,130 (sub-grant)	\$577,931 (2006–2011)	
New Horizons Community Service Board www.newhorizonscsb.org		\$573,059 (2008–2013)	
Newton County Board of Commissioners www.co.newton.ga.us	\$33,723 (sub-grant)		
Next Level Community Development Center	\$63,750 (sub-grant)		
Pulaski County Board of Education www.pulaski.k12.ga.us	\$18,274 (sub-grant)		
Quest for Change, Inc.		\$480,799 (2008–2013)	
River Road Church of Christ, Inc. www.riverroadchurchofchrist.com	\$59,257 (sub-grant)	\$484,180 (2008–2013)	
SAGE Communications Services, Inc.		\$350,194 (2006–2011)	
Southside Recreation Center	\$85,000 (sub-grant)		
S.T.A.R.S. Georgia www.starsga.org	\$85,000 (sub-grant)		

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Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee	Title V	CBAE (Length of Grant)	AFLA (Length of Grant)
Thomaston-Upson School System www.upson.k12.ga.us	\$63,750 (sub-grant)		
Turner County Board of Education www.turner.k12.ga.us		\$598,996 (2006–2011)	
Visions Unlimited Community Development, Inc. www.visions-unlimited.org	\$84,971 (sub-grant)		
Wholistic Stress Control Institute, Inc. www.wholistic1.com		\$575,000 (2007–2012)	
Wilkinson County Board of Education www.wilkinson.k12.ga.us		\$418,896 (2008–2013)	
Willie M. Simpson Evangelistic Ministries, Inc.		\$431,509 (2008–2013)	

Adolescent Health Contact²⁴

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 Governor’s Office for Children and Families
 55 Park Place, 4th Floor
 Atlanta, GA 30303
 Phone: (404) 656-5601

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Georgia Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

AID Atlanta
1605 Peachtree Street NE
Atlanta, GA 30309
Phone: (404) 870-7700
www.aidatlanta.org

ACLU of Georgia
1900 The Exchange, Suite 425
Atlanta, GA 30339
Phone: (770) 303-9966
www.acluga.org

Georgia Campaign for Adolescent
Pregnancy Prevention
1450 West Peachtree Street NW, Suite 200
Phone: (404) 524-2277
www.gcapp.org

Georgia Equality
1530 DeKalb Avenue NE Suite A
Atlanta, GA 30307
Phone: (404) 523-3070
www.georgiaequality.org

Georgia Parents for Responsible Health
Education
P.O. Box 15006
Atlanta, GA 30333
www.gprhe.org

Georgia Tech Pride Alliance
Student Involvement Office, Room 2211
Georgia Institute of Technology
Atlanta, GA 30332
Phone: (404) 385-6554
www.pride.gatech.edu

Planned Parenthood of Georgia
75 Piedmont Avenue NE, Suite 800
Atlanta, GA 30303
Phone: (404) 688-9305
www.ppga.org

Georgia Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Georgia Christian Alliance
4880 Lower Roswell Road, Suite 165
P.O. Box 523
Marietta, GA 30068
Phone: (770) 973-3793
www.gachristianalliance.org

Georgia Family Council
3500 Parkway Lane, Suite 460
Norcross, GA 30092
Phone: (770) 242-0001
www.georgiafamily.org

Georgia Right to Life
P.O. Box 927
Lawrenceville, GA 30046
Phone: (770) 339-6880
www.grtl.org

Teen Advisors
P.O. Box 5305
Columbus, GA 31906
www.teenadvisors.org

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Newspapers in Georgia²⁵

Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Newsroom
72 Marietta Street
Atlanta, GA 30303
Phone: (404) 526-7003
www.ajc.com

Gwinnett Daily Post
Newsroom
P.O. Box 603
Lawrenceville, GA 30046
Phone: (770) 963-9205
www.gwinnettdaily.com

Savannah Morning News
Newsroom
P.O. Box 1088
Savannah, GA 31402
Phone: (912) 652-0301
www.savannahnow.com

The Augusta Chronicle
Newsroom
P.O. Box 1928
Augusta, GA 30903
Phone: (706) 724-0851
chronicle.augusta.com

The Macon Telegraph
Newsroom
P.O. Box 4167
Macon, GA 31208
Phone: (478) 744-4411
www.macon.com

Political Blogs in Georgia

Atlanta Unsheltered
www.atlantaunsheltered.com

Blue Heart of Dixie
www.blueheartofdixie.blogspot.com

DoraBlog
www.doraville.org

Georgia Liberal
www.galiberal.com

Beyond the Trestle
www.beyondthetrestle.com

Cracker Squire
www.crackersquire.blogspot.com

Fresh Loaf
[http://blogs.creativeloafing.com/
freshloaf](http://blogs.creativeloafing.com/freshloaf)

Georgia Politics Unfiltered
www.georgiaunfiltered.blogspot.com

¹ Ga. Board of Ed. Rule 160-4-2-.12(c).

² Ibid.

³ “Strand: Disease Prevention,” Grade 6, Health, *Quality Core Curriculum Standards*, (Atlanta, Georgia: Georgia Department of Education, 2002), accessed 9 June 2010,

<<https://www.georgiastandards.org/standards/GPS%20Support%20Docs/QCC%20Health%206-8.pdf>>.

⁴ Health, *Quality Core Curriculum Standards*, (Atlanta, Georgia: Georgia Department of Education, 2002), accessed 9 June 2010,

<<https://www.georgiastandards.org/standards/GPS%20Support%20Docs/QCC%20Health%206-8.pdf>>.

⁵ SB 223, Georgia General Assembly (2009).

⁶ Danice K. Eaton, et. al., “Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance—United States, 2009,” *Surveillance Summaries, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, vol. 59, no. SS-5 (4 June 2010): 98–109, accessed 4 June 2010,

<<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/ss/ss5905.pdf>>. Note: Georgia did not participate in the full 2009 YRBS.

⁷ U.S. *Teenage Pregnancies, Births, and Abortions: National and State Trends and Trends by Race and Ethnicity*, (Washington, DC:

Guttmacher Institute, January 2010), accessed 5 March 2010, <<http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/USTPTrends.pdf>>, Table 3.1.

⁸ Ibid., Table 3.2.

⁹ Joyce A. Martin, et. al., “Births: Final Data for 2006,” *National Vital Statistics Reports*, vol. 57, number 7 (Hyattsville, MD: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 7 January 2009), accessed 5 March 2010,

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr57/nvsr57_07.pdf>, Table B.

¹⁰ U.S. *Teenage Pregnancies, Births, and Abortions: National and State Trends and Trends by Race and Ethnicity*, Table 3.2.

¹¹ Martin, et. al., “Births: Final Data for 2006,” 4.

¹² Ibid., Table B.

¹³ U.S. *Teenage Pregnancies, Births, and Abortions: National and State Trends and Trends by Race and Ethnicity*, Table 3.5.

¹⁴ “Cases of HIV Infection and AIDS in the United States and Dependent Areas, 2007,” *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report*, vol. 19, (Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, February 2009), accessed 5 March 2010,

<<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/reports/2007report/pdf/2007SurveillanceReport.pdf>>, Table 18.

¹⁵ Slide 6: “Estimated Numbers of HIV/AIDS Cases among Adolescents 13 to 19 Years of Age, 2007—34 States,” *HIV/AIDS Surveillance in Adolescents and Young Adults (through 2007)*, (Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, May 2009),

accessed 25 March 2010, <<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/slides/adolescents/index.htm>>.

¹⁶ Ibid.; “AIDS Case Rate per 100,000 Population, All Ages, 2007,” (Menlo Park, CA: Kaiser Family Foundation), accessed 5 March 2010, <<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparetable.jsp?ind=513&cat=11&sub=120&yr=62&typ=1&sort=a>>.

¹⁷ Ibid., Table 16.

¹⁸ Slide 15: “Reported AIDS Cases among Adolescents 13 to 19 Years of Age, 2007—United States and Dependent Areas,” *HIV/AIDS Surveillance in Adolescents and Young Adults (through 2007)*, (Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, May 2009), accessed 25 March 2010, <<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/slides/adolescents/index.htm>>.

¹⁹ “Wonder Database: Selected STDs by Age, Race/Ethnicity, and Gender, 1996-2008 Results,” (Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 30 June 2009), accessed 5 March 2010, <<http://wonder.cdc.gov/>>; see also Table 10:

“Chlamydia: Reported Cases and Rates Per 100,000 Population by Age Group and Sex: United States, 2004–2008,” *Sexually Transmitted Disease Surveillance 2008*, (Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of STD Prevention, November 2009), accessed 5 March 2010, <<http://www.cdc.gov/std/stats08/surv2008-Complete.pdf>>, 95.

²⁰ Ibid; see also Table 20: “Gonorrhea—Reported Cases and Rates per 100,000 Population by Age Group and Sex: United States, 2004–2008,” *Sexually Transmitted Disease Surveillance 2008*, 106.

²¹ Ibid; see also Table 33: “Primary and Secondary Syphilis—Reported Cases and Rates per 100,000 Population by Age Group and Sex: United States, 2004–2008,” *Sexually Transmitted Disease Surveillance 2008*, 121.

²² This refers to the federal government’s fiscal year, which begins on October 1st and ends on September 30th. The fiscal year is designated by the calendar year in which it ends; for example, Fiscal Year 2009 began on October 1, 2008 and ended on September 30, 2009.

²³ Through the Fiscal Year 2010 appropriations process, Congress eliminated all discretionary funding for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs, including the entire CBAE program and the abstinence-only-until-marriage portion of AFLA. The grant years listed in the chart reflect the years for which funding was originally approved; however, the grants effectively ended in Fiscal Year 2009.

²⁴ SIECUS has identified this person as a state-based contact for information on adolescent health and if applicable, abstinence-only-until-marriage programs.

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²⁵ This section is a list of major newspapers in your state with contact information for their newsrooms. This list is by no means exhaustive 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](#).