



SIECUS

State Profile

NEBRASKA

The Department of Health and Human Services and community-based organizations in Nebraska received \$956,938 in federal funds for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2007.¹

Nebraska Sexuality Education Law and Policy

Nebraska law does not require sexuality education; indeed, it explicitly states that this is a matter of local control. Nebraska does not limit or prescribe what can be taught in such classes nor does it recommend a specific curriculum. However, in its *Nebraska Health Education Frameworks*, the Nebraska State Board of Education does support “an abstinence approach to risk behaviors associated with...sexual activity.” The State Board of Education also adopted specific abstinence guidelines to be used in any school unit involving family life or sexuality education. The guidelines include teaching that “abstinence from sexual activity outside marriage is the expected standard for all school-age children,” and “a mutually faithful monogamous relationship in the context of marriage is the expected standard of human sexual activity.” The guidelines also note that the best way to develop family life or sexuality education units is for parents, school boards, and teachers to work together with schools, districts, and communities “so all have a voice in the process and content.”

Nebraska does not require parental permission for students to participate in sexuality or HIV/AIDS education nor does it say whether parents or guardians may remove their children from such classes.

See the Nebraska Revised Statutes Chapter 79, and *Nebraska Health Education Frameworks*.

Recent Legislation

Legislation to Amend Discrimination Laws

Bill 475, introduced in January 2007, would amend the discrimination laws in the state to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or marital status. The Bill was indefinitely postponed on May 22, 2007.

Events of Note

SIECUS is not aware of any recent events regarding sexuality education in Nebraska.

Nebraska's Youth: Statistical Information of Note²

- In 2005, 41% of female high school students and 41% of male high school students in Nebraska reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 46% of female high school students and 48% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2005, 3% of female high school students and 6% of male high school students in Nebraska 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 12% of male high school students in Nebraska 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, 30% of female high school students and 30% of male high school students in Nebraska reported being currently sexually active (defined as having had sexual intercourse in the three months prior to the survey) compared to 35% of female high school students and 33% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2005, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 56% of females and 67% of males in Nebraska reported having used condoms the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 56% of females and 70% of males nationwide.
- In 2005, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 25% of females and 19% of males in Nebraska reported having used birth control pills the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 21% of females and 15% of males nationwide.
- In 2005, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 23% of females and 26% of males in Nebraska reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 19% of females and 28% of males nationwide.
- In 2005, 85% of high school students in Nebraska reported having been taught about AIDS/HIV in school compared to 88% of high school students nationwide.
- In 2000, Nebraska's abortion rate was 12 per 1,000 women ages 15–19 compared to a teen abortion rate of 24 per 1,000 nationwide.³
- In 2004, Nebraska's birth rate was 36 per 1,000 women ages 15–19 compared to a teen birth rate of 41 per 1,000 nationwide.⁴

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services received \$218,740 in federal Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funding 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. In Nebraska, the match is provided by the sub-grantees.

The Department of Health and Human Services runs the Nebraska Abstinence Education program which uses some of the Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funds for a media campaign that is primarily implemented at the state high school basketball tournament each year.

The NAE also distributes Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funds to nine sub-grantees: Alliance Area YMCA, Answers and Alternatives Crisis Pregnancy Center, Antelope Memorial Hospital, Four Corners Health Department, Lincoln Crisis Pregnancy Center, Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska, Inc., North Central District Health Department, St. Elizabeth Foundation, and Youth For Christ, Columbus.

These sub-grantees use a variety of curricula; however, the most popular abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Nebraska are *WAIT (Why Am I Tempted?) Training* and *Choosing the Best LIFE*.

Both of these curricula have been reviewed by SIECUS. In our review of *WAIT Training*, SIECUS found that it contained little medical or biological information and almost no information about STDs, including HIV/AIDS. Instead, it contains information and statistics about marriage, many of which are outdated and not supported by scientific research. It also contains messages of fear and shame and biased views of gender, sexual orientation, and family type. For example, *WAIT Training* explains, “men sexually are like microwaves and women sexually are like crockpots....A woman is stimulated more by touch and romantic words. She is far more attracted by a man’s personality while a man is stimulated by sight. A man is usually less discriminating about those to whom he is physically attracted.”⁵

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 happy futures, 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.”⁶

Two of the Title V sub-grantees are crisis pregnancy centers: Answers and Alternatives Crisis Pregnancy Center and Lincoln Crisis Pregnancy Center. Crisis pregnancy centers typically advertise as providing medical services and then use anti-abortion propaganda, misinformation, and fear and shame tactics to dissuade women facing unintended pregnancy from exercising their right to choose.

The Lincoln Crisis Pregnancy Center devotes a majority of its website to denouncing abortion.⁷ The organization offers the following as advice to women:

You do have the choice not to have an abortion and we can help. We want to help you avoid being hurt physically and emotionally by offering solutions. You don’t need to make this decision right away. Slow down and allow time to think. Don’t let anyone tell you that you have to have an abortion. We exist to help you explore your options. There are risks to most abortion procedures. Because of these dangers we do not recommend or refer for abortion.⁸

In fact, induced abortion early in pregnancy carries very low risk of complications. Less than 1% of women experience a major complication and there is no evidence of childbearing problems among women who have had aspiration abortions (the most common procedure) within the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.⁹ In addition, “the risk of death associated with childbirth is about 11 times as high as that associated with abortion.”¹⁰

The sub-grantee Youth For Christ, Columbus is part of a larger national organization whose mission reads, “YFC reaches young people everywhere, working together with the local church and other likeminded partners to raise up lifelong followers of Jesus by their godliness in lifestyle, devotion to the world of God and prayer, passion for sharing the love of Christ and commitment to

social involvement.”¹¹ This organization uses *WAIT (Why Am I Tempted?) Training* in its abstinence-only-until-marriage program.¹²

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Evaluation

Nebraska completed an evaluation of its Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage program in 2002. This review involved pre- and post-test surveys administered to two groups, one of which participated in the abstinence-only programs and the other received only the regular health and sexuality curricula. The results revealed, “abstinence-only education did not significantly change young adolescents’ values and attitudes about premarital sexual activity, nor did it significantly change their intentions whether or not to engage in premarital sexual activity.”¹³ In addition, the authors of the evaluation found that favorable attitudes toward abstinence expressed by youth could not be attributed to the programs.¹⁴

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

There are two CBAE grantees in Nebraska: City of Norfolk/Community Character Development Coalition and Father Flanagan’s Boys’ Home. There are no ALFA grantees in Nebraska.

The Community Character Development Coalition has a variety of abstinence-only-until-marriage media clips available on its website. One clip, “It’s your choice!,” features young people who state, “Prom. It’s a big night. It could either be a night to remember. Or a memory to regret. Would you jump off a cliff if everyone else did?”¹⁵

The website also suggests a number of abstinence-only-until-marriage videos and speakers. Pam Stenzel, Keith Deltano, and Mike Long, national abstinence-only-until-marriage speakers, are all listed as resources.¹⁶

SIECUS reviewed Pam Stenzel’s video “Sex Still Has a Price Tag,” in which Stenzel delivers two 40-plus-minute monologues to a studio audience of high school students. She uses a preacher’s cadence and often yells at her audience in attempts to emphasize her points. Stenzel focuses on unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and other negative outcomes of sex such as emotional pain and the inability to bond. Her presentation relies on fear, promotes shame, and mandates decisions for young people. For example, Stenzel tells her audience, “If you forget everything else I told you today, and you can only remember one thing, this is what I want you to hear. If you have sex outside of one permanent monogamous—and monogamy does not mean one at a time—that means one partner who has only been with you—if you have sex outside of that context, you will pay.”¹⁷

SIECUS also reviewed the commercially available videotape of Mike Long’s presentation, *Everyone’s Not Doing IT*. In his presentation to students, Mike Long, a self-described pioneer in the abstinence movement lectures, preaches, and tells young people in no uncertain terms that premarital sex is morally wrong, that they are incapable of making decisions for themselves, and that everyone should aspire to marry and raise children in a “traditional” family setting. In a style that falls somewhere between that of an infomercial spokesperson and a televangelist, Long relays messages of fear and shame and provides medically inaccurate information. For example, he tells his audience “You’ll never know whom you want to marry.... Maybe that man or woman will regard virginity as an important indicator of character, and maybe, if you’ve been sexually active, he or she will find out. (If you’ve been pregnant or had a sexually transmitted disease, your chances of marrying such a person may be even slimmer.)”¹⁸

Keith Deltano is an abstinence-only-until-marriage speaker and Christian comedian who has given talks around the country in middle schools and high schools. SIECUS attended one of Mr. Deltano’s most popular presentations, “The New Sexual Revolution or Abstinence is Cool,” and found that he uses a loud, aggressive style, reminiscent of a football coach to badger students into accepting his abstinence-

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only-until-marriage ideology. Deltano relies on messages of fear and shame, inaccurate and misleading information, and biased views of marriage and gender. The highlight of Deltano’s performance includes an activity designed to illustrate the ineffectiveness of condoms against HIV in which he suggests that condoms fail 10% of the time and then he dangles a cinderblock over the genitals of an unsuspecting male student yelling, “Is 10 percent good enough for you?!? Is it good enough?!?”¹⁹

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)
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services System www.hhs.state.ne.us	\$218,740 federal	Title V
Alliance Area YMCA	\$25,000	Title V sub-grantee
Answers and Alternatives Crisis Pregnancy Center	\$15,000	Title V sub-grantee
Antelope Memorial Hospital	\$15,000	Title V sub-grantee
Four Corners Health Department	\$16,315	Title V sub-grantee
Lincoln Crisis Pregnancy Center	\$17,000	Title V sub-grantee
Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska, Inc.	\$24,438	Title V sub-grantee
North Central District Health Dept.	\$25,000	Title V sub-grantee
St. Elizabeth Foundation	\$24,988	Title V sub-grantee
Youth for Chris, Columbus	\$25,000	Title V sub-grantee
City of Norfolk/Community Character Development Coalition 2005–2008 www.ci.norfolk.ne.us/ccdc	\$438,198	CBAE

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Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes Title V, CBAE, AFLA, and other funds)
Father Flanagan's Boys' Home 2007–2011	\$300,000	AFLA

Adolescent Health Contact²⁰

Linda Henningsen
 Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
 P.O. Box 95044
 Lincoln, NE 68509
 Phone: (402) 471-0538

Nebraska Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

ACLU of Nebraska
 941 “O” St., Suite 706
 Lincoln, NE 68508
 Phone: (402) 476-8091
www.aclunebraska.org

Nebraska Religious Coalition for
 Reproductive Choice
 P.O. Box 31395
 Omaha, NE 68131
 Phone: (402) 320-0070

Planned Parenthood of Nebraska and
 Council Bluffs
 2246 “O” St.
 Lincoln, NE 68510
 Phone: (402) 441-3332
www.plannedparenthood.org/ppncb

Nebraska Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Family First
 610 J St., Suite 10
 Lincoln, NE 68508
 Phone: (402) 435-3210
www.familyfirst.org

Nebraska Right to Life Committee
 P.O. Box 80410
 Lincoln, NE 68501
 Phone: (402) 438-4802
www.nebraskartl.org

Newspapers in Nebraska²¹*Columbus Telegram*

Newsroom
1254 27th Ave.
Columbus, NE 68601
Phone: (402) 564-2741
www.columbustelegram.com

Hastings Tribune

Newsroom
912 W. 2nd St.
Hastings, NE 68901
Phone: (402) 462-2131
www.hastingstribune.com

Lincoln Journal Star

Newsroom
926 P Street
Lincoln, NE 68508
Phone: (402) 473-7150
www.journalstar.com

North Platte Telegraph

Newsroom
P.O. Box 370
North Platte, NE 69101
Phone: (308) 532-6000
www.nptelegraph.com

Omaha World-Herald

Newsroom
Omaha World-Herald Building
Omaha, NE 68102
Phone: (402) 444-1000
www.omaha.com

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 2007 begins on October 1, 2006 and ends on September 30, 2007.

² 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 26 January 2007, <<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>>.

³ U.S. *Teenage Pregnancy Statistics: Overall Trends, Trends by Race and Ethnicity and State-by-State Information* (New York: The Guttmacher Institute, February 2004), accessed 26 January 2007, <<http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/2006/09/12/USTPstats.pdf>>.

⁴ *National Vital Statistics Reports 55.01* (Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics, 2006), 10, accessed 26 January 2006, <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr55/nvsr55_01.pdf>.

⁵ Joneen Krauth-Mackenzie, *WAIT (Why Am I Tempted) Training, Second Edition* (Greenwood Village, CO: WAIT Training, undated). For more information, see SIECUS' review of *WAIT Training* at <http://www.communityactionkit.org/curricula_reviews.html>.

⁶ Bruce Cook, *Choosing the Best LIFE* (Marietta, GA: Choosing the Best Inc., 2000). For more information, see SIECUS' review of *Choosing the Best LIFE* at <http://www.communityactionkit.org/curricula_reviews.html>.

⁷ "Your Choices – Abortion," Lincoln Crisis Pregnancy Center, accessed 25 March 2008, <<http://www.lincolncrisispregnancycenter.org/abortion.htm>>.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ *Facts In Brief: Induced Abortion*, (New York: Alan Guttmacher Institute), accessed 5 April 2004, <http://www.agi-usa.org/pubs/fb_induced_abortion.html>.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ "The Mission of the YFC," Youth For Christ, accessed 25 March 2008, <<http://www.yfc.net/Brix?pageID=2941>>.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ L. Sather and K. Zinn, "Effects Of Abstinence-Only Education On Adolescent Attitudes And Values Concerning Premarital Sexual Intercourse," *Family & Community Health* 25 (2002): 12.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ "Resources: It's Your Choice!" Community Character Development Coalition, (2006), accessed 14 March 2008, <http://www.ci.norfolk.ne.us/ccdc/tv_commercials.htm>.

¹⁶ “Resources: Sexuality and STD’s,” Community Character Development Coalition, (2006), accessed 14 March 2008, <<http://www.ci.norfolk.ne.us/ccdc/resources.htm>>.

¹⁷ Pam Stenzel, *Sex Still Has a Price Tag* (Littleton, CO: Enlighten Communications, Inc., 2006).

¹⁸ Mike Long, *Everyone Is NOT Doing IT! DVD and Book Series* (Raleigh, NC: ML Productions, 2004).

¹⁹ SIECUS’ review is based an hour long version of “The New Sexual Revolution” which SIECUS staff attended at a public high school in Loudoun County, Virginia in February 2007 as well as information from Deltano’s website and newspaper articles about his other appearances.

²⁰ SIECUS has identified this person as a state-based contact for information on adolescent health and if applicable, abstinence-only-until-marriage programs.

²¹ 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](#).